

**Santa Monica Democratic Club
2022 City Council Candidate Questionnaire**

Thank you for your interest in the Santa Monica Democratic Club endorsement. Candidates seeking the endorsement of our Club must complete and return the following questionnaire. Note that only registered Democrats are eligible for our consideration. Please send the completed questionnaire to smdemocrats@gmail.com by 11:59pm on August 26, 2022. Interview appointment times with our Executive Committee will be scheduled on a first come first served basis as the questionnaires are returned. Submitting this questionnaire constitutes acknowledgment that its contents are now part of the public record and may be reproduced and distributed by the Santa Monica Democratic Club.

General Information

Candidate Name: Caroline Torosis

Email Address: ctorosis@gmail.com

Phone Number: 650-224-6770

Candidate's Current Occupation: Attorney and Senior Deputy of Workforce Development & Economic Opportunity for the Chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

Candidate's Employer: Los Angeles County

Campaign Contact Person (if other than candidate): N/A

What qualifications do you bring to this office?

As an executive and attorney in local government, I have extensive experience navigating multiple, complex agencies to ensure that there is a "no wrong door" approach to serving our community. I have worked to establish a Countywide Office of Small Business, creating the County's first-ever small business concierge. At the onset of the COVID-19 public health and economic pandemic, I worked quickly to avert layoffs at hundreds of businesses by lobbying the state to unlock discretionary funds for local deployment, known as the County's Employer Assistance Grant Fund.

As Senior Deputy of Workforce Development & Economic Opportunity for the Chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, I have dedicated my career to passing policies that protect the rights of our workers, consumers, and tenants while allowing our small businesses to promote a fair and vibrant marketplace where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

In my current role, I am leading the County's economic and jobs recovery response to the COVID-19 pandemic by directing over \$100 million in financial relief to our small businesses, implementing the nation's most innovative Guaranteed Income program, and standing up for our vulnerable front-line workers by establishing the County's Affordable Housing Trust Fund and one of the strongest minimum wage ordinances in the nation, which extends to Santa Monica.

As an elected Commissioner on the Santa Monica Rent Control Board, I work with both tenants and landlords to enact common sense reforms to the City's rent control laws — minimizing landlord operating expenses normally passed onto tenants, keeping Santa Monicans in their homes, while securing a budget surplus and greater public transparency.

Why are you running? I am running for City Council because I fundamentally believe that our government's role is to stand in the gap for those who need our help, and to ensure a thriving, inclusive and welcoming City for all. I have spent my years on the Rent Control Board ensuring that tenants and landlords are entitled to fair and reasonable rent controls. We must ensure that those controls remain in place and that our laws are enforced. Additionally, we still have much work to do to ensure that our housing providers can remain in Santa Monica and that our tenants are protected as we come out of the recession created by the global pandemic. I am ready to lead our City Council in an innovative and forward-looking direction to accomplish these goals as well as return a professionalism and productive discourse that has fallen away in recent years.

What are the top issues of your campaign? How do you plan to address those issues once elected? I am running for City Council to leverage my experience in local, state and federal government to bring much needed resources to Santa Monica. I plan to build on my proven track record of delivering for my constituents in my two terms on the Rent Control Board to make progress in the following areas:

Ensure that we cap rent increases for rent-controlled tenants at 3% across the City to keep residents in their housing amid rapidly rising inflation.

I will work to expand resources for homeless services by at least 25% in the City budget. We will do this by holding LAHSA accountable for outreach, mental health services, and crisis response street teams by leveraging both relationships and grant funding opportunities.

We will realize equitable economic recovery by reducing bureaucratic barriers and red tape for new businesses and therefore new city revenue streams. Specifically, this would include measuring timelines and expediting those entitlement timelines for jobs-creating projects. We will establish one-stop meetings for new projects that will allow all parties and city agencies to come together in one place to let the business know what they need and why they need it by.

A challenge I see facing our city is increasing speculation as our economy recovers. One way to combat this would be to pass an anti-speculation tax; similar to the one San Francisco attempted to pass and that is in place in Vancouver. This may help to curtail the rapid rate at which speculation occurs.

