

Environmental Questions for Candidates

* Required

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Approved in 2018, the Evanston Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP) identifies actions our City must take to meaningfully address climate change. The following questions relate to the various elements of CARP and align with the actions featured in the plan. Citizens' Greener Evanston appreciates your participation. Your responses will be shared with the community in advance of the election.

Evanston Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP)

<https://www.cityofevanston.org/home/showdocument?id=45170>

1. What are the top 3 things you have you done in your personal life to reduce your own, or your family's environmental impact? *

We compost, three members of our family of four are pescatarian or vegetarian (I am pescatarian), and we drive a hybrid car.

2. List 1-4 steps you would take to help implement the CARP plan incorporating key City departments and decision-making processes. *

1. Prioritize CARP in City budget and procurement procedures, including the level of funding for the Office of Sustainability.
2. Establish additional clear and measurable goals and deadlines toward CARP implementation, create and regularly update an online dashboard where the public can monitor progress toward these goals, and establish a system of accountability for missed goals.
3. Prioritize engaging and organizing communities of color as the City moves forward with CARP implementation, given that communities of color are experiencing the harshest consequences of climate change.
4. Use government projects, including rooftop solar on municipal buildings and schools, as demonstration opportunities to encourage more private sector steps toward CARP compliance.

(For this and many other questions, you can see more detail at the Climate and Sustainability page on our website: <https://www.danielbiss.com/climate>)

3. What are your top environmental or climate priorities for the City? *

1. The implementation and success of CARP, as outlined in the question above.
2. The implementation and success of our Environmental Justice Resolution, including the establishment of a clear plan to mitigate the inequities present in Environmental Justice Areas.
3. The protection of the lakefront and our access to safe drinking water by utilizing green infrastructure to avoid combined sewer overflow and moving away from lead service lines.

4. The City just passed an Environmental Justice Resolution. What steps should be taken to ensure that Environmental Justice (EJ) is incorporated into City Code and that all City staff is trained to identify and tackle EJ issues? *

The city should develop a public engagement mechanism that ensures the most affected communities are leading the discussion. The city should also use this mechanism to formulate a strong definition of Environmental Justice Area, and create and maintain a public map of such areas. City government should also establish a clear plan to mitigate the inequities present in Environmental Justice Areas; this mitigation plan must be a part of all public communication about the Environmental Justice Areas. Finally, we must prioritize Environmental Justice Areas when making decisions about infrastructure projects, economic development, and code revisions -- and in order to make this happen, we must establish a process whereby city decisions are not made, regardless of department, without first assessing them against our EJ priorities.

5. Building energy consumption is the greatest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Evanston. Assertive action and meaningful behavior change to address building energy

consumption are needed to mitigate the gravest impacts of the climate crisis. Would you endorse: *

Yes

No

Maybe

Updating the building code to require LEED Gold Certification or higher on new construction?: YES

Updating the building code to improve overall building energy efficiency beyond the minimum requirements of the State of Illinois Energy Conservation Code?: YES

Updating the building code to require LEED Gold Certification or higher on new construction?: YES

Updating the building code to improve overall building energy efficiency beyond the minimum requirements of the State of Illinois Energy Conservation Code?: YES

6. List 1-3 of your ideas to engage and educate the public so that Evanstonians have the knowledge and resources to address the climate crisis. *

1. The mayor must personally convene public discussions to communicate the challenges that climate change can present to Evanston and the tradeoffs necessary to forestall the worse consequences.
2. The City must engage with partner public institutions like libraries, schools, and the ecology center to maximize our opportunities to educate our community.
3. We must establish truly inclusive mechanisms of community engagement, perhaps including paid stakeholder participation to ensure that all voices are participating in these processes.

7. List 1-3 of your ideas to ensure that our most vulnerable residents are prepared for the challenges of climate change such as extreme heat, flooding, etc. and that they know where to get support when facing such challenges. *

1. We must engage the whole community in developing detailed resilience plans to ensure that our strategies reflect the diverse needs of different neighborhoods and constituencies in Evanston.

