

2021 Candidate Sustainability Questionnaire

1. General Sustainability:

A. What do sustainability and climate resiliency mean to you in the context of local governance?

Local elections matter in so many areas, including this one. Locally-led sustainability practices and efforts to increase climate resiliency are crucial. We need local officials who are willing to focus on initiatives they can implement that will improve Saratoga's sustainable practices and protection of natural resources.

B. What are your top 3 sustainability-related priorities for Saratoga Springs, and what concrete actions will you take to address them?

My top three sustainability-related priorities are:

- (1) As the Purchasing Agent for Saratoga, using Saratoga's purchasing power to drive sustainable choices in our contracts for goods and services;
- (2) Promoting increased recycling throughout Saratoga Springs, especially downtown; and
- (3) Reducing carbon emissions and air pollution by improving the bikeability and walkability of Saratoga through construction and maintenance of more walkways and bike lanes.

In addition, as an independent candidate, I will work with everyone - other City Council members, city employees, county officials, non-profit groups, and individual citizens - and enlist their help and ideas to improve Saratoga's sustainability practices.

2. Climate Crisis:

A. What role do you think local government should play in preparing for and addressing climate change?

Climate change is a global crisis that requires local action. Saratoga Springs has a responsibility to contribute to the worldwide effort of combating climate change by reducing energy use, purchasing goods and services responsibly, and promoting alternative transportation solutions. Local government in general, and City Council in particular, should play a leading role in assisting Saratoga to prepare for and address climate change. This role should focus on bringing people together to work toward solutions.

B. What policies and programs will you implement to improve the environmental health and climate resiliency of our community in the face of increasing climate disruption, including extreme temperatures and precipitation events?

I will be an advocate for a fully-staffed fire/emergency medical service station on the East Side. From my work as a Commissioner of Civil Service, I know how long the hiring process is for firefighters. We need to work together as a community to get rolling on this immediately. I also recognize that climate change is a social issue, and I will work with Saratoga's diverse communities to improve the health and quality of life of all Saratogians, including seeking to increase the diversity of our commissions and boards.

C. Given the urgency of the climate crisis, what policies and programs will you implement to curb greenhouse gas emissions and under what timeline will these policies and programs be implemented?

I will be an advocate for the priorities I mentioned above - improving bicycle transit, installing recycling bins downtown, and redirecting government purchasing power to sustainable products and services, all of which will curb greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, I fully support our Complete Streets and Smart City Street Lights initiatives

3. Unified Development Ordinance (UDO): For several years, the city of Saratoga Springs has been engaged in a complete rewriting of the city's zoning ordinance. This Unified Development Ordinance is ostensibly the most important regulatory document in the city and will direct land use and development standards for years. The UDO is slated to be voted on after the election, on November 16.

A. Do you believe the draft UDO contains adequate sustainability measures, including protections for our natural resources and mitigations for addressing the climate crisis, to satisfy the vision laid out in the 2015 Comprehensive Plan? Please explain your answer.

I believe this question refers to the final proposed draft of the UDO, released on September 21, 2021. I was happy to see that this draft responded to many of the issues raised by Sustainable Saratoga and the City Planning Board's Advisory Opinion to the Council. However, I believe the final proposed UDO still contains inadequate sustainability measures, which are inconsistent with the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. In addition, this final draft has not been through public comment yet. As an independent candidate, I will be a voice for Saratoga on City Council. I am looking forward to the October 5 and 19 hearings to listen to the public's view of the proposed UDO.

The city of Saratoga Springs has a "greenbelt" – a large area of low-density, low intensity development in the outer portions of the city – to retain a sense of rural character outside of the city's core while concentrating the impacts of development and transportation within the core, to protect sensitive environmental features such as wetlands and open spaces, and to advance the city's identity as "the City in the Country."

B. Given the intense and persistent development pressure on the greenbelt, what is your assessment of the effectiveness of the UDO to protect this city resource?

Again, I was happy to see that this draft responded to many of the issues raised by Sustainable Saratoga regarding the greenbelt, but I believe the final proposed UDO should be more effective in its protection. For example, it appears that the UDO still allows some inappropriate uses in the greenbelt's rural gateway zones. In addition, this final draft has not been through public comment yet. As an independent candidate, I will be a voice for Saratoga on City Council. I am looking forward to the October 5 and 19 hearings to listen to the public's view of the proposed UDO.

C. If elected, what additional measures would you take, if any, to ensure the continued existence of the city's greenbelt?

I believe in the vision of Saratoga as the city in the country. If elected, I will support limiting sprawl and preserving the greenbelt in accordance with the principles of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan.

4. Affordable Housing:

A. What steps will you take toward achieving increased opportunities for diverse and affordable housing (both rental and ownership) for both middle- and lower-income levels?

I will work to create a Saratoga that is affordable to all, not just for the wealthy, I want our local firefighters, the waitstaff in our restaurants, and the clerks in our stores to be able to live in and enjoy all that Saratoga has to offer. By working with the other members of City Council, state and local agencies, and non-profit organizations, I will seek to increase diverse and affordable housing in Saratoga.

B. Would you support inclusionary zoning (or some other proposal) to promote affordable housing in Saratoga?

Yes, I support inclusionary zoning as a way to promote affordable housing.



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5. Sustainable Saratoga's Role:

A. What are your thoughts about working in cooperation with Sustainable Saratoga in helping the city achieve greater sustainability features and environmental protections?

I welcome working in cooperation with Sustainable Saratoga to help Saratoga Springs achieve greater sustainability and environmental protections. I recognize that I am not an expert in all areas and, if elected, I will rely on learning from those with specialized knowledge. The best way for Saratoga Springs to succeed is by bringing people together to tackle important issues. In the case of sustainability and environmental protections, that means being open to collaboration with groups like Sustainable Saratoga, which has worked on environmental issues in Saratoga for over a decade.

B. If elected, would you be receptive to a mid-term follow-up with Sustainable Saratoga, to review sustainability progress, obstacles, and possible ways we can work together?

Absolutely. I would be disappointed if Sustainable Saratoga did not hold me accountable as Commissioner of Accounts. I look forward to follow-up and collaboration with Sustainable Saratoga so that we may improve Saratoga's sustainable practices and protection of its natural resources.