

Name: Debra Srebnik

1. Do you accept that there's a Climate Crisis, and what's your plan to deal with it?

Absolutely! I have accepted the truth of a climate crisis since before Al Gore's movie that made the reality crystal clear. With respect to Kenmore, in 2019, I met with PCA and discussed the idea of Kenmore having its own climate action plan, understanding that the broader King County group was developing a toolkit for municipalities that could make such an effort feasible for a small city. I conducted considerable work to compile the climate strategies that Shoreline, Portland, and King County had included in their plans, using them as models for our own. At our City Council retreat in January, 2020, I proposed that we (Council) prioritize the creation and implementation of a climate action plan. Not only did the Council vote to prioritize it, we/they voted that it should be within the top five priorities – which meant that the City would be tasked with dedicating resources and staff time to the effort. This prioritization was key to getting us to where we are today regarding implementing the plan, beginning with a community engagement and input phase. I'm very excited that we are moving forward with the plan, which should align our efforts with broader county, state and federal greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions targets.

2. If you win, you would be taking office when the city is starting to implement its first Climate Action Plan. The next decade is pivotal in solving the climate crisis. Are you familiar with the city's plans and goals, and how would you help the city do that?

Yes indeed! As noted above, I helped kickstart the climate action plan for Kenmore. The plan acknowledges that the most substantial contributors to GHG emissions are building energy use and transportation. It lays out steps for implementation such as joining ICLEI, conducting GHG emissions baseline assessment, and leveraging the support of partners such as King County. Implementation strategies are identified at both the city operations and community level – and include strategies for reducing building/facility energy use, using clean electricity, reducing water consumption, reducing fossil fuel consumption, reducing car use, ensuring land use concentrates growth near transit, and protecting and increasing our tree canopy among other strategies. The Plan starts with a robust community engagement process, then will move into identifying and prioritizing strategies. The City has hired a consultant and a half-time staff person to manage these early stages, and the City Manager and Council will re-evaluate to what extent the ongoing work can be 'absorbed' into existing staff units after 18 months.

The role of a Councilmember at this point is to set the policy in motion, ensure that there are sufficient resources allocated to the effort, and to synthesize the community input. The next phase will require using the community input as a guide to which strategies to prioritize (and fund) at which stages, as not all strategies can be implemented at the same time for funding and staffing reasons.

**3. Could you discuss how the U.S. and local governments should address climate justice
What opportunities do you see for this in Kenmore?**

Climate justice requires that we identify how lower income communities and people of color are disproportionately impacted by climate change. For example, Hurricane Katrina's magnitude was, in part, a function of climate change. It had the most tragic impacts on people with the fewest resources to help them evacuate or recoup losses of their homes and livelihoods. These individuals were also predominantly people of color. Both the U.S. and local governments must identify the ways in which climate change is impacting – and will impact – these populations, and then fund targeted solutions. In the case of Katrina, resilience efforts might include shoreline restoration, rebuilding levees (where appropriate), building affordable housing away from risk areas, and relocation assistance.

At the local level in Kenmore, we might examine how rising temperatures could impact people who do not have the resources to live in (or go to) places with air conditioning or cooler lower floors. Similarly, with increased flooding, there may be people living in flood zones who do not have the resources to move or make their residences more flood resistant. Residents in mobile home park communities could also be impacted disproportionately if storms become more intense. Planning for, and potentially funding, climate resilience efforts citywide, and especially for at-risk populations, will be crucial to protecting *all* of our residents.

4. What do you think the potential could be for financial partnerships with federal and state and county governments to work on climate solutions?

At the county level, Kenmore is – and will be – partnering to identify GHG emissions, reduction targets and monitoring reductions over time. As noted earlier, the City will also use the county's climate action Toolkit. At the state and federal level, there are funds being made available to help utilities and cities reduce GHG emissions – including incentive programs, funds for planning/building density close to transit, and funds that may potentially be available through the federal infrastructure package that has yet to pass in Congress. This year, Washington state's legislature adopted a landmark cap-and-invest approach, setting a price for carbon emissions and re-investing the funds into transportation 'decarbonization', **air quality monitoring**, tribal relocation and pollution reduction, and climate change resilience efforts. It attempts to redress climate injustice by identifying and reducing subpopulation disparities in climate impacts. A portion of funds from this key legislation as well as federal legislation will be invested in local communities such as Kenmore.

5. What are your ideas about affordable housing in Kenmore?

Affordable housing is currently the #1 priority of Kenmore's City Council. We understand that we need to both protect existing affordable housing and develop much more – especially housing affordable to those households with income below 30% AMI and 50% AMI (area median income). Regarding protection, we need to continue the pressure to retain our mobile

home park communities, consistent with the Council votes on this issue in 2019. We also must not be too quick to support redevelopment of older, more affordable multifamily housing and smaller single-family homes.

Regarding development of more affordable housing, the City is involved in several ways that I wholeheartedly support. First, the City partners with ARCH (A Regional Coalition on Housing) which is a joint effort among east King County cities to fund a housing trust fund that can be used (or leveraged to obtain other funds) to build affordable housing. ARCH also provides technical support for affordable housing planning, and they help create partnerships between funders, cities, and housing developers to facilitate affordable housing development. Partnerships are needed to achieve development at the 30% or 50% AMI level, as developers cannot make this level of affordability 'pencil out' without subsidies.

The City is also working with Northlake Lutheran to potentially develop part of their property for affordable housing, and the City is working with Metro, Sound Transit, and King County to build affordable housing adjacent to the upcoming bus-rapid-transit site. In addition, the City is considering the outright purchase of vacant land for development of affordable housing. The Planning Commission is currently examining the options for promoting affordable housing within single family neighborhoods as well, such as duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, and cottage housing. I look forward to supporting all of these efforts.

6. Do you support actions at the city level to reduce GHG emissions by adopting energy performance standards for new and existing buildings, eliminating new "natural" gas connections?

Definitely! As noted earlier, the climate action proposal that I spearheaded identified building energy performance as one of the two most important targets for climate action (along with transportation). It should be acknowledged that the contribution to GHG emissions in Kenmore from *city operations per se* is less than 5% of GHG emissions. What this means is that the bulk of GHG emission reductions must happen at the community level. Regarding building emissions, adoption of energy performance standards for the City's permitting of new construction, and existing building renovations over time is crucial. Eliminating natural gas use for heat will be also be a key action step for new and existing buildings. Local experts on climate change report that use of gas for cooking and fireplaces are very small contributors to GHG emissions, and so they recommend that municipalities focus on just natural gas use for heat.

*PCA has a policy of not endorsing candidates. However, we consider this discussion to be very important and the beginning of an ongoing dialog. We do reserve the right to publish responses on peopleforclimateaction.org. Please answer in writing on this document and send to vgrayland@earthlink.net. Please be in contact via email about scheduling a Zoom interview, an individual response to our questions, not a debate.