

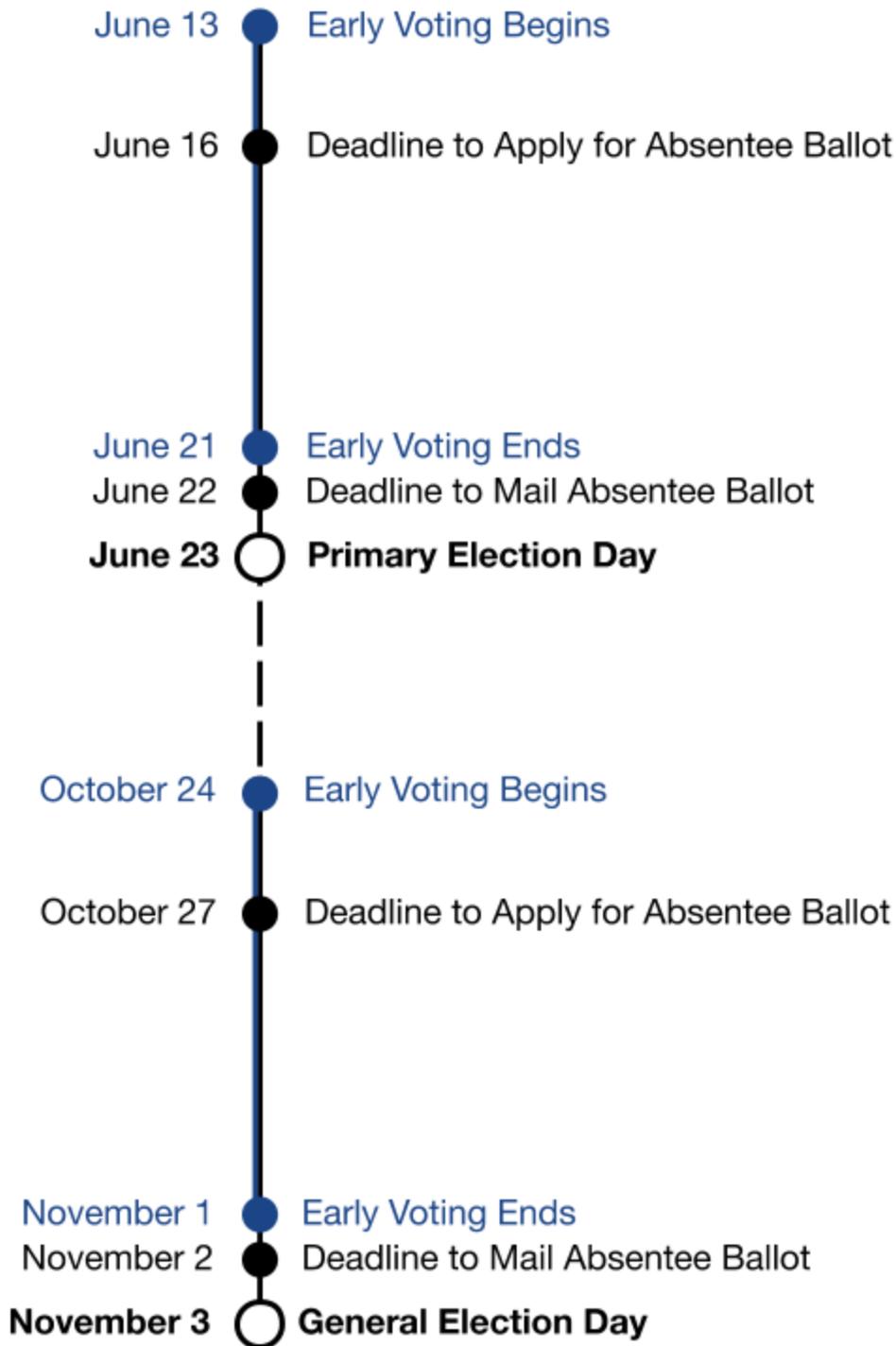
**APAVOICE**

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS VOTING & ORGANIZING TO INCREASE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

# 2020 QUEENSBOROUGH PRESIDENT CANDIDATE SURVEY



# KEY INFO



DISCLAIMER

This voter guide is part of a campaign by APA VOICE: Voting and Organizing to Increase Civic Engagement. Our goal is to increase awareness and civic participation in the Asian Pacific American community. We are non-partisan and do not endorse any political party or candidate.

