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Running for Ward 12 City Council

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2025 City Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you for filling out our 2025 City Candidate Questionnaire. As a 501(C)3 organization, Community Power will not be making endorsements. The purpose of this questionnaire is to educate Minneapolis residents on the positions of candidates seeking the City offices that will shape the future of energy related to access, equity, resilience, decision-making/ownership and affordability.

Connecting to On-the-Ground Realities of Climate Change and City-level Action

1. Briefly share your understanding of climate change and how that guides what you believe Minneapolis must do to mitigate and adapt to it.¹

We declared a Climate emergency in the City of Minneapolis in 2019.

Minneapolis residents deserve a climate champion that will fight for clean air, energy, and water for generations to come. Local governments must lead the way and work hand-in-hand with state and federal leaders to achieve strong climate resilience goals.

The harmful effects of climate change have a devastating impact on Black, Brown, Indigenous, and working-class people, and our voices must be at the center of our work. We can have a City that invests in a strong walk, bike, and transit infrastructure; pushes for policies that will get us to net neutral carbon emissions; increase renewable energy resources; and delivers an equitable green economy.

In my first term, I have championed policies that fight climate change, improve air quality, and prioritize the future of our planet. As your Ward 12 council member I have:

- Bolstered transportation access by making Minneapolis a partner in the Transit Assistance Program (TAP), which will help make public transit more affordable.
- Prioritized investments in walking, biking, and transit infrastructure, giving residents more options for getting around town.
- Increased access to electric vehicle charging stations and electric vehicle carshare.

¹ See City's 100% renewables resolution which calls for achieving 100% renewable electricity for all Minneapolis energy users by 2030, and 100% renewable energy for all sectors (electricity, heating, transportation, industry) by 2050.

- Preserved and invested in our local green spaces and natural systems.
- Passed an ordinance permitting planting of edible plants and trees on boulevards.

If re-elected, I will:

- Continue working to improve the Green Cost Share Program so more residents can take collective action to prevent climate change. Residents will receive matching funds for energy efficiency, solar, pollution reduction, and environmental projects.
- Reduce pollution by investing in tree canopies, home and small business energy efficiency programs, and solar gardens.
- Continue supporting the Peoples' Climate and Equity Plan, which means guarantee affordable and carbon-free buildings for all of Minneapolis by 2030, reducing the racial wealth gap by creating jobs in the growing green economy, working to ensure every person has a safe, healthy and climate-resilient neighborhood connected by accessible and carbon-free transportation, and enacting a City dedicated fund to ensure bold climate justice.

2. **Energy Efficiency:** The city has fallen far short from reaching its goal of 75% of households participation in energy efficiency retrofits.² What would you do once in office to advance access to energy efficiency, particularly for those who bear a higher energy cost burden or face access barriers to existing programs (e.g. renters, low & moderate income, and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color residents)? Please describe the particular policies/initiatives you would expand, continue, and/or create.

The harmful effects of climate change have a devastating impact on Black, Brown, Indigenous, and working-class people, and our voices must be at the center of our work. We can have a City that invests in a strong walk, bike, and transit infrastructure; pushes for policies that will get us to net neutral carbon emissions; increase renewable energy resources; and delivers an equitable green economy.

In my first term, I have championed policies that fight climate change, improve air quality, and prioritize the future of our planet. Ward 12 is a very diverse multiracial and intergenerational community of neighborhoods, home to many young families and seniors, renters and homeowners alike. The costs of having an energy-inefficient home have higher negative financial impacts disproportionately on lower-income homes, BIPOC residents, and renters in our city. Minneapolis is a majority renter city, meaning most people have a home that is not owned by them with a split incentive for energy efficiency because they take on utility costs but the landlord makes the decision on weatherizing the property. If re-elected, I will continue working to improve the Green Cost Share Program so more residents can take collective action to prevent climate change. Residents will receive matching funds for energy efficiency, solar, pollution reduction, and environmental projects.

The biggest and best thing we can do at the local level to address climate change is to reduce emissions and reliance/usage of fossil fuels through strong energy efficiency measures. I will work in collaboration with our Ward 12 neighbors to start addressing the problem by reducing the size of it.

² See City's [Climate Action Plan from 2013](#). The City [met its third shorter-term goal of 100% renewable electricity](#) for city operations by 2023.
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Three out of four housing units in the City of Minneapolis lack adequate insulation— requiring much more energy than necessary to keep people warm in the Winter, and cool in the Summer, and as a result, are causing utility bills to be higher.

We need more aggressive efforts to weatherize and insulate homes and buildings in our City. We did it with airport noise mitigation, effectively doing large-scale weatherization efforts in homes, and we can do it again starting with our green zones and ensuring that buildings where renters live are not left out.

