

September 20, 2023

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 Saratoga Springs.

The upcoming November election offers an opportunity to discuss pressing environmental issues in our area. Our supporters are interested in knowing your plans for addressing the key sustainability issues confronting our community. We are requesting your responses to the questions below by October 4, 2023. Please email your answers back to us (kelsey@sustainablesaratoga.org) in digital form.

As a 501(c)(3) organization, we do not endorse any particular candidate for an elected office. Your responses and those of other candidates will be posted on our website, shared to our social media, and emailed to our members verbatim. We will not provide any comments on the responses.

Thank you in advance for your participation, and please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Kelsey Trudell
Executive Director
Sustainable Saratoga



Board of Directors: Anne Ernst, Laura Faulk, Dianna Goodwin (Chair), Sarah Goodwin, Elaine McArdle, Harry Moran, Paul Murphy (Treasurer), Richard Romano (Secretary), David Sayer

1. Sustainable Saratoga believes that to be more sustainable as a city, we need more diverse and affordable housing. If you agree, what type of efforts would you support to achieve this objective? If you disagree, please explain why. **I agree more diverse and affordable housing is needed. The best way to achieve this is to create a zoning code that allows for that. Smaller lots, tiny homes, and the availability of creating rental units easily would help in that regard. The City has several more affordable projects underway, and I believe the City should continue in its efforts to diversify our housing stock.**
2. Saratoga Springs participates in the No Mow May movement encouraging residents, homeowners, businesses, and municipalities to reduce the frequency of mowing to provide habitat and food for pollinators. Rate your support for changing municipal mowing practices to encourage native plantings and natural habitat and for banning insecticide use on municipal properties.

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Do Not Support Highly Support

Comments: **I participate in No Mow May and would encourage my fellow residents to also participate. As far as municipal practices, I would agree that requiring municipalities to plant native trees in the public Right-of-Way and in public parks; as well as reducing mowing by creating wildflower fields, or allowing native plants to grow in open spaces. I agree municipalities should limit (but not ban as in some cases it may be necessary) the use of insecticides on public property.**

3. Saratoga Springs’ Complete Streets Policy is to ensure that road projects are planned and designed with safe, convenient travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders. Rate your support for the Complete Streets Plan.

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Do Not Support Highly Support

Comments: **I have a history of supporting and fostering bicycle and pedestrian improvements throughout the County. I was an early advocate for the Geyser Road Trail and was able to push for the County Board of Supervisors to adopt their County Bike Route map. I believe the City and County should ensure that when engineering and planning road projects, as well as for the yearly re-paving, that the City and County consider all modes of transportation. Widening shoulders, adding bike lanes, and placing sidewalks where none exist should all be part of this program.**

4. Saratoga Springs has a long history of tree-lined downtown streets which provide much desired aesthetic value in addition to promoting clean air, clean water, and cooler temperatures. Rate your support for the continued funding of urban tree plantings to expand Saratoga's urban forest.

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Do Not Support Highly Support

Comments: **I agree that the City should continue funding the urban tree planting program throughout the City.**

5. In 2016, the then City Council adopted a report of the Downtown Parking Task Force, which called for several steps including an "Office of Downtown Parking Management," a volunteer advisory board, and the selection of a professional parking management firm to design and implement a plan. Rate your support for implementing the recommendations in this report for a downtown parking management plan.

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Do Not Support Highly Support

Comments: **I believe the City should keep to its commitments and begin implementing the recommendations of this plan. Regardless of the outcomes, the City should take an active look at parking and how it affects the City's traffic flow and the current parking situation and its impact on downtown businesses.**

6. Saratoga Springs is known as the "City in the Country." Sustainable Saratoga believes it is critical for the city to codify zoning and planning standards, protect the Greenbelt and open space, and support sustainable growth principles. The city's current zoning ordinance (the UDO) allows development in the Greenbelt that risks urban sprawl. Sustainable Saratoga has supported amendments to the UDO to continue to protect the city's Greenbelt. Rate your support for amending the UDO to limit development and retain rural character in the city's Greenbelt, including the rural gateways into our city.

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Do Not Support Highly Support

Comments: **Saratoga Springs has done the right thing over the years by creating a Zoning plan that concentrates development within the urban core and has less dense**

development in the Greenbelt. It has made our City a desirable place to live. I do not believe that the City should change overall zoning to increase or decrease allowable density in the Greenbelt. I do believe though that individual projects should be weighed on their merits, and any allowances for variation from the zoning should be used sparingly with review from the City’s Land-Use boards, on a case-by-case basis. I would be against a total prohibition of all potential projects that do not fit zoning in the greenbelt area.

- 7. Sustainable Saratoga advocates for limiting the amount of garbage and food waste that enters the landfill. Currently our downtown business district has no recycling bins for the public to dispose of recyclables, and the city of Saratoga Springs is lacking a municipal community compost collection service. Rate your support for the addition of public recycling bins downtown and the development of a community composting program.

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Do Not Support

Highly Support

Comments: I absolutely agree that the City should begin a municipal recycling program, as well as a community compost collection. Recycling is the law in Saratoga County, and while a study on why this is not a requirement for our various towns, cities, and villages may be a conversation at the County level, I believe municipalities should take the initiative and leverage the County’s recycling center for municipal recycling. Having a downtown program for recycling would help to increase the amount of recycling materials that the County processes. It’s a great potential intermunicipal partnership that could find great success. Our municipal leaf and grass pickup has been one of the most popular and successful programs our City has, and adding a municipal compost pickup can only enhance an already successful project.