## **Are there elections on June 23? I've heard that New York's primary was cancelled.**

Yes, elections are happening on June 23! The primary elections previously planned for Congress, state Assembly, and state Senate will be held. In addition, there will be a primary election for one city office: Queens Borough President. The vast majority of New York City neighborhoods will have at least one primary election on June 23.

New York's Democratic Presidential Primary is June 23.

## **How do I request an absentee (or mail-in) ballot?**

The process is easier than it has ever been. This year, the Board of Elections is mailing every registered voter an absentee ballot application, which you can complete and return to request your absentee ballot. (The application sent to you by mail will include a postage-paid return envelope.)

The application will be mailed to the address listed in your voter registration. If you are away from your home, you can request that an absentee ballot be sent to your current location.

## **There are other easy ways to request an absentee ballot:**

1. Online at [nycabsentee.com](https://nycabsentee.com)
2. Email a completed [application](#) to [AbsenteeJune2020@boe.nyc](mailto:AbsenteeJune2020@boe.nyc)
3. Call 1-866-VOTE-NYC (1-866-868-3692) and request an absentee ballot
4. Mail a completed [application](#) to [your borough's BOE office](#)
5. Fax a completed [application](#) to 212-487-5349

You only need to request a ballot once, using one of these methods.

## **Can I still vote in person?**

Yes. In-person voting is still available, both during the early voting period (June 13 - 21) and on Election Day (June 23). You can find your poll site (which may be different for early versus Election Day voting) using [nyc.pollsitelocator.com](https://nyc.pollsitelocator.com). Ballot marking devices will be available at all poll sites and Board of Elections offices.

If you want to vote in person, we recommend voting early, if possible, since wait times are expected to be shorter and crowds to be smaller.

## **How can I find out if my registration is up to date?**

The New York State Board of Elections has a useful web tool to check your voter registration status: [voterlookup.elections.ny.gov](https://voterlookup.elections.ny.gov). The tool will provide your current registered address, party affiliation, and your election districts.

**Report any voting problems to (212) 966-5932 (Asian American Legal Defense & Education Fund Multilingual Voter Hotline).**

# COSTA CONSTANTINIDES

Democrat, City Councilmember



**Housing:** Would you mandate certain levels of affordable housing in all Housing related zoning applications that come across your desk? What income levels would you recommend that all developers adhere to when building housing in Queens?

First, we will block any land-use application on City land that isn't 100% affordable. Any proposal on private land must have a deep affordability component, beyond the typical 80-20% split. All proposals must also have a strong sustainability and organized labor component. We must diversify our affordability rates, putting a preference on units that are 70 or 80% AMI, because 110% AMI is hardly affordable. I am also focused on identifying public land to create senior and veteran housing. Here in Astoria, we found an underused City plot that will now yield up to 150 senior-appropriate apartments at 60% AMI, which will allow elderly residents to pay rent on Social Security or a pension.

**Development:** The Amazon project, the Redevelopment of Sunnyside Yards, and the Flushing Special Waterfront Rezoning have all seen opposition from community organizers, activists, and leaders. What steps would you take to ensure community members are centered in the ULURP and negotiation process? How would you reform the community boards with these issues in mind?

Reforming community boards is the first step to guaranteeing better people-centric planning decisions. Right now, many of Queens' 14 boards are overwhelmingly white men who drive. We have seen how this disparity recently played out in controversial zoning decisions. Boards' members must be diverse both in terms of background and in thought. I want to professionalize the Community Board appointment process by creating an Office of Diversity and Outreach to proactively let people know when a vacancy is created, educate people on how to apply, and have an open interview process. Those who don't make it receive a letter to explain why but keeps them engaged by listing other ways they can get involved in the community.

**Education:** How will you ensure there is more engagement with low income, immigrant, and other marginalized communities before decisions about NYC public school reforms are made? Do you support the status quo with regards to the Specialized High School Admissions Test?

While I believe there should be reforms to the Specialized High School Admissions Test, the Borough President should use their capital budget to attack the deeper inequality issues in our school system. I want to install a hydroponic science lab at every Queens school as part of an effort to improve our science, technology, engineering and mathematics curriculum. Not every student learns from a textbook, so without hands-on infrastructure like this, we are denying students in poorer schools the opportunity to unlock a hidden love of science. This should start at early education and carry through junior high school, which will guarantee every single Queens student has a strong understanding of science when they go to take that reformed test.

