

Environmental Questions for Candidates

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>

Email address *

info@keenan4evanston.org

First Name *

Lori

Last Name *

Keenan

Candidate type *

Mayor

Ward Information

Select your Ward *

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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? *

1. Composting. I helped bring Tumbleweed's compost tumbler to the U.S. and had the opportunity to educate consumers about the benefits of composting and the alarming amount of compostable materials found in landfills. Composting has helped my family reduce food waste and seek more sustainable local food sources.

2. Leaving the leaves. Rather than use a rake or a leaf blower, my family leaves the leaves to provide food and shelter to insects. This helps birds, too, since insect death is the leading cause of recent declines in bird populations. Leaving the leaves means that I don't use a leaf blower, which blasts insects and soil biodiversity at up to 200 mph, and has a two-stroke engine that is a major emitter of carbon dioxide and fine particulate matter emissions.

3. Bike riding. I ride my bike everywhere! Bike riding reduces my carbon footprint and gives me an opportunity to slow down and enjoy being outside in Evanston.

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

1. I would propose a partnership between Evanston's Health and Human Services Department, the Evanston Health Advisory Council, and Edible Evanston to work on the Evanston Project for the Local Assessment of Needs (EPLAN) priority issue of obesity. Edible Evanston has produce sharing and "growing new gardeners" programs that could address EPLAN's goal to "increase the percentage of residents (59%) that consume three or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day."

2. I would suggest that the Evanston Public Library system continue its educational outreach focusing on climate change (including presentations, film discussions, community conversations, and learning kits), and that it expand these efforts by working with the Parks & Recreation Department to identify parks that (1) serve residents with the least access to libraries and (2) could host a Little Free Library that could hold these educational materials. From there I would promote a partnership with Evanston Rebuilding Warehouse to create the little libraries out of reclaimed building materials.

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

In no particular order...

1. Finding an affordable path to lead pipe replacement. I support retrofitting lead piping in order to ensure that families have safe drinking water. Replacement in residences where lead levels are deemed too high should be an immediate priority.

2. Promoting the adaptive reuse of existing buildings. I spearheaded the preservation of Harley Clarke from demolition, and I worked with Citizens' Greener Evanston, Evanston Rebuilding Warehouse, Landmarks Illinois, and the National Trust to show that the greenest building is the one already standing. I strongly believe that history, sustainability, and economic vitality can coexist. One of the end goals for Harley Clarke is an adaptive reuse that would house the Midwest Climate Action Center.

3. Confronting lakefront erosion. We're not talking about beach erosion as much as we should be, and we need to remember that the beach is not just an economic asset. I care greatly about our lakefront and was involved as a community member in the Lakefront Master Plan, which balanced sustainable and restorative environmental actions with recreation and conscientious public use.

4. Eliminating single-use plastics and promoting recyclable, biodegradable, or compostable packaging.

5. Banning leaf blowers year round in order to protect birds and insects, reduce gas-powered lawn emissions, and protect the health of lawn care workers and Evanston residents. (Please note that eliminating leaf blowers does not lead to a price decrease in lawn services; banning leaf blowers does not harm landscaping companies and can help them finish work safely, in less time, and with less gas.)

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? *

Environmental Justice Resolution (Click Link) - <https://www.cityofevanston.org/home/showpublisheddocument?id=59213>

The EJR should be translated into city ordinances: (1) The City should work with Environmental Justice Evanston and commit to testing for lead throughout all the wards and more significantly in the Fifth Ward, especially if residences there have been neglected in the past. (2) The City should commit to fully funding the Dutch Elm Disease injection program, particularly in Evanston's historically underserved wards, so that Black, Latinx, and other residents of color have access to the urban canopy provided by fully grown trees that offer shade and reduce flooding. This should include a partnership with the Reparations Stakeholders Authority of Evanston to determine whether funds are needed to inoculate the private elm trees of Evanston's Black community. (3) The City Manager's office would be responsible for identifying local personnel training opportunities.

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?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Updating the building code to improve overall building energy efficiency beyond the minimum requirements of the State of Illinois Energy Conservation Code?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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. Besides working to expand the urban agriculture class at Evanston Township High School and promoting the Next Generation Science Standards that introduce global climate change to middle school students, I would also create a citizen board to identify interdisciplinary teaching opportunities on the climate crisis and sustainability for elementary, middle, and high school. The board could write lesson plans and compile resources for teachers in all subject areas.

2. I would suggest that the Evanston Public Library system continue its educational outreach focusing on climate change (including presentations, film discussions, community conversations, and learning kits), and that it expand these efforts by working with the Parks & Recreation Department to identify parks that (1) serve residents with the least access to libraries and (2) could host a Little Free Library that could hold these educational materials. From there I would promote a partnership with Evanston Rebuilding Warehouse to create the little libraries out of reclaimed building materials.

