

Michelle Mosby responses:

How would you work to implement the proposals outlined in RVAGreen2050 and the Climate Equity Action Plan 2030? Would you take a different approach to climate planning, or continue the RVAGreen2050 program?

I fully support RVAgreen 2050 and the Climate Equity Action Plan 2030 as strategic frameworks to address climate change while advancing equity across every Richmond community. Our priorities will include reducing carbon emissions, encouraging green infrastructure, and building resilient neighborhoods to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, ensuring all areas of the city benefit.

Promoting equity is central to this effort, particularly in historically marginalized communities, where we must amplify voices and ensure access to green job opportunities, sustainable development, and renewable energy investments. By fostering robust community engagement and leveraging public-private partnerships, we can secure resources and advance these objectives. Collaborating with educational institutions, nonprofits, and businesses will provide a blueprint for achieving measurable results.

Public-private partnerships will be crucial in driving innovation and securing funding for our climate goals. Through collaboration with businesses, nonprofits, and educational institutions, we will scale green initiatives and prepare Richmond's workforce for the growing green economy.

What proposals would you make to support the Office of Sustainability, and how would you encourage other city departments to adopt sustainable, carbon-neutral and environmentally beneficial practices?

To ensure the success of Richmond's Office of Sustainability, cross-departmental collaboration is essential. We will coordinate efforts on energy efficiency, waste reduction, recycling, and carbon-neutral practices, including promoting public transportation, biking, and reducing energy consumption in public buildings. I propose creating a Sustainability Task Force to work closely with all departments, identifying opportunities for sustainability and integrating best practices across city operations.

How would you manage the competing needs of DPU gas system customers and city carbon emissions reductions? Would you support a study on the future of the system?

I support a comprehensive study to assess the future of Richmond's natural gas system and explore the feasibility of transitioning to cleaner energy alternatives. Balancing the needs of

gas customers with the city's carbon reduction goals will require a forward-thinking and pragmatic approach. First, we will ensure the reliability and affordability of natural gas for current customers while also pursuing the city's climate objectives. The proposed study will evaluate the economic, environmental, and social impacts of a transition and offer a clear, strategic plan for sustainable change if feasible.

The city recently restarted its Urban Forestry Commission and formed a Public Utilities and Service Commission. How would you approach working with these oversight commissions?

My administration will prioritize strong collaboration and open communication with the Urban Forestry Commission and the Public Utilities and Service Commission. Key city departments, including Public Works and Utilities, will coordinate with the commissions to share data and resources. This will help the commissions make informed recommendations on urban forestry's connection to public utilities infrastructure. By aligning tree-planting initiatives with stormwater management and energy conservation efforts, we can achieve our sustainability and infrastructure goals in tandem with Richmond's long-term vision.

How would you manage Richmond's heat islands and the growing threat of extreme heat in the city?

To address the rising threat of extreme heat in Richmond, I propose several key strategies:

- **Expanding Green Spaces:** Green spaces are not only aesthetic assets but also essential for public health, mental well-being, and community cohesion. Parks provide recreational and social spaces while also contributing to better air quality and mitigating the urban heat island effect. Neighborhoods with more green space experience lower temperatures in summer, improving comfort and health outcomes. Moreover, research shows that access to green spaces can enhance academic performance, emphasizing the need for parks near schools.
- **Sustainable Zoning and Planning:** We will adopt zoning and building codes that promote heat resilience by encouraging low-impact development, energy-efficient materials, and green infrastructure. This will help reduce heat buildup and support long-term sustainability.
- **Community Engagement:** Working closely with public and private partners, we will launch an educational campaign to raise awareness about heat risks and energy efficiency programs. Additionally, we will provide cooling resources, such as increase the number of cooling centers throughout the city, collaborate with other partners to distribute fans and air conditioning units to vulnerable populations during extreme heat events.

How would you prioritize addressing the causes and mitigating the effects of climate change in the context of all the other things city government has to do?

Addressing climate change within city government requires a comprehensive and strategic approach, balancing immediate and long-term needs. Our strategy will integrate climate goals and resilience measures into all city policies, including zoning laws, building codes, transportation planning, and housing development.

Public engagement is essential. We must educate residents—especially those in vulnerable communities—about climate change impacts and involve them in sustainability initiatives, fostering community ownership and participation.

To promote renewable energy and energy efficiency, we will explore incentives such as tax credits, grants, and loans for homeowners and businesses that adopt sustainable practices. Working collaboratively with federal, state, and business partners, we can secure resources for these incentives.

Finally, we will establish clear metrics to track the effectiveness of our initiatives, allowing for adjustments and improvements where necessary.