I will also work to increase the availability of the Preserve our Diversity (POD) program to long-term rent-controlled tenants. Santa Monica has enacted a first-in-the-nation program to offer shallow subsidies to long-term senior rent-controlled tenants on fixed incomes to ensure they are able to remain in their housing as their rents continue to rise. I will work to increase funding for POD to ensure that a greater number of our residents are able to avail themselves of this critical program, particularly in the wake of COVID-19.

Finally, wealth building does not only occur through homeownership but through business ownership as well. I will work to establish a loan fund help our small, women-owned and BIPOC-owned business acquire their commercial space to keep rents affordable and the business in the community.

As an executive and attorney in local government, I have extensive experience navigating multiple, complex agencies to ensure that there is a "no wrong door" approach to serving our community. I have worked to establish a Countywide Office of Small Business, creating the County's first-ever small business concierge. At the onset of the COVID-19 public health and economic pandemic, I worked quickly to avert layoffs at hundreds of businesses by lobbying the state to unlock discretionary funds for local deployment, known as the County's Employer Assistance Grant Fund.

I am ready to lead the Santa Monica City Council on day one to ensure we deliver for our residents and stakeholders.

Please list all of your individual and/or organizational endorsements.

ELECTED LEADERS

Sheila Kuehl - Los Angeles County Supervisor
Sue Himmelrich - Mayor, City of Santa Monica
Tony Vazquez - Member, California Board of Equalization
Richard Bloom - Assemblymember, 51st District
Kristin McCowan - Mayor Pro Tem, City of Santa Monica
Gleam Davis - Councilmember, City of Santa Monica
Dr. Sion Roy - Trustee, Santa Monica Community College District
Dr. Nancy Greenstein - Trustee, Santa Monica Community College District
Barry Snell - Trustee, Santa Monica Community College District
Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein - Board Member, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified Board of Education
Keith Coleman - Board Member, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified Board of Education
Laurie Lieberman - Board Member, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District
Steve Duron - Chair, Santa Monica Rent Control Board
Anastasia Foster - Vice-Chair, Santa Monica Rent Control Board
Naomi Sultan - Ex-Officio Commissioner, Santa Monica Rent Control Board

COMMUNITY LEADERS

Ted Winterer - Former Mayor, City of Santa Monica
Rick Chavez Zbur - Democratic Candidate for Assembly District 51 and former Executive Director, Equality California*
Denny Zane - Co-Chair, Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights and former Mayor, City of Santa Monica
Torie Osborne - Community Leader and Activist
Jon Katz - Santa Monica Democratic Club President*
Shawn Landres - Planning Commissioner, City of Santa Monica
Leslie Lambert - Planning Commissioner, City of Santa Monica
Katy Yaroslavsky - Democratic Candidate for Los Angeles City Council District 5
Abby Arnold - Co-Chair, Santa Monica Forward
Jennifer Kennedy - Steering Committee Member, Santa Monicans for Renters Rights
Sonya Sultan - Steering Committee Member, Santa Monicans for Renters Rights
Adine Forman - Executive Director, Hospitality Training Academy
Derek Devermont - Delegate, Democratic National Committee
Kristen Torres Pawling - Committee Member, Culver City General Plan Advisory Committee
Dan Hall - Board Member, Santa Monica Pier Corporation
Susie Shannon - Delegate, Democratic National Committee

ORGANIZATIONS

Abundant Housing Los Angeles
IBEW Local 11
Santa Monica Forward

How long have you lived in Santa Monica? Where else have you lived, and why did you live

there? I have lived in Santa Monica for 11 years. I grew up in the bay area of northern California, close to Stanford University. I lived there until attending UCLA in Los Angeles for four years. During that time I also lived for several months in Paris and Washington D.C. for study abroad and summer working for the Department of Justice, respectively. I then lived in St. Louis, Missouri for three years while I attended Law School at Washington University School. After graduating I moved back and lived for one year in our neighboring community of Brentwood before moving to Santa Monica.

Will you pledge to serve on City Council for your entire four year term? Yes. I also plan to seek re-election thereafter.

Party / Activism

How long have you been a registered Democrat? Have you ever been registered as a member of another political party, or as Decline To State? If so, which party and why? I have been a registered Democrat since I first registered to vote, at 18, and have been a registered Democrat for 18 years since (I am 36).

