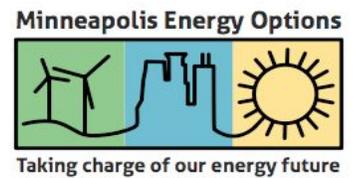




Community Power
2720 E 22nd St
Minneapolis, MN 55406



Community Power 2017 Minneapolis Candidate Questionnaire

Community Power invites all candidates to complete the following questionnaire to inform Minneapolis voters on positions shaping Minneapolis's energy future:

- 1. What role do you feel energy infrastructure, sourcing, and decision-making play in shaping livability, affordability, economic resilience and community health for Minneapolis residents and businesses? How do you propose to fulfill that role?**

I believe that the energy system plays a major role in our community's economic and environmental health. Climate change is one of the most important challenges we face as a society, from the global level to the local level.

Minneapolis residents and businesses spend millions of dollars a year on fossil fuel and nuclear energy that leaves our community. By investing in locally-generated renewable energy, we can keep those dollars in our local economy while fighting climate change. And much of what needs to change to address climate change will have positive co-benefits, from increasing the healthiness of our buildings stock to giving more opportunities for active transportation.

The City has historically played a minor role in energy policy. But given the abdication of responsibility at the federal level, the halting progress at the state level, and the unwillingness of monopoly energy companies to change to a climate-positive business model, the City has to step up. We have to be willing to use existing levers - like land use policy or rental licensing - in new ways, while pushing for changes in areas the City has not typically controlled.

- 2. Do you think Minneapolis is adequately prepared to respond to climate change? If yes, how? If no, what do you think Minneapolis should do to become prepared?**

No. There are two responses to climate change needed: reducing our carbon emissions to stop making the problem worse, and planning for resilience. I believe that we are not on a path to meeting our climate change goals, and the City has developed no meaningful climate resilience plan. The City has an adopted Climate Action Plan and aggressive climate goals. The City's sustainability staff presented a high-level roadmap for how to reach the already-adopted 80% reduction by 2050 goal, and it is clearly possible with existing technology. But it's clear that the current activities of the City, Xcel and Centerpoint are not sufficient to reach the City's goals. We need to plan and act in truly transformative ways, to rapidly decarbonize our entire economy, and cities like Minneapolis should be leading the way.

We also need to draft a climate resilience plan. Everything the City plans for, from food systems to storm water, from the energy system itself to our transportation networks, will be impacted in significant and hard to predict ways.



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- 3. Do you support a policy of 100% renewable electricity for city operations by 2021, 100% renewable electricity by 2030 for all Minneapolis energy users, and 100% renewable energy in all sectors (electricity, heating, transportation, industry) by 2050 for all Minneapolis energy users (check one)?**

Yes

Feel free to provide a deeper explanation of your position:

For City operations: it is possible to rapidly change to renewable energy (especially if membership in community solar gardens is counted towards the goal) in terms of the City's electricity use. It will be much harder to get to 100% renewable energy in the City's vehicle fleet and for heating and cooling of all City facilities. I am committed to pushing for a rapid shift to renewable electricity, and adopting a plan for conversion to renewables for heating and transportation.

For citywide renewable energy use: I am committed to meeting this goal, but we should be clear that it is only achievable with major changes to the way that Xcel fuels electricity generation. I will push for those changes through the Clean Energy Partnership and other channels, but unfortunately the City does not have sole or even partial control over this. This lack of City control is compounded for heating and transportation fuels. There are some things the City can do to speed the electrification of transportation, but our impact is limited.

- 4. What do you intend to do during your time in office to help achieve the Minneapolis Energy Vision (established by City Council in 2014) and the goals of the Minneapolis Clean Energy Partnership?**

I plan to continue and strengthen the goals of the CEP. The current council member representing Ward 1 is on the CEP board and has not been able provide the leadership necessary to make the goals. Our city as a whole needs strong leaders that can listen to energy partners and residents to meet the vision for 2040. Together Xcel, Center Point and the City of Minneapolis can lead the nation in taking effective action on the CEP.

- 5. Do you support securing universally-accessible financing that allows all Minneapolis energy users to make energy efficiency improvements and switch to clean energy with no upfront cost, no debt or credit checks, and monthly payments on utility bills that are overall lowered due to the energy saved?**

Yes

Feel free to provide a deeper explanation of your position:

Yes, I support inclusive financing. I understand that Centerpoint is moving towards adopting a form of on-bill financing that is not fully inclusive, and Xcel is currently opposed to on-bill financing of any kind. I would advocate that both utilities move to inclusive financing, through the Clean Energy Partnership and any other means I could find.

