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2017 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire
for Westchester 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 2**
* The completed questionnaire is mandatory for endorsement consideration and must be submitted via e-mail as a Microsoft Word file to: politics@nylcv.org
* To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV’s 2016-17 Westchester Policy Agenda](http://nylcv.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016-17WestchesterAgendaFINAL.pdf)
* Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg (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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| **I am a lifelong advocate for the environment. I don’t just take appropriate positions on the issues I get things done. While still a councilman, I drafted clean air requirements which required the use of ultra low sulfur diesel in construction vehicles. As Mayor of the City of White Plains I have accomplished a great deal on the environmental front, phasing out #4 and #6 fuel oils, capping our landfill which had been closed for 30 years, adding fabric recycling to our recycling center which has since removed 38 tons of fabric from the waste stream and numerous other initiatives.**  |

 **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 Westchester Policy Agenda](http://nylcv.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016-17WestchesterAgendaFINAL.pdf))

1. Sustainable Development: Advancing modernized zoning to encourage mixed land use and compact development

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| White Plains has a number of redevelopment projects at various stages in the pipeline. All of these involve the repurposing of current space in the downtown core and include a mix of residential, commercial and retail uses. With each project I have sought to incorporate pedestrian-friendly improvements, energy efficient construction, and a design which enlivens the street and connects the project and to the surrounding downtown area. We have made zoning changes to permit this type of development as part of our strong Comprehensive Plan. We have several adaptive reuse projects moving forward as well. We had a groundbreaking level of community participation in the redesign of our train station area focusing not just on the station itself but on improving the pedestrian and cyclist experience in the area. |

1. Invasive Species: Educating the public on this problem and implementing better management practices

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| I have worked hard on this issue both at home and on the job. Most prominently we are currently engaged in the eradication of phragmite from the large marsh which adjoins the Central Westchester Parkway. We will be replacing it with native plants, restoring the health of the wetlands and providing habitat for native species. As mayor I started the policy that the city will only plant native trees. |

1. Cleaner Air: Speeding up conversions and retrofits of home heating oil No. 6 and No. 4 to more efficient heating systems

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| In 2014, I proposed a local law phasing out the use of # 6 and # 4 fuel oils in all commercial and residential buildings throughout the City.  The law, which was passed in July 2014, required the phase out of # 6 fuel oil by July 31, 2016 and # 4 fuel oil by June 30, 2020.These fuel oils pose a health risk to those who live in and immediately around the buildings where they are burned and can exacerbate conditions such as asthma. They are bad for the environment, particularly # 6, because when burned they release fine particles that contain high levels of nickel, sulfur and other pollutants into the air. We have worked with Con Ed to help incentivize conversions and have seen great results. |

1. Expanding Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure: Facilitating the development of a larger network of charging stations that will encourage more municipalities, businesses and individuals to switch to EVs in the coming years

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| The City of White Plains currently offers twenty publicly accessible electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in parking structures and lots throughout the City, the most of any Westchester municipality. Eight EV charging spaces are located in the surface lot adjacent to the White Plains TransCenter Garage on the North side. Four of those are Level 2 charging stations and four are Level 1 charging stations. Twelve additional EV charging spaces are located in public parking garages throughout the downtown. We have also brought in trial programs which have placed chargers in private apartment communities. We anticipate bringing in another round of chargers shortly as we near the end of the grant process.I have worked aggressively to create and expand this network. For four years I drove electric exclusively and have advised other elected officials on the nuts and bolts of this issue. I also successfully advocated for the installation and expansion of EV charging on the NY State Thruway. I am temporarily not driving electric, to my chagrin, due to a lease termination but am actively looking for my next EV. |

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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| When I became mayor I immediately set to work to open parkland which had been sitting unused for 15 years. Located at the corner of Bryant and Mamaroneck Avenues, it was the former proposed site of a new library which, thankfully was built downtown. I was familiar with it having climbed over the fence to hike it with my sons. We opened the gates put in simple trails and a bridge over the stream that flows through the park and created an oasis of tranquility. The park will remain passive, and is a real asset to the city which we added for very little cost.We have also used goats to clear some city parkland which, originally an operating farm into the 1980s, had become overgrown with invasive species. The goats did a great job (they love poison ivy) and are back for a second season. They are cheaper than mechanical harvesting and there is no product to be trucked away. Our ultimate goal is to restore a low impact farm use on the site for environmental and educational purposes. The goats themselves have become a hit and have, in effect, become a farm use.We are working on completing our greenway, the former NY Boston and Westchester Rail Line. |

