

## 2009 CANDIDATE SURVEY – Isaac Abraham, 33<sup>rd</sup> Council District, page one of two

What do you believe are the top priority park issues that need to be addressed in your district and citywide? **Open space generally, adequate funding for parks maintenance and recreation and securing funding for the Brooklyn Bridge Park, as well as making sure that any park space remains accessible to all.**

### Securing Adequate Funding / Maintenance for Parks

- a. Will you work towards securing long term funding for Parks? **Yes** No
- i. If so, would you consider exploring creative financial models such as Parks Improvement Districts (based on the BID model), tax increment financing (TIF), zoning benefits and public private partnerships to supplement maintenance and operating costs?
- b. Would you support dedicating revenue earned through park concessions to parks maintenance and operations? **Yes** No
- i. If so, would you also support revising the Major Concessions Rules to include all significant private uses on public property (including parks) to community/borough review? **Yes** No
- c. Will you support establishing the tracking of spending and staffing on a park by park basis? **Yes** No
- d. When a capital project is not fully funded will you support diversifying funding sources to ensure their completion? What would those sources be?  
**Yes** No **I would primarily look and capital sources committed to projects not yet ready**
- e. What specific actions would you take to ensure that every park in every neighborhood has properly working facilities such as ball-fields, educational facilities, restrooms, etc? **This is a mayoral issue but I would look at making sure that is the case in the 33<sup>rd</sup> district by working with the community boards and civics and other community organizations to monitor conditions. I would look at leverage my capital funding to supports these needs and work with the DPR and local groups to ensure the routine maintenance occurs.**
- i. Will you support a “fix it first” policy for funding capital projects, so that resources are allocated to existing projects in need of repair? **Yes** No
- f. Will you support adequate staffing and funding to ensure that new and existing parks stay in a “state of good repair”? **Yes** No
- i. What funding/programs would you use to increase the full-time parks maintenance staff?
- ii. What can be done to improve the baseline services, or maintenance of effort, in our parks to ensure that partnerships don't need to replace poor, existing services or neglected services such as bench and fountain repairs?
- iii. How would you fund the unique maintenance costs of waterfront parks (e.g. access, bulkheads, and piers)?  
**Above three are responsibility of the mayor and commission but I would use budget and oversight powers of the city council to help direct attention and resources. In terms of the entire city budget we talk but a small percent and I already have plans to effect savings in the budget, some of the savings can apply to parks needs.**
- g. Will you support park ratings by borough and community board in addition to the citywide level in the Mayor's Management Report? **Yes** No
- h. Will you support making the official Parks Department “property list” – that specifically delineates all 1,700 properties – available online? **Yes** No

### Protecting Parkland

- a. Will you support more laws that require public notification and input when a park will be used for non-park purposes, to afford parks the protection they need from development or use by other agencies? **Yes** No
- i. How would you require that professional sports organizations assist in maintaining and operating public parks near their facilities? **Oversight into their contracts (or in case of MSG, the tax abatement) and also general jawboning since they make big bucks.**
- ii.

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b. Will you work to strengthen parkland alienation regulation by requiring Environmental Impact Statements before parkland alienation bill is filed by municipality?

Yes No

i. How will you do this? **I will support the necessary state legislation and introduced a resolution in support of the state bill in the council**

c. Will you support mitigation for taking of parkland and ensure replacement of lost parkland for the community? Yes No

i. How will you do so? **That is already the law and I will certainly be part of the oversight to make it happen.**

d. How would you prevent “pay to play” situations from arising at public and amateur sports facilities? **It should not be and if necessary I would seek to pass a law and/ or include restriction as part of the city budget process**

e. Will you support legislation that requires regular NYPD reports to the City Council on crime in parks (i.e. Intro. 470)? Yes No

f. Will you work towards making parkland part of the city’s CompStat system? Yes No

**Expanding Park Use**

a. Will you work toward creating, with significant community involvement, a comprehensive citywide master plan for parks and open spaces that will guide the overall acquisition, restoration, improvement, and maintenance of parks, natural areas, playgrounds and athletic facilities in the five boroughs? Yes No

i. What is your vision for some of the new parks? **Facilities conceived and plans that reflect the visions of each community and any distinct needs.**

ii. How would you develop it? *Consulting the community; working through community groups. Insisting on an open and inclusive process.*

b. Will you support extending Resolution No. 1033 which calls for the continued protection of community gardens and the rights of the community and gardeners? Yes No

c. What specific actions would you take to revitalize the recreational and amateur sports programs that have been decreased by this year’s budget cuts? **As I stated above I already have plans to effect savings in the budget, some of the savings can apply to parks needs.**

d. What specific actions would you take to enable a much higher level of collaboration among the Parks Dept. and other city agencies on issues such as stormwater management, greenways, and economic development projects? **This is a mayoral pursuit but I would certainly raise the question in the context of oversight and budget hearing**

e. How will you ensure that public spaces created as amenities/mitigation for large scale economic development projects such as Atlantic Yards, Penn Yards, and Manhattanville are truly open to the public? **Mapping as parkland makes sense but the ULURP process should have covered these and include such an opportunity.**

i. Do you support mapping such public spaces as parkland? Yes No

**National and Regional Parks**

a. How will you support the creation of planned new regional waterfront parks like Fresh Kills, Hudson River Park, Governors Island and Brooklyn Bridge Park? **Federal and state assistance as well as looking to budget appropriately. Also concessions can come into play but only following community review that follow ULURP**

b. What are your plans to ensure that all citizens have equal access to these regional facilities? **The only issue should be access to transit. Anything more and I lead a demonstration especially in Brooklyn!**

c. What steps would you take to promote the use of and access to our city’s national parks at Gateway National Recreation Area and the other National Parks of NY Harbor? **The federal officials – Congress and Senators – need to step forward here but I will be part of the voices and a loud one at that and will similarly press City Hall.**