2. We must immediately commence clear communication about what models suggest are the likeliest dangerous outcomes for Evanstonians to give residents the needed time to prepare for these challenges.
3. We must utilize and expand programs to retrofit homes of the most vulnerable to prepare for the challenges that will likely arise.

8. Would you endorse: *

Yes

No

Maybe

A pathway to free beach access for all?: YES

An affordable pathway to lead pipe replacement?: YES

9. How would you advance green infrastructure in Evanston? *

Green infrastructure must be integrated into all capital planning and expenditures. Moreover, we must deploy a broad definition of green infrastructure that includes not only traditional projects but also natural options including expansion of the urban tree canopy and green spaces, as well as nature-based stormwater solutions. Finally, we must establish clear goals and benchmarks that will point toward the utilization of more green infrastructure, such as the goal of ending combined sewer overflow.

10. Reducing food waste is a top climate solution. The USDA estimates that 30-40% of food is wasted in the US, while as many as 14% of Evanston residents may be food insecure. List 1-3 ideas to ensure all people in Evanston have enough healthy food to eat. *

1. Evanston has long been on the forefront of exploring the connection between public health, sustainability, and urban agriculture -- these efforts should be expanded.

2. We should emulate recent progress France has made on addressing the issue of food waste, including both the implementation of new regulations as well as pairing restaurants and grocery stores with nonprofits working on food insecurity and food waste.

11. List 1-3 ideas to combat food waste in Evanston, including at schools. *

1. We must give residents tools to properly sort their food waste.
2. We must expand composting by emulating San Francisco's successful program that combined a phased-in system of mandates with a program to give residents and businesses the tools they needed to make it work, including access to modern facilities, financial incentives, and community engagement.
3. We must work with the school boards to create demonstration programs that move our schools toward zero food waste status, and then spread these efforts outward to the rest of the community.

12. Would you endorse: *

Yes

No

Maybe

A path to ban all single-use plastics, including shopping bags?: YES

Expanding bulk shopping options at stores?: YES

13. How would you support a circular economy in Evanston? *

Broadly speaking, we must make it easier to recycle and reuse through refinement of municipal services as well as public education initiatives. This includes programmatic changes around municipal recycling, vocal support and leadership by example when it comes to building a culture of reuse and repair, and a number of specific policies related to construction and demolition (C&D). Specifically, we should partner with Evanston Rebuilding Warehouse to use large municipal and nonprofit projects as models for the community to learn about deconstruction options. We must enhance compliance with the Cook County Construction and

Demolition diversion ordinance by tracking data both to identify instances of non-compliance and to improve the market for reused and recycled C&D material. After full compliance is achieved, we must pass a strengthened C&D ordinance, modeled after Portland's deconstruction ordinance.

14. List 1-3 ideas you have to advance climate-friendly transportation and mobility in Evanston, either through project investments or big picture changes to urban development planning. *

1. Leverage existing upcoming capital projects on Church St., Chicago Ave., and Oakton St. to maximize walkability, bike safety and convenience, and transit access.
2. Conduct a sidewalk gap analysis to determine necessary upgrades and begin work on those projects, with priority given to areas whose sidewalk inadequacies reflect a history of racism in Evanston.
3. Prioritize access to schools when planning walkability and bike safety.

15. Would you endorse: *

Yes

No

Maybe

Preserving large native trees on private land? More info -

<http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1635842,00.html>: YES

Requiring bird-friendly construction on new buildings and renovations, like Chicago and New York City? More info - <https://studiogang.com/publication/Chicago-tribune-safer-migration-chicago-birds>:

YES

Leaving leaves to decompose on city properties, rather than hauling them? More info -

<https://awaytogarden.com/fall-cleanup-with-ecology-in-mind-with-doug-tallamy/>: YES

Expanding the city ban on gas, propane and electric leaf blowers? More info -

https://library.municode.com/il/evanston/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodetd=TIT9PUSA_CH5GEOF_9-5-20NOPR and <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/109428.html>: YES