



*Educate.
Advocate.
Act.*

Sustainable Saratoga

PO Box 454
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
info@sustainablesaratoga.org
www.sustainablesaratoga.org

September 17, 2019

Dear Candidate,

Sustainable Saratoga is a not-for-profit organization that promotes sustainable practices and the protection of natural resources through education, advocacy and action, for the benefit of current and future generations in the Saratoga Springs area. The November 5, 2019 election offers an opportunity to raise and discuss pressing issues relating to sustainability in this region.

Our supporters are interested in knowing your plans for addressing key sustainability issues confronting our community. We would like you to respond to the questions below by October 8, 2019. Please email your answers back to us at info@sustainablesaratoga.org in digital form. If you have any questions, please email us or call us at 518-620-6139.

As a 501(c)(3) organization we do not, and will not, endorse any particular candidate for an elected office. Your responses and those of other candidates will be posted on our website and Facebook page and emailed to our members and friends verbatim and without any comments.

Thank you in advance for your participation and responses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Art Holmberg".

Art Holmberg
Chair of Sustainable Saratoga



The Comprehensive Plan of the City of Saratoga Springs, adopted in 2015, is a unified set of policies that will guide the future development of the city. The Plan consists of nearly 250 recommended actions and a Future Land Use map that indicates the desired location, uses, and intensity of development. Key elements of the vision of the Comprehensive Plan include the “City in the Country” concept, and the importance of sustainability in all aspects of city management and development.

1. What steps will you take toward achieving sustainable economic development in the City, including diverse and affordable housing (both rental and ownership)?

A sustainable economic development plan in our City should begin with a framework that identifies our specific needs, untapped resources and defines in numerical terms our goals and objectives.

Our plan should have clear quantifiable objectives that focus on participation, equity, and growth to reduce energy usage, expand public transit options, conserve green space, create energy efficient buildings (public/private), and at the same time establish a more diverse and affordable housing opportunities.

One of the biggest issues facing our City today has to do with affordability when it comes to housing. If we are going to be a sustainable city, we need to create opportunities for affordable residences within the City limits that includes homeownership in addition to rentals. Today it is becoming more difficult for individuals who work in the City to reside in the City.

We need to look at having an inclusionary zoning policy to require a production of affordable housing for rental and purchase that are available to low and moderate income residents.

I will work with the City Council along with national, state and local agencies to implement policies that align with our annual goals and require us to be accountable on a quarterly review basis.

2. The City Council recently adopted a resolution with a unanimous vote to support policies consistent with the Paris Climate Change Agreement. What policies and programs will you



implement to improve the environmental health and resiliency of our community, including any policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, consistent with this resolution?

I am pleased our city has adopted a resolution recognizing the need to align with the Paris Climate Change Agreement. Cities generate a majority of our climate emissions and local government needs to play a role in reducing emissions and making our City resilient to climate change.

As the next Commissioner of Finance, I will lead a determined effort to focus on developing a program with solutions and alternatives that reduce the heavy commercial truck traffic along Broadway and our residential streets. I will work directly with the Governor's office and State Department of Transportation to come up with new approaches to solve this unsustainable problem and issue. Currently we have truck traffic that is routed from Route 50/Ballston Avenue onto Adelphi Street in order to access South Broadway/Route 9 South. This traffic should not be routed into the City as the path to exit the City.

The City has proposed a Code Blue shelter located at Finley and Adelphi Street which is on this truck traffic route. Having a high traffic, truck route is unsustainable for many reasons including safety and quality of life especially for our most vulnerable.

I also advocate for alternative forms of transportation and complete streets. Our City has had a complete streets policy since 2012, with very small, incremental advancements with this initiative. I'd work to advance initiatives that support this policy.

I'd like to implement electricity reduction policies via use of LED lighting, and work with DPW and DPS to ensure capital and equipment purchases are energy efficient.

3. In 2016 the City Council adopted a recommendation that calls for the creation of a unified and efficient parking management plan and policy for downtown. What steps do you think should be taken to implement or amend that plan, and what are the other major transportation and mobility issues you think should be addressed?

Understanding Sustainable Saratoga could not provide a copy of the 2016 City Council recommendation I was able to review the March 2018 RFP for Smart Parking Management Strategy and Implementation Plan. This is a well written request for proposal and I'd like to understand the submissions received and next steps. The goal should be to find solutions that mitigate parking concerns, use our space more constructively and create alternative transportation options such as bikes and public transit.



4. The Greenbelt is the outlying rural area around the City's urban core.
 - Do you support adjustments to the Comprehensive Plan that would change allowable uses or increase or decrease allowable densities in the Greenbelt?

I support the current zoning rules and regulations protecting the City's outer district, and will champion efforts to preserve this space against runaway development. I also advocate for the renewing of an open space bond act that will allow the City to secure properties important to the Cities Open Space Plan.

- What kind of actions, if any, do you think the City should take to protect the watershed and Saratoga Lake from the deleterious effects of development?

One of the areas where I'm most concerned has to do with the environmental health of our primary water supply source at Loughberry Lake. It appears to be undergoing a slow degradation as a result of climate change and urban development impacts, however we have not done any environmental study updates in decades that pertain to the water quality and quantity issues related to this primary water supply source. First and foremost, we need to commission a study updating the quality and quantity issues for our water supply. Based on this comprehensive water study update we can then properly determine short-term and long-term solutions.

5. The Comprehensive Plan calls for action on key sustainability issues facing our community, including affordable housing, parking, trails, energy conservation, environmental protection, recycling and waste reduction, and multimodal transportation. However, the City Charter does not assign responsibility for these issues to any specific City department.

- What actions will you take to establish leadership and make progress in these areas?

Under this form of government we are limited to assigning full responsibility because each member at the council table is one of five votes. However, what I will commit to do is use my voice as an advocate and sponsor City policy and procedure for the following areas: affordable housing and other environmental and quality of life issues facing the city as identified in this questionnaire.

Additionally, as the Commissioner who oversees the City's IT department, I will sponsor efforts to continue and expand a "smart city" approach that monitors and analyzes data to allow better decision making and thus more efficient use of resources.



- For which of these specific areas will you pledge to assume responsibility, if no other council member has already assumed responsibility?
 - affordable housing
 - energy conservation
 - open greenspace

- Could a non-profit like Sustainable Saratoga play a role in achieving your agenda?

I believe it is both in the interest of the City and feasible for the City to promote Sustainable Saratoga and other non-profits that have a direct impact on quality of life and longer-term planning, including helping encourage events and participation in such events. As a city council member, I would solicit input from such non-profits on a regular basis for promising initiatives, and as Commissioner of Finance direct my department to work directly with such organizations on conducting appropriate cost benefit analysis and fiscal analysis of proposals to allow open discussion on continuing Saratoga Springs' leadership in sustainable policy

