

SFLCV November 2020 Election Board of Supervisors Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in San Francisco League of Conservation Voters' endorsement process. Please limit answers to the below questions to 2-3 paragraphs at most (250 words). We are accepting responses until June 24, 2020.

Please enter your contact info here (Name, District, Campaign contact, Phone, Email, FPPC#) *

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1. Affordable Housing: What are your top priorities around supporting infill development within your district and throughout the City? How will you respond to pushback from your constituents regarding height, density and affordability? What have you done to advance housing initiatives in your district, neighborhood, SF? *

I believe that to legislate and govern effectively, we have to create a big umbrella and work with stakeholders across the board. And yes, sometimes neighborhood resistance is inevitable. But as leaders, we have to be able to make tough choices, govern from a place of integrity and conviction and not always choose the path of least resistance.

Our housing affordability crisis is the product of decades-long state and local government inaction, rising income inequality, neighborhood resistance but also systemic racism. According to a 2019 study by the United Ways of CA, in 2017, 34% or about 19,000 of households in the Richmond District spent more than 30% of their income on housing. It is imperative that we address our housing affordability with increased urgency.

First, we have to make it easier, not harder, to build more affordable housing. The fact is construction costs are high. Unfortunately, at the state level, because of the dissolution of state redevelopment agencies, we do not have a primary source of funding that would allow us to subsidize construction. While San Francisco, along with cities like New York and the District of Columbia, are leading the way towards inclusionary zoning, we have to also think about how laws, good the intention may be, could be counterproductive. We have to intentionally and deliberately evaluate how on-site affordability requirements, ground floors plans, development impact fees, etc. could disincentivize housing construction. Therefore, we have to foster an inclusive process and work with developers, affordable housing advocates, tenants unions to ensure that everyone feels heard, we are not adding another layer of burden on so many San Franciscans already experiencing housing insecurity.

We also have to reevaluate parking requirements. Parking spaces are expensive, and imposing strict mandates makes it harder to build more housing units. This means we have to create alternatives to private vehicle ownership (ie. incentivize bike ridership), expanding public transit) By diminishing the need for parking spaces, we are also diminishing barriers to housing construction.

Finally, housing is a racial equity and economic justice issue. The fact is building more housing units does not alleviate the housing insecurity currently experienced by many. We have to acknowledge the fear people of color and low-income households feel over gentrification. This is why it is critical that we make sure they are included in community dialogue and we guarantee commitments from developers to build certain amount of units below market rate.

2. Walkable and Bikeable Streets: What are your top priorities for better and safer streets for pedestrians and bicyclists? How do you intend to advance those priorities if elected? How will you work with constituents who are opposed to bike/ped infrastructure improvements in your district (such as traffic calming, bike lanes, and bike share docking stations)? What have you done to champion these efforts up to now? *

My commitment to biker and street safety runs deep, as someone who's worked as a community advocate and coalition builder both in local and state government the last two decades. I am proud to have been part of a team, under former Supervisor Jose Medina, that was instrumental in building the Valencia Bike Lane, one of the first bike lanes in San Francisco.

Bicycle safety is a racial equity and social justice issue. And we cannot talk about bicycle safety without talking about bicycle citations. Studies from Chicago, New York and Tampa show deep racial disparities in bicycle citations, where a majority of those ticketed live in predominantly African-American and Latinx areas.

We must work with transit agencies and our law enforcement community to (1) improve data collection and identify any racial disparities in bicycle citations and (2) enforce CA state changes that allow ticketed riders to take a bicycle safety program in lieu of a hefty \$300 ticket. For low-income folks, \$300 can pay a month's worth of groceries or utilities. If we want to strive for a more just and equitable San Francisco, we must shift reliance from punitive fines to restorative justice measures.

Finally, if we want effective public policy, we have to make it an inclusive process, which means working with stakeholders across the board -- SF Bicycle Coalition, labor unions, neighborhood associations, City Planning Commission. And yes, this could mean facing resistance from residents. But as leaders, we have to be able to make tough choices and govern from a place of integrity and conviction because at the end of the day, the safety and well-being of our communities is paramount. And sometimes the most impactful pieces of legislation are not always popular.

3. Reliable, Fossil Free Public Transit: What are your top priorities for improving local and regional transit? How would you advance your priorities if elected? What have you done to improve transit operations, access to transit, passenger experience, etc.? *

We cannot address public transit without talking about the safety of frontline workers who make the system operate during this pandemic. There could be a second wave to COVID19 and MUNI and BART are ground zero for transmissions. Going back to "normal" is not an option. First, as riders, we have to keep wearing masks in public. And if you are able to work remotely and avoid saturating public transit, do so. Second, we have to make sure testing is accessible especially for frontline workers.

Access to public transit is a racial equity and economic justice issue. Many commuters, especially low-income POC and seniors, rely on discounted fares to commute daily. The hard reality is budget cuts are almost inevitable and we are facing a \$1.7 billion (and growing) deficit. But we cannot make these cuts at the expense of low-income commuters.

Voters approved Regional Measure 3 in 2018 which will incrementally increase toll rates to fund the expansion of public transit. I applaud this effort and vow accountability by means of citizen and legislative oversight. With traffic congestion and the lack of affordable housing in the SF and San Jose Metropolitan Areas, we need a better way to facilitate the in and outflow of workers across the Bay while shifting our dependence on traditional petroleum to low-carbon fuel alternatives such as solar power and electricity.