If re-elected I will continue to pursue programs that weatherize and insulate homes block by block in the City of Minneapolis. The City of Minneapolis' noise mitigation program has given homes new windows, doors, and insulation at no cost— essentially weatherizing homes since 1992. This is a model we can use in the City of Minneapolis. We can help scale a program specifically with the goal of energy efficiency. These efforts should be targeted at low-income homeowners, communities in green zones, and renters who are cost-burdened.

3. **Local Clean Energy:** The city of Minneapolis has a goal for 30% of its electricity to be sourced from local distributed solar by 2030.³ However, our electric utility, Xcel Energy, has been in the news multiple times over the years for delaying local clean energy projects or outright blocking them by excessive interconnection fees. What changes, if any, would you like to see to enable better access to the electric grid for communities, and how would you wield the City's authority to bring those changes about?

I would like to see the City of Minneapolis work towards supporting and incentivizing community solar programming. I do not think we should rely on Xcel Energy for solar and we should have community solar options throughout neighborhoods not only for individuals to benefit, but for whole blocks to power their homes. I would like for the council to study how we can do this and compare models at other municipalities. Additionally, we should leverage our relationship with Xcel to permit more rooftop solar throughout the city.

4. **Trash Incineration/ Zero Waste:** In 2024, the city passed an ambitious landmark resolution calling upon the county to shut down the HERC incinerator downtown by 2028.⁴ How would you expand repair, reuse, recycling, composting rates and other zero waste economy efforts in Minneapolis or at the intergovernmental level so we can be on track to meet that goal?

It is high time that at the City of Minneapolis, we review and rethink waste management in Minneapolis. Currently, we are burning 61.81% of our waste, recycling 19.05%, and only composting 16.18% of our waste. This is not adequate enough to close the garbage incinerator and move towards a zero-waste future.

I want to make a legislative directive to study the way waste management is done in our city, learn where our shortfalls are, and get recommendations to reduce our waste and get to zero waste. I also see the ways in which recycling and composting programs are not reaching enough of our residents, specifically renters, working people, and BIPOC community members. We need to chart a path forward that scales these programs up and equitability reaches and educated people in our City.

³ See the Clean Energy Partnership's [2023 annual report as this is theme 2](#) for the Minneapolis Clean Energy Partnership

⁴ Hennepin County, who owns the HERC, has set a closure date for the HERC that ranges from 2028-2040.

I have spoken with Hennepin County Commissioners on how we can get to a place of closing the HERC incinerator and am determined to be a partner for environmental justice advocates and coalitions at the City to help achieve it.

I am interested in how we can reduce the amount of waste that residents create as a key step to closing the HERC. Over 40% of food consumption in the U.S. is wasted. We can dramatically reduce this number if we built out a comprehensive organics composting program for residents to participate in.

Polluters and polluting projects need to be held accountable in our City and as Council Members, it is our job to call environmental injustice for what it is even if it is not convenient. The City of Minneapolis needs to build strong coordinated efforts between the County and State government to close down the HERC garbage incinerator that has been polluting our community for far too long.

Tools for a Just Transition

4. **Funding to Meet the Scale of the Challenge:** At the urging of community advisory bodies, the City of Minneapolis in 2017 increased the utility franchise fees by 0.5%, which amounts to approximately \$2.5 million per year, to create resources for the specific purpose of funding local energy solutions that would equitably lower utility bills. In 2023, the Minneapolis City Council voted to raise an additional \$10 million for 2024, and annually going forward, explicitly to meet the updated Climate Equity Plan goals. Currently, these funds are not structurally ear-marked, and there is no scale-up plan for funds beyond this. An inaugural 2-year advisory committee called the Climate Legacy Roundtable (CLR) made up of EVAC, CEAC, and Green Zones committee members along with additional community members launched in early 2025. It is not yet clear what specific level of input and co-governance this community advisory body will have.
- In your opinion, what amount of annual funding does the City need to implement its goals in time? Please use *specific numbers* (we understand they are estimates/ballparks!).

\$10 Million is a good start but it's not enough to scale the amount of work we must focus into on weatherization of all homes and then clean energy conversion plus community education. We need to move towards \$20 Million a year in the short term and in addressing climate change we must be bold in our goals and we should aim to reach \$100 Million until we get to full clean energy city wide. This is what experts are advocating: we will need to meet our goals in time— we should consider other revenues outside of city funding, we should look at grants, and leverage private support as well.

- Should these funds be placed in a dedicated fund or in the general fund? Why or why not?

We need to dedicate new funds into climate action and specifically energy efficiency programming. We can't have these limited dollars be spent elsewhere when we have the clock running on the climate crisis. We need to work on energy efficiency robustly to reduce costs on utility bills and make the switch to clean energy smoother and swifter.

- How should Minneapolis residents be involved in governance of the money raised (either through CLR and/or beyond) and how much procedural weight should that input carry?

