



*Educate.
Advocate.
Act.*

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelsey Trudell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the top of the "K" across the top of the name.

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?

Yes, I support this vision for Saratoga Springs. I welcome economic development that incorporates green building initiatives; however, each project must be carefully balanced against its actual costs, particularly when it involves public funding. The City of Saratoga Springs is facing significant financial constraints in the near future. For that reason, this type of development will need to rely heavily on grants and other outside funding sources.

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 support all planning and development that incorporates protecting our green infrastructure. I believe the Planning Board does an excellent job of integrating this concept into new projects.

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?

Potentially. Again, I agree with this concept; however, cost will ultimately be the deciding factor.

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.

Housing costs are incredibly high throughout the country. They are especially higher in more desirable places to live, particularly areas with low crime rates and strong schools. I believe efforts to expand affordable housing should focus on the middle class. Saratoga has increasingly become a place only for the wealthy or the poor, while the middle class has been pushed to purchase or rent in Ballston Spa or Malta. I believe that the short-term rental (STR) market has driven up the cost of our middle-class housing stock. For example, Geyser Crest, once an affordable neighborhood, has been overrun with STRs, effectively turning homes into de-facto hotels catering to weekend bachelor and bachelorette parties. The failure to address this issue in the past has directly contributed to today's affordability crisis in Saratoga Springs, as the market value of homes is now based on their short-term rental rates. As such, the implementation of STR regulation is welcomed but has been delayed in implementation.

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?

I support this initiative and have volunteered in the past.

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