



Gabe
Leland

Climate Resilience Ordinance

The DEA supports passing the Climate Resilience Ordinance, a municipal law that will help the City reduce greenhouse gas emissions incrementally through 2050. This law will help protect residents, especially our low-income communities of color, from impacts of climate change (e.g. extreme weather).

Q: What are your priorities to reduce emissions and lessen the impacts of climate change in Detroit during your term in office?

A: Our efforts should start at home as we look at our City assets and find ways to improve their energy efficiency standards. We also need be forward thinking in how we develop vacant land in the City. For example, an area in District 7, the O'Shea Solar Farm, is now being used for alternative energy. We also need to focus more on place-making and walkable neighborhoods to encourage the use of public transit and less reliance on automobiles.

Sustainability & Equity

Sustainable and equitable development requires our City officials to balance public health and environmental needs with economic growth and job creation. When new projects and developments are under consideration, all too often economic interests may outweigh critical environmental concerns, that are likely to decrease the quality of life for residents, especially low-income, people of color, and other vulnerable communities.

Q: As you consider development proposals in your role as an elected official, how would you balance economic interests and environmental concerns?

A: One example of the efforts my office is making is to look at the green infrastructure plans that are presented with development projects before the City. This includes things like addressing water run-off, green space, rain gardens, and bioswales. Having strong repercussions in the conditions of abatements and other tax programs is needed to ensure these requirements are met. By ensuring that residents have access to quality jobs, it helps ensure they will have greater economic equity. When our residents are successful, our City is successful.

Air

The DEA supports the air quality improvements recommended in the Community Action to Promote Healthy Environments (CA-PHE) Detroit Air Quality Public Health Action Plan:

Q: Share up to three air quality improvements you will work to enact during your term in office. Explain how.

A: (1) First we need to focus on planning models and place-making in our neighborhoods. By supporting public transit and walkable neighborhoods we will eventually see less reliance on gas-powered vehicles. I would also like to see more vehicles operated by the City switch to clean-burning models. This will result in improved quality of life for our residents not just through cleaner air, but greater access to resources and economic opportunity. (2) Secondly, our local energy partners and the City need to continue investing in renewable energy like we are currently doing with the O'Shea Solar Farm in District 7. With the large areas of vacant land in the City, there are many more opportunities to bring renewable energy to our residents. (3) Lastly, the City is currently cutting down many dead trees in the City. The next step is to replant

these trees to restore the tree canopy and the health benefits these trees bring.

Waste

Recycling brings value back into the waste stream, reduces negative effects of disposal (including toxic emissions, leakages, and lost resources and energy), and creates the potential for new markets. Detroit has an opt-in curbside recycling program limited to single households and residences up to four units. Given your role, share the strategies and policies for waste reduction and reuse you will support in response to the question below.

Q: How will you work to increase recycling options for all residents, including people who live in apartments?

A: Currently it is up to apartment complex owners and businesses to privately negotiate trash collection and recycling. I would encourage apartment owners and other industries not currently eligible for the City's recycling plan to work together to create an economy of scale and negotiate these services.

Q: How will you work to increase diversion of waste from the incinerator, for use in industry and commerce?

A: By pushing for recycling to the greatest extent possible, but also focusing on reduce and reuse efforts. I will encourage the Office of Sustainability to look at a jobs plan that focuses on green industry and how to improve recycling.

Land Use and Food Access

The City of Detroit owns 24 square miles of structure-free, vacant land that can be put into private hands for productive use.

Q: What is your top priority for publicly-owned land in Detroit?

A: I would like to see our land used for green infrastructure development. This will not only develop vacant and neglected areas, but provide quality jobs and long-term improvements to the environment by relying less on fossil fuels.

Healthy food and urban agriculture are surely connected in Detroit. Accessing healthy, culturally-appropriate food can be a challenge. Residents depend upon the network of gardens and farms that exist throughout Detroit for sustenance.

Q: Given your role, what would you do to ensure that residents have access to healthy, culturally-appropriate food?

A: I think it is important that we make access a priority through food distribution. This means encouraging the development of more quality grocery stores and farmers markets in our neighborhoods, especially those communities without access to quality transportation.

Water

Detroit is a Great Lakes city. The DEA supports the Detroit Water Agenda, which provides recommendations for ensuring all Detroiters will have access to affordable, clean, safe water to drink and use. It encourages water conservation and endorses effective models of resilient water management, which embrace a basin-wide perspective and integrated planning of urban development, green and gray water infrastructure.

Q: Share up to three Detroit Water Agenda recommendations you will work to enact during your term in office. Explain how.

A: I would encourage green infrastructure in developments seeking tax abatements which will not only encourage their use to reduce pollution, but sustainable development as well. I will keep residents informed of available training seminars and credits for using green infrastructure through our community efforts.

Green stormwater infrastructure helps manage sewage overflows, reduces basement flooding and builds healthier, more attractive neighborhoods. Residents, businesses, and places of worship can receive stormwater/drainage credits from the City to help build green stormwater infrastructure.

Q: How would you help people build green stormwater infrastructure and access to these credits during your term of office?

A: I will continue to tap into our community organizations and social media to make sure we reach as many residents as possible to let them know that these programs are available, as well as host community meetings and encourage attendance at the various training seminars already held.

