



*Educate.
Advocate.
Act.*

Sustainable Saratoga
PO Box 454
Saratoga Springs, NY
12866
info@sustainablesarato
ga.org
www.sustainablesarato
ga.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.

It is important to note that I am running for a position at the County level, with limited control and impact on the development and policies on the City level. Therefore, my answers will primarily focus on the County level and how it may impact Saratoga Springs.

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

One of the first steps necessary at the County level is to consolidate economic development funding and reduce redundancy in funding and personnel. This will streamline decision-making and oversight and potentially release some County funding for other priorities. Additionally, I continue to encourage the development of a technology committee on the Board of Supervisors, which will set and oversee priorities in the County to attract more tech-oriented and small and remote businesses with a focus on long-term integration into our community. One of my first steps as Supervisor was to push the nomination of a second Saratoga County representative to the Capital District Transportation Authority in order to improve and increase public transportation and decrease reliance on cars. I am focused on a Housing First model for the County to assist the housing unstable, and working within state and national committees to learn more how to best develop County-level development policies that focus on resiliency and municipal density while preserving open space.

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?

My first step will be to continue pushing for a county-wide climate plan focused on both mitigation and adaptation. This plan would look at what the county is and can do to reduce impact on the environment, including increasing use of solar for county energy needs; building additional technologies into the planned biosolids facility with Albany County, including bio-char; and adding additional methods of re-using and re-cycling County supplies. It would also review the County's ability to respond to climate change, including development within the County and the preservation of green space; emergency management planning and scenarios; and infrastructure and municipal cooperation planning. Currently, I sit on the leadership team of the Energy, Environment, and Land Use Committee of the National Association of Counties, as well as on the membership of state and national level resilient counties committees, in order to learn best practices for application within Saratoga County.

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?

I believe that a comprehensive and unified review of parking within the City of Saratoga Springs is an excellent idea and, similarly, a review of transportation through Saratoga County is necessary. A primary transportation issue within the County as a whole is the need for increased public transportation, especially given the planned movement and distribution of County services outside of the existing public transportation structure. Additionally, working with neighboring counties through CDTA, we may be able to develop commuter-oriented services along the Northway which would increase employment opportunities for Saratoga County residents. To this end, during my first year on the Board of Supervisors, I pushed for a resolution for a second representative from Saratoga County on the CDTA Board; while the resolution currently rests in the hands of Governor Cuomo (who makes the official appointment), the position had previously been vacant for years.

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?
 - 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?

The Greenbelt should be preserved and the City and County should review the potential impacts on the watershed of all development actions, with a primary focus of preserving water security and health. This should be a major consideration in the climate mitigation plans and affect the use of chemicals, particularly in law enforcement, at the county airport, and in agricultural use.

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?
 - For which of these specific areas will you pledge to assume responsibility, if no other council member has already assumed responsibility?
 - Could a non-profit like Sustainable Saratoga play a role in achieving your agenda?

As Supervisor, my role is to focus on County-level sustainability issues, and I pledge to continue the push for a county-wide climate mitigation plan as described above, either through a standing committee or a separate ad hoc group. I will also seek federal and state funding that will allow Saratoga County to take actions resulting from the plan to minimize the impact on the County budget while preparing for the future. I will continue to work with Sustainable Saratoga and other non-profits to assist in obtaining resources and connections to move Saratoga Springs and Saratoga County into a healthy and prosperous future.