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- 6. Do you support using the rooftops of Minneapolis public buildings to host community solar gardens that create access for low-income families as well as train and hire Minneapolis residents of color to install and maintain them?**

Yes

Feel free to provide a deeper explanation of your position:

Yes, I support using appropriate publicly-owned buildings and land to host community solar garden installations. I support having specific workforce goals in the City's contracts for this work (and other work). The City has made some progress on subscribing to community solar gardens, but there's a lot of room to grow. I am also interested in other types of renewable energy deals that could benefit the City, such as investing in wind or combined wind and solar installations in rural Minnesota.

- 7. How would you advance equitable access to energy resources for renters and low-income families to ensure that all Minneapolis families have healthy, comfortable homes, affordable energy bills, and the choice to shift to clean and efficient energy?**

I believe that the City needs to commit to a comprehensive, building-by-building energy retrofit program. Such a program would dramatically increase energy efficiency, address housing-related health issues like asthma and lead poisoning, and decrease the amount of money residents spend on energy. This is one of the strategies from the Climate Action Plan that has not yet been implemented, and that I would champion. This may require new and innovative conservation improvement programs from the utilities, and the City should push for those via the Clean Energy Partnership. It may also require that the City use its regulatory authority to compel rental property owners to participate - knowing that the property improvements will ultimately save them and/or their tenants money.

- 8. Would you support an increase in utility franchise fees of 0.5% of Minneapolis energy sales to be re-invested in dedicated long-term funding for local energy solutions (check all that apply)?**

Yes

Dedicated funding could additionally/instead come from these sources:

These specific energy solutions need this kind of long-term funding:

Feel free to provide a deeper explanation of your position:

I support raising the franchise fee by half a percent and dedicating the revenue to local energy work. I would also support seeking grants from foundations and other sources, tying this funding to other housing-related funds (like mitigation of lead and other healthy housing issues). I believe that the City should dedicate these funds to the sort of building-by-building energy and health retrofits that I described in question 7.

- 9. How should the City of Minneapolis evaluate the effectiveness of the Minneapolis Clean**

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Energy Partnership as its second two year work plan ends in late 2018? What criteria or thresholds would convince you that the Minneapolis Clean Energy Partnership is succeeding (and should be sustained and expanded) OR is failing (and the city should pursue a different route)?

I believe that the effectiveness of the Clean Energy Partnership can be measured against the 2040 Energy Vision adopted by the Council in 2013, the Climate Action Plan, and the Clean Energy Partnership's own work plans and metrics. So far, I do not see evidence that the Clean Energy Partnership is on track to meet any of these goals.

The goal of the utilities is clear: to avoid any talk about a municipal energy utility while changing their operations as little as possible. That's why Xcel pushed a bill to let them out of the Public Utilities Commission process for a new fossil fuel power plant, rather than investing in renewables, among several other recent actions that are not in keeping with the City's energy vision. The City should not let them get away with making the Clean Energy Partnership a distraction.

Unfortunately, the City Council did not start the Clean Energy Partnership on the strongest footing. Within a month after agreeing to form it - and before the Council members of the Partnership board were even seated - a bare Council majority voted to cut the City's funding for staff to Partnership activities in half. The current Ward 1 Council Member voted for that cut. I would have voted differently. And if I was in one of the seats on the Partnership board, I would be much more active in pushing the utilities to meet the City's energy goals.

And where the current Ward 1 Council Member has not only accepted campaign contributions from higher-ups and lobbyists with Xcel and Centerpoint, but proudly included them as co-hosts of his fundraisers, I have not accepted any contributions from energy utility lobbyists or executives.

10. If Xcel Energy and/or CenterPoint Energy refused to agree to the measurable outcomes you defined in question 9, or failed to achieve them, would you support active exploration of other options by the City of Minneapolis, including: terminating the franchise agreement, securing Community Choice Aggregation, or pursuing energy municipalization (check one)?

Yes

Feel free to provide a deeper explanation of your position:

I have a realistic view of the difficulty of forming a municipal energy utility. State and federal law are set up to make this a very difficult option to exercise. However, the community organizing work around the Minneapolis Energy Options campaign was the only reason that the utilities were willing to form the Clean Energy Partnership in the first place. Climate change is too great a threat - and the opportunities from a resilient, energy-independent city are too great - for the City not to use whatever tools are at our disposal. I'm intrigued by Community Choice Aggregation, and would push for the State to give Minnesota cities that option.

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