What is your experience with political activism? Have you ever volunteered or worked for a political campaign other than your own, and if so, in what capacity were you involved? I have been politically active since the age of 16, when I campaigned for Howard Dean for President. My first job was working field for Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren while in high school. Since then, Steve Westly for California Governor, and Hillary Clinton for President in 2008. I helped to open Hillary's California campaign headquarters in Koreatown and served as a field organizer and then managed her California surrogate speakers bureau. I am passionate about campaigning for and electing progressive democrats. I have volunteered for a variety of campaigns since returning to Los Angeles County after law school.

Which political candidates have you endorsed or supported publicly in the past? Please list as many as possible. Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Assemblymember Richard Bloom, Mayor Sue Himmelrich, Councilmember Gleam Davis, Senator Elizabeth Warren, Hillary Clinton for President, Lieutenant Governor John Fetterman, Stacy Abrams, Kevin de Leon for Senate and Mayor, Steve Westly for Governor, Lindsey Horvath for Los Angeles County Supervisor, Holly Mitchell for Los Angeles County Supervisor, Rick Zbur for Assembly.

Have you ever signed for or publicly supported efforts to recall a public official from office? If so, please list the name(s) of the officials and why you felt they should be recalled. No.

Please list any organizations with which you are a member, including any leadership position you have held in each organization.

I am an active member of the LA County Central Committee, serving on several subcommittees, including the Labor Subcommittee and the Judicial Endorsement Subcommittee. Other organizations include:

Elected Delegate, California Democratic Party. Appointed member, CADEM Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion Committee, prior appointee to Platform Committee. Member, Los Angeles County Democratic Party. Appointed member, Member, Santa Monica Democratic Club. Member, Heart of LA Democratic Club. Member, Stonewall Democratic Club and Stonewall Young Democrats.

I am also an active alumna of UCLA and a member of the Metro Los Angeles Chancellor's Society and Women in Philanthropy.

Please confirm that you have read the latest version of the California Democratic Party Platform,

as found here:

<https://cadem.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CDP-Platform-2022-FINAL-1-1.pdf>

List any items in the CDP Platform with which you disagree. (This is in no way a litmus test for our endorsement; however, because the party delegates have worked so hard on every word of this platform document, we believe it will be a helpful guide to comprehend the policy differences between each candidate.)

I am an immediate past appointed member of the California Democratic Party Platform Committee. I have studied the platform diligently and worked with delegates across the state to author a broad and inclusive Platform that espouses our values. I agree with the Platform, and in the future, we are committed to working one editing the entire platform so that the language is more cohesive throughout the document

Campaign Finance

Please indicate Yes or No to the following statements:

1. I pledge not to take contributions from oil, gas, and coal industry executives, lobbyists, and PACs.
 2. I pledge not to take contributions from police or law enforcement unions, lobbyists, and PACs. Yes
 3. I pledge not to take contributions from development firms, lobbyists, and PACs. Yes
- If you answered No to any of the above contribution questions, please explain here:

City Governance

What is your brief assessment of how City Council has functioned over the past two years? In 2020, three Democratic incumbents were unseated by a group calling themselves the "change slate." The group is quite nativist in nature, not wanting to change the character of the community. I am running to return progressive, inclusive and innovative values back to the council. The change slate is running a group of candidates and it is important that we elect three strong democrats to the seats up for this election instead.

Do you believe we should keep the current system of seven at-large council seats? What other type of representation would you be interested in exploring? I would like to see the professionalization of the city council members with a support staff and a directly elected mayor that sits on the city counsel as its chair, replacing one of the seven at-large seats. I believe this will best serve our city by allowing our council to fastidiously study items coming before them, as well as asking the requisite questions in advance of hearing each item on the dias.

Do you support the elimination of the City Manager position and/or the creation of an empowered, directly elected Mayor of Santa Monica? I support the direct election of a mayor. I believe we also need this to co-exist with a strong and capable City Manager.

Do you favor any changes to our City Charter as a means to make the city government more democratic? I support the direct election of a mayor, and the provision of staff for our City Councilmembers, who serve part time, to ensure that issues before the Council are properly studied and analyzed.

Are top city staffers' salaries too high, and is this a potential source for balancing the City budget? Good people deserve good salaries. Without high salaries the quality of professionals on the city staff is likely to suffer. Additionally, reducing salaries or staff would be detrimental to a staff that is already suffering from low morale due to layoffs and lack of capacity. Santa Monica staff salaries are commensurate with similarly situated cities. I believe we can operate more efficiently, and draw down regional and Federal funds before we should think about lowering salaries.

