

I. Privacy, openness, and accountability: What have you done in the past to support "sunlight" laws or encourage public access to information, deliberation, and decision-making? (and/or) What existing or new ideas do you support, going forward, to encourage informed public participation? How have you / how would you protect the information of private individuals, that might otherwise be inappropriately disclosed by the push for greater public openness? From first responders (police, fire, EMT) through higher level administrative positions, what practical steps do you support to encourage professionalism and accountability?

*In the state House, I have routinely supported measures that would put information about state government in the hands of citizens and to improve transparency and accountability. I have also sought to bring the public into decision-making in areas such as economic development and public works functions within my legislative district, and in my efforts to avert the closure of Carnegie Library branches.*

*I see the primary role of the controller as guarantor to the citizens of Allegheny County that their government is efficient, effective and responsive to their needs and concerns. I am committed to bringing to light the failure of any agency under my purview to fulfill these aims, and to make constructive recommendations to improve performance and to ensure that the entire machinery of county government is working together toward the future success of our communities and our region. Of course, the support of our citizens for the recommendations I make are the only way to ensure they are carried out. I plan to necessarily involve the public in both identifying areas that need the attention of the controller's office and to identify solutions and strategies for making improvements.*

II. Several public-private partnerships have been set up in areas such as the Schenley plaza and riverside locations on the Northside. While this pseudo-public space is lovely for recreation, it is also considered private for purposes of assembly, rallies, protests, or informational / not-for-profit leafleting--effectively, off-limits, even including the adjacent city sidewalks. Moving forward, how can the city and county prevent or remedy the significant de-facto privatization of public space, without, at the same time, countenancing harassment?

*Without a doubt, some of these conflicts will have to be resolved through the court system, though my immediate thoughts would be that areas with public access may be used for speech activities so long as there is no disruption of the activities of others.*

III. What sorts of jobs best anchor and sustain a community? What role, if any, should your office play in encouraging / not hindering certain types of job

development?

*If there is anything the continuing recession has shown, it is that a strong economy cannot be built with low-wage, service-sector jobs. This is why I have supported efforts toward Community Benefits Agreements in the City of Pittsburgh, cosponsored the Economic Development Responsibility Act at the state level, and introduced the Green Work Force training act to connect vulnerable populations with quality jobs in emerging sustainable industries.*

IV. What sorts of development, redevelopment, or blight-fighting programs best anchors and sustains a community? What could you do, within the bounds of your office, to suggest, encourage, implement or support specific responses to (e.g.) abandoned or decrepit housing, declining schools, and/or other problems that typify a community in decline?

*As a state representative, I have participated in efforts at innovative community development including transit-oriented development in Beechview/South Hills Junction and Castle Shannon, green reuse of vacant school buildings in Mt. Washington, sustainable development planning along the Route 51 Corridor, housing development complementing the existing historic neighborhood in Manchester, among others. As controller, I would seek to provide vision on how similar initiatives would benefit economic growth and quality-of-life in our region.*

V. The 800 lb gorillas: Health care is a statewide / national level issue. So is ecological policy. However, benefits, funding, permitting and potentially funding of clinics are city and county issues (within the bounds set by Act 47). Similarly, both the city and county have some say in determining the appropriateness and location of coal and gas extraction / processing / waste product storage, from the standpoint of risks to public health and to infrastructure. In both cases, very large local employers have vested interests that may not be in line with the best interests of the citizenry. What, realistically, do you hope to do to further the best interests of the citizenry, and/or reduce the risk of inappropriate corporate influence?

*One of my top priorities as controller will be to ensure that county agencies are doing everything in their power to ensure that permitting, inspection, and planning reflect our obligation to public health and environmental quality. Our region has benefited greatly from reorienting its image and its economy toward "Green" and we must continue on this course. I also hope to connect county municipalities and residents with better information about gas drilling activities and legal options for protecting their interests.*

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