

October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Hi Nancy,

Please find the answers below to your questions about sustainability and the City of Covington. I appreciate you reaching out to hear my thoughts and if I can answer anything for you further please let me know.

Have a great day.

Fleeta S. Baggett

### **QUESTION #1 - GENERAL BELIEF**

When you hear the term "SUSTAINABILITY," what does it mean to you? How would you implement sustainable measures in your jurisdiction?

*When I hear the word sustainability I immediately think "How do we keep Covington balanced, maintained, and moving in a positive direction?" There are a lot of different factors that can fall under the definition of sustainability, but ultimately, how do we keep the City of Covington moving in a direction that supports the community for our residents that live here now and the residents that will live here in the future?*

*First, I would like to continue to foster the efforts Covington already has in place to support sustainably. For example, the new appliance rebates and energy assessments we have implemented.*

*Secondly, I think that when it comes to sustainability it is the small changes that individual people do each day that make the most impact. Whether it is teaching children at a young age to turn the water off while brushing their teeth, walking or riding a bike when possible, composting, recycling, gardening, etc. The small day-to-day changes we can ALL do make the most impact. I think spreading the word on what our citizens can do in their regular routines will ultimately benefit us the most in the long run.*

### **QUESTION #2 - LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT**

In a 2022 study funded by the City of Covington, the consulting firm Urban3 performed an "Economic MRI" of the city's tax revenues and cost of services to determine which types of development produce a positive cash flow for the city, vs. those costing more to service than the revenues generated. They found the best economic performance in areas with multi-story, more compact, mixed-use development. However, city residents often raise concerns about the impacts of density. As an elected official, what would be your philosophy for balancing those interests/perspectives in your municipality?

*Balance is key here. From the start, I have always voted no on the large apartment complexes. While they may seem like a good idea at first, from what I have witnessed, they always develop into a problem down the road. I think it is important to have a balance of live/work spaces that bring positive impact for the community (for example, Clarks Grove) but these spaces should be zoned in areas where it makes sense. Having safe, well maintained, mixed use spaces can be an asset to a growing city like Covington. I think it is most important to make sure it is going to be the right fit for the location and surrounding communities long-term.*

### **QUESTION #3 - SOLID WASTE**

Businesses and educational institutions in our community are implementing "Zero Waste" programs to dramatically reduce the volume of waste reaching the landfill from their operations.

What investments, if any, would you support your government making to pursue similar objectives?

*Zero Waste initiatives are an important part of maintaining sustainability across the board within a community. Like my answer to question 1, it starts with the individuals and what they are willing to participate in when working to create zero waste. City wide recycling bins are one way we currently try to reduce waste, but I would like to research other towns who are doing a great job of this and see what else we could implement in Covington. I think reducing waste is important, especially as we continue to grow.*

### **QUESTION #4 - CLEAN ENERGY**

In our area, the governments of Athens-Clarke County, Atlanta, Augusta, Clarkston, DeKalb County, Decatur, Savannah, and Winterville have all set clean energy targets for 2050 or earlier.

Would you be willing to propose/support clean energy targets in your jurisdiction?

*Yes, I support a clean energy target and think it is important to set goals on improvements that members of the community can work toward.*

### **QUESTION #5 – CLIMATE POLLUTION REDUCTION**

The state of Georgia and the Atlanta Regional Commission have received EPA grants for \$3 million and \$1 million, respectively, to develop collaborating climate pollution reduction plans. These plans will open grant opportunities for municipalities in the 29-county metro Atlanta area to reduce their climate pollution. Drawdown Georgia, a statewide initiative led by researchers from UGA, Georgia Tech and Emory University, identifies 20 Georgia-specific climate solutions

that provide a roadmap for reducing climate emissions across the state. What climate pollution reduction actions would you prioritize and seek funding for in your city?

*All of our departments will continue to seek grants to help reduce pollution in Covington. We work hard to monitor our air quality with the EPA and our water department does a great job of managing PFAS. This needs to be maintained and always held to the highest standard. On a smaller level, I think we should continue to explore economically responsible and feasible alternative fueling for the City of Covington fleet. On a larger level, I think it is extremely important to continue to hold industries in Covington accountable and establish high standards for new industries that want to expand here.*