

Mayoral Candidate's Responses to Philadelphia Crosstown Coalition's Questionnaire

1. TAX ABATEMENT

Should the ten year realty tax abatement continue as is?

KENNEY: On City Council, I supported legislation to create the tax abatement program, and it has done much to spur real estate development in some parts of Philadelphia. However, I believe that we must consistently review and examine all of our tax programs, credits and abatements to find their true cost and whether they work. We must ensure that these programs are effective at either retaining or creating jobs.

One change I believe we must make is in the land/improvement value of properties after reassessment under AVI. As the members of the Crosstown Coalition knows from their years of advocacy on this subject, throughout the majority of the City, land values account for small portion of the total assessed value of a property, and for properties receiving tax abatements this percentage is even lower on average, specifically for some of our most expensive property. As Mayor, I will look to raise the land value of the total assessment, which keeps property taxes the same on properties without an abatement, ensures those benefiting from the abatement pay a fairer share of taxes, and keeps the abatement program intact so development is not inhibited.

KINDIJ: 10 year realty tax abatement should continue as is.

Should it be modified or abolished?

KENNEY: Answer above.

If you favor modification, what modifications should be made?

KENNEY: Answer above.

KINDIJ: It should also be modified - expanded to 20 years for all properties under \$250k

2. REAL ESTATE TAXATION

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How frequently should reassessments occur?

KENNEY: In order to avoid dramatic property tax increases like Philadelphians recently experienced after the most recent AVI, future reassessments should be done every two to three years. As Mayor, I will work with the Office of Property Assessment to ensure they are using accurate sales information, along with street-level data to make sure our system does not fall into disrepair again. We must also continue to support programs like LOOP, the Longtime Owner Occupant Program, of which I was a proud supporter and which has helped many Philadelphians stay in their homes.

KINDIJ: Reassessments should occur every year.

3. WAGE TAX

Should Philadelphia shift more of its revenue sourcing from wage and business taxes to real estate taxes?

KENNEY: Yes. Philadelphia's wage and business taxes are regressive and hamper our ability to attract businesses and create jobs. I fully support the plan circulated by the Job Growth Coalition headed by Paul Levy and others to shift away from wage and business taxes and increase revenue through a higher tax rate for commercial properties. This would lessen the tax burden on individuals and employers, while taxing static assets, like property, that can't leave the city.

As I said previously, I would also reevaluate all our current tax incentive programs to ensure that we're not wasting tax payer dollars on economic incentives that don't result in additional revenue for the City.

KINDIJ: Philadelphia should increase the minimum wage to \$15 per hour (**a higher minimum wage would increase the city's tax revenues**) by changing Philadelphia's BIRT code.

Option A: For-profit business entities that apply Philadelphia's \$15 minimum wage schedule will pay a lower business income tax.

Option B: For-profit business entities that do not apply the \$15 minimum wage schedule will pay a higher than current business income tax.

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I will create a 10-year tax-free zone (TFZ) program for new business entities that will bring jobs to Philadelphia (**an increase in city's tax revenues**). Their minimum requirement (e.g. 25+ employees) apply the \$15 minimum wage schedule, and pay an annual membership to the City of Philadelphia (**an increase in city's tax revenues**).

I will also expand the 10-year tax abatement to 20 years for all properties under \$250K, the program that will bring jobs to our underdeveloped and poor neighborhoods (**an increase in city's tax revenues**)

Many young citizens come from underprivileged families. Many of them have made mistakes in their lives and have received some type of permanent criminal record. Landing jobs for those young men and women has become a "mission impossible."

Therefore, I will create Philadelphia's Public Security Officer Agency (up to 10,000 jobs), the largest in the nation. It will contract a major US private security provider through PPP that will hire, train, and supervise qualified returning and underprivileged citizens and transform them into good and productive citizens. Their job will be to protect our citizens and keep our streets safer, secure, and cleaner (**an increase in city's tax revenues**)

At the beginning, wage and real estate taxes need to stay at the current tax rate. Business tax rate will decrease but only for those business entities that apply \$15 minimum wage schedule. We must make Philadelphia attractive to various businesses, and give them opportunity to make profits. In return, Philadelphia will be adding more jobs and more tax revenues. We have to think out of the box.