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

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| During my time in office the City has created 4.1 miles of designated bike lanes and numerous other bike routes with painted shoulders and “sharrows” for shared lanes. We were the first municipality in Westchester to implement designated bike lanes. Our bike lanes strategically connect the city’s residential neighborhoods and commercial center. See link for map: <http://www.cityofwhiteplains.com/DocumentCenter/View/336>At my direction, the City applied for and recently received a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant award of $1.2 million. This application was submitted in connection with the planning study that was recently completed for our Transit District area. Improvements will be specifically aimed at making bicycle and pedestrian improvements in this area of the city in and around the Metro-North station. Improvements will include: high visibility crosswalks, new bike lanes, including a protected bike lane, the addition of a bike corral at the train station and new bike racks, the installation of a mid-block pedestrian cross signal (known as a HAWK Beacon), reconstruction of certain sidewalks, and the creation of green bike boxes at certain intersections. This funding will enable us to implement many short-term bicycle and pedestrian improvements in the Transit District and adjacent neighborhoods. |

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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| We recently completed a year-long study of the area immediately surrounding the White Plains Metro-North station. This process included an unprecedented level of public outreach and engagement. The result was the creation of a strategic plan for this vitally important area of the city which focuses on transit-oriented development, livability, adding vibrancy and connecting the city’s nodes of activity as well as close-in residential neighborhoods. We gave special attention to ensuring that residents of neighborhoods closest to the station had a full opportunity to be heard and, literally, a seat at the table which was not always the case on past projects. |

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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| In addition to the previously mentioned areas of open space, we are creating a new pocket park on Maple Ave at the developer’s expense in exchange for increased density on the site. We have imposed a parks impact fee on new residential development which will provide millions of dollars for the creation of new parks and the improvement of existing ones. I also voted in favor of the FASNY application to build a school on a defunct golf course which would have resulted in more than 89 acres of publicly accessible parkland at no cost to the city. The land, developed as a golf course would have been restored to a natural condition. We are working on corridors as well, the greenway as well as other trail systems and connectivity of open space even when owned by different entities. |

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

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| We are currently working to restore a major wetland, we are planning to restore use by the city of existing wells and the city’s two reservoirs to our water supply which currently is supplied entirely by the City of New York. We are phasing out #4 and #6 fuel oils, purchasing electric vehicles, providing EV charging as well as allowing EV owners to “jump” the waiting list for permits at our most sought after garages. We strictly enforce construction site protocols to protect against runoff and urge the use of storm water capture and reuse on new projects. We are well underway in our program to reline our sanitary sewers and seal sanitary sewer manhole covers to reduce storm water infiltration. |

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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| In January 2014, White Plains adopted the NYS Unified Solar Permit, an expedited solar permitting process aimed at residential-sized solar arrays. White Plains was one of the first municipalities in the state to do this. In city FY 2016, the Building Dept. issued 117 permits for solar install, as compared to 99 permits issued for the previous 9 years total.The Department of Public Works is currently replacing all of the city’s streetlights with LEDs. This is close to 5,000 lights. In addition to the savings in electrical costs, these fixtures will result in lower maintenance costs, including zero replacement costs for 10 years, and fewer outages because of the extremely long life and durability of the new LED fixtures.  Installation began February 13th and is expected to be completed within a year.  The life of the fixtures is projected to be 27 years, and the fixtures are fully guaranteed for 10 years.The City is also replacing lighting in our facilities (including the Renaissance Sq Fountain) with LED fixtures or retrofitting existing florescent and incandescent fixtures with replacement LED bulbs. These measures significantly reduce energy consumption -- from 60 to 6-8 watts for the average 60 watt bulb and from 40 to 16 watts for the average florescent replacement bulb. Bulb life is also increased from 2,000 to 20,000-50,000 hours. The City recycles over a thousand fluorescent light bulbs per year using a device called the Bulb Eater®, which safely and effectively crushes them into 55 gallon drums. When the drums are full they are sent to a recycling facility.  |

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

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| We provide space for a robust community gardens program and are actively working on restoring farm use to Baldwin Farm. Our intent is not to have a Disney style farm but rather a small low impact working farm. |