

**Respondent:** Brittany Hume Charm

**Office Sought:** Ward 5 Councilor At-Large

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

1. Using data to target the homes that are most likely to adopt changes. 2. Improving our data so we can do #1 effectively. 3. Soliciting data on energy use intensity (EUI) from homeowners so we, and they, can better understand benchmarking of energy use and financial costs, though I don't think it should be a law. As our energy costs spike, it can be offered as a way for homeowners to understand how their heat costs compare with their neighbors and how much lower they could be based on their home attributes (and how they could lower further if they changed attributes like weatherization and heat pumps).

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

1. Ways to address winterization, not just heat pumps. As someone who bought a house that required far more winterization (and construction time, and expense) than we were expecting, it is a significant lift and potential financial hit for homeowners, and not one that I have heard great plans to address. 2. Ways to address the EUI without mandatory reporting. Can we require that homeowners need to disclose their last year of energy bills when selling their home--so it becomes an incentive to make these improvements ahead of time (to be reflected in home value) and to provide some transparency to the city? 3. Other ways to target homeowners with information about the benefits, estimated costs, and processes to make existing homes more energy efficient.

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

I think we have to be taking advantage of the sticker shock Newton homeowners will feel when they get their winter heating bills. They are always a huge unwelcome seasonal expense, but this year they will be even worse, with an estimated 13% price increase. These are the sorts of shocks that make people want to say "never again" and compare notes with their friends and neighbors. Perhaps targeted outreach can be timed to come in waves that are the week following when people get their bill each month to help get word of mouth about solutions when people are listening and talking about it already.

**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 nearly all of these recommendations. I have lived in cities where I have seen almost all of these in place. I would want to speak further with subject-matter experts and implicated stakeholders (e.g., businesses) about the expense and potential phasing of some of these (e.g., discouraging vs banning single-use plastics, the construction industry about the deconstruction of homes because we need to be very careful to not further increase the cost of housing right now), but in general, I support them.

**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?**

No response

**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?**

No response

**Provide any additional comments on the above (optional)**

This is an area I'll need to learn more about in order to answer some of these questions.

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

This is not a priority for me given the expense and my understanding of our current financial picture. My instinct is that we should use our buses until they are at the end of their useful life. And, a gas-powered bus is still better than all of those kids going in separate cars.

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

I would need to understand more about the details of the guidelines.