If you believe we should shift away from wage and business taxes to real estate taxes, how would you propose to do this?

KENNEY: See Above.

If you do not believe that such a shift should occur, why not?

KENNEY: N/A

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4. DELINQUENT TAXES

Should the City sell tax liens to private investors?

KENNEY: With nearly a third of our residents living in poverty, it's nearly impossible to collect all of the delinquent taxes due to the City. Our best option for increasing revenue through delinquent tax collection is to focus on real estate taxes. Any future tax lien sale should use New York City as a model, where the government conducts yearly sales of their most marketable liens. According to a 2013 report from the City Controller, the City can collect nearly \$100 million through the sales of investor-owned residential properties, along with delinquent commercial and industrial properties. A sale of these liens would allow us to wipe this debt from our books, and provide an immediate source of revenue that could be used, among other things, to improve our revenue collection system and assure this massive backlog of debt doesn't happen again.

KINDIJ: I strongly support to sell tax liens to private investors and collect delinquent taxes promptly.

If not, what steps would you take to ensure that the delinquency is addressed?

KENNEY: In addition to the lien sale, we must modernize our Revenue department, especially its tax collection methods. As Mayor, I will undertake a complete review of our tax collection system and determine where changes can be made to simplify tax forms and payment avenues. It should not be overly difficult for people to file their taxes.

5. PGW SALE

Do you believe that City Council should have conducted public hearings on the PGW controversy? Please explain your answer.

KENNEY: Yes. As a member of City Council, I had hearings on the subject nearly 15 years ago and supported the possible sale. However, in part because of the Nutter administration's refusal to discuss amending any part of the deal including discounted rates for senior citizens or wage protections for current PGW workers my fellow Councilmembers were unwilling to consider a hearing. I could have grandstanded on the issue, but I would

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have angered and embarrassed my colleagues. Now, if I'm elected, I'll have a significantly more positive relationship with Council than the Mayor's Office does currently, and we'll reduce the political dysfunction that plagues important conversations like the sale of PGW.

KINDIJ: The safety and financial future of Philadelphia can not be concentrated only in the hands of Darrell L. Clark and his political/financial patrons. City Council should have conducted public hearings on the PGW controversy. I strongly support the sale of PGW which will "infuse the utility with private capital, speed gas-main replacement, boost the city's pension fund, and trigger economic growth by putting a debt-ridden city asset into private hands".

What is your vision for the future of PGW?

KENNEY: While PGW has improved greatly over the past few years, we still have an aging gas pipeline infrastructure that is increasingly dangerous. We also have the opportunity to expand LNG production and possibly increase PGW's contribution to the City. As Mayor, I will work with City Council to develop a comprehensive plan for a public-private partnership that protects the current PGW workforce, but also seeks to more quickly replace our aging pipes and takes advantage of our prime location near the Marcellus Shale deposits to make Philadelphia an energy hub on the East coast.

6. PENSIONS

Do you believe that the City can "grow" its way out of this deficit— i.e. that prosperity in the City, as distinguished from tax hikes, will produce higher realty and business tax revenues so that the additional funds can be used to pay down the deficit OR that the City can somehow change its ways and pay down the deficit by better practices?

KENNEY: It is important to understand that this underfunded pension liability did not happen overnight. To fix it will require a concerted effort by my Administration to create new revenue by growing the overall City tax base; to negotiate fair contracts with our municipal unions; and to work with the Board of Pensions to ensure that we are making smart investments without losing any money or the opportunity to grow the Fund.

