

Q1

Please enter your contact info here

Name: Jonathan Lyens

District: 8

Campaign contact: Vanessa Lyens

Phone #: 415-676-7977

Email: lyensforbart@gmail.com

FPPC #: 1398181

Q2

What are your qualifications for the BART Board of Directors and why should SFLCV endorse you? (please limit your response to 250 words)

I am uniquely positioned to be an effective BART Director because of my belief in a life of public service and my professional experience. Growing up blind wasn't always easy. From an early age I was discriminated against because of my disability - this has led to a lifetime of advocacy for those of us too often ignored in our society, and it has fueled my passion to always stand for equality and to face down all forms of discrimination. I hold a Masters in Public Administration. I spent four years in the SF Mayor's Budget Office, helping guide the city's budget through the Great Recession. In 2012, I served on the city's bargaining team, facilitating successful labor negotiations with 26 of the city's unions. I was on the team that helped rebuild SF General Hospital, the only level one trauma center in SF and northern San Mateo counties. In addition, I was President of the Board of Directors for Richmond District Neighborhood Center, with fiduciary responsibility for the program serving 3,000 San Franciscans each month through after school, senior and family programming.

Q3

What should BART do to better meet San Francisco's transportation needs? (please limit your response to 250 words)

To better meet the transit needs of San Franciscans, BART must address the safety, reliability and accessibility of its service. BART must also work with the city more closely. As Director, I will advocate

for the formation of a working group between BART and the city. The group will coordinate schedules and new projects between BART and Muni, and it can enable the city and BART to have a unified response to many of the vexing issues that are impacting BART - such as homelessness and open air drug use. BART also needs to explore how to serve the west side of San Francisco.

Q4

What changes, if any, would you make to BART's fare structure? Do you support parking charges at all BART parking spaces -- why or why not? (please limit your response to 250 words)

There are several points of inequity in BART's current fare structure. Currently, shorter distance trips on BART have a higher per-mile fare than longer trips - this makes it less appealing to use BART for shorter trips and has a disproportionate impact on transit dependent communities. This can be seen in examining BART's own trip data - with a decline in trips not traveling through the TransBay tube. Additionally, BART should work with other neighboring transit agencies to coordinate the fare structure for riders forced to transfer from one transit agency to another. I also want to implement free BART for youth, seniors and people with disabilities.

Q5

What can BART and Muni do to improve fare, schedule and service coordination with Muni and other transit agencies? (please limit your response to 250 words)

As Director I will advocate for the formation of a working group between Muni and BART. Such a model already exists between BART and AC Transit, and one should exist here also. This group will be empowered to work on exactly these types of issues - by creating an existing forum for these items to come up and be addressed.

Q6

How do you think BART should balance the use of driving, transit, walking and biking to its stations? (please limit your response to 250 words)

Riders access the BART system through various means and BART has an obligation to make its service accessible to all. It must be easy for riders to transfer to BART from other transit systems.

Additionally, pedestrian and cyclist safety must be of the highest priority. Regarding cars, I believe that parking lots should be limited and fees should be cost recovery. I prefer to use the space currently being used for parking lots as space for affordable housing. Let's use public land for the maximum public good, and house people instead of cars.

Q7

Does BART adequately address the transit needs of low-income and transit dependent people and communities of color? If not, what should BART do to better meet their needs? (please limit your response to 250 words)

As a person with a disability, being transit dependent is not a lifestyle choice and this issue is very personal. BART's record with many low income communities is terrible. We must make our system more safe, accessible and reliable. We must keep the elevators running and clean, and move them inside the fare gates. Additionally, our escalators must be repaired or replaced at a much more rapid pace than is currently planned. Further, we need to help our community feel safe on the system through the efforts of station hardening and increasing the presence of BART staff in the stations.

Q8

Do you support green-building standards for BART construction? What should the standards include? What else should BART do to improve its environmental practices? (please limit your response to 250 words)

Yes, I support green building standards for all BART construction. These standards should include things such as solar panel roofing of new stations and retrofitting current ones. New construction should also take every opportunity to decrease energy usage, such as more efficient station lighting and motion activated escalators.

BART's energy usage is substantial - the largest power user in Northern California. BART's recent renewable energy power purchase agreements will dramatically increase their clean energy portfolio from 4% to 90% by 2021. However, this increase is not enough - which is signaled by the fact that the clean energy percentage will drop to 75% by 2025 due to increased energy use. These agreements are good first steps and BART needs to continue this effort to reach and maintain a 100% clean

energy portfolio. Further, I would like to explore other avenues for obtaining renewable energy, through purchasing from sources like CleanPowerSF.

Q9

What is your opinion of BART's extension program? Under what conditions would you support extensions or additions to the BART system? (please limit your response to 250 words)

My first priority is the maintenance and preservation of the systems core. For too long we have failed to adequately invest in public transit infrastructure and a generation of neglect is beginning to show. With that said, we do need to find new ways to bring BART into the 21st century. This should include real conversations about a second TransBay tube. While this project will be extremely difficult, it has the potential of reshaping the fabric of the region for a generation. Additionally, as a candidate in BART District 8, the least served district by BART, it is time for real work on BART to the beach. Other system extensions can make sense in the right circumstances, such as the extension to San Jose through the cooperation of the VTA. As BART considers new expansion projects, two types of analyses must take place. First, BART must consider the social equity impact of the project and prioritize those projects that increase service to transit dependent communities. Second, BART must also conduct a full budgetary analysis of each proposal, evaluating the project's capital cost (the cost of construction) as well as the inevitable increase in BART's operational budget.

Q10

What are your spending priorities, given that there are always more projects than money to spend on them? (please limit your response to 250 words)

The most important role of a BART Director is oversight of the District's budget. As elected officials, Directors have a fiduciary responsibility to the District, ensuring that the budget is fiscally sound and structured in a way that is sustainable over the long-term. Having spent four years in the San Francisco Mayor's Budget Office during the recession, I learned firsthand how critical it is to protect core system functionality while not taking on more funding obligations than can be sustained over the long term. I believe that all new expansion projections, while being analyzed through a social equity analysis, should also be examined through a fiscal sustainability lens. The BART Board of Directors must recognize that all new expansion brings with it new and increased operational expenses that must also be accounted for in the fiscal calculus. As Director, I will always prioritize our core system,

providing better and more reliable service to current riders, over bringing more people into the system that BART may or may not be able to afford.