Should each City Council member have their own paid staffer, and/or should Council be a full time job? I believe both would be beneficial to the professionalism of the City Council and its ability to serve the city. For the size of our city and our budget, there needs to be more attention paid to the actual duties of the City Council members. Even now, to do the job correctly requires more time than is commensurate with the salary paid for its performance. As a professional in local government, I am aware of, and familiar with the time commitment required. However, the low salary and lack of direct support staff narrows the candidates that can run for the office, particularly if we are looking to attract skilled, knowledgeable people to the role.

Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

In what ways can the City of Santa Monica ensure that, in a real, practical sense, Black Lives Matter in our community?

First, we need to see a much greater investment in the Black Agenda. If we are to ensure that Black Lives Matter, we must look at investing a disproportionately high amount of money into communities that have been harmed by white supremacy and racist government policies. This includes opportunities to return land to its rightful owners, such as in the former Belmar neighborhood.

Additionally, we need to ensure that our policing practices do not contribute to the epidemic of over incarceration. What are our priorities in serving our community? The Santa Monica police department is often the only agency to respond to problems in the community — even if the problems are not criminal in nature. Police handle mental health crises. They enforce traffic laws. They answer 911 calls about neighbor to neighbor disputes, including tenant harassment, barking dogs and loud parties. Therefore, we must invest in community serving programs that support the diverse needs of our community, particularly our black community. We also must set up a fund to support black businesses in our community, as we know that historically, minority-owned businesses are more likely to hire minority workers.

In what ways can the City of Santa Monica better protect its undocumented residents? The City should serve all residents of Santa Monica, regardless of immigration status. We must continue to perform robust education and outreach, particularly in multiple languages, regarding city services to ensure our undocumented neighbors are aware of their rights and responsibilities. We could seek to establish an Office of Immigrant Affairs, and ensure we are tracking and reporting outcomes on how, as a city, we are serving the immigrant community. I strongly believe that education and outreach is the strongest form of protection, because knowledge empowers individuals to stand up for their rights. We can always strive to use new channels of communication and trusted community groups to reach residents who would otherwise be unaware of our services. Each year, on the Rent Control Board we conduct a self-help seminar entirely in Spanish targeted at the Pico Neighborhood, and we can build upon this to do more.

How do you plan to (in the moment) counteract any and all observed possible acts of microaggressions towards Women, African Americans, Hispanics, LGBTQ and others of marginalized communities from your fellow Councilmembers or members of the public? What is your experience in dealing with these situations?

I will work towards establishing a commitment for Santa Monica to be anti-racist, and were I to see any microaggressions, I would call them out in the moment.

People of color and those from historically marginalized communities have been particularly harmed by housing instability, discriminatory rental policies, and homelessness. Today, approximately half of all renters in this country are people of color, and these renters are disproportionately affected by housing cost burdens. Around a quarter of Black and Hispanic households spend at least half of their income on housing costs, as compared with less than 20 percent of white households. People of color also face disproportionate rates of eviction. Therefore, we must approach all our work with an eye toward equity with respect to enforcing the rent control charter.

I will continue to be a strong voice in support of policies and programs across the City and the state that elevate the voices of people of color. Increasing funding to organizations like the Church in Ocean Park with histories of inclusiveness and access could serve to provide more services to residents who would not otherwise be aware. Additionally, looking at set asides for people of color in programs like POD will ensure that we are promoting equitable access to services. I would encourage the Rent Control Board to undergo an equity analysis to see how effectively we are serving people of color, and how we can do better[DB4] .

What are the most significant environmental justice issues in Santa Monica, and how will you address them?

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, city residents and low income individuals are among the Americans most likely to suffer from climate change. The most significant environmental justice issues in Santa Monica revolve around the Pico Neighborhood. This includes the toxins polluted from the 10 freeway, the City's waste transfer station and recycling center, as well as the Expo line stop. We need greater environmental protection measures on projects in this neighborhood, as well as more urban greening measures. Additionally, to slow the speed of traffic, we should explore traffic mitigation measures such as curb cuts or speed bumps. We must install more protected bike lanes to incentivize walking and biking, and we need to look at disincentivizing private care use. The City needs to continue to ensure earthquake retrofitting in buildings is expedited to keep our residents safe, and work with the Rent Control Board to promote City policy to protect our renters.

