

Santa Monica Democratic Club

2026 City Council Candidate Endorsement Questionnaire

Eli Gill

General Information

Candidate Name:

Eli Gill

Email Address:

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Candidate's Current Occupation:

Senior Manager of Insurance Operations

Candidate's Employer:

Teak

Campaign Contact Person (if other than candidate):

Eli Gill

1. What qualifications do you bring to this office?

I have lived in Santa Monica for over twenty years, which means I have a deep, firsthand understanding of how this city has changed and where it has fallen short. Professionally, I have spent my career in operations and management in complex, regulated environments where results matter, budgets are real, and accountability is not optional. I know how to set priorities, build systems, and follow through.

Beyond my professional background, I have been an active civic participant in Santa Monica for many years. I have been attending and watching City Council meetings for at least fifteen years, and have become significantly more engaged over the last five, advocating on housing policy and mobility improvements. I am a founding member of Abundant Santa Monica, Santa Monica Greenways, and have served on the steering committees of Santa Monica Forward and Santa Monica Families for Safe Streets. I understand the mechanics of how decisions actually get made in this city, and I know where the gaps are.

2. Why are you running?

Santa Monica is a great city that is not living up to its potential, and too often City Hall feels disconnected from the practical needs of the people who live and work here. Families are being squeezed out by the cost of living. Too often, renters in this city are being subjected to substandard housing and negligent landlords. Small businesses are struggling under red tape and high fees. Our public spaces have become less welcoming. And too many city programs spend money without clear accountability for results.

I am running because I believe we can do better. Not through grand gestures or ideological posturing, but through better management, clearer priorities, and a relentless focus on execution. I want to bring that discipline to City Hall.

3. What are the top issues of your campaign, and how do they differ from other candidates in this race? How do you plan to address those issues once elected?

Santa Monica works best when it works for everyone, and right now too many residents are being squeezed out or left behind. My campaign is organized around four priorities: housing that works for all income levels, a city that is safe and well-maintained for everyone, a thriving local economy, and a government that actually delivers on its promises.

On housing, my focus is not just on building more but on building better and protecting what we have. That means holding landlords accountable for maintaining their properties through a strengthened code enforcement process, including dedicated case managers for the most problematic repeat offenders rather than just fines that get ignored. It means strong anti-displacement protections so long-term renters are not pushed out as the city grows. And yes, it means making it easier to build new homes at all income levels, because the only way out of this affordability crisis is more supply alongside strong tenant protections.

On quality of life, I believe every resident deserves clean, welcoming public spaces, safe streets for people walking, biking, and getting around without a car, functional infrastructure, and responsive city services. Achieving this requires the right mix of responses for the right situations, including rapid rehousing and interim shelter, mental health professionals and unarmed outreach workers, programs like SaMo Bridge, and as a last resort, traditional enforcement.

On the economy, I want Santa Monica to be a city where small businesses can afford to open and stay open, where our streets and public spaces are activated and alive, and where workers earn wages that let them actually live here.

What distinguishes me from other candidates is how I think about getting things done. I have spent my career running operations across very different industries, from construction lending to manufacturing to standing up a large-scale logistics operation from scratch during the pandemic. I have managed complex programs under pressure, with real budgets and real consequences for failure. I know what it takes to turn a policy decision into an actual result, and I know how often that step gets skipped. Santa Monica does not have a shortage of good ideas or ambitious plans. It has a shortage of execution. I want to bring that discipline to City Hall.

4. Please list all endorsements received to date (individual and organizational).

Gleam Davis, Jesse Zwick

5. How long have you lived in Santa Monica? Where else have you lived?

I first moved to Santa Monica in 2004 after graduating from UCLA, so I have been here for over twenty years. Before Santa Monica, I grew up in La Verne, California.

6. Will you pledge to serve on City Council for your entire four year term?

Yes.

7. What is your history of watching, attending, or speaking at Santa Monica City Council meetings?

I have been watching and attending City Council meetings for at least fifteen years. My earliest and most consistent advocacy has been around mobility, pushing for safer streets, better bike infrastructure, and public spaces that work for people who are not in cars. Over the last five years I have become significantly more active, speaking regularly at meetings and engaging directly with council members and city staff on specific proposals. More recently that advocacy has expanded to housing policy and how the city manages and activates its public spaces. Seeing the gap between what gets decided at the dais and what actually gets built or implemented on the ground is a big part of what pushed me to stop advocating from the public comment podium and run for the seat itself.

Campaign Finance

1. How much money have you raised for your campaign to date?

Approximately \$25,000.

2. How much do you intend to raise by Election Day 2026?

\$100,000.

3. Are there any sources from which you would decline donations?

I will not accept contributions from industries or individuals whose interests are fundamentally at odds with Santa Monica's long-term wellbeing, including those who profit from the city without any real commitment to it. What I care about is whether someone is invested in Santa Monica as a community, not just as a market. I want this campaign to be funded by people who actually love this city and want it to work for everyone who lives and works here.

Party / Activism

1. 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?

I have been a registered Democrat and have always voted Democrat. In my younger years I was registered No Party Preference. That reflected a frustration that the Democratic Party as a whole was too centrist and a general skepticism of the two-party system, not any sympathy for the right. As I have gotten older and watched what is at stake in American politics, I have come to believe that registered Democratic participation is essential, and I have been fully committed to the party for many years.

2. What is your experience with political activism? Have you ever volunteered or worked for a political campaign other than your own?

I have been deeply involved in civic activism in Santa Monica for years, primarily through advocacy organizations focused on housing and transportation policy. I have served on the steering committees of Santa Monica Forward and Santa Monica Families for Safe Streets, and I am a founding member of Santa Monica Greenways. I am also a member of Abundant Santa Monica, the Santa Monica Democratic Club, and SMRR. Much of my activism has been direct advocacy at City Hall: attending meetings, speaking at public comment, and engaging with council members and city staff on specific policy issues.

3. Which political candidates and/or ballot measures have you endorsed or supported publicly in the past?

I have publicly endorsed and supported Dan Hall, Barry Snell, Natalya Zernitskaya, and Ellis Raskin for local office. I have also publicly endorsed the current parcel tax measure for SMMUSD schools.

4. Have you ever signed for or publicly supported efforts to recall a public official from office?

No.

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

Santa Monica Forward (member, Steering Committee), Santa Monica Families for Safe Streets (member, Steering Committee), Santa Monica Greenways (founding member), Abundant Santa Monica (founding member, former co-chair), Santa Monica Democratic Club (member), SMRR (member).

6. Please confirm that you have read the latest version of the California Democratic Party Platform. List any items in the CDP Platform with which you disagree.

I have read the 2026 CDP Platform and I am in strong agreement with its values and priorities across the board. I do not have fundamental disagreements with the platform as written.

City Governance

1. What is your brief assessment of how the City Council has functioned over the past few years?

The Council has made real progress in some areas. The Homelessness Strategic Plan, SaMo Bridge, the right to counsel program, and the work on Housing Element implementation are all meaningful steps in the right direction.

But progress on individual initiatives is not the same as results, and the results on our two biggest challenges, housing affordability and homelessness, remain insufficient relative to what we are spending and what we need. The homelessness emergency declaration has been renewed repeatedly without a clear milestone for what success looks like or when the emergency ends.

On Downtown and commercial vacancