

September 9, 2025

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.

Prior to the upcoming November election our many supporters are interested in knowing your position on sustainability issues in our community. We are requesting your responses to the questions below by October 3, 2025. 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 newsletter subscribers 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

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?

Interresting that I was talking about the history and importance of the Greenbelt just this morning.

I am in favor of maintaining the greenbelt to protect our city in the country.

I believe that strong downtowns surrounded by places for recreation and connecting to nature ensure long term viability of a community and are therefore critical to economonic development and to drawing businesses and a workforce to Saratoga Springs.

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

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?

I am a strong believer in green infrastructure and open space, as my past service on the Saratoga Plan Board and current service on the SoBro Conservancy board will attest. I will be fierce advocate for open space as an important way to mitigate intensifying climate hazards.

Over the past 10 years the County has committed over \$250,000 and up to \$500,000 in its annual budget for Open Space in large part because of my predecessor and Matt Vietch. Matt and I have discussed this very issue at length and he has promised to help me navigate this issue with the County.

If elected supervisor I would want to continue to advocate this level of support or even increase the amounts.

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?

I am in strong agreement that reducing food waste and keeping it out of landfills is an excellent goal.

The City of Saratoga Springs was very forward-thinking when they implemented the composting program for yard waste. In my opinion it has been an unqualified success and one of the programs that is truly taken advantage of by our residents. They feel as though they are contributing to something positive when they put their yard waste out on the curb each year. I would absolutely support adding food waste to this program, and would work with the City DPW in providing any County funding or support to this initiative. While the Supervisor does not directly have involvement with these types of City initiatives, the County has a great resource with its

partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension and Saratoga County Soil and Water to help with recommendations or support of the 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.

I was pleased to see Governor Hochuls “move-in NY” initiative announced and I will be watching closely the impact it has on the initial targeted cities. Affordable housing is the foundation for much economic development, and much housing is needed to support the workers, medical professionals, first responders and others.

Our ‘City in the Country’ concept for Saratoga Springs, keeping the inner district more densely developed than the outer areas of the City is a big factor in what makes Saratoga Springs so attractive to so many home buyers. Unfortunately, while sustainable for the long term, this concept has perhaps unintentionally caused real estate values to rise to a level that has made it difficult for those of modest means to either rent or own in Saratoga Springs.

I support the Comprehensive Plan’s goals and ideals. While the County Supervisor does not have any direct input into the City’s planning, I would be supportive of any affordable housing initiatives, such as the recent developments near West Avenue, which give those of moderate incomes the ability to reside within the City limits.

One concept that has been used to some success in Essex County has been their land bank program which leverages government involvement to rehabilitate aging homes and substandard properties, and then sell them back to qualified owners in order to achieve sustainable and long-term

affordability for residents. Approaches that revitalize existing homes and create affordable housing are true win-wins.

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?

Tree Toga is a low cost, high impact program that should continue to be funded. I had the opportunity to participate in Tree Toga with my daughter and we still drive by the trees we helped plant and reflect on what was a great day meeting neighbors and adding to the vibrancy of this city. Tree Toga not only supplies and replaces trees that deliver valuable environmental benefits to the city it provides a connection to the community that will last for generations.

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

Politics aside, sustainability and mitigating the causes and impacts of climate change are among my most personal passions. As a boy scout I was taught not just the value of our natural world but that only humans can protect it. As an adult I regularly study how to mitigate the effects of human activities on our environment. One of my favorite recent reads was “ The Year of No Garbage” By Eve Schwartz. A fascinating tale that really uncovers so many myths about the effect of plastic on our planet. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle are a great mantra but they need to be focused in that order—first REDUCE, then REUSE, last RECYCLE. Too much attention over the years has been focused on the least impactful of those 3—recycle. As a community we need to do our best to educate people that the #1 way to drive sustainability is to REDUCE consumption.

As green as Saratoga is relative to other communities, I believe a lot more can be done. I will fight for the appropriate funding and resources to secure that countywide we are doing as much as possible to make Saratoga Springs and County as sustainable as possible.



*Educate.
Advocate.
Act.*