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2017 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire   
for Capital Region Candidates

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the New York League of Conservation Voters Questionnaire.

The New York League of Conservation Voters is the only non-partisan statewide environmental organization in New York that fights for clean water, clean air, renewable energy and open space through political action. This questionnaire is designed to elicit your views regarding what environmental, public health, clean energy and transit and environmental justice groups consider to be the most important issues of the day. Responses may inform NYLCV’s educational and legislative programs and actions NYLCV takes in the election cycle.

Responses should be considered public. Although NYLCV may choose not to publicize responses to every question, verbatim responses may be reproduced and distributed publicly. If so, your responses may be shortened, if necessary, but will not be edited in substantive ways. If you choose to refer us to a position paper or website, please indicate exactly what text you would like us to cite. For candidates choosing not to respond to the questionnaire, NYLCV will note as much in its public materials.

NYLCV and its partners in the environmental policy arena believe that New York’s voters are determined to make the environment a voting issue this year. Candidate positions on issues such as protecting public health, building a clean energy future, and mitigating climate change will help voters decide how to cast their ballots this election cycle. This questionnaire is one of the primary ways the public will get this information.

After receipt of your completed questionnaire, you will be invited to participate in a formal interview with our Chapter Board. The interview will provide you with an opportunity to present your credentials, elaborate on your questionnaire responses, and respond to questions. Here are a few more guidelines:

* Questionnaires are due **Friday, June 9**
* The completed questionnaire is mandatory for endorsement consideration and must be submitted via e-mail as a Microsoft Word file to: [politics@nylcv.org](mailto:politics@nylcv.org)
* To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV’s 2016-17 Capital Region Policy Agenda](http://nylcv.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Capital-Region-Agenda-16-17.pdf)
* Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg ([jklainberg@nylcv.org](mailto:jklainberg@nylcv.org))

**Campaign Contact Information**

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PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Please share your accomplishments or experiences that indicate your commitment to advancing a pro-environment agenda. These experiences may be professional or personal.

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| **As Mayor of the City of Albany for the past four years, my administration has been and continues to be committed to a pro-environment agenda. We have successfully undertaken the first rezoning of Albany in more than 50 years to help ensure we develop our City while also making sound decisions about the impact of that development on our neighborhoods and environment. As a member of the Mayors National Climate Action Agenda, I recently signed two joint letters with mayors from across the United States, committing the City of Albany to uphold and honor the goals of the Paris Climate Accords. Working with the City of Albany’s State Assembly Delegation, I was able to secure state funding to help complete the Madison Avenue Street Calming. a project that reduced Madison Avenue from four lanes to two, added a two dedicated bicycle lanes and one dedicated turning lane, and brought sidewalks and crossings into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act – all leading to reduced traffic speeds and a more walkable and bicycle-friendly neighborhood. The City is currently in the final stages of publishing a feasibility study for the Albany Waterfront Connector – a multi-use path that would connect the Albany County Helderberg Hudson Rail Trail with the Mohawk-Hudson Hike Bike Trail. When completed, this project will provide additional recreation and economic development opportunities for individuals and businesses in our City, and will connect the City of Albany with surrounding communities to create a true multi-use transportation network throughout our region. By working with the New York Power Authority, my administration secured funding to pay for the hiring of a City Sustainability Manager who is dedicated to proposing and managing energy efficiency improvements throughout the City. My administration has implemented the City’s first Sustainability Advisory Committee comprised of experts in the renewable energy, transportation, energy efficiency, and conservation fields. This committee performs research for, and makes recommendations to, City departments on potential projects and improvements that are sustainable and create minimal environmental impact. I am deeply committed to continuing an administration based on a proven pro-environment record in my next term as Mayor of the City of Albany.** |

**ISSUES**

Please indicate your level of commitment to, and if applicable your recent personal and professional activity with respect to, the following issues:

(To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV’s 2016-17 Capital Region Policy Agenda](http://nylcv.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Capital-Region-Agenda-16-17.pdf))

1. Regional Transit Analysis: Working with the Capital Region Regional Economic Development Council to develop rapid transit options (i.e., bus and light rail) between central business districts

