

## **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?

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

**Climate change is a real issue that affects everyone, especially people of color, and it cannot be ignored. We need to continue to aggressively increase energy efficiency citywide, expand investments into renewable energy, and improve our public transit system so that it is the most attractive transportation option. We need to elevate renewable energy to the norm, not the exception. We can do it by making solar panels and other renewable energy technologies economically feasible for businesses and individuals regardless of income and location through tax credits or low-interest loans and yes, by working with our city's local architects. This is not an issue we can afford to put on the backburner. When I am your City Council member, I will make sure that the Northside is not left out of the equation. We need to invest in green jobs and infrastructure and help get people trained to fill these good-paying jobs. We will support aggressive climate energy goals and even more aggressive policies, so that our future generations can thrive.**

## **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?

**It is the city government's responsibility to ensure everyone has a safe home to go to at the end of the day. I believe that each of us deserves to live in a home that is safe, secure, comfortable, and affordable. The city needs to continue prioritizing the preservation of existing and the creation of new affordable housing with a focus on deeply affordable housing. The city needs to implement a metro-wide approach to affordable housing to meet the needs of those who are unsheltered. Otherwise it is disruptive to their lives, their children's schooling, their neighborhood relationships, and their ability to retain employment. At the end of the day, housing is a right not a privilege. Minneapolis needs to provide for and work with those who are struggling with finding affordable and stable housing.**

## **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 a city council member, I will always view policymaking through a racial equity lens. The Minneapolis city government has a responsibility to work together to remove structural barriers and direct its efforts to addressing injustices in our daily lives. So far, initiatives like the 2040 Comprehensive Plan that allow housing options in every neighborhood for families regardless of income are just a starting point. Homeownership is one of the best ways to prevent displacement and intergenerational wealth, but we also need to act in the areas of transportation, health, equity, safety, housing, and criminal justice. There is not a single policy**

**that does not have some kind of implication in inequality. We need to take into consideration and prioritize the needs and benefits of our communities of color. Only then will we be able to create a dent in our city's broad inequalities.**

### **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?

**There is no doubt that our downtown core will be permanently changed following the pandemic. Even though the past couple years have been incredibly hard for our community, I believe that our city government has learned a lot. We know what needs to be done in order to restore our downtown to what it was prior to the pandemic and even better than that. I would like to see city leaders continue to invest in and provide support for businesses that are struggling from the pandemic. We must prioritize support and resources for entrepreneurs of color who are disproportionately feeling the pandemic's effects. The city needs to partner with and support community organizations who have already been doing the great work to help small business owners access training, capital, and other technical and financial resources. We also need to ensure that businesses are able to recover from the recent civil unrest. This means covering building costs and loss of profit. Finally, we need to generate investments to support small businesses through city grants, subsidies, or purchases if economically justified.**

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

**I am a longtime advocate for complete streets and creating a city that is walkable and bikeable. I am interested to see how the 2040 plans play out in North Minneapolis. That said, Wards 4 and 5 have not seen the same level of investment or building boom that other parts of the city have been experiencing. We still have many vacant lots and lots of properties that are in need of redevelopment and repair. As a city council member, I will ensure that any future changes to the 2040 plan and zoning/density laws are taking the specific needs of Wards 4 and 5 into consideration.**

### **Additional Questions**

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

**I firmly believe in completely utilizing and working with our community organizations that are already doing great work in our city. The Minneapolis AIA will particularly come in handy moving forward with infrastructural development. City council members are nowhere close to being experts in the field. This is why we need to constantly include organizations like the AIA in conversations surrounding our response to climate change, affordable housing development, as well as many other important issues. I look forward to working with the AIA come January, so that we can adequately address immediate needs within our community.**

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

**I would first like to meet with members from the AIA directly to hear their thoughts on how we can better address safe, affordable, and environmentally efficient housing. This is the most important part since no action can happen without advice from the experts. However, before this can happen, I will need to rely on the AIA's support to get elected. This means publicly endorsing, fundraising, donating, or otherwise getting involved with our campaign. Election day is quickly approaching and we need as much support as there is available.**