3. The City could post signage along the lakefront path, at L stop entrances, near schools, near faith centers, etc., to illustrate Evanston's historical weather data in a simple, eye-catching way. The Clark Street Beach Bird Sanctuary could have similar signage, but showing the decreasing populations of migratory birds.

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. Identify ways to make City communications accessible to all residents, so that vulnerable residents receive ample and clear notice of what relief they can receive from the City.

2. Support the insulating of our most vulnerable residents' homes and work with the Evanston Community Fund to identify a source of funding for those residents' utility bills.

3. Work with community leaders and organizations to guarantee food security to vulnerable residents so that they have capacity to move from a daily concern (i.e., food) to future concerns about climate change. Going with that, the City should identify which water fountains could be modified by adding a retrofit bottle filling kit in order to increase outdoor water access to vulnerable residents during times of extreme heat.

8. Would you endorse: *

	Yes	No	Maybe
A pathway to free beach access for all?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
An affordable pathway to lead pipe replacement?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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

Info: <https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/what-green-infrastructure>

I have long been a proponent of sustainable construction, and I have worked with the nation's largest roofing contractor to help educate and champion sustainable practices such as solar, thin film PV, green roofing, and reflective coatings. In 2009, this company put a green roof on the Target Center in Minneapolis; it was the largest green roof in the US at the time. I would advocate for green roofs in Evanston. We could advance our stormwater management plan by connecting with the owners of large grocery stores, parking lots, and major developments about their capacity for green roofs. I would also advocate for rainwater harvesting across wards by working with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District to reduce the price of the Residential Rain Barrel Program for Evanston residents at a certain income level. Another important piece of green infrastructure is urban tree canopy. I would promote the continue full funding of the Dutch Elm Disease injection program in order to maintain our fully grown trees that offer shade and reduce flooding.

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>

1. Expand farmers markets and bring small fresh fruit and vegetable shops to neighborhoods where Evanstonians are food insecure or live in food deserts.
2. Expand community garden programs and encourage a continuing financial partnership between the Evanston Community Foundation and Edible Evanston in order to provide food insecure residents with materials for two raised beds, soil, and initial plants and seeds, as well as accessible workshops, a progress journal, and a garden mentor.
3. The Greater Greater Chicago Food Depository and Interfaith Action have Producemobile distributions on the second Tuesday of the month. I would work to expand those distributions through a partnership with the City and the use of existing vehicles and bikes to distribute the food. I would gather restauranteurs for a round table discussion of what food is currently wasted and how much of it would be compatible for the Producemobile or another food distribution service.

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

1. Ask that restaurants and schools donate, reduce, reuse, or compost leftover or unsold food. Expanding the City's efforts with Collective Resource could make this an accessible goal.
2. Offer each residence a small sink-side compost bin, a green bin, and accessible education on how to use both and why composting matters.
3. Expand Evanston's community gardens and produce-sharing initiative by working with Edible Evanston.

12. Would you endorse: *

	Yes	No	Maybe
A path to ban all single-use plastics, including shopping bags?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expanding bulk shopping options at stores?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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

Info: <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/concept>

I would support a circular economy in Evanston by...

- eliminating single-use plastics;
 - bringing recycling to all schools;
 - encouraging schools to move their cafeterias to zero-waste through composting;
 - continuing the City's recycling days and repair clinics;
 - supporting the building of Little Free Libraries;
 - supporting the development of additional 'libraries,' such as seed packet or tool lending libraries;
 - examining Evanston's solar opportunities on public and private buildings; and
 - supporting rain water harvesting and gardening.
-

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. *

I would like to decrease residents' car trips and increase their travel by foot, bicycle (or unicycle, as I've seen around town!), and public transportation by supporting a project that would establish small fresh fruit and vegetable shops in neighborhoods where Evanstonians are food insecure or live in food deserts.

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>



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>



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/>



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

https://library.municode.com/il/evanston/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT9PUSA_CH5GEOF_9-5-20NOPR

and

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/109428.html>



Additional Comments

Re: #5 - I would endorse updating the building code to require LEED PLATINUM Certification on new construction. I would endorse updating the building code to improve overall building energy efficiency beyond the minimum requirements of the State of Illinois Energy Conservation Code, BUT, the greenest building is the one that is already built, so I would want to ensure that these updated building codes would not lead to construction and demo waste.

Re: #8 - I would endorse a pathway to free beach access for historically marginalized Evanstonians and residents at a certain income level. I would endorse an affordable pathway to lead pipe replacement and I support retrofitting lead piping in order to ensure that families have safe drinking water. Replacement in residences where lead levels are deemed too high should be an immediate priority.