I will work with Governor Wolf and the legislature to amend the Uniformity Clause of the Pennsylvania Constitution so that we can finally fully reform

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Philadelphia's antiquated business tax system and place a greater emphasis on commercial property taxes as a revenue source. This will allow Philadelphia to be a more competitive economy for businesses to locate and operate, and allow us to grow our tax base and generate further revenue to pay into the Pension Fund.

I will negotiate contracts with our municipal unions that are both fair for workers and the City. As the son of a union firefighter I have a unique respect and perspective on the collective bargaining process. While treating workers with the dignity and respect that they deserve, I will negotiate contracts that take into account the general wellbeing of the Pension Fund, and ensure that current and future workers are paying enough to keep the Fund sustainable so that they can actually collect a pension in retirement.

Finally, I will make sure that the Fund is being managed effectively and we are not losing money through failed investments or poor contracting. Shortly after being sworn in as Mayor I will convene an independent Public Pension Funding Commission made up of private sector leaders to take a fresh look at how the City manages and engages others to manage the Pension Fund. This Commission will evaluate the performance of professional service providers and evaluate the availability of financially responsible local investment opportunities so that our pension fund dollars can work for Philadelphia's economy.

KINDIJ: I believe this great City can grow its way out of this deficit (please see my answers above 3.,4.,5.). I will also make sure that the city receives additional funds from PILOT (either voluntarily, or via statutory measure), mandatory contributions from Comcast and PPA (**an increase in city's revenues**).

If you do not believe that "growth" alone will suffice to address this issue, which do you favor: raising taxes, cutting spending or selling assets? Depending on your answer, specifically identify the taxes to be raised, the names of the programs that should be cut (please no generalities like eliminating "waste and abuse"), or the assets to be sold.

KENNEY: As I mentioned above, I will work with the Governor and legislative leaders to reform Philadelphia's business tax environment and place a greater emphasis on commercial property taxes. This, along with strategic partnerships between businesses, the Community College of

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Philadelphia, and the School District, will help create an environment where businesses will want to locate and operate in Philadelphia, as opposed to the current regressive tax structure in place now.

To gradually improve the pension plan's funding status, do you favor continuing the defined benefit plan for existing employees while instituting a defined contribution plan for more recently hired employees?

KENNEY: As Mayor I will negotiate contracts that are both fair for workers and fair for the City. As part of these negotiations we will develop a hybrid plan that will actually entice employees to join, instead of the current Plan 10 that has failed to gain voluntary membership by City employees. This and any other concession can only be gained by negotiating with our workers in good faith, and with mutual respect from all involved.

KINDIJ: To gradually improve the pension plan's funding status the following must be implemented: The retirement age for new city employees will have to increase. Their contribution into a pension fund and insurance will also have to increase. Health care costs and spending must stay within city government's control and not be transferred to labor unions. I will suspend DROP except for uniformed employees (police and firefighters).**(an increase in city's revenues)**

DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

7. CHANGING NEIGHBORHOODS

Other than providing real estate tax relief to long-time residents whose assessments have increased due to rising values in the neighborhood, do you believe that government should intervene regarding these neighborhood changes?

KENNEY: I am proud to have been one of the prime sponsors of the Longtime Owner Occupant Program that has helped many residents stay in their homes and avoid large tax increases. With that said, I do believe that more can be done. I believe that neighborhoods are best when there is a mix of residents with different backgrounds and ages. The newly graduated college student should be able to live next to the 80-year-old African-American woman who moved to Philadelphia in the 1960's and

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has lived through tremendous change in our City during her lifetime. I believe that government's role here should be as a facilitator of these arrangements with a mix of protections for longtime residents, and incentives for new residents. I also believe the City can leverage our vacant, non revenue-producing vacant land into affordable housing opportunities.

KINDIJ: I do not believe that government should intervene regarding neighborhood changes, however providing real estate tax relief to long-term residents whose assessments have increased due to rising values in the neighborhood should definitely remain until they sell their properties to new owners. They must be owner-occupied and not rental units.

If so, list the disruptions you would target and the remedies you would suggest.