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| As Mayor, I have served as a member of the Capital Region Economic Development Council. I have actively supported funding for the transition of a minimally-used highway exit ramp in Downtown Albany to become a walkway from the Hudson Riverfront to Downtown businesses and entertainment. I have also worked closely with the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) as well as many other public authorities and agencies such as the Downtown Business Improvement District to help increase public transportation offerings, such as the roll-out a free downtown shuttle service that will provide residents and visitors alike with another method of transportation into and out of the developing Downtown and Warehouse Districts.  Working alongside our State Assembly delegation, we are working toward the construction of the Albany Waterfront Connector – a multi-use path that would connect the Albany County Helderberg Hudson Rail Trail with the Mohawk-Hudson Hike Bike Trail. When completed, this project will provide additional recreation and economic development opportunities for individuals and businesses in our City, and will connect the City of Albany with surrounding communities to create a true multi-use transportation network throughout our region  I have also worked with a private consulting firm to determine the feasibility of a gondola that would cross the Hudson River and connect Downtown Albany with the Albany-Rensselaer Rail Station. The gondola would provide economic development potential and would make it more convenient for people to access the city, and would be an environmentally friendly and affordable way for people to cross the Hudson River. |

1. Renewable Energy: Streamlining and modernizing the process for obtaining government approval to install renewable energy facilities

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| Under my leadership, the process to install renewable energy facilities in the City of Albany has been streamlined and made more efficient. Through the use of a newly created Technical Review Committee, individuals and businesses present their proposed project before all requisite City departments, including Planning & Development, General Services, Water, and Engineering. This method reduces red tape and creates meaningful collaboration between the applicant and the City early in the application process. |

1. Clean and Safe Water: Working to ensure counties and localities regularly test their drinking water using EPA’s Contaminant Candidate List and Unregulated Drinking Water Contaminants

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| The City of Albany’s Water Department regularly tests drinking water for contaminants as per New York State and EPA regulations, as well as several unregulated drinking water contaminants such as Cryptosporidium and Giardia. The Water Department publishes an annual report for the residents and visitors of Albany, and is made available on the City’s website. This report highlights the testing that is undertaken, as well as the levels and types of detected contaminants found in the City’s drinking water. In 2016, the City of Albany’s drinking water met New York State drinking water health standards, and the water system did not have any violations of maximum contaminant levels. |

1. Sustainable & Transit-Oriented Development: Creating livable and sustainable communities that permit increased density and diversity in our downtowns and neighborhoods

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| Over the past three years, the City of Albany has successfully undertaken the first rezoning of the entire City in more than 50 years. Updating the zoning code helps to spur economic development, protect neighborhoods, and make it easier for homeowners to make improvement to their homes. It also will create livable and sustainable communities by tailoring the code to how neighborhoods are currently used and how community members would like to see the neighborhoods used in the future. This helps to eliminate unnecessary and duplicative variance requirements and helps to minimize uncertainty, especially when opening a new business. |

1. Transportation: Maximizing environmentally friendly mobility options in and around residential and commercial centers

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| The City of Albany completed a Bicycle Master Plan, as part of the Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan, which identified a network of bicycle routes to improve cycling as a viable mode of transportation throughout the City. One of my first actions as Mayor was to work with the City of Albany’s State Assembly Delegation to secure state funding to help complete the Madison Avenue Street Calming. This project has reduced portions of Madison Avenue from four lanes to two, adding two dedicated bicycle lanes and one dedicated turning lane, and is bringing sidewalks and crossings into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act – all leading to reduced traffic speeds and a more walkable and bicycle-friendly neighborhood.  Over the past three years, I have worked with Council Members Dorcey Applyrs and Vivian Kornegay, as well as with community members, to identify solutions that will improve the safety and well-being of the residents of Albany’s South End. The City and the Capital District Transportation Committee have joined together to complete a traffic study on South Pearl Street in the City’s South End using an innovative approach to determine where trucks are coming from and where they are heading using automatic license plate readers as several locations for approximately one month. This traffic study is the next step in addressing important quality of life issues for those living along South Pearl Street, including air and noise pollution.  For the past several years, I have advocated for the passage of ridesharing in Upstate New York. Ridesharing needs to be a complement of the transportation system for any city in the 21st century. Ridesharing alleviates congestion of roads, parking lots, and on-street parking spaces, and provides residents and visitors alike with the opportunity to enjoy local shopping, dining, and entertainment without having to worry about how they will get back to their home or hotel. After coordinated advocacy efforts with other cities, chambers of commerce, businesses, Governor Cuomo signed legislation into law allowing for ridesharing as of June 29 in Upstate New York. |

1. Open Space Preservation: Planning strategies such as clustering, creating pocket parks in developed areas, and encouraging biotic corridors in less densely populated areas

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| My administration has undertaken several projects to help alleviate the impact of stormwater runoff in our City, and create green spaces. Two of these projects is the Hansen/Ryckman Infrastructure Project and the Quail Street Green Infrastructure Project. Both have replaced underground stormwater infrastructure, created permeable surfaces and added vegetation that helps soak up water and avoid flooding, especially in areas of Albany that have been prone to historic flooding. These projects are improving the quality of life in these neighborhoods and will improve the quality of water in the Hudson River. |

