



City Council Candidate Sustainability Survey District 2

Question 1:

Background: Sustainability means to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony in the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Across many dimensions (atmosphere, water, soil, waste, consumption, etc.), our use / abuse of natural resources is not sustainable – especially for future generations. In many cases quick and dramatic changes must be taken on the part of individuals, businesses, and governments as time is running short. The city of Bloomington has several active sustainability initiatives in progress but has no way of measuring the results and has no stated goals regarding what we want to achieve with these initiatives

In addition, the city of Bloomington has not yet agreed to join the Green Step Cities Program (<http://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us>) -- a voluntary challenge, assistance and recognition program to help cities achieve their sustainability and quality-of-life goals that 57 other Minnesota cities have joined. This free continuous improvement program, managed by a public-private partnership, is based upon 28 best management practices.

Question: As a way to focus and evaluate sustainability efforts, would you support the creation of a city wide Sustainability Plan that:

- Includes areas such as Energy / Carbon, Water, Solid Waste, Transportation, and the Environment?
- Identifies specific measures, goals and long term targets?
- Is created using outside expertise and includes public input?
- Includes becoming a Green Step City?

Andrew Carlson Response:

☒ Yes ☐ No

Bloomington residents care about their environment and their future. These community values are an important reason why sustainability initiatives can be found in numerous City documents including *Imagine Bloomington 2025 Plan*, *The City of Bloomington's Sustainability Work Program*, and the *Alternative Transportation Plan*. (...continued on next page)

Thomas Hulting Response:

☐ Yes ☐ No

I generally support the concept but it depends on what the issues are, who sets the limits and who enforces the outcomes. I am personally a conservationist and do not waste things.

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(Carlson response - continued from previous page)

As a City Councilmember, I would be supportive of a council action to create a City of Bloomington Sustainability Plan that contained relevant topics, set goals, and included community input. Before becoming a Green Step City, costs to the City in terms of staff time and other resources would have to be determined.

(Hulting response - continued from previous page)

For the last 2 ½ years, I have been working to implement CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) fueling stations in Bloomington and the country. This saves money and it is clean energy.

It is hard to know what the role of the city could be in the area of sustainability. You can read more in depth answers to this question in the subsequent survey questions.



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Question 2:

Background: The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) considers Global Warming to be one of the biggest long-term environmental issues to confront life on earth. However, there is debate in the popular media about whether Global Warming exists and, if so, whether it is the result of human activity.

Question: *Do you believe that Global Warming exists and, if so, do you believe it is mostly the result of human activity?*

Andrew Carlson Response:

☒ Yes ☐ No

Thomas Hulting Response:

☐ Yes ☒ No

Scientists just 20 years ago said the earth was supposed to become colder because of greenhouse emissions, then today, just twenty years later they are claiming that the earth was going to be warmer. Concern over CO₂ is not well thought out. Temperature fluctuations have been all over the map over recorded (and deduced) history, so who is to say that today's temperature is ideal, not to mention too high? The sun is the primary reason the temperature rises and falls.



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Question 3:

Background: PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) is a means of financing energy efficiency upgrades or renewable energy installations for buildings. Municipal governments offer a specific bond to investors and then turn around and loan the money to consumers and businesses to put towards an energy retrofit. The loans are repaid over the assigned term (typically 5 or 20 years) via an annual assessment on their property tax bill that typically corresponds to the increased cash flow from the money saved as a result of the investment. This is a way to encourage businesses to make investments in clean energy projects (e.g. solar, LED lighting, insulation, etc.) with little or small impact on cash flow.

Background: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PACE_financing

What Eagan is doing: http://www.twincities.com/dakotacounty/ci_24004216/eagan-enters-partnership-st-paul-port-authority-provide

What Edina is doing: <http://pacenow.org/about-pace/feature-c-pace-in-edina/>

Question: *In order to help incent residents and businesses in Bloomington to invest in energy savings / carbon reducing initiatives, would you support the city of Bloomington establishing a PACE program for business and residents (once it becomes feasible for residents)?*

Andrew Carlson Response:

☐ Yes ☒ No

The State of Minnesota has enacted PACE enabling legislation and according to the PACE Now website one project has been completed in Edina. However, the program is relatively new and not without financial risks and costs to the City. As a City Councilmember I would not support a PACE program at this time.

Thomas Hulting Response:

☒ Yes ☐ No

I am generally supportive of actions that are not taxpayer-subsidized; technology needs to stand on its own. I would personally focus on reducing city permitting and inspection fees. In addition, financing arrangements that leverage the City's financial strength and that insure the money is repaid with interest and is low risk, is a great way to incent efficiency upgrades.