**Economy:** As borough president, you would have both a substantial discretionary budget and the stature to push for meaningful change. What concrete steps would you take to address the top concerns of immigrant small business owners, especially escalating rents and onerous city regulations? Do you endorse tax incentives for small businesses rather than big corporations?

I am personally tired of lamenting Amazon when we should celebrate Queens' amazing small businesses. Yes, small businesses deserve tax breaks over large corporations because they are the backbone of Queens' economy as a pathway into the middle class for many immigrant families and a major employer. At the outset of this crisis, I called on the federal government to prioritize small businesses ahead of cruise lines or big banks. As Queens Borough President I will use my ability to request legislation to prioritize small businesses over mega companies. My office will also bring small business leaders together on a regular basis to stay up to date on the issues before them, so we can properly advocate for them.

**Inclusion and Racism:** What concrete steps would you take to address the recent escalation of Anti-Asian sentiment? Long-term, how would you lead Queens, the most racially and linguistically diverse borough in the city, toward inclusion for all community members?

Hate and racism have no place in Queens. It's exactly why I proposed the Office of Diversity and Outreach in October, which would set up satellite offices in our immigrant communities -- with staff who speak the languages. This should be the place where community leaders come when small evidence of larger hate crimes start to show up. Those should then go to the central Borough President's Office, so we can work with the Mayor's Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes and the NYPD to bring the right resources into that neighborhood. More than 190 languages are spoken in Queens -- we need to make sure they're celebrated, not marginalized.

# ELIZABETH CROWLEY

Democrat, Former City Councilmember



*Did not respond to multiple requests.*

# ANTHONY MIRANDA

**Democrat, Former Chief of Police for NYC  
Administration for Children's Services**



**Housing:** Would you mandate certain levels of affordable housing in all Housing related zoning applications that come across your desk? What income levels would you recommend that all developers adhere to when building housing in Queens?

1. Yes.

2. For this I would consult with housing advocates as to what would make the most sense. One element we would for sure consider is the median and average incomes as it pertains to the specific Queens neighborhoods.

**Development:** The Amazon project, the Redevelopment of Sunnyside Yards, and the Flushing Special Waterfront Rezoning have all seen opposition from community organizers, activists, and leaders. What steps would you take to ensure community members are centered in the ULURP and negotiation process? How would you reform the community boards with these issues in mind?

1. Ensure communities are properly notified of any and all developments, hold public hearings and community meetings in order to solicit direct feedback from residents, offer electronic means of submitting responses to proposals, and have community boards reflect the current makeup of the communities.

2. Evaluate members based on time in community and community involvement and advocacy, publicly track and report on the composition of all community boards, [and] notify local residents of proposed members and get their feedback before appointing. Increase distribution of applications and access to applying, respond to each person who applies regarding receipt of application and timeline regarding decisions, [and] engage those who are not appointed in other opportunities to be involved such as active project committees.

**Education:** How will you ensure there is more engagement with low income, immigrant, and other marginalized communities before decisions about NYC public school reforms are made? Do you support the status quo with regards to the Specialized High School Admissions Test?

1. Concerted efforts to make feedback accessible and easy to use. Also multiple methods for outreach and participation in direct feedback efforts such as remote meetings (such as Zoom). I would better utilize the current communication networks such as PTAs, sending notices home with the children, emails, Remind/ text networks. I would ensure that our office is directly communicating this information to all communities.

2. No. Not even colleges use a single test system for admissions. We should at minimum reflect best admissions practices. Consideration of a student's total academic history performance, plus civic and community activities.

**Economy:** As borough president, you would have both a substantial discretionary budget and the stature to push for meaningful change. What concrete steps would you take to address the top concerns of immigrant small business owners, especially escalating rents and onerous city regulations? Do you endorse tax incentives for small businesses rather than big corporations?

1. Calling together the full Queens elected delegation to actively legislate and appropriate on behalf of those most in need rather than those with the greatest resources.

2. Yes.

**Inclusion and Racism:** What concrete steps would you take to address the recent escalation of Anti-Asian sentiment? Long-term, how would you lead Queens, the most racially and linguistically diverse borough in the city, toward inclusion for all community members?