Finally, commuter safety and passenger experience is a racial equity and criminal justice issue. The events of the last few weeks laid bare the inequity and injustice in our law enforcement. According to police records, 46%-55% of citations from eating and drinking are for Black riders, whereas they only account for 10% of total BART ridership. This calls for major reforms within our law enforcement community. As someone who has worked in local government, I will bring my experience to ensure that we take meaningful reform and fix this broken system and ensure that passengers feel safe.

On a personal note: I take the 38R everyday to work, promoting and improving public transportation will always be a priority

4. Green Energy Policy: What are your top priorities for improving energy conservation, household efficiency and renewable power, and how would you advance these efforts? What have you done to promote energy conservation in these areas? Are you, personally, a CleanPowerSF SuperGreen customer? *

SB 32 mandates that California reduces its GHG emissions by 40% to 1990s levels. We've made some progress but as a City, we must do more to shift our dependence on traditional petroleum to low-carbon fuel alternatives. We have to incentivize the electrification of transportation, public and private, either by means of expanding our rebate programs, especially for low-income vehicle owners or making a full transition to an all-electric MUNI. The MUNI has identified nine all-electric routes but we must do more.

I've worked in local and state government the last two decades, both as a community and taxpayers' advocate. I understand how critical building coalitions is to getting things done. Building a greener San Francisco presents a prime opportunity to work across sectors -- environmental groups, tech, neighborhood associations, labor, auto industry. As Supervisor, I will work tirelessly to ensure that we include community input and govern with facts, not myths perpetrated by climate skeptics, to put a dent on our environmental crisis and transition to a future where every household is powered by solar power or electricity.

Finally, we cannot talk about Green Energy without tackling environmental racism. The fact is certain areas, which are disproportionately low-income and POC, more than others suffer from higher rates of air pollution. We must work with the City Attorney to hold accountable corporate and industrial polluters. The Ninth Circuit recently ruled that San Francisco along with other Bay Area counties and cities can sue the Big 5 petroleum companies for their role in climate change. I welcome this news and as Supervisor, I will make sure that we use other legal tools at our discretion to lend oversight and accountability over industrial pollution.

5. Water Sustainability & Conservation: What are your priorities for improving the sustainability of San Francisco's drinking and wastewater systems? If elected, what steps will you take to enhance the City's water resiliency and reduce its reliance on imported water? What have you done to promote conservation in this area? *

Water is too precious to use just once, I support the San Francisco recycled water program and support expanding the program throughout San Francisco.

As supervisor I would like to See San Francisco be part of the rain barrel rebate and educational program. If each home in San Francisco helped to maintain a healthy urban watershed by reducing the demand on the potable water system to irrigate our garden, and by reducing the amount of wet weather runoff that is collected and sent into the public storm water system, which goes untreated into our bays and estuaries. We would conserve our drinking water.

Water conservation starts at home. Education of water conservation in schools is extremely important, this is why every year I work with my son's school teacher to have someone speak to the class about the importance of water conservation and what they can do to help CA drought.

6. Zero Waste: How can the city advance its Zero Waste goals in light of the temporary (we hope) move to suspend programs such as the required fee for grocery store bags that previously incentivized customers to reuse bags and containers, or purchase foodstuffs from bulk-stocked bins? What are your thoughts around recent legislation to reduce waste and what more can we do? How will you make it happen? What have you done to promote zero waste? *

The San Francisco Mandatory Recycling and Composting Ordinance (No. 100-09) all San Franciscans must do their part to separate their recyclables, compostable and landfilled trash and to participate in recycling and composting programs. Recology programs need to be continuously be supported.

Restaurants every year use to-go containers by the thousands that end up in our landfills if not recycled correctly. A recent legislation was introduced to charge a fee for to-go containers. I support and would reintroduce a similar legislation with amendments. San Francisco restaurants are struggling, I know because I own a restaurant in San Francisco. We ask each to-go order if they would like to bring their reusable containers, or if they are locals that we know we serve them in a plate and give them a credit when they return the plate. This has increased our local clients and reduced our costs. While I understand that high tourist area, this would be a burden, we can exclude high tourist areas as the City tests out the service fees for to-go containers.

7. Your Environmental Vision: Why should the San Francisco League of Conservation Voters endorse you? How will protecting the environment shape your agenda given the potential for ongoing pandemic conditions? How will you continue the efforts and gains despite significant economic hardship? *

As a woman of color, I feel a certain obligation to step up and ensure that our voices are heard in shaping environmental policy. The fact is environmental science has been overwhelmingly white. We have to do better and create an inclusive space that takes into account the experiences of people of color with environmental racism and put forward solutions that effectively respond to the needs of communities that bear the brunt of industrial pollution.

Protecting the environment while incentivizing job creation is not an either-or issue. We can do both if we have the moral leadership and the will to do so. Our City is facing imminent budget cuts and a growing \$1.7 billion dollar deficit during a pandemic. However, this economic environment presents an opportunity for us to tackle both our deficit and the environment. We can invest in a green economy by creating green jobs and building more bike lanes, working with tech, labor and the auto industry to transition to an all-electric MUNI, expanding our rebate programs to incentivize the electrification of private vehicles, working with nonprofits and CBOs to install solar panels, especially among low-income households and ending our reliance on plastic bags. This way we are putting San Franciscans to work and pulling ourselves out of recession while also addressing our climate crisis.

A UN Climate report states we only have 10 years to reverse the trajectory we are in; otherwise, there is no going back. Our children deserve better. We cannot cower to Big Oil money in politics at the expense of our children's future. We need to act with increased urgency. As Supervisor, I will legislate and govern with science and not myths perpetrated by climate skeptics and oil and energy lobbyists.



San Francisco League of Conservation Voters

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