

Respondent: Garry Miller

Office sought: Ward 5 Ward Councilor

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

1. The focus on retrofitting existing buildings. To meet our climate goals, existing buildings - which represent the majority of Newton's emissions - must be retrofit to be carbon-neutral.
2. Focus on ensuring that existing retrofits are satisfactory. Negative publicity and experiences with retrofits can be extremely detrimental to meeting our goals.
3. Automating reporting for smaller buildings. It just doesn't seem feasible to require small landlords and homeowners to compile this information on their own.

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

1. We must extend BERDO to smaller buildings in Newton, and not just leave it at the largest buildings as it does now.
2. A continued focus on retrofits of existing buildings and making sure those who install things like heat pumps have a positive experience.
3. Start looking harder at resilience projects. It's becoming clearer that regardless that as hard as we work in Newton, the country and world as a whole are going to miss the targets we've set, so how can we ensure we in Newton are prepared for our warmer future?

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

I'd like to see more publicity and action around successful projects. I've spoken with people who are unaware of the climate aspects of the new Countryside school. And the fact that Northland (and potentially Riverside) is going to be full Passive House is probably underappreciated. Can we organize tours or listening sessions to publicize this better?

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)

All of them. In particular, I would like to see a renewed push to increase adoption of curbside composting, and to work with businesses to increase adoption of composting programs at restaurants and other businesses to reduce the organic composition of our solid waste stream.

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)

No response

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

Yes, this is essential to both meeting our climate goals and improving air quality for our students. When I emailed the Mayor 7 year ago about this, it didn't seem practical to move to electric school buses, but the technology has improved rapidly since then and it's time to move on this.

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

It's quite clear that we are heading towards a warmer future. We will have increasing numbers of heat emergencies and thus greater impacts on vulnerable populations including seniors and workers who have to spend a lot of time outdoors. Protective measures will be needed to ensure the safety of these populations.