

Adams Ends Re-election Bid as Mamdani Rises With Support From Young Voters

By Sarah Grimsted

Mayor Eric Adams has ended his bid for re-election, a decision that immediately reshaped New York City's mayoral race, which Democratic socialist Zohran Mamdani is leading heading into the campaign's final stretch.

Adams said he was stepping aside after struggling to raise funds and facing mounting speculation about his future. He defended his record on housing, crime, and education in a nine-minute video posted on X. But his time in office has been overshadowed by criminal charges and corruption allegations.

"His political actions and blatant corruption were a disgrace to the city of New York," said Vic Verbalaitis, 25, a journalist from Bushwick. Verbalaitis is disillusioned with Adams's leadership. During his last term, federal prosecutors charged him in a five-count indictment with conspiracy, wire fraud, bribery and soliciting illegal campaign contributions from foreign nationals.

Ahead of Adams' withdrawal, rumors circulated that he was leaving the race to work for the Trump administration. The goal was to consolidate votes for former governor Andrew Cuomo. Cuomo, who was beaten in the primary by Mamdani, is running as an independent in the general election. He trails Mamdani by a large margin, according to the most recent polls.

“We know he’s [Adams] is basically Trump’s slackey,” said Samuel Land, 30, an East Village acupuncturist.

What Land and Verbalaitis shared, besides a distaste for Adams, was a firm belief in Mamdani. A Democratic socialist, Mamdani hopes to transition from Queens assemblyman to being Mayor to 8.4 million residents in New York.

“He’s a visionary, a great leader, and has wonderful policies,” said Verbalaitis. Land and Verbalaitis looked forward to his campaign promises to make the city affordable, install fast and free buses, create city owned grocery stores, and tax the rich. “He gives me hope for a New York I could actually believe in,” said Land.

According to the latest polls from the New York Times, Mamdani is up 47% compared to Cuomo and Republican candidate Curtis Sliwa. Compared to Mamdani, Adams was only polling 8.5%. Part of Mamdani’s success has been because of his support from young voters. Of those who voted early in the 2025 New York City primary election, about 40% were under the age of 40, according to data from the NYC Board of Elections.

New York City residents will find out on Nov. 4 if the backing of young voters was enough to carry Mamdani through the election.

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