

Katie Trippi, 6th Ward

Citizens for Greener Evanston Candidate Questionnaire, February 2021

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? *

I have been personally committed to reducing my personal environmental impact since producing a science fair project on air pollution in the 4th grade. I became the environmental activist in my family and insisted that we begin recycling and composting any and all things and this was in the early 1970's. Since then I have continued my personal practices to reduce my family's human impact on the environment in as many ways as possible. I hope this is a lasting trait that I have instilled in my children as they start their own households and educate their own families. I would say the top three things that I have done lately are:

I leave the car in the garage whenever possible and walk or bike to work, to run errands, and visit friends.

I go out of my way to recycle items that the city does not accept. Including paints and chemicals, batteries, electronics, and CFL lightbulbs.

When I moved to a condo, I intentionally hired a junk hauler who is committed to keeping the hauled items out of the landfills by recycling, re-selling or reusing them.

I frequent the restaurants in Evanston that are locally sourced such as Gotta B Crepes, Found Kitchen, Farmhouse, Next of Kin, and Blind Faith Café. I know that by supporting these local businesses I am decreasing the carbon footprint created when goods are shipped across country using fossil fuel for transport and energy for cooling.

I have adopted personal habits that prioritize environmentally friendly practices such as cutting back on my meat consumption to do my part to lower the emissions of greenhouse gasses such as methane, and changing all of my home lighting to be L.E.D. low energy, high efficiency light bulbs and taking energy ratings and sustainability into consideration when making any major purchases at home or at work.

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

- I will continue to look to the volunteers on the City Environment Board and Citizens for Greener Evanston for their guidance in applying the CARP recommendations into the appropriate City Ordinances and Resolutions.
- I will promote mixed use zoning for developments in Evanston and advocate for affordable housing and equity in the community. I believe there are numerous economic benefits to adopting plans that incorporate a walkable environment and a compact scale that humanizes a business and residential district and increases the economic viability of the entire development.
- Especially with projects that occur in partnership with the city, I work with city staff to ensure that the development of these projects align with CARP goals.
- I will be an advocate for the expansion of the City of Evanston's Office of Sustainability both in budget and staffing.
- I will advocate for School District Green Initiatives, and programs that teach sustainability.

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

My priorities for the City will be environmental and climate justice which are equal part an ethical and racial issue as well as an environmental one. Climate change and destruction of the environment affect some parts of our community more than others. We need to acknowledge this disparity and find the equitable ways for the entire community to work together in combating climate and environmental issues.

In addition, I'd like to engage my Ward residents in Home Energy education, advocate for strategies and programs to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled in the community and improved recycling commitment by residents.

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? *

Here are just some of the steps that can be taken to address the disproportionate effect of pollution in our most fragile and traditionally underserved parts of our community by advocacy and favorable votes in council:

- consideration of environmental justice in residential development plans
- banning polluting industrial facilities in areas of our city that already experience environmental injustice.
- improving public health codes that would address both existing and potentially new sources of pollution.

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. I firmly believe in our desire to become a “Most Livable City”. We must set some audacious goals toward that end. We should start with requiring LEED Gold Certification for all new construction. Especially if developers are requesting any special considerations from the city.

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

Yes. In order to live up to our commitment and expectation for excellence we must set goals to go above and beyond the minimum requirements of the state. This will set us apart from other communities and attract environmentally responsible developers and contractors. Planet Earth’s future will depend on 100% renewable energy – educating homeowners and builders/contractors on early adoption of electric appliances, hot water heaters, furnaces/HVAC and Electric Vehicle charging capabilities in homes would distinguish our commitment.

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. *

- Continue with educational seminars sponsored by the city and Citizens Greener Evanston and featuring local environmental experts, expand them to schools, places of worship, block clubs etc.
- Through these seminars demonstrate that the climate crisis is a discrete change in climate conditions, and it is already affecting our community (more extreme heat days in a year, more flash floods, increased snowfall).
- Put an emphasis on awareness that some parts of our communities will be more affected than others and that we all have a responsibility to help each other because the only healthy community is a resilient community.

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. *

- First, we should identify the needs that exist in our community regarding each resident's ability to cope with an extreme weather-related incident. The city should undertake a survey that would help us quantify how many of the most vulnerable residents do not have the basic means of protection from extreme heat or cold as well as those who experience flooding because of a torrential or extended rain event. This survey could help the city to develop a plan to address the adverse effects of climate change in the neighborhoods that will be affected most severely.
- We also need to develop a climate emergency network that will, in the example of an extreme heat day, be able to quickly reach out to the most vulnerable and ensure they have access to fans for cooling down, water to hydrate, and medical assistance if needed and that cooling centers are available to those in need. These are mostly senior citizens that may live alone and are often not used to getting the information from the internet. This network could be activated to identify and remediate the needs of our most vulnerable citizens in the event of any number of natural disasters including pandemic events. This climate emergency network should consist of community organizations, places of worship, influential individuals, and of course the city officials.