What specific initiatives to increase diversity and promote inclusion among City staff are you interested in pursuing, and how will you work with the City Manager to implement these Policies?

We must establish that Santa Monica is committed to a policy of equity in hiring and promotion. I would work to require training across all city staff to not only improve on the way the City delivers services to Women, BIPOC, LGBTQ+ but the way we manage and promote diverse voices within our city. As an executive manager within the County of Los Angeles, I have experience not only dealing with these microaggressions but calling them out and rooting them out.

Housing / Development

What steps would you propose to address the homelessness crisis in the City of Santa Monica?

Significant steps can be taken by holding our County funders accountable for outreach, mental health services, and crisis response street teams. I have been in the process of this work already by ensuring the successful implementation of the homeless hiring tax credit, a policy I crafted in collaboration with the office of Sen. Maria Elena Durazo.

I also believe we must leverage our position as a regional innovator to work with the County, state and Federal government to be more assertive about drawing down mental health and homeless services dollars. This includes not only funding for street outreach, services, and transitional housing, but funding for brick and mortar affordable, supportive housing. We must realize better coordination amongst our City agencies, reinstate a director over homelessness that reports directly to the City Manager and City Council, and tracks outcomes on a month over month basis to prioritize real, systemic improvement.

What is your philosophy on the appropriate scope of development that should be approved in Santa Monica? I am a strong advocate for deed-restricted affordable housing in my community. Promoting smart growth through long-range community planning and the creation of housing and job centers near high-quality transit nodes, as well as urban greening and open space, ensures we have healthier families and communities. I believe in the principles of the State Strategic Growth Council, furthering environmental equity through the creation of housing, jobs, and community amenities, while reducing vehicle miles traveled. This includes eliminating urban sprawl, and a commitment to meet our Regional Housing Needs Assessment housing production numbers at all levels of affordability. Moreover, the increased production of affordable housing is critical to alleviating our homelessness crisis. This includes the development of supportive housing coupled with County continuum-of-care services through Housing for Health to help individuals experiencing homelessness reach economic self-sufficiency.

In what specific ways has Santa Monica failed to address the housing affordability crisis? What concrete steps would you take on Council to better address the crisis? Santa Monica, with the leadership of County Council, must reduce building and holding costs to make it easier to develop housing Santa Monicans can actually afford while expanding renter protections. This would include reducing bureaucratic barriers and red tape for new development with a focus on affordable housing. I believe in increasing resources and funding for new affordable housing development, and this includes prioritizing city land and resources for affordable housing.

How can the City of Santa Monica meet its next RHNA cycle goal of 6,153 new deed restricted affordable housing units for low and moderate income households and 2,721 new market rate housing units?

- 1) Making publicly owned land available at or below market rate to subsidize the cost of affordable housing development on vacant and underutilized parcels.
- 2) Streamlining affordable housing development on public land. This could include the creation of a Housing Acquisition Fund whereby Santa Monica would purchase land for affordable housing, ensure it is shovel-ready, and then turn it around to a non-profit affordable housing developer with an affordable housing deed restriction to expedite the land development component. From a financing perspective, Housing for Health could cover the capital operating subsidy which would ensure that more supportive housing is built.
- 3) Passing a vacancy tax to grow Santa Monica's affordable housing trust fund dollars which would also serve to dis-incentivize holding inherently affordable units off the market to circumvent the Ellis Act.
- 4) A community benefits agreement on all development projects to require a higher percentage of deed restricted affordable housing in all mixed-use development projects.
- 5) Advocate for an increase in funding at the state level for Low Income Housing Tax Credits, particularly for tax credits deployed in the State Housing and Community Development's designated "high opportunity areas" such as Santa Monica.
- 6) Funding appropriated to preservation of existing affordable housing, particularly housing that may not be up to code or in disrepair. With acquisition-rehabilitation financing, preservation purchasers can purchase these properties and, instead of displacing low-income tenants, can rehabilitate the property in exchange for deed restricting the property to make new units available to tenants living at or below a certain percentage of Area Median Income.

