**AIA Minneapolis 2021 City Council Questions**

**Sustainable Design/Resiliency**

The building sector accounts for nearly half of carbon dioxide emissions in the United States per

year – more than any other sector. U.S. buildings alone are responsible for more CO2 emissions annually than those of any other country except China. Most of these emissions come from the combustion of fossil fuels to provide heating, cooling, and lighting, and to power appliances and electrical equipment.

How will you work with architects and the city to prepare Minneapolis for the impacts of

climate change?

*We desperately need to improve our City’s building infrastructure to better combat climate change and reduce our overall carbon footprint. That goes beyond City owned buildings and into privately owned buildings as well. That is why I have been so supportive of programs like our 4d Affordable Housing Incentive program which not only provides property tax relief for buildings that keep rent affordable, it also provides access to energy efficiency upgrades for those same buildings. Both new and existing.*

*We need to expand our incentive programs like this to cover building materials, utility products and efficiency designs to not only reduce our emissions but also to enable lasting development that is better prepared for a changing climate. To get there we need to listen to experts in this field and be open to paying for these programs and shepherding in more progressive building designs and materials.*

How will you incentivize approaches to design, construction, and operations to move these

goals forward?

*As I said above I support the establishment and expansion of programs like our 4d program and the Rebuild Resilient program I brought forward last year to rebuild Lake Street with an energy efficient focus. We need targeted investments if we are going to actually prepare for, and do our part to prevent, climate change. We also could potentially create a program that helps to get climate-friendly buildings on a faster or tiered- type of track for development. I have not fully explored the legality of that yet, but “greener” upgrades should be a priority of our city planning department.*

**Development/Affordable Housing**

Investment and development efforts in Minneapolis have historically been uneven and have led

to both prosperity and displacement. As a member of the City Council, what specific solutions

do you have to foster development and affordable housing that serves the multifaceted needs

of Minneapolis businesses and residents? To what extent are public-private partnerships or taxpayer-supported development part of the solution?

*We need affordable housing in every corner of the city. We will never be able to do enough with taxpayer-supported development, and public-private partnerships are always going to be needed and need to be fostered. Historically the City has focused on building that kind of housing only in certain neighborhoods, which does not provide residents with an equal opportunity to live wherever they want in Minneapolis. I have fought to change that and to drive affordability into Southwest Minneapolis. In the past I did so by working directly with developers and architects to encourage them to use the tools the City has provided to make affordable housing work within a business plan. That sometimes takes education and sometimes it takes strategic partnerships to make something work. I firmly believe we need those partnerships in order to keep the supply of new affordable housing coming. The City’s role in those partnerships is making those investments both feasible and easy to navigate on a process end.*

*I completely agree that we need a multi-faceted approach to solving the housing crisis. We need policies that work together and compliment each other. That means any policy must coordinate with the tools we have, particularly- requiring affordable units through Inclusionary Zoning , incentivizing new affordable projects through the 4d tax incentive program, and financial assistance through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. This is why I support programs that lift up investments into the City, rather than drive those opportunities elsewhere.*

**Equity in the Built Environment**

We see wide disparities in access to quality housing, access to spaces to work and play, and

access to the process that creates and designs these places in the City of Minneapolis. How

would you address these as a member of the Council?

*As I said above I feel the City needs to prioritize building quality, accessible and affordable housing in every corner of the city, and not just pockets. That does not help us break free of concentrated areas of poverty and it does not allow access to work and play for many residents. I would address this by working to refocus our strategy of building affordable housing to be more broad and align with established transit rather than concentrated in a few neighborhoods. Our city is only accessible as far as folks can afford to live in it. We need to make affordability a reality in every neighborhood.*

**Post-COVID Downtown Core**

The COVID pandemic has drastically changed the way people live, work, and play. Even though

the situation is still quite fluid, what changes do you expect to see in the downtown core and

Beyond?

*I expect to see a dramatic change in how businesses choose to operate and maintain physical spaces and provide direct services. We’ve already seen transitions from a number of organizations to be either completely remote or some sort of a hybrid model. Of course there are still businesses that cannot operate in this fashion, but I do anticipate that several of them will retain some of these elements for the long haul.*

*With those changes I see an opportunity for our downtown neighborhoods. I see potential for redevelopment and repurposing a lot of existing businesses and possibly retail spaces. I think the sky's the limit on the creativity and opportunities that will take place.*

**2040 Plan Implementation**

The Minneapolis 2040 Plan is already having broad and deep impacts on the City’s built

environment. What will you do as a City Council member to ensure that the goals of the plan

are met?

*When the 2040 Plan was passed in 2018 I authored an amendment to require the Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) department to establish a set of metrics to track the success of the plan. That included tracking how much affordable housing is created as a result of the zoning changes and how many triplexes are developed with the new minimum zoning allowance. I plan to hold CPED to that amendment and report back on the success of the plan.*

Where do you see the greatest opportunity to address inequities? What are your priorities in implementation?

*As I said during all the discussion over the plan, our greatest opportunity around zoning is through building out our transit corridors and small and medium business nodes. Adding more housing to the areas where folks work and play, or have access to reliable transportation to work and play is key to combating inequities. This gives more residents access to the resources they need and lifts up our existing transit infrastructure. This also helps folks who don’t have access to a single occupancy vehicle better access to job opportunities and to support small and local businesses. That is why my top priority is implementing the zoning changes to our transit corridors and built form guidance for mixed use areas of our city.*

**Additional Questions**

How would you work with architects to realize your vision for Minneapolis?

*I have always made it a practice to meet with and listen to field experts especially as it relates to our zoning and development policies in Minneapolis. I’m lucky to have a great number of constituents in the architect field and even some neighborhood leaders that I connect with often. This field is so complex between building design, materials, site reviews and more that we need more experts advising City leaders. Recently I’ve been learning about the advancements in sustainable building materials and believe we should absolutely be moving in that direction. We need experts advising us to help push the City forward and achieve our goals in fields that are quickly evolving.*

And what can we as architects do to work with the city of Minneapolis to move your vision

forward?

*You’ve done a great job in helping me whenever I’ve asked- even back in 2014 when I needed to mobilize focus groups on zoning amendments in our 1 to 4 unit code. I’m grateful for that and see the impact it has made.*

*The City is always in need of experts volunteering to serve on our various resident led boards and commissions- particularly the City Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Adjustments. These more long-standing advisory groups actively advise the Mayor and Council on specific issues and typically are in need of volunteers.*

*Another way to help the City would be to actively send new ideas directly to Council Members to help educate us on ideas that you believe can help Minneapolis push our goals on affordable housing and equitable development forward. Local government has a reputation for moving slowly but together we can push forward.*