

AARP New York–Gotham Polling & Analytics Poll: Mamdani Leads in NYC Mayoral Race

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, August 22, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Majority Of Voters Say City Is Headed in the Wrong Direction, Affordability, Housing, and Safety Top Concerns

Poll Shows Mamdani Maintains a Commanding Lead Across Most Demographics and in Every “Drop-Out” Scenario, But Older Undecided Voters Could Emerge as Key Swing Bloc

Assembly Member Zohran Mamdani leads the field in the race for New York City mayor, according to a new poll of registered voters conducted by [AARP](#) New York and [Gotham Polling & Analytics](#). In the initial ballot test, Mamdani received 41.8% support, followed by former Governor Andrew Cuomo (23.4%), Guardian Angels founder Curtis Sliwa (16.5%), Mayor Eric Adams (8.8%), and other candidates (1.6%), with 7.9% undecided.

According to the poll, Mamdani secures just over half of Democrats (51.6%), while Cuomo captures nearly a quarter (24%). The rest of the field remains in single digits. Among Republicans, Sliwa gets over half the vote, with Cuomo and Adams splitting much of the remainder.

The poll also explored a unique set of “drop-out” scenarios to assess how the race would shift if one or more candidates were to exit. In every scenario tested, Mamdani maintains a commanding lead over the remaining contenders. Notable shifts included:

- If Cuomo drops: Mamdani rises to 48.4%, leading Sliwa by 27.6 points.
- If Adams drops: Mamdani leads Cuomo by 14.0 points (42.6% to 28.6%).
- If Sliwa drops: Mamdani leads Cuomo by 16.8 points (45.1% to 28.3%).
- Head-to-head with Sliwa (Cuomo, Adams, Walden drop): Mamdani leads by 22.9 points (44.3% to 21.4%).
- Head-to-head with Adams (Cuomo, Sliwa, Walden drop): Mamdani leads by 24.4 points (44.4% to 20.0%).

□ Head-to-head with Cuomo (Adams, Sliwa, Walden drop): Mamdani leads by 11.0 points (42.0% to 31.0%).

Undecided Voters

In a head-to-head matchup between Mamdani and Cuomo, 27% of voters remain undecided. This bloc is mainly made up of older New Yorkers split between Democrats and Republicans, making it a pivotal group that could tip the balance of the race.

In this matchup — with Mayor Eric Adams, Curtis Sliwa, and Jim Walden removed from the ballot — Cuomo attracts the most support from independents. The undecided voters are overwhelmingly older: just 5% are ages 18 to 34, and 18% are 35 to 49, while nearly eight in ten are over 50 — 31% are between 50 and 64, and 46% are 65 or older. Partisan affiliation is also split, with nearly half of undecideds (49%) identifying as Democrats and about one-third (33%) as Republicans, while the remainder are non-partisan (13%) or affiliated with another party (5%).

City Direction & Future Outlook

Voters express significant dissatisfaction with New York City's current trajectory. Only 9.2% say the city is headed in the "right direction," while a majority — 52.7% — believe it is going in the "wrong direction". Another 35.8% offered mixed views, and 2.2% had no opinion. Looking ahead, 30.6% are "very optimistic" that with the right leadership, the city's future can improve, and 28.6% are "somewhat optimistic." Meanwhile, 21.0% are "somewhat pessimistic" and 7.4% are "very pessimistic" about the city's prospects. A further 12.3% remain unsure.

Consistent with past polls, the cost of living dominates voter concerns across every income bracket. Affordability (61.3%) stands out as the top issue citywide, followed closely by public safety (53.9%) and housing availability (38.9%). Voters also raised concerns tied directly to cost pressures, including education expenses, transit affordability, and healthcare costs. Taken together, these findings underscore that financial strain is the defining issue shaping voter sentiment in the 2025 mayoral race.

Demographic Breakdown of Support

The poll also reveals important differences in candidate support across demographic groups. Mamdani leads across nearly all racial and ethnic categories, with particularly strong backing among Black (48%), Hispanic (45%), and East or South Asian (48%) voters. He also holds a plurality among White non-Hispanic voters (44%). Cuomo performs best among Jewish voters, earning 38% compared to Mamdani's 22%. Sliwa's strongest support comes from Hispanic (20%) and White non-Hispanic (21%) voters, while Adams garners modest support among Black voters (13%).

"New Yorkers are telling the candidates loud and clear — show us your plan to make the city

livable and affordable, and you'll earn our vote," said Beth Finkel, AARP New York State Director. "Older voters especially, who turn out at the highest rates, want real solutions to help them stay in the homes and communities they built and make great."

"Mamdani sits on a hard floor around forty percent but likely to have a firm ceiling below a majority - in a split field that's enough to stay ahead. Cuomo has the best path of the challengers, but even in a hypothetical one-on-one in an election that often favors lower-turnout, older electorates, he still trails by double digits. The opening for a comeback is the sizeable uncommitted bloc in the consolidation tests - roughly 11% to 35% depending on who drops - which means a disciplined persuasion campaign could still make this a race," said Stephen Graves, President, Gotham Polling & Analytics.

Candidate Favorability

The poll reveals a range of public sentiment toward the leading candidates:

□ Zohran Mamdani is viewed very favorably by 36.0% and somewhat favorably by 11.2%, while 5.4% view him somewhat unfavorably and 42.3% very unfavorably; 5.2% are neutral.

□ Andrew Cuomo holds a relatively balanced profile, with 19.0% very favorable and 19.3% somewhat favorable, compared to 12.4% somewhat unfavorable and 39.1% very unfavorable; 10.2% remain neutral.

□ Curtis Sliwa garners 19.5% very favorable and 11.8% somewhat favorable ratings, while 15.2% are somewhat unfavorable and 36.7% very unfavorable; 16.7% are neutral.

□ Eric Adams faces a challenging image, with just 8.3% very favorable and 16.6% somewhat favorable, compared to 13.4% somewhat unfavorable and 49.9% very unfavorable; 11.9% are neutral.

□ Jim Walden is largely unknown to the electorate, with 60.9% neutral. He has 3.2% very favorable and 5.3% somewhat favorable ratings, while 10.2% are somewhat unfavorable and 20.4% very unfavorable.

This Gotham Polling & Analytics Poll, sponsored by AARP New York, was fielded August 11, 2025 among 1,376 likely voters in New York City. Respondents were invited by SMS text to complete a self-administered web survey (English only). The margin of error for this survey is +/-3.2 percentage points. The full methodology report and annotated questionnaire is available here: [AARP NYC Mayoral Poll 2025](#).

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