Minneapolis residents should always have a say and input, through a public process, in the long term financial trajectory of our city.

The inaugural 2-year Climate Legacy Roundtable (CLR) advisory committee is already composed of civilian voices and residents from across the city, especially from the Northside and Southside - because it is made up of EVAC, CEAC, and Green Zones committee members and other community leaders. I believe this special advisory committee should be looped in and briefed on important updates related to utility franchise fees, and how that funding is being apportioned or used and spent. I believe these civilian experts and community leaders should be part of providing input and realizing co-governance every step of the way.

It is important to move and work in partnership with constituents, that is why I am a leader who will govern alongside our neighbors. I have learned first hand the amount of passion and dedication the residents of the 12th Ward have, and their willingness to not only ask for change, but be a part of it. As the Council Member for Ward 12, I have not just championed our ward's values, but put them into action. I have a strong record of public service and advocacy. I've built a reputation of rolling up my sleeves and working directly with you and our neighbors. I'm excited to keep bringing your concerns to City Hall, and building the city we deserve block by block and policy by policy.

5. **Heating & Cooling Systems:** There are growing local and national examples of “district heating” systems that use existing water pipe systems or ground-source heating to heat and cool buildings.⁵⁻⁶ Some city governments have launched city-owned district energy systems to enable a community-wide transition from fossil fuels to renewables. What role would you like to see district heating playing, if any, in a strategy towards ending reliance on fossil fuels for heating and cooling?

I am excited to see the growing interest and popularity of district heating systems, with some examples in St. Paul and organizations like Cooperative Energy Futures exploring sites in the Northside and Southside of Minneapolis. I would like to continue to see the expansion of technologies such as district geothermal networks and cooperatively owned solar gardens here in the 12th Ward, and the retrofitting of homes in neighborhoods across the ward.

In the near future, I am interested in exploring how the city of Minneapolis can launch city-owned district energy systems at places like city owned facilities, school buildings, public libraries, parks buildings, grocery stores, apartment buildings, and other places where we can have the capacity to host a district heating setup with infrastructure.

⁵ Examples nationally: Framingham, Massachusetts is piloted networked geothermal heating systems.

⁶ Examples locally: Towerside Development on the East Bank; District Heating in Minneapolis downtown; EcoDistrict in St. Paul.

District heating can be the future of municipal energy production and cost savings if we have the political will to expand the infrastructure to include hyper-local grids. Not only does this contribute to energy resilience, but it also allows for us to rapidly transition away from our reliance on gas and electricity from fossil fuels to heat the buildings where we live, work, and play.

6. Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Minneapolis Clean Energy Partnership: In 2013, the City discussed a potential municipalization of the gas and electric utilities as a way to reach the City's ambitious Climate Action Plan goals more quickly, equitably and affordably. Instead, in 2014, the city created the "Minneapolis Clean Energy Partnership" to allow the utilities time to demonstrate good faith on their promise to be good partners with the City. This whole process coincided with the expiration of the City's 20-year franchise agreements with both Centerpoint & Xcel, which got renegotiated in 2014 and shortened from 20 years to 10 years. These agreements expired and were renegotiated again in 2024,⁷ offering a pivotal moment for reflection on the effectiveness of this first-in-the-nation Partnership:

- For this new flexible agreement (2025-2034), what criteria do you believe the City should use to measure whether the Minneapolis Clean Energy Partnership has been effective in achieving the City's goals?

We declared a Climate emergency in the City of Minneapolis in 2019.

I'm fired up and ready to be a fierce advocate for the needs of our communities when our franchise agreement is up with energy utilities companies like Centerpoint and Xcel.

Alongside, holding corporations and industry accountable for helping meet emission reduction and efficiency goals and having them literally pay when they continue to pollute. I will continue to be a Council Member who will be a strong advocate for our community when our franchise agreement is up with utilities and get them to pay their fair share for a dedicated climate action fund and ensure they are doing, even more, to reach out to climate goals, and even consider a path towards municipalization.

As a City Council Member, I have the legislative authority to shape policy around what is required of staff implementation of the Climate and Equity Plan the City of Minneapolis will soon adopt. It is of utmost importance that we show the public that with a large bold plan of this scale— that we develop clear metrics and a timeline to determine how we will meet our goals.

- How frequently would you like the City to evaluate the progress towards its goals under the new flexible-duration agreement? (e.g. once at the end, annually, at the midpoint, etc).

I think that the City should regularly evaluate progress towards its goals under this flexible duration agreement, and a frequency that makes sense on the timescale that we are operating under is annually - once a year. This will allow for the City to take action or change course if evaluations are showing that there is little or no progress towards our goals, and act accordingly.

⁷ City [website](#) with comprehensive information on the new agreements.