7) The City should appoint a permitting ombudsperson to serve as the point of contact for all housing developers. This will ensure that the entitlement process is streamlined, and that any developer constructing approved new units of housing is able to do so in an expeditious manner.

What is your assessment of the 2022 Housing Element proposed by City Council?

I support the adoption of our housing element, although I believe that we could have been more specific about how we are going to create the number of units required by our RHNA. In terms of the process, when early drafts of the housing element were presented to the Rent Control Board for review and feedback, it was perceived by staff was not amenable to the comments of the Board, and elected body. We must act assertively and deliberately if we are to meet our RHNA mandate. I supported the initial rejection of our housing element as it did not meet the mandate in front of us. I appreciate that the City Council took additional steps to add specificity and then re-submit the housing element.

The Rent Board and its staff have committed to hosting a discussion about the city's rent control law with the community at large. The City has always complemented the Rent Charter's mission in the areas of the City's jurisdiction, including: Tenant Harassment, Code Enforcement, Land Use (AirBnb & corporate rentals laws) and Tenant Relocation Benefits. How would you enhance or change these areas of tenant protections on City Council?

I am committed to ensuring we have the strongest renter protections in the region. Santa Monica has seen rapidly increasing rental prices, and we must protect folks in their existing housing. With our independently elected Rent Control Board and their expert staff, we should lean on their decades of experience to lead the discussion. Rent Control is meant as a community stabilization tool, and not deed restricted affordable housing. Rent Control helps folks build wealth and prepare for daily living expenses. We need to continue the strong tenant protections we have in place, and ensure that we are not inadvertently incentivizing landlords to harass and constructively evict their tenants in favor of being able to make a higher return on their investment. Everyone should have the dignity to be able to age in place.

What do you see as the mission or purpose of Rent Control in a city where 70% of the population are renters? Rent control is vital to the fabric of our community. It ensures that we protect our renters and afford the same stability to those who rent as those who own. It is recognition that a person's home can be a property that they don't own but rent and that they should be able to stay in their home regardless of the whims of the rental market. As a Rent Control Board Commissioner, I work with both tenants and landlords to enact common sense reforms to the City's rent control laws — minimizing landlord operating expenses normally passed onto tenants, keeping Santa Monicans in their homes, while securing a budget surplus and greater public transparency.

Public Safety

What is your assessment of the role of the Public Safety Reform and Oversight Commission in Santa Monica?

What is your assessment of the OCR Report regarding the police response on May 31, 2020, and what changes to City and SMPD policy should be implemented in light of its findings?

I believe the City should have been much more transparent in its response to the events on May 31. From the Police Chief to the City Manager, it is imperative that we learn from the actions of May 31. I do not want to see tear gas used on non-violent protestors in our City. The OIR report identified areas of needed improvement for the Santa Monica Police Department that existed under previous leadership. New leadership has worked to address nearly all of the concerns raised in the report and is working on continuous improvement, which I support.

I am in support of a strong Police Civilian Oversight Commission with a complaint review board to ensure that our Police Department has multiple layers of accountability.

What steps do you think need to be taken in the next two years to reduce crime in the City? If this requires additional funding, how should it be funded?

I understand that currently, the Santa Monica Police Department is stretched too thin. Over time, police officers have been tasked with social work and homeless outreach on top of their public safety responsibilities. We need to start using the right tool for the job. We need to increase the number of mental health professionals responding to non-emergency, mental health and homeless crises while reserving police response for escalating emergency situations.

Is the Santa Monica Police Department presently well funded? Should more or less of the City budget be allocated to hiring SMPD officers? Santa Monica Police Department is currently well funded. Our police officers are not mental health professionals, yet they get called to do tasks better suited for social workers. We must increase mental health outreach workers to pair with our first responders in order to more holistically address our mental health crises. Moreover, high profile “smash and grab” robberies have made an already difficult economic time even harder for our businesses. The current rash of smash and grab and follow home robberies are part of larger national organized theft rings, and we must work with our regional law enforcement to reduce crime and ensure that we are fully realizing our economic recovery.

Do you support efforts to promote investment of general fund monies previously allocated toward armed police response to instead go toward mental health services and other unarmed departments when appropriate? Yes. Recent displays of armed police response have shown it is not being utilized in a productive matter and mental health services need to be further supported, including the creation of local inpatient. mental health beds for admissions.