KENNEY: The major disruptions that affect longtime residents are obviously rising property taxes for owners and rising rent for renters. As Mayor, I will work with City Council to extend the LOOP program for residents who face either large future tax increases due to reassessment or for residents who failed to apply for the program last year but qualified after AVI went into effect. I will also work with City Council to develop a program modeled on LOOP to help longtime renters who face higher rents due. Finally, I will work with the Land Bank to make sure that we are using our vacant and City-owned land to provide affordable housing opportunities for Philadelphia residents who are in need.

8. ZONING RELIEF THROUGH COUNCIL

Would you vote for (or sign) ordinances enabling developments contrary to the zoning code and which have not received a variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustment? If so, under what circumstances would you vote for (or sign) such ordinances?

KENNEY: During my time on City Council, I was happy to support the adoption of the new Zoning Code, which has improved the City's processes considerably. I believe the Code is a living document, and there will always need to be some exceptions to the rules. Most of these exceptions can be handled by the ZBA, but there will be times when a zoning change will be necessary through Council Ordinance. As a Councilmember-at-Large and a member of the Rules Committee, I participated in many hearings to discuss zoning changes that presented

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positive changes for neighborhoods, but may not have been approved by the ZBA. As opposed to District Councilmembers, I was able to view each zoning change impartially, and with a view of how the change would effect not only the surrounding area, but larger City as a whole. As Mayor I would take that same approach. I would not seek Council Ordinances for simple changes that could easily be handled by the ZBA, but when there is a larger project, that requires robust debate before a committee of City Council, and then by the body as a whole, I will make my decision to sign and support the legislation based on its impact on the neighborhood involved, and its impact on the City as a whole. I believe this approach will allow all interests to be considered fully.

KINDIJ: I will remove the City Council from the zoning process. This will reduce its' "pay-to-play" business practice.

9. CITY OWNED VACANT PROPERTIES

Will you vote to amend the ordinance by eliminating the Council ordinance provision? Explain your response.

KENNEY: I was happy to support the creation of the Land Bank, and I am excited for the progress the interim Board has made in the creation of their Strategic Plan. Before suggesting changes to the Land Bank Ordinance, I would like to work with the Board and City Council to determine the most effective procedures to dispose of and redevelop this land in a fair and equitable way. If the current processes cause unnecessary delays, than I will work with City Council to rectify that by ordinance.

KINDIJ: It has been proven that vacant properties in Philadelphia increase gun assaults and other crimes, cost \$21 million per year to maintain, owe the city more than \$70 million in delinquent taxes, and lower property values from 6% to 20%. Therefore, I will vote to amend the ordinance by eliminating the Council ordinance provision. This will simplify and expedite the sales process of city-owned vacant properties (**an increase in city's revenues**).

GOVERNMENT & ADMINISTRATION

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10. ETHICS: CREATING A PERMANENT INSPECTOR GENERAL

Are you willing to support for Bill 130001 calling for a ballot referendum to amend the City Charter to establish an independent Inspector General funded by taxpayer dollars who would have oversight over every city department?

KENNEY: I was happy to introduce and sponsor Bill 130001 while on City Council, and as Mayor I will advocate again for the passage of this Bill to place the office of the Inspector General in the City Charter. The work of the current I.G., Amy Kurland, has saved the City millions of dollars in former waste and abuse, and I would be happy to have her continue in this role in my administration.

KINDIJ: I will support for Bill 130001 calling for a ballot referendum to amend the City Charter to establish an independent Inspector General funded by taxpayers dollars who would provide oversight over every city department.

I will bring in the Sam Katz administration.

If elected Mayor, would you leave the current Executive Order in place and promptly fill the Inspector General's position?

KENNEY: Yes. Understanding that even with City Council approval, this change to the City Charter would not take effect until after being approved by the voters, I would sign an Executive Order to continue the current Inspector General office under the Mayor.

KINDIJ: I will leave the current Executive Order in place and promptly fill the Inspector General's position.

I will bring in the Sam Katz administration.

