

1. In the city's Comprehensive Plan, Saratoga Springs is defined as the "City in the Country," meaning an intensively developed urban core and vibrant downtown surrounded by "the Greenbelt," an outlying area of rural character and natural resources, with low-density residential development. Do you support this vision of Saratoga Springs or do you think it should change? What are your ideas for economic development that promote smart, sustainable growth for our community?

I recently met with Sustainable staff (Kelsey) and board member (Amy) regarding a proposed project in the Greenbelt. This project would have required both comprehensive plan and zoning amendments to proceed and I told the applicant I would not be supportive of the required changes for the project to proceed and informed Sustainable the same.

After this instance, another applicant approached me with a lawful project involving an area overlayed by the Greenbelt. As I have previously promised Kelsey and Amy, if I became aware of any Greenbelt impacts I would inform them. I subsequently facilitated a meeting between Sustainable and the development team to ensure that as they further design, the concerns Sustainable expressed be incorporated.

I believe in doing what I've said/promised and Sustainable representatives can attest I've held my word in all instances.

2. The Saratoga Springs Hazard Mitigation Plan ranks severe storms, flooding, and extreme temperatures as the top hazards for the city. The city's natural "green infrastructure," including forests and wetlands, helps protect against flooding, reduces urban heat, and absorbs carbon from the atmosphere. What is your plan for keeping the city's "green infrastructure" intact and for protecting city residents and our local economy from intensifying climate hazards?

Upon entering office one of the first titles I created was the position of Urban Forester. This position was created in compliance with the 2013 Urban Forestry plan. Urban Forestry plays an element in protecting the identified natural resources in the question.

Upon coming into office, there were four Senior Engineering Technician positions open. Additional titles include: Stormwater/GIS Specialist and Utilities Engineer. The Stormwater/GIS Specialist will specifically be tasked with addressing the increasing demands of severe weather and adherence to the NYS DEC MS4 requirements.

These positions were created to address specific needs within the Engineering Department to address climate action, the City's ability to address instantaneous response and implementation of long-range planning.

Finally, DPW is currently with Sustainable on a signage program where DPW will design and obtains permits through NSYDOT designating entry to the Greenbelt in varying locations throughout the City.

3. Approximately 40% of the food produced in the U.S. for human consumption is wasted, with much of it ending up in landfills and resulting in further environmental problems. Should municipal food scraps collection be added to the City's existing composting operations?

The largest concern with inclusion of food scraps in the City's composting program is the pickup mechanism. Currently, leaf/lawn debris is retrieved through on street pickup of yard debris and inclusion of food scraps could not be done in the same manner. A trial program would have to include voluntary drop-off of material at the Weibel Ave facility before attempting a pickup program.

4. The cost of housing in Saratoga Springs continues to rise. In other resort communities such as ours, simply building more housing has not reduced housing costs. Please discuss your ideas for making Saratoga Springs more affordable.

As a Planning Board member, I supported a number of subdivisions with non-conforming lots; particularly in the inner district. Allowing non-conforming lots creates an in-fill mechanism preventing sprawl or attempts at it.

The second thing I'd be supportive of is an inclusionary zoning program and adoption of the NYS 485-a program. Inclusionary zoning is the process by which height bonuses would be granted to developers seeking multi-story developments. This would require modification of Section 4.4(B) of the UDO.

Currently, the City only participates in the NYS 485-B program which applies to commercial, industrial and retail projects. The adoption of the 485-A program would enable mixed-use projects inclusive of residential development to be included in the tax abatement program. This would also, primarily affect inner district developments.

5. Sustainable Saratoga and the city of Saratoga Springs have worked hard for years to increase the presence of trees in the city—the "urban forest"—which provides environmental, social, and economic benefits for Saratoga Springs. This ongoing program requires investment in trained professional staff, tree planting, and maintenance. How important is funding for the urban forest among other city priorities?

Pursuant to number 2, the creation of the Urban Forester was an initial undertaking when I got into office. The position received approval of the Civil Service Commission and awaits budgetary approval for final adaptation. When the Urban Forester position is filled, we will backfill the Arborist position and bring DPW in line with the 2013 Urban Forestry plan.

6. Please feel free to address your top sustainability priorities for Saratoga Springs or any other sustainability topics.

As stated above, I've made sustainability a priority by incorporating it into the regular activities of DPW. The creation of positions including Urban Forester, GIS/Stormwater Specialist and Utilities Engineer will protect the City's infrastructure while making us more climate resilient.

Connectivity will be the emphasis of work in the imminent future. In May, I introduced a resolution that enabled DPW to access payment in lieu of funds from the Planning Board to be utilized for Missing Link and ADA compliant projects. After a meeting with Inclusive Saratoga, we are currently working with Saratoga County to design and permit the first project utilizing this process.

Subsequently, I was able to identify unspent state funds which will further the construction of identified Greenbelt Trail projects allowing bicyclists to traverse from Geyser Road to Nelson Avenue via Crescent Ave Connector (RFP issued) and through a dangerous segment of Excelsior Spring Ave (RFP intended October). This does not include Church and Van Dam streets where a separate study identified pedestrian improvements to mitigate impacts of existing truck traffic that will likely serve as a deterrent for future truck traffic. Decreasing the reliance of vehicles or incentivizing multi-modal transport is a significant opportunity for the City and its residents.