Do you support or oppose efforts to recall District Attorney George Gascón? Do you support DA Gascón’s special directives on restorative justice? If not, what approach should be taken?

I oppose efforts to recall DA Gascon. I support his special directives on restorative justice and I believe that we must stay the course if we are to reduce our epidemic of mass incarceration. The special directives should be implemented in a manner that preserves a victim’s right to justice.

Was the City Council justified in choosing not to implement an indoor vaccine mandate during the omicron surge in January/February 2022? What was your position at the time?

No, it was not justified. We should have implemented an indoor vaccine mandate and I would have pushed to do so.

Mobility

Should Santa Monica encourage more pedestrian-only streets like the Third Street Promenade? If so, on which streets would you consider this?

I believe when pedestrian-only streets like Third Street Promenade are logistically feasible they can be a positive force and benefit to our City. The main commercial corridor of Main Street is a good example as to where we have been able to close the street to car traffic for major events. However, it is largely the layout of Main Street that allows for that success, such as the major parking lots being accessible through side streets. I believe the City should consider making a carless Main Street a more permanent fixture of Santa Monica.

Do you support additional Metro rail lines being built in Santa Monica, and if so, which potential

projects do you support? Which regions of the City would you like to see serviced? Yes. The current planned buildout of the forthcoming purple line will end at the Veterans Administration campus in West LA. Ideally, this line would extend all the way through Santa Monica to the ocean. This would be useful to getting into downtown Los Angeles, however, we would also want to see the Crenshaw/LAX extension to link all the way to the purple line, facilitating north south travel. .

Should shared mobility devices and apps (eg, scooters, e-bikes) be encouraged or discouraged in Santa Monica? We need to balance their potential mobility benefits with their effectiveness and safety concerns. Studies have shown that scooters are not an effective last mile solution as they were originally touted as and they came with multiple safety concerns in their interactions with both pedestrians and automobiles. E-bikes and biking in general fare much better, but without more protected bike lanes also come with safety concerns especially if we further encourage their use. I encourage the use of e-bikes coupled with protected bike lanes, and we should make infrastructure changes as such. I

Should the overall amount of street parking in Santa Monica be reduced in order to encourage a shift away from cars toward other modes of transportation? Santa Monica is a transit-rich, walkable community, but I don't necessarily believe elimination of street parking will resolve any issues, particularly if there is not easy access to structured parking near transit to compensate for the loss of spaces. If elected to City Council, I would be interested in exploring Santa Monica's required parking minimums for new development to potentially move toward a European-based model with parking maximums. While parking minimums create barriers to most small-scale, affordable, and infill housing, many multi-family affordable developments require some amount of parking. We must develop a solution that maximizes both affordability and the use of low income housing tax credits for deed-restricted affordable housing. We should explore the elimination of mandatory minimums in certain transit-priority areas of the City, similar to what the City of San Diego has piloted, and let the market dictate our needs.

Ballot Measures

Do you support California Proposition 1?

Yes, I believe we should support the right to reproductive freedom.

Do you support the citizens initiative ballot measure which would tax real estate transactions over \$8M and provide revenue for affordable housing, rent subsidy, and SMMUSD? Why/why Not?

Yes. Although I think a more robust community engagement process should have been conducted, I support the intent of the measure. With the dissolution of redevelopment, we absolutely need more funding for housing and mechanisms to keep folks in existing housing.

Do you support the competing council-approved ballot measure which would tax real estate transactions over \$8M and provide revenue into the general fund? Why/why not?

No, as I do not support an either/or approach.

Do you support the rent control ballot measure which would permanently lower the rent control General Adjustment cap from 6% down to 3%?

Yes.

Do you support the SMC bond measure?

Yes.

Do you support the 1% transient occupancy tax ballot measure?

Yes.

Do you support the cannabis business tax ballot measure?

Yes.

Federal Legislation

Do you support the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 which just passed Congress? It compromises on many of the important provisions included in the previous Build Back Better

Act. Do you think it's good enough?

I support the Inflation Reduction Act, because I think it's important for the Democratic Party to push progress forward, and deliver much needed relief for working Americans. Unfortunately, with Senator Manchin as a holdout under Build Back Better, this was the best compromise the party could negotiate as we come into the stretch before our mid-term elections. We have a climate crisis in this Country, and the IRA is the largest investment on climate change we have seen.

