

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? *

As a tenant rights attorney and affordable housing advocate for the last two decades, I know that we need to prioritize affordable housing, particularly in areas with public transit. I've championed higher inclusionary zoning citywide. When rezoning of Divisadero and Fillmore in 2016 didn't include community benefits, I co-founded Affordable Divis, which organized meetings with over 500 residents, developed a community plan, and won higher affordability requirements in exchange for higher density.

As Supervisor, I introduced a measure for the November 2020 ballot authorizing the City to acquire, develop, or construct 10,000 units of permanently affordable social housing. The measure would carve out a local exception to Article 34 of the California Constitution, the constitutional amendment passed in 1950 as part of redlining and segregation policies of that era. Passed in 1950 with the backing of the state Realtors Association, Article 34 intended to keep low-income tenants — particularly African-American tenants and other people of color — out of affluent, white neighborhoods. With this measure, we are making it possible to create thousands of units of municipal housing for the people of San Francisco, especially people of color.

Generally speaking, I have not experienced pushback on affordable housing in District 5 in my decades of work here. I have experienced pushback on market rate development for having insufficient affordable housing, with the goal to increase the affordable housing. I have managed pushback from constituents around solutions to homelessness during this pandemic, specifically the safe sleeping site in the Haight Ashbury - only the second one in the city. We overcame attacks from conservative neighbors in Cole Valley (many of whom my opponent boasts as her early endorsers) who sought to stop the Safe Sleeping Site, and we overcame a lawsuit filed by the Co-Chair of Women for Trump against the site. While I will consult with all constituents, I will not let a vocal minority of residents block solutions that have overwhelming community support and meet a desperate need.

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? *

I'm a member of Walk SF and the Bike Coalition and appreciate the work of the broader Vision Zero Coalition, including their strong letter last year demanding accountability, timelines, and benchmarks for Vision Zero. We need traffic calming and speed limit reduction, to ban right on red in dangerous intersections, and crossing guards to help at high risk intersections – especially near senior housing. As a pedestrian, cyclist, and every day Muni rider myself, I believe that protected bike lanes and intersections are essential, as is safer and more extensive bike parking.

Since taking office, I've taken the lead working with MTA on a range of projects. We announced significant safety improvements at Masonic/Oak, launched Slow Streets on Page and Golden Gate, and I have publicly stated my support for building out our network of car free streets. My office and the MTA led ongoing efforts to establish the Fell street bike lane, the first new protected bike lane of the Slow Streets program, which is scheduled to open soon. I will continue fighting to make sure that San Francisco is a transit first city, and stop letting Uber and Lyft take over our streets, causing traffic and accidents without giving anything in return.

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.? *

I've been an everyday Muni rider for the last 27 years. I'm one of two supervisors (I believe) who rides public transportation to City Hall.

I believe we need to improve MUNI service and incentivize ridership by reducing fares. I was an outspoken critic of proposed Muni fare increases, and I worked hard with Supervisor Peskin and community organizers to reverse MTA-approved fare increase and win a Muni fare freeze for the next two years. My office is in constant communication with MTA about MUNI service. We are currently supporting efforts to launch a MUNI only lane on Masonic. This is a transit first city and we need a robust transit system that moves people reliably, affordably, and without overcrowding. We need to get serious about getting people out of cars and onto Muni – the exact opposite of Uber's business plan. A real transit-first policy is an integral part of making streets safer and our city greener.

San Francisco has a target of transitioning to all battery electric buses by 2035. It's crucial that we stick to that. This means replacing so-called "renewable diesel" buses, which still emit greenhouse gases. We need to commit to a city fleet of 100% electric vehicles, powered by renewable sources.

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? *

Energy efficiency is key to reducing the city's reliance on fossil fuels, lowering residents' utility bills, and creating jobs in the clean energy sector. Our buildings should be net zero energy and use zero fossil fuels. Electric heat pumps, smart home devices and residential battery storage can increase the efficiency of homes and allow them to flexibly respond to changes in the grid. By tightening our building codes, we can surpass our state minimum and lead the way for other communities.

Existing buildings should be assessed for deep energy upgrades and move towards full decarbonization in the next decade. A good first step is the Existing Buildings Ordinance, which sets strong standards for large commercial buildings. It's a standard that should be expanded to include all buildings – residential and commercial – to ensure we are making the best possible use of our energy resources.

Financing energy efficiency is often one of the biggest challenges. With split incentives between landlords and tenants, the city can play a role by offering low-cost financing to efficiency upgrade projects. The cost of the projects can be paid back over time through savings on utility bills – a successful program like this was recently rolled out in Hawaii. With a public bank, we will have the opportunity to fund these and other sustainable, ethical, projects that actually benefit the public interest.

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 a resource that will continue to become scarcer through climate change. We need to ensure that we are managing our water supply. We have to think big and look at all aspects of water usage and set goals to increase efficiency and recycling and provide clean water for all. In San Francisco, we can reduce our water usage in buildings by setting strong standards for conservation and installing efficient, low-flow devices. We need a city wide program of audits and retrofits to upgrade all of our water systems to state-of-the-art technology that minimizes unnecessary water use.

Regional coordination among Bay Area cities is essential to preserving the San Francisco Bay. We are all affected by water pollution, agricultural runoff, groundwater depletion, and rising sea levels - we must all work together to solve them. San Francisco should take a leading role as a progressive environmental advocate in regional and state organizations involved in managing the Bay's natural resources.

While collaborating with other communities to solve our common problems, San Francisco must also work towards developing an independent, resilient water supply. We should encourage the development of distributed water resources, by promoting rainwater capture, water reclamation and greywater systems. Combined with strong water conservation standards, and regional collaboration within our watershed, we can meet the challenge of water scarcity and rethink how we use water to ensure future sustainability.

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? *

We need to incentivize residents and businesses to use reusable, recycled and recyclable products whenever possible. We should continue to reduce our waste as a city through the styrofoam, bag, and straw bans. Japan's recycling program is detailed, comprehensive and begins with consumers deconstructing their garbage into separate bins for plastic, paper, food, metals, etc. Let's follow the lead of cities who have already created solutions by subsidizing a discounting program for when people bring their own thermos to a cafe and giving breaks to stores that stock sustainable, local, or environmentally friendly packaging/products. Some of these efforts (such as reusable bags and cups) are currently on hold in the pandemic, but we need to get them back up and running when it's safe to do so.

But we can't rely on individual consumer actions alone. We need to do more to look upstream by implementing fundamental changes to reduce the enormous output of waste we generate. That means taking on major corporations that profit from the waste and I welcome opportunities to do just that. We can lead the way for other cities to adopt standards that force corporations to stop filling our oceans and parks with refuse.

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? *

Environmentalism has been one of my top priorities throughout my career. I'm a long-time member of Forests Forever, I was endorsed by SFLCV and the Sierra Club in 2016, and by the Sierra Club in 2019. I'm a defender of CEQA. In my two decades of housing advocacy, I have steadfastly rejected attempts to divide the housing justice and environmental movements. Throughout my career, I've stood up to corporate interests for our communities.

Our city is facing serious challenges in both the short and the long term – COVID-19, a looming recession, and ongoing climate change. We need bold plans to address these issues, like 10,000 units of social housing. We need to identify new sources of revenue for critical programs, and embrace creative ideas like the slow streets program. Conceding to 10% cuts across city budgets and reduced services from the get-go just isn't good enough. I feel a great responsibility to make sure my kids and all kids grow up in a world that is safe, beautiful, and sustainable. We cannot settle for anything less.



San Francisco League of Conservation Voters

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