1. Sustainable Public Access Management: Making significant impacts on energy use and the environment simply by deciding to spend money and deploy resources wisely

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| My administration is deeply committed to sustainable public access management. In order to prioritize the implementation of sustainable projects in the City, the Albany Energy Plan was developed over a year of in-depth analysis and multiple stakeholder meetings. The finished plan, which was released in early 2015, provides a comprehensive approach to energy use reduction and management city-wide.  My administration is also actively exploring the potential purchase of all streetlights in the City of Albany with the intention to convert these lights to LED lights. We are currently working with National Grid and outside advisors to determine the best approach in order to make this acquisition a reality. |

1. Natural Resource Protection – Comprehensively managing and protecting regional natural resources (i.e., air, water and land)

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| I am committed to comprehensively managing and protecting natural resources. As a member of the Compact of Mayors and Mayors National Climate Action Agenda, I recently signed on to two letters, one with 273 other mayors, and one with more than 1,219 governors, mayors, businesses, investors, and colleges, both committing to honor and uphold the goals of the Paris Climate Accords.  The City of Albany has set a goal to divert 65% of waste from the Rapp Road Landfill by 2030. As Mayor, I have implemented policies and set procedures to review the future of solid waste management in the City of Albany. We have recently issued a Request for Proposals for a Solid Waste Transfer Station and is holding public meetings to obtain community input on the next steps for solid waste management in the City.  The City of Albany has set a goal to reduce Carbon Dioxide emissions from wastewater and water treatment by 10% by 2030. Under my leadership, the City of Albany has worked to achieve this goal by improving the water quality of the Hudson River and its tributaries through infrastructure improvements that will reduce combined sewer discharge from entering the Hudson River. During the first month of my administration, Albany joined the other five local pool communities and the Albany County and Rensselaer County Sewer Districts to execute an Order on Consent administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Through the order and Long Term Control Plan, our group of municipalities will implement more than 50 projects and programs that will significantly improve the water quality of the Hudson River. A significant amount of the stormwater is diverted to the Hudson River during wet weather. The CSO Regulator of the Beaver Creek, “Big C,” is the largest discharger of CSO volume in the Albany Pool, contributing 45% of all CSO discharge volume in the 6 Albany Pool Communities during wet weather. It’s estimated that the “Big C” facility will cost $45 million dollars to construct – the most costly project of the LTCP. Leveraging our relationships with our New York State Senate and Assembly Delegation, the Albany Pool Communities were able to secure funding from New York State to help fund this infrastructure improvement. Improving the water quality of the Hudson River is a regional benefit, promoting increased recreation opportunities on the Hudson and creating ancillary economic development potential. Implementation of the LTCP and “Big C” project is a demonstration of sustainability and environmental stewardship by investing in our infrastructure to provide a benefit that is long lasting and improving the quality of the Hudson River, issues relating to quality of life, recreation, habitat preservation and economic development and river related commerce. The “Big C” project has preliminary design completed and the screening and disinfection technologies selected. |

1. Farms and Local Food: Managing development and providing access to healthy, fresh foods

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| During my time as Mayor, I have worked closely with the Albany Housing Authority and Trinity Alliance to ensure the completion of the Capital South Campus Center. This project is home to a local Meals On Wheels kitchen and distribution center. It is also conveniently located across the street from one of the 23 community gardens in the City. |

1. Energy: Achieving energy efficiency in residential and commercial settings, in existing and new buildings, and with cutting-edge technology and the smarter use of older technology

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| Under my leadership, the City of Albany has committed itself to realizing a 20% energy reduction in municipal buildings. One of the projects that the City has recently completed is the changeover of all lights in City Hall to LED lights. This project will see a return on investment in less than 2 years, and will realize a Carbon Dioxide reduction of 114 Metric Tons.  The City of Albany was recently named the grand winner of an energy competition by the New York Power Authority. The award includes implementation of services valued at $1.4 million for three innovative energy-saving projects designed by the City that are estimated to save the City approximately $240,000 in annual energy costs and help reduce greenhouse gases by 773 tons. One project will connect 22 City buildings to the New York Power Authority’s Energy Manager for real time energy use monitoring. This will continuously evaluate the City’s building use to ensure maximum energy efficiencies. The second project will provide for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations and a vehicle monitoring project for 300 City vehicles. The third project will provide for energy efficiency upgrades at several City buildings including City Hall, the City’s Municipal Golf Course, and Department of General Services.  The City is in the process of implementing 10 Mega Watts of solar which is expected to produce 11,678,666 kWh, including the installation of solar panels on the roof of the Swinburne Skating Rink. When completed, the project will generate 75% of the electric the City’s municipal buildings consume. |