

Respondent: Cyrus Dahmubed

Office Sought: Ward 4 Councilor At-Large

What are the 3 most important aspects of Newton's Climate Action Plan? (100-200 words)

From the provided document specifically referring to recommendations for the residential sector, my three most important goals would be: requiring property owners to complete a comprehensive EUI metric, if this can be made free to owners. Building dashboards of publicly available data on energy-related attributes of residential buildings. Establishing an Electric HVAC inspector position to be the center of competence for this work.

From the full CAP, my three most important goals would be:

- Requiring solar PV on new buildings above a certain size
- Requiring new buildings to be all electric
- Retrofitting NHA properties with PVs and other sustainable improvements

What are 3 items you would like to see prioritized in the update to the CAP? (100-200 words)

I'd like to see us prioritize retrofits of NHA properties, because this is a very direct and tangible connection between equity and sustainability, two priorities that cannot be fully achieved without each other. I'd also prioritize incentivizing the transition to electric vehicles (Goal C.2) and shifting to modes of public and active transportation (Goal C.4) To take a holistic approach to addressing many issues at once, I'd also prioritize encouraging additional, appropriate, low-carbon, housing near public transportation (D.3.5) and reviewing our existing zoning to determine whether it is actually achieving this goal.

What other ideas, plans, or proposals do you have that will support Newton's Climate Action Plan? (100-200 words)

I'd support efforts to require buildings above a certain size achieve higher environmental performance and human wellbeing standards like Phius and WELL. I'd seek to decrease the cost of solar PV and other building performance adaptations for residents, especially in Environmental Justice communities. I'd also support an ideas competition, like Boston's recent "Triple Decker Challenge", to advance creative ideas for how energy retrofits can create shared community benefits. Retrofitting Newton Housing Authority properties with solar PV should serve as a catalyst for addressing deferred maintenance, introducing Green Infrastructure, and completing other retrofits for improved performance. I'd encourage new construction to limit provided parking (if any) to electric vehicles, especially if building in the village centers. I'd make school buses free again, and propose a free express bus pilot program to increase awareness and use of Newton's express buses. I'd work with our State delegates and the MBTA to get our Commuter Rail stations rebuilt to be safe and accessible, and provide fast, frequent, lower-

emission regional transit connections. I'd support a municipal compost pilot, restarting our rain barrel program to help with stormwater management, and other tactical but impactful programs that can have direct benefits for residents.

Do you support the waste reduction goals passed by the City Council in 2022?

Yes

Which of the recommendations of the Sustainable Materials Management Commission's report "Setting the Path to Zero Waste" do you support? (100-200 words)

I support them all, though I'd prioritize a curbside organics collection program, and tying this into a broader strategy for composting and integration of natural systems with our waste strategies so that we can restore our stripped topsoil and encourage systems of circularity. I'd also prioritize incentivizing trash reduction through less frequent collection, while providing recycling, yard waste, and organics collection at no fee and greater frequency. I'd support educating residents about what can and can't be included in each kind of waste stream, and possibly building this guide directly into the underside of trash bin lids. I'd prioritize developing a comprehensive zero waste plan. I'd strongly encourage this to think boldly about waste from building demolition and renovation, and create systems for reuse of building components, such as a partnership with Boston Building Resources or a similar organization. I'd prioritize extending this to waste of furniture and material goods; we live in a society that encourages purchase, use, and disposal of items too easily, and while they are often still in good and usable condition. Encouraging more reuse, especially through destigmatizing donation and purchase of used goods in a community with a lot of affluence, could be a priority.

Do you support efforts to encourage National Grid to retire rather than replace existing gas pipe infrastructure?

Yes

Would you support efforts requiring National Grid to repair rather than replace leaking gas pipes?

Yes

Do you support the elimination of the "2-foot rule" that National Grid uses to avoid Grant of Location applications for installing new gas pipes?

Yes

Provide any additional comments on the above (optional)

I support the ongoing work of the Public Facilities Committee to transition Newton away from natural gas, and would seek to explore additional opportunities for supporting residents in these transitions as the MassSave incentives for doing so begin to sunset. I'd also prioritize eliminating use of greenhouse gasses from our NHA properties as quickly as possible, including natural gas.

Do you support the city moving to electric school buses as quickly as practical? (100-200 words)

Yes, and to encourage their use while also getting more GHG-emitting personal vehicles off the road and reducing traffic, I'd strongly support making the bus free for students and families again. I'd also strongly support ensuring that these buses are fully accessible both for students and so that some of them can be used throughout the day to support the transportation needs of senior citizens.

Do you support the city adopting guidelines that are protective during heat emergencies, i.e. cooling centers? (100-200 words)

Yes, and I'd encourage us to prioritize the establishment of these in neighborhoods with strong heat island effects, low tree canopy, and that are near heat-emitting infrastructure like major roads and railways. To the degree that this data is available through the power company, I'd encourage us to determine neighborhoods that have low rates of residential air conditioning, and also prioritize implementation of cooling centers in these neighborhoods. Finally, as part of this effort, I'd encourage us to educate citizens about natural and passive cooling strategies, from the scale of neighborhood and building adaptations to the scale of the individual body.