



# **FEET FIRST PHILLY**

**James Deleon**

**Question #1:** When you replace car trips with walking, you help reduce carbon emissions.

**In the past week, where did you walk to and why?**

I just had a medical procedure, so I couldn't walk anywhere the past week.

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**Question #2:** The public discussion surrounding the 2023 municipal elections has mostly addressed the surging gun violence in Philadelphia.

**Do you believe quality of life issues like broken and blocked sidewalks, abandoned cars, and lack of accessibility to greenspace are connected to the violence? Will your administration's approach to gun violence incorporate a focus on safe streets and sidewalks?**

Yes I do and addressing those issues are a major concern. We will initiate Community Court to address these issues.

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**Question #3:** Hit-and-runs have reached a crisis in Philadelphia. In 2022, hit-and-run fatalities rose to a record 31, more than triple the count in 2019.

**How will you address this epidemic in the short and long term?**

**James DeLeon** - In the short term, I would prosecute all caught hit & run drivers to the fullest extent of the law and have the local news cover their prosecution. In the long term, I would set up a amber alert type of system, in which hit & runs are publicized to the community in real time so as to have a better opportunity to catch the perpetrators.

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**Question #4:** Philadelphia first committed to "Vision Zero," a strategy to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries, in 2017. The premise of the city's pledge is that traffic deaths are not "accidents," but policy failures. However, 120 Philadelphians died in traffic incidents in 2022, twice the 2022 target set by the city's Vision Zero Action Plan 2025.

**What went wrong, and what will you do differently as Mayor?**

80% of Philadelphia Traffic deaths occurred on just 12% of its city streets. As Mayor, I would reduce speeds on problematic streets, make sure that public transportation is functioning properly on those streets, have functional bike lanes on those streets, & allow for walking safety on those streets.

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**Question #5:** In May 2017, City Council passed a bill amending City law on sidewalk closures (Chapter 11-600 of The Philadelphia Code). Now, those who seek a Streets Department permit to close a sidewalk or even a portion of a sidewalk must submit an analysis regarding the feasibility of providing a protected walkway. But this reform only matters if those responsible for sidewalk closures bother applying for a permit. Unpermitted sidewalk closures persist across the city, endangering pedestrians and making our sidewalks inaccessible to people who are wheelchair-bound or push strollers.

**What went wrong, and what will you do to fix it?**

As Mayor, I would designate L&I to have specific Inspectors, check all sidewalk closures for necessary permits and fine all those that don't. I will make all those found in violation to obtain the necessary permit and fix the sidewalk legally.

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**Question #6:** The Streets Department is responsible for paving and maintaining roadways, but the City leaves sidewalk maintenance to property owners – many of whom cannot afford to make sidewalk repairs on their own. Philadelphia has over 230 miles of sidewalks in poor condition, which decreases the quality of life and makes walking and rolling difficult.

**What forms of mobility does the Streets Department exist to serve? Do you support using the Streets Department budget to develop a plan, or a funding strategy, to repair and replace sidewalks?**

The liability issues would have to be addressed, as to a municipality doing work on private property. This is an issue that I as Mayor would discuss with City Council.

I would tell Council that we must pass legislation that will allow me to have The Streets Department develop a plan to budget the repairs and replacement of some private sidewalks that are in disrepair.

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**Question #7:** Car ownership rates are skyrocketing in Philadelphia, seeing its largest increase in low-income households. Car ownership is a huge burden on household costs and on public space. Because much of the city was built in a time before cars, there is limited public space for personal car storage, leading to illegally parked cars on sidewalks and crosswalks.

**Will your administration promote mode shift and reduce reliance on personal car ownership? How will your administration advance this policy goal?**

Yes. Improvement in Public Transportation and bicycle safety will lead to less reliance on personal car ownership.

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**Question #8:** Public parking management and enforcement of parking rules in Philadelphia are entrusted to the Philadelphia Parking Authority, a State agency that operates outside the control of City government. However, this does not mean that the City has no role to play in holding the PPA accountable for its decisions, lobbying Harrisburg for more funding, or taking action on its own to supplement activities that the PPA is not but perhaps should be doing.

**Are you satisfied with the PPA's stewardship of public space and enforcement? What is your Administration's strategy for the City to proactively address illegal parking, abandoned cars, and other parking management concerns?**

No, I'm not. I would lobby The Legislation in Harrisburg to allow The PPA to proactively tow abandoned cars, & ticket illegal parking & boot & tow cars that are illegally on our streets, more aggressively.

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**Question #9:** After nearly a decade of planning, two rounds of community input, and a great deal of controversy, in the spring of 2022 the City Council authorized a "hybrid redesign" of Washington Avenue, intended to protect the safety of cyclists and pedestrians on an important, but notoriously deadly thoroughfare. However, the portion of Washington Avenue west of Broad Street was left alone, in deference to councilmanic prerogative.

**What went wrong with the Washington Avenue Complete Streets project? How will your administration govern differently to ensure Complete Streets projects across all council districts are successful?**

My administration will negotiate with the Council Person and the constituents in hi/her district, as to why the complete streets project is important and we will reach a amicable solution, and move this project forward.