

General Sustainability

A. What do sustainability and climate resiliency mean to you in the context of local governance? Sustainability in the context of local government is ensuring our laws and policies enable our community to live with a balance between consumption and contribution back to the Earth. Climate resiliency is creating an environment for our community that reduces our contribution to climate change and be prepared to respond to the changing climate.

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

1. Continue working on sidewalk and trail programs to ensure safe nonmotorized paths all over the City. This will be achieved by advocating with all elected Commissioners to fund and support these programs.
2. Work with our Administrator of Parks, Open Lands, Historic Preservation, and Sustainability (Tina Carton) to plan out achieving Certified Silver Climate Smart Community designation.
3. Expanding the funding and accessibility of EV Charging stations available in the City through working with the Department of Public Works to assess the challenges of implementing and sustaining EV Charging stations and backing funding to address these issues.

Climate Crisis

A. What role do you think local government should play in preparing for and addressing climate change? The local level officials must be aware of every issue facing the city and its residents.

We must research the facts and partner with the local experts to explore programs and community incentives that are viable in the City of Saratoga Springs. The local government officials are the leaders in implementing real change in fighting climate change.

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? As Mayor, the biggest responsibility in preparing for climate change is continuing to ensure that zoning enables high density in the urban core.

This allows many residents to reduce their need for items that contribute to climate change. Advocating for well-planned and safe bike lanes, incentivizing businesses and residents to adopt sustainable habits, and continue to be a leader in addressing climate change. We are a Bronze Level Climate Smart Community, and I will continue to work to achieve Certified Silver level.

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? The City currently has exceptional programs to combat the climate crisis, such as EV Charging stations, Spa City Solar Park, and Community Choice Aggregation. I will continue to fund these programs and enable the expansion of new programming that has been researched to provide the city residents and businesses with the best options during the escalating climate crisis. The priority is to continue funding for the programs we currently have to ensure sustainability then I will work with the professionals to create new programming such as expanding municipal electric fleet vehicles, partnering with local restaurants to reduce food

waste, and incentivizing construction and building rehabilitation to increase the utilization of energy-efficient products.

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. 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."

I was impressed that, except for four inconsistencies, the Planning board determined that the UDO is compatible with the Comprehensive Plan. In my opinion, translating the vision from the Comprehensive Plan into law via the zoning ordinance, and combining it with other key City planning documents, is an enormous undertaking. The current version of the UDO accomplishes this and then goes further to implement additional protections and sustainability measures that will benefit our greenbelt. It provides a strong framework from which to consider future improvements.

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?

The expansion of conservation analysis in the UDO and measures to protect our natural resources are strong examples of addressing some of this pressure. I also believe that the use of allowances and definitions provides the Planning Board an effective foundation to build in project-specific conditions when considering an application in the RR.

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

There were many requests and recommendations submitted by our land use boards and community partners for the greenbelt that are not yet implemented into the zoning ordinance. I would ask the Council to consider amendments from these lists.

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? The Mayor's Community Development Office has worked diligently with builders and real estate firms to secure affordable housing options for current and new residents of the City. Including the proposed affordable housing units, the City is on target to exceed available units by more than twice the HUD requirement.

One of the primary issues I have found is the lack of knowledge of these programs and marketing their availability to potential residents will be a priority to ensure everyone has a place in Saratoga Springs.

B. Would you support inclusionary zoning (or some other proposal) to promote affordable housing in Saratoga? Inclusionary zoning can be beneficial to Saratoga Springs, and I would welcome working with a team to incorporate inclusionary zoning.

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? It is always best to include the local community organizations in forums that support idea exchanges and cooperation.

Partnerships with clearly defined roles can lead to incredible opportunities for residents and businesses.

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? This would be a wonderful opportunity to continue to discuss items that are important to Sustainable Saratoga and how the City can continue to support the work of this organization. I am fully open to meet with a community organization to strengthen relationships and build a better community for everyone.