What do you think of legislation proposed since Roe v Wade was struck down – designed to protect other previously assumed fundamental freedoms? Notably: the Right to Contraception Act (HR 8373) and the Respect for Marriage Act (HR 8404) which would codify into federal law the rights for access to contraception and same-sex and interracial marriage.

Since *Roe v. Wade* was struck down it has become clear that nothing can be taken for granted and as many rights that can be codified should be.

Do you think we need the Protecting Access to Medication Abortion Act (S 4467)? It defends access to medication abortion in states where the right to an abortion is still protected. Safe access to Medical Abortions is strongly supported throughout the county by the majority of Americans. Since *Roe v. Wade* was struck down it has become clear that nothing can be taken for granted and as many rights that can be codified, should be.

Do you support the Medicare For All Act (HR 1976)? Yes.

Whether you support that bill or not, how can we ensure universal, single payer health care coverage for all Santa Monicans? By working with our state and Federally elected officials to push for universal, single payer healthcare. We must continue to elect strong delegates to our state party and our national party. These delegates must be able to represent the will of Santa Monica Democrats. We also must work together as Democrats to continually advocate with our local elected officials to share our personal stories and why single payer is essential to the trajectory of our country.

Additional Questions

What steps must Santa Monica take to enact a Green New Deal in our own city, if any?

Additional funding for green jobs, a re-envisioning of our economy and a high-road workforce development program that centers around climate, equity and jobs must be enacted in our City. I will leverage my experience at the County to bring benefits to our City. I created the County's first-ever green jobs High-Road employment program. The High-Road framework prioritizes equity, climate, and job quality by prioritizing supply side work that focuses explicitly on creating greater equity for the people of Los Angeles County by mitigating and supporting adaptation to climate change; increasing environmental sustainability; building community and economic resilience.

This has resulted in careers in high-road industries using climate resilient technology for those with the highest barriers to employment. The High-road model is now being used in the deployment of American Rescue Plan and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds. Moreover, there are millions of state and county dollars available to expand this program, which we can bring to Santa Monica. Finally, this year, with the leadership of the Board of Supervisors, the County of Los Angeles implemented its Green Zones policy to remove dirty and polluting land uses near residential. A key concept undergirding the program and in environmental justice more broadly is transparency and community engagement. In order to create implementable and effective planning tools, the Green Zones Program employs data-driven approach and robust stakeholder outreach strategy. This is something we can replicate in Santa Monica.

Although marijuana is legal in California for recreational use, there are currently no dispensaries operating in Santa Monica. Why is this the case, and should that be changed?

We have not been able to reach consensus on permitting dispensaries in the City. We must look at new ways to increase revenue in the City, while doing it in a safe and equitable manner. Therefore, we should look to learn from the City of Los Angeles's social equity program, and ensure that if we permit recreational cannabis use, we do so in a way that first benefits those who have been disproportionately negatively impacted by the war on drugs.

If dispensaries are allowed in Santa Monica, what processes would govern the business approval process to ensure equity?

We need to reduce start up costs for social equity applicants, which would mean conditional permits while approved applicants are waiting for full entitlements. Additionally, the City would need to create a map of permit concentrations, where in the City the cannabis facilities would be permitted so as to ensure there is no overconcentration. Finally, the criteria for the social equity program would need to be governed by a new position to develop equity criteria and prioritize applicants.

What role do you believe the Santa Monica Democratic Club should have in our City?

I believe that the Santa Monica Democratic Club should be the pre-eminent club in our City. We are able to cross generations and cultures, united in our shared passion for improving both our local community and national community. It has been amazing to meet likeminded friends from all walks of life and across all geographical areas of the City. I believe the Club plays the role of convener, but also one of the trusted sources of information for the community.

If elected, how would you attempt to interact with the Santa Monica Democratic Club and other political organizations to ensure community buy-in on new proposals?

I would continue to be an active member of the Santa Monica Democratic Club and the other political organizations I am already a member of. Moreover, just like in my role as a member of the Rent Control Board I will maintain my open-door policy of speaking to anyone that feels like they need to be heard on an issue, regardless of their position, including any organization or its members.