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Question 4:

Background: Our current solid waste collection system (open collection) results in a very high number of collection trucks travelling up and down any given street once a week creating a public safety issue, spewing out significant pollution and carbon, and causing excessive wear and tear on our streets.

Question: *As a means of reducing carbon emissions and pollution, reducing wear and tear on our streets, and increasing the public safety, would you support some form of organized collection (solid waste, recyclables, yard waste) even if that means limiting choice?*

Andrew Carlson Response:

☐ Yes ☐ No

I would consider it.

Bloomington's solid waste collection system is currently being studied. Once the final report has been presented to Council and the issues debated, I'll be better educated to form my own opinion.

Thomas Hulting Response:

☐ Yes ☒ No

Individuals can do a much better job of negotiating price and special needs and get a better result than the city can do. And they do this without spending money studying or hiring consultants to make a determination. If the city gets involved in getting group rates, hauling companies would simply collude on pricing, as has already happened in multiple cities across the country, and the results would not be as effective as individual negotiation.

I have firsthand experience with consultants many times not meeting expectations; simply said, they "go to school" at the City's expense, or they "sell" what "someone" wants to hear," or, they simply "sell" a solution they have implemented for someone elsewhere. (...continued on next page)



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(Hulting response - continued from previous page)

We do not need a consultant to study this question; we have ample technical resources within our own Engineering Department, on the Council, and within the interested community at large.



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Question 5:

Background: Travel within the city by car creates pollution, emits carbon, causes congestion, and supports a sedentary life style that does little to maintain our health. Getting people onto bikes to take short trips around town reduces pollution and carbon emissions, reduces traffic and wear and tear on our streets, and increases health.

Question: *As a means of reducing air pollution, carbon emissions, traffic congestion, and promoting healthy life styles, would you support a plan to create safe biking routes to popular destinations for commuting purposes (in addition to recreation purposes)?*

Andrew Carlson Response:

☐ Yes ☐ No

I would consider it.

Biking continues to grow in popularity for recreation, but also as a means of commuting. Bloomington's *Alternative Transportation Plan* and *Complete Streets Policy* provide guidance for creating safe biking routes. As a City Councilmember, I'd need to verify that existing documents were insufficient before I would support a new plan.

Thomas Hulting Response:

☐ Yes ☐ No

When I grew up, kids didn't have bike lanes but we rode our bikes everywhere and that was how we got around. I don't have an issue with bikes and I don't have an issue with restriping back roads, but I am against restriping major roads for biking.

I am particularly against the ten foot bike path from 110th going south that is part of the Hyland Bike Path, connecting Hyland Park with the parking lot at the bottom of Bloomington Ferry Road. From 110th, Bloomington Ferry Road takes a downhill slope, while that slope from the juncture at Auto Club Road becomes a very steep hill for almost a quarter mile that most bikers will not want to ride,
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rendering this to be not a sensible bike trail route for families. Not one mother will want their children riding down this steep hill, but more fundamentally, not one child (or mother) will enjoy walking their bike up this hill in order to return home! This is not a prudent use of tax dollars. Instead the road could be restriped (as is EVERY neighboring road) for very little money from 110th St. down to the Bloomington Ferry Road landing. Additionally, the city should not use eminent domain in order to take private property from long-time, taxpaying residents.



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Question 6:

Background: To address the declining water levels in our deep aquifers, what can the City Council do to make Bloomington a more sustainable community, particularly for groundwater resources?

Question: As a means of reducing the stress on the aquifers that supply the city of Bloomington with fresh water, would you support groundwater demand-reduction goals and strategies to be implemented by the City Water Utility that includes water-conservation incentives and requirements such as requiring large users of water for irrigation to install moisture / rain sensors?

Andrew Carlson Response:

☐ Yes ☐ No

I would consider it.

Ensuring a clean, reliable water supply is a critical role of government. We are fortunate to have excellent water in Bloomington. In 2008, Minnesota state statutes were changed requiring that all metropolitan public water suppliers adopt a water conservation rate structure. This resulted in a partial rate change including a two-tier water rate structure for the City of Bloomington. As a City Councilmember, I would support voluntary incentives to conserve water.

Thomas Hulting Response:

☐ Yes ☒ No

We all have to be concerned about our air and water quality and keep it clean.

From what I understand, our Bloomington aquifers are ample, and so I don't think we need water conservation incentives. Perhaps other cities have a different situation that might require water conservation measures.