8. Would you endorse: *

Yes

No

Maybe

A pathway to free beach access for all? No

I believe that our Lake Michigan beaches represent one of our community's greatest resources. They also must be properly staffed and maintained for the safety of all our resident and non-resident beach users. Access to public beaches should be open to all and paid for by beach tokens that are available on a sliding scale fee system.

I believe that non-residents should pay more for their beach tokens than Evanston residents and that we should continue to distribute beach tokens free of charge through our network of not-for profit agencies who serve our most vulnerable Evanston families who qualify.

An affordable pathway to lead pipe replacement. Yes, but we must adopt one of the many ways to make our lead pipe infrastructure safe for consumers immediately with the eventual goal of replacing all lead pipes in our city infrastructure. Total replacement of our lead pipes will be an expensive and time consuming venture and thus must be undertaken in a thoughtful and economically viable way. There are available alternatives that essentially coat or seal off the lead contamination in the pipes to keep the drinking water safe. We must investigate and implement one or more of these alternatives as we plan and structure our long term project of replacing the piping.

<http://www.clevelandwater.com/blog/what-we-do-about-lead-water-treatment>
A Chicago company NuFlow adds an epoxy liner <https://www.nuflowmidwest.com/a-pipe-lining-system-that-protects-against-lead-leaching/>

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

Promoting green infrastructure in public and private new construction as well as renovations is an important step in ensuring that Evanston becomes a "Most Livable City." We must be committed to constructing all public parking lots, alleys, sidewalks and streets are paved or repaved with permeable pavement and we must investigate and implement alternative solutions to storm drains. We should provide incentives for home and business owners to add elements of green infrastructure such as rain gardens, green roofs and rainwater harvesting to their properties. I also support complete streets strategies.

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. *

The USDA estimates that 30 - 40% of food is wasted in the US. <https://www.usda.gov/foodwaste/faqs> 14% of Evanston residents may be food insecure. <https://icma.org/articles/article/evanston-il-producemobile-continues-provide-fresh-fruits-and-vegetables-community>

It is a startling fact that 14% of Evanston residents may be food insecure. A number that has surely increased because of the pandemic. There are several not-for-profit organizations working to reduce or eliminate hunger in Evanston. As a member of the City Council, I would work on connecting and strengthening these efforts. I would support the continuation of our Producemobile. I would lift-up the work being done by Campus Kitchens at Northwestern University and the food and grocery redistribution efforts being spearheaded by Whole Foods and other food retailers in Evanston. In a community with as many progressive minded citizens and resources available to us there is no reason for anyone in Evanston to go to bed hungry.

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

- Connecting schools, restaurants, and other food service providers with local not for profit service agencies and food banks so the surplus of food goes to people who need it the most.
- Continue promoting and expand the composting program in Evanston households. A good example is Edible Evanston who provide raised beds free of charge for backyard gardeners to grow food and flowers and encourage the use of home composting practices.
- Food represents 20% (sometimes up to 35%!) of landfill waste. We must redouble our efforts to educate our community, beginning with the children who will be instilled with life-long food saving habits.

12. Would you endorse: *

Yes

No

Maybe

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

Yes. We are already moving in this direction with a ban on single use plastic shopping bags.

Expanding bulk shopping options at stores?

Maybe. I think this issue should undergo further examination to determine the communal health aspects and cross contamination concerns that have been highlighted by the recent pandemic.

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

I believe that the Evanston community will embrace the effort to transition to a circular economy and that we should do everything possible as a city government to move in that direction by incentivizing businesses like the Evanston Rebuilder's Warehouse and other green, sustainable, and environmentally regenerative enterprises to locate in Evanston and help to demonstrate to our residents the positive effects of a circular economy.

Transitioning to a circular economy does not only amount to adjustments aimed at reducing the negative impacts of the "use it then toss it" economy. Rather, it represents a systemic shift that builds long-term resilience, generates business and economic opportunities, and provides environmental and societal benefits.

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. *

- Expanding bike paths and complete streets designs wherever possible.
- Creating pedestrian zones in our central business areas,
- and expanding public transportation options.

15. Would you endorse: *

Yes

No

Maybe

Preserving large native trees on private land?

Yes. Evanston is known as a Tree City. We have been recognized by national organizations for the age and beauty of the trees that line our public parkways and that are planted on private property throughout the city. We operate a city forestry department and employ a city arborist.

It is in our best interest to ascertain and support the health of all the trees on public as well as private land. Private citizens should be able to call on city staff for consultation regarding the health and wellbeing of the mature trees on their property

as well as the planting of new trees as the opportunity arises. This expertise could be a fee for service revenue opportunity for the City of Evanston. I also support the current Dutch Elm Disease Tree Insurance program.

Requiring bird-friendly construction on new buildings and renovations, like Chicago and New York City?

Yes.

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

Yes, providing that the leaves do not present a health hazard as they decompose.

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

Yes.

Additional Comments:

I am most interested in furthering the concept of environmental justice and preventing further harm to communities of Black, indigenous and people of color who have suffered more economic and physical harm because of the declining health of our environment. I will implement a lens of environmental, racial equity in the decisions I make as an elected official serving my community.

A copy of your responses will be emailed to the address you provided.