11. UNFAIR ELECTORIAL DISTRICTING

Would you vote to amend the City Charter in 2015 so that the next redistricting in 2020 will be conducted by an independent, non-partisan commission?

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KENNEY: As a member of City Council, I took part in two redistricting debates that were difficult and contentious. The process, however, is very important, specifically for District Councilmembers who have represented the interests of certain communities and areas for some time. The idea of an independent and nonpartisan commission for redistricting is worthy of further study as we approach the 2020 census and subsequent reapportionment.

KINDIJ: I would vote to amend the City Charter in 2015 so that the next redistricting in 2020 will be conducted by an independent, nonpartisan commission.

12. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Would you vote to amend the City Charter, eliminating the City Commissioners and adding the position of an election administrator that reports to the Mayor?

KENNEY: I believe the City Commissioners and their staff serve a very important function through their role as the conductors of Philadelphia's elections. There is value to having one appointed individual in this position, but people who hold elected office are oftentimes held to a higher standard by their constituents. As someone who had the honor to be run for elected office several times, I know that Philadelphia voters are knowledgeable about pertinent topics, and when an elected official is performing poorly, in most cases, they will make sure they do not get reelected. Given the arguments on both sides, I believe this issue is worthy of further study.

KINDIJ: I would vote to amend the City Charter, eliminating the City Commissioners and adding the position of an election administrator that reports to the mayor.

13. SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Would you vote to abolish the Sheriff's office, transferring to other City agencies its functions (Sheriff's sales, courtroom security and inmate transfer)?

KENNEY: I do not believe that the elimination of an office that is elected by the voters of Philadelphia is necessarily always the best way to improve government. The Sheriff's office must be updated, specifically when it

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comes to their operations and future investments in technology to make the office operate more effectively and efficiently. As Mayor, I will work with the Sheriff and his/her office to ensure that funds are fully accounted for, and that smart investments are being made to make their operations more open, transparent, and accessible for the public. Similar to the City Commissioners, as Mayor I will focus on working with the publicly elected officials to improve their operations before advocating for their elimination.

KINDIJ: I will vote to abolish the Sheriff's office, transferring to other City agencies its functions (Sheriff's Sales, courtroom security and inmate transfer).

14. ROLE IN NEIGHBORHOODS IN DEVELOPMENT AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE

What would you do to give neighborhoods more meaningful roles in decision-making and more effective engagement as partners in the city's goals and mission?

KENNEY: On City Council as a member of the Rules Committee dealing with numerous zoning matters, I have always considered the opinion of the local community impacted by the development to be vitally important. In a City as dense as Philadelphia, having a good relationship with you neighbors, both residential and commercial/industrial, is paramount to creating a high quality of life in every neighborhood. The new Zoning Code adopted by City Council has moved this process forward substantially by codifying the input of RCOs into the zoning process. The City Planning Commission has also done much community outreach as a part of their Philadelphia 2035 planning process. As Mayor, my goal will be to further increase the input and involvement of community organizations who are the grassroots of Philadelphia's political process. Your community groups will have access to my Administration, and I will work with your District and at-Large Councilmembers to make sure they are responsive to community concerns.

KINDIJ: I would empower community leaders to work directly with the city experts specialized in zoning, planning, economic development. etc. rather than with Councilpeople.

15. SCHOOLS

What is the dollar amount of the contribution that you believe the City should make in fiscal year 2016 – 2017, your first year in office, and how you would finance it. Explain your conclusion.

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KENNEY: The School District has not yet released their budget information for Fiscal Year 2016, other than to say that they expect to start their budget request with a deficit of \$80 million. With this lack of information, it is impossible to give an exact dollar amount of the City's contribution to the School District. It is clear however that more funds are necessary both from the Commonwealth and from the City of Philadelphia to create better educational outcomes for our school children. As Mayor, this process begins by working with Governor Wolf and legislators in Harrisburg to create a funding formula which takes into account Philadelphia's poverty level and the realities of educating children in an urban school district. I will also increase collaboration between City Departments and the School District, so that the City can replace or supplement services for which the District is paying. This money can then be reinvested directly into schools. Increasing school funding from the City will require a multipronged approach.