1. Any and all discrimination requires not only public condemnation, it requires strict enforcement of the laws that are meant to protect us all. I would use the voice of the QBP's office to be an advocate for the victims. The QBP's office will also explore all opportunities for community forums and education. Another thing is I would work closely with the APA communities to elevate their presence and voices, especially during a time of crisis. As such I would work closely with all agencies engaged in both enforcement and oversight of illegal discriminatory practices.

2. By ensuring the QBP's Office has an empowered diverse staff, diversity on all standing committees, and all community boards. Ensure that all County Committee seats have representatives. Meet regularly to address community concerns, listening to and working with the whole tapestry to make a stronger Queens.

# DONOVAN RICHARDS

Democrat, City Councilmember



**Housing:** Would you mandate certain levels of affordable housing in all Housing related zoning applications that come across your desk? What income levels would you recommend that all developers adhere to when building housing in Queens?

I have always prioritized affordable housing in all new developments, and will continue to mandate that affordable housing comes first and foremost in all housing related zoning applications. I introduced legislation to require the City to include measures to affirmatively further fair housing in its report on creation or preservation of affordable housing. I've worked with the Dept. of Housing Preservation to create 100 percent affordable passive house multi-family buildings, in Rockaway Queens, and will continue to enable the growth of equitable housing. As chair of the Land Use Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises I negotiated the MIH framework, a stronger, more inclusive affordable housing plan.

**Development:** The Amazon project, the Redevelopment of Sunnyside Yards, and the Flushing Special Waterfront Rezoning have all seen opposition from community organizers, activists, and leaders. What steps would you take to ensure community members are centered in the ULURP and negotiation process? How would you reform the community boards with these issues in mind?

As Queensborough President I will ensure that the residents of Queens are included with a seat at the table for all critical land use decisions. As chair of the Zoning committee, I always helped to negotiate a stronger, more inclusive affordable housing plan for all new development projects. I have been vocal in my support for Community Land Trusts to stem the tide of displacement and have spearheaded the city's first initiative to fund CLTs. CLTs help put neighborhood decision-making in the hands of the community members, having community boards to consult during land-use decisions ensures that resources are reinvested into the neighborhood. I was a vocal proponent of measures designed to diversify our community boards with new voices and perspectives and will continue to advocate for such changes.

**Education:** How will you ensure there is more engagement with low income, immigrant, and other marginalized communities before decisions about NYC public school reforms are made? Do you support the status quo with regards to the Specialized High School Admissions Test?

The SHSAT has led to a diversity gap in admissions and has created a trend of discrimination in our school system negatively affecting underprivileged students. Education equity is vastly significant, every child regardless of their parents income or the color of their skin deserves access to a great education. Funding sound education is a matter of equipping schools, teachers and students with adequate resources. Additionally, we must prioritize keeping NYC schools healthy and safe, fair budgeting is essential to improving education quality. We need to ensure that teachers reflect the diversity of the communities where they teach. I am for incorporating more measures in the high school admission process, so schools no longer rely so heavily on the flawed SHSAT.

**Economy:** As borough president, you would have both a substantial discretionary budget and the stature to push for meaningful change. What concrete steps would you take to address the top concerns of immigrant small business owners, especially escalating rents and onerous city regulations? Do you endorse tax incentives for small businesses rather than big corporations?

Yes, I am in favor of tax incentives for small businesses. I have a demonstrated history of supporting brick and mortar retailers, from fighting for the Grocery Retention Act, to rallying against large chains, such as Walmart seeking to push out small businesses. As Borough President I will continue to fight for tenants rights advocating for rent regulation and vacancy decontrol so that people are able to continue to call Queens home. Additionally, I've been an advocate for small businesses vending limit increases, as a type of policy we must pursue to allow for a flourishing economy that benefits all.

**Inclusion and Racism:** What concrete steps would you take to address the recent escalation of Anti-Asian sentiment? Long-term, how would you lead Queens, the most racially and linguistically diverse borough in the city, toward inclusion for all community members?

