

City and County executive, legislative and administrative offices:

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?

As Allegheny County Council President, I sponsored legislation to put campaign finance reports online as well as property assessments. I have also worked to encourage citizens to come to County Council meetings to voice their displeasures or support for various issues including potential Marcellus Shale drilling in the county and the Human Rights Commission.

I do however believe that in the quest to create a more public and open government, we must respect the privacy of individuals by not publicizing private personal information such as social security numbers.

Finally, I would work to better train our workforce to ensure that accidental disclosures of private information do not happen and if there is an incident, I would work with the correct individuals to correct the matter.

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 leafletting -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?

I believe encouraging discussion is one of the ways we can hopefully mitigate the majority of problems that may arise. However, some areas are private, donated spaces that, as a stipulation of the gift, are only allowed to be used in certain manners. As County Executive, I would work with local foundations as well as within Allegheny County departments to encourage a balanced use of current facilities and future projects.

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?

Industries that bring local wealth to a community by providing jobs and pay a family sustaining wage are ideal. These jobs should also contribute to the overall health of the community and make residents want to live in that area or region.

Allegheny County was one of the few areas in the nation that didn't bleed employers during the Recession because we have a business friendly climate that encourages responsible investment. I

would continue to work with our businesses to support expansion that helps and not hinders local areas.

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?

I believe we need a systematic approach—government needs to work with the community and determine their needs and wants and major concerns. Government can determine what it believes to be a blighted property but a neighborhood association may disagree and that is why a dialogue between the two is very critical.

I think the first important question would be, “Why is there decrepit housing?” Is it because of national trends or is the problem more local and if it is, possibly utilizing county departments such as Aging or Economic Development to tackle issues may result in faster outcomes.

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?

As an elected official, I would work for the people. In all of my decisions, their best interests come first and I would work to govern with their wellbeing as my priority.