One revenue generator will be changing the land/improvement value of City properties so that the land value is a greater percentage of the total assessment. This will lead to increased revenue from commercial tax abated properties without raising taxes for the vast majority of citizens. I will also work with our nonprofit institutions, specifically our colleges and universities, to setup PILOTs and SILOTs so that they can leverage their money and expertise to help the School District education our children.

KINDIJ: I strongly believe the School District administration should go through some drastic administrative changes first before any further discussion on fiscal year 2016-2017 takes place. Its current leadership is corrupt and mismanaged. I strongly support the abolishment of SRC and believe the SDP board should be democratically elected. The Mayor's job is to act based on experts' advice. I already mentioned above from where the funds will come from. I also believe the current SDP administrative salaries are way to high for current economic conditions in Philadelphia.

Do you believe that any strings/conditions should be attached to the City's contributions to the School District budget and, if so, what are they?

KENNEY: Increased accountability on the expenditure of City funds is very important, and I was pleased to see that the City's Inspector General will now be conducting investigations for the School District on their funds.

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Specifically I would like the City and the School District to partner to create new oversight of the City's Charter Schools. The recent failure and closure of several Charter Schools has shown that the current model of oversight is greatly flawed, and with Charters taking a larger chunk of the School District's budget, it is imperative that this money be managed and correctly, and school administrators be held accountable for that management.

LIFESTYLE

16. HOUSING FIRST

If housing is readily available for homeless people, should they be permitted to live in public spaces?

KENNEY: Through the work of Project HOME and advocates like City Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell, Philadelphia has improved greatly in meeting the needs of our homeless population. By utilizing vacant and City-owned land, we have a real opportunity to provide affordable housing for our neediest populations, especially homeless Philadelphians. Treating mental health or medical issues that could be exacerbating homeless Philadelphians' situations is also paramount. As Mayor, I will work with the Department of Behavioral Health, along with our nonprofit partners like Project HOME to make sure that the needed services are reaching this population effectively, and we are not just housing someone without treating the other issues that have caused their homelessness.

KINDIJ: If housing is readily available for homeless people, they should not be permitted to live in public spaces.

Do you favor sidewalk ordinances to regulate aggressive panhandling and other antisocial behavior?

KENNEY: During my time on City Council, I passed multiple ordinances trying to counteract this type of behavior. Pedestrians shouldn't have to either fear for their safety or be accosted by panhandlers while walking on Philadelphia's sidewalks. With that said, I firmly believe that we can not fix these situations just through restrictive ordinances. People resort to this behavior because they believe they have no other place to turn to feed themselves and their families. We must make a concentrated

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attempt to create more jobs in this City for our population who may not have graduated from high school or college.

As Mayor, I will partner with the Chamber of Commerce and other business organizations to make sure that our Community College curriculum contains real skills that these employers need in their employees. I will also work with the School District to create community schools that will serve as the center of each community and provide social services and job training programs to adults in the evenings. Additionally, I will work with the state legislature to amend the Uniformity clause of the Pennsylvania Constitution so that we can reform our business tax system and foster a tax climate that will attract businesses to Philadelphia.

KINDIJ: Yes I do.

Members of the Coalition:

Bella Vista Neighbors Association • Center City Residents' Association • Central Roxborough Civic Association • East Falls Community Council • East Passyunk Crossing Civic Association • Fishtown Neighbors Association • Logan Square Neighborhood Association • Northern Liberties Neighbors Association • Overbrook Farms Club • Packer Park Civic Association • Passyunk Square Civic Association • Queen Village Neighbors Association • Society Hill Civic Association • South Broad Street Neighborhood Association • South of South Neighborhood Association • Washington Square West Civic Association • West Powelton/Saunders Park RCO • Woodland Terrace Homeowners Association