Discrimination against our Asian neighbors have crippled communities & small businesses throughout NYC. I have always stood with and fought alongside the Asian residents of Queens against racism and discrimination, and have joined colleagues standing in solidarity with the community, publicly denouncing the anti-asian xenophobia on the rise. Our diversity is our strength, and as Chair of the Public Safety Committee I created the Hate Crimes Unit to help create a better criminal justice system, spearheaded the opening of the Office for the Prevention of Hate Crime, in order to protect marginalized populations from targeted harassment and make the city safer through police data transparency; and will continue to ensure that Asians among other groups are equipped with the necessary resources to feel not only safe but comfortable.

# DAO YIN

Democrat, Accounting & HR Manager



**Housing:** Would you mandate certain levels of affordable housing in all Housing related zoning applications that come across your desk? What income levels would you recommend that all developers adhere to when building housing in Queens?

As a first-generation immigrant who came to Queens more than two decades ago to start a family, Dao Yin faced the realities of our housing crisis himself. One key problem is that most of the new housing that has been built in Queens over the last decade has been for the upper class and the super-rich. This takes away valuable housing stock from families and seniors on a fixed income who are simply looking for adequate shelter. Dao Yin will work to ensure that developers can still make a decent profit but while building affordable housing and keeping the rents at reasonable levels. Affordable housing must be a priority, and it must be truly affordable to middle-class families.

**Development:** The Amazon project, the Redevelopment of Sunnyside Yards, and the Flushing Special Waterfront Rezoning have all seen opposition from community organizers, activists, and leaders. What steps would you take to ensure community members are centered in the ULURP and negotiation process? How would you reform the community boards with these issues in mind?

It is unfortunate that the City and Amazon could not reach a reasonable deal with to bring up to 40,000 jobs to Queens. Although there are valid concerns that New York had not gotten enough under the proposed deal, Dao Yin is in favor of gathering support for a better deal. Under the right circumstances, and a properly negotiated deal, billions of additional tax revenues could be achieved, along with tens of thousands of new jobs. Dao Yin will negotiate with other companies that want to bring jobs to Queens and help everyone in Queens prosper. Community Boards perform a vital function, and they must be reorganized so that they are not overtaken by special interest groups.

**Education:** How will you ensure there is more engagement with low income, immigrant, and other marginalized communities before decisions about NYC public school reforms are made? Do you support the status quo with regards to the Specialized High School Admissions Test?

Yes. One of Dao Yin's top priorities is to protect our specialized high schools and the Specialized High School Admissions Test. The SHSAT provides a fair way to provide high quality education to those who can benefit from it the most. In addition, the current admissions process gives opportunities to low- and middle-income students throughout the City that they would not otherwise have. More innovation in our public schools is also important. It is sad that only 37% of students that graduate from City schools are actually prepared for college. Dao Yin will also support our charter schools, which offer new and unique ideas in teaching critical thinking skills to students of all backgrounds.

**Economy:** As borough president, you would have both a substantial discretionary budget and the stature to push for meaningful change. What concrete steps would you take to address the top concerns of immigrant small business owners, especially escalating rents and onerous city regulations? Do you endorse tax incentives for small businesses rather than big corporations?

The recent Coronavirus outbreak has been devastating to our small businesses, which are the lifeblood of Queens. Small businesses employ an overwhelming proportion of our immigrants, who are under increasing attack. Without the hard work of our immigrants, this City would cease to be the amazing place that it is today. Dao Yin will not allow out-of-state and large corporations to push out mom and pop stores. As a Chinese-American immigrant to this country and a community activist in Queens, Dao Yin knows the struggles that our small business owners face. Dao Yin will work to reduce fees and regulations on small businesses, because it is often too complicated and expensive for entrepreneurs to do business in this City.

**Inclusion and Racism:** What concrete steps would you take to address the recent escalation of Anti-Asian sentiment? Long-term, how would you lead Queens, the most racially and linguistically diverse borough in the city, toward inclusion for all community members?

As the father of two children, Dao Yin believes that the best way to improve race relations is by setting a positive example with strong leadership during these difficult times. Dao will fight for the resources that all residents of Queens need during this devastating pandemic. Queens is full of working-class neighborhoods that are underserved by hospitals and have a lack of fresh, healthy food, thus leaving our residents with preexisting medical conditions that make them particularly vulnerable. Not only do we need medical resources and well-paying jobs, but also, we need to educate our citizens on how to be safe, healthy, and be prepared for the next health crisis that will arrive in the years ahead.