- If the utilities were to fail again in their obligations to the City, what actions would you see the City take to protect the interests of its constituents?

I take these obligations very seriously. If the energy utilities continuously fail in their obligations to the city, and do not uphold their end of the bargain, I would consider exploring a path towards municipalization and requesting the city conduct a study on what that would potentially look like.

Our City in Context

- 7. Minneapolis Priorities for State Level Rules, Regulations -** The city has authority to advocate on behalf of residents' interests to influence not only state level policy, but also specific regulation and rules governing the monopoly utilities that operate in Minneapolis communities. What top priorities on energy would you work to include in your intergovernmental affairs agenda to the Public Utilities Commission and/or the state Legislature?

We need to act boldly and think creatively. I would like to see a local Green New Deal created and implemented that focuses heavily on educating and empowering communities of color, working communities, and renters into a movement for climate resilience.

As chair of the Intergovernmental Relations committee on the City Council, I advocate on behalf of Minneapolis residents when engaging with our counterparts on the Park Board, at the School Board, in the Legislature, and at Hennepin County - even Congress.

I want to see a world where who we get our energy from here in the City of Minneapolis is not beholden to a monopoly or a duopoly, where neighbors are able to tap into hyper local climate resilient energy grids through district geothermal.

I would like to see an amortization bill pass which would allow for municipalities like Minneapolis to begin to phase out polluters that have been grandfathered into residential neighborhoods

I will also advocate strongly at the State Legislature and Public Utilities Commission for more solar projects to come online, especially rooftop solar gardens and more cooperatively owned energy, as well as revisiting outdated line extension allowances.

- 8. Sources of Where Our Electricity Comes From -** While the City can govern its own local energy goals, energy from the larger electric power grid will continue to be produced to supplement the energy produced locally in the city limits. Minneapolis residents have paid and will pay for the cost of the infrastructure and the risks/benefits of it all for decades. Every energy technology comes with a unique set of features, hazards, and vested interests. How would you, if given the opportunity, engage with the following energy technologies in order to meet the city's demand for electricity? (E.g. increased/advocated for, banned, phased out, continued at current levels, etc).

- Coal
- Wind
- Nuclear
- Fracked gas
- Solar
- Green hydrogen
- Carbon capture & sequestration
- Nuclear
- Other forms of hydrogen (grey, blue, yellow, etc).
- Trash burning

As a Council-member who represents a very interconnected multi-racial, multigenerational community here in ward 12, I will always advocate for the health and safety of my neighbors.

I will advocate strongly for the accelerated expansion of renewable sources of energy across the City of Minneapolis, including: solar, wind, green hydrogen, carbon capture, carbon sequestration, as sources of energy that are the least harmful to our residents.

I would like to see coal, fracked gas, and trash burning be phased out as we realize a just transition towards clean energy to realize our 2030 climate goals.

I am in favor of implementing a clear plan and timeline that will phase out the HERC incinerator as quickly as possible, as we rapidly transition to other sources of electricity generation here in Minneapolis.

If re-elected my office will continue supporting the Peoples' Climate and Equity Plan:

- Guaranteeing affordable and carbon-free buildings for all of Minneapolis by 2030.
- Reducing the racial wealth gap by creating jobs in the growing green economy.
- Working to ensure every person has a safe, healthy and climate-resilient neighborhood connected by accessible and carbon-free transportation.
- Enacting a City dedicated fund to ensure bold climate justice.

One of my top policy priorities remains building a just and equitable climate-resilient city. I've made clear my steadfast support of the Minneapolis People's Climate and Equity Plan since the beginning of my first campaign.

I think there are even more ways we can look into increasing funding in our climate fund! I am excited to move forward on actions that will increase weatherization in our city, increase clean energy options, and make investments in transit, bike, and walk infrastructure.

9. Nuclear & Minneapolis Drinking Water - Xcel Energy's nuclear power plant at Monticello is about 30 miles up the Mississippi river from the city of Minneapolis's main drinking water intake. In recent years, spent fuel storage casks at Monticello have been leaking tritium which has moved through the water table to the river. What line of action would you pursue to protect the City's interests in this regard?

The Mississippi river is absolutely critical to the livelihood of Minneapolis Residents.

Tritium leakages from a power plant in such close proximity to the Mississippi River, which runs through the heart of Minneapolis is absolutely cause for concern. As the Chair of the Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) committee on the City Council, I will meet with stakeholders including scientists at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and my fellow elected counterparts at Hennepin County and the State Legislature to see what the State can do to prevent the movement of tritium advancing through the Mississippi River watershed and advocate for the necessary preventative measures to protect our drinking water source.

We must be good stewards of the Mississippi, with its vital importance for communities both upstream and downstream from the Twin Cities metro area. The establishment of riparian buffers to prevent contamination and pollution of the Mississippi is important to me.