

Sangamon Valley Group of the Sierra Club Springfield Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Debbie Cimarossa

Office Sought: Alderman, Ward 7

1) Part of the plan calls for increases in annual spending on energy efficient and conservation programs. Will you support keeping Springfield's commitment to those efforts by maintaining the spending levels called for in the energy plan?

Yes, I plan to keep the commitment.

2) Will you support maintaining the City's commitment to purchase at least 120MW of wind power for Springfield, of which 60MW will be paid for by the State of Illinois?

Yes, I plan to support maintaining the City's commitment.

3) As part of the agreement, CWLP will offer a green power program, where residents and businesses can choose to purchase some or all of their electricity from wind power and other renewable resources at a higher cost. Currently, this program does not require CWLP to acquire additional green power when customers participate in the program. Do you support allowing customers to pay for additional clean energy department (beyond the 120MW requirement) through this green power program?

Yes, customers who choose to use clean energy should be afforded the opportunity to use the green power program.

4) Would you support using wells in the Sangamon River Valley as a secondary source to meet the city's future water needs, which would be a less expensive and more environmentally friendly alternative to building a second lake?

This may be a suitable alternative. Hunter Lake has been planned for many years, and the city has invested so much that they are already committed. That said, if the wells can be proven to be as reliable and less expensive, it may be the best option for the city.

5) What actions would you take to enhance the network of bicycle paths in Springfield?

I served as co-chair of the Sangamon County Board's special committee for the Sangamon Valley Bike Trail. I participated in public hearings and worked with the Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Department of Transportation to support the Sangamon Valley Trail. I have always been a strong proponent of bike trails and look forward to working with Sangamon County and the Park District to keep the current bike paths, and assure that the outdoor recreational facilities are maintained. I would continue to support enhancing the network of bike paths if funding becomes available.

6) What actions would you take to encourage development within Springfield's city center, and discourage sprawl?

I support seeking all of the funds possible to encourage redevelopment in the city center to preserve our neighborhoods. "Infill" is a planning program that some cities use to encourage development in empty and dilapidated areas in the city. I would support using this technique to bring new homes and businesses to the city center.

7) Many cities, including Normal Illinois, have adopted ordinances that promote sustainability, energy conservation, and environmental concerns for buildings. Do you think Springfield should promote green building practices such as providing incentives for developers, or rewriting zoning, stormwater management, building, and other ordinances? If yes, what steps should Springfield take to implement these standards?

I believe that these ordinances could be a tool to encourage environmental responsibility in Springfield. The City's first step should be to develop a vision plan that sets goals and standards. Then, we should work towards the goals. We also need to take a good look at our existing zoning laws to assure that they are meeting the needs and plan of the city.

8) Do you support the expansion of Springfield bus service into evening hours? Are there any other steps you would take to encourage increased use of public transportation?

Usage reports that examine the viability of increased bus services should be created before making a determination. If the services would be utilized, and are economically feasible, increased bus service could become a reality. As to increasing the use of public transportation, expansion of monthly rider cards and other programs should be implemented to encourage use.

9) Will you support the phasing-in of energy efficient and low pollution vehicles into the city's fleet?

Yes, as hybrid and flex fuel vehicles become more available to the public, and the price continues to drop, it is in the City's interest to phase these kinds of vehicles into the fleet.

10) Please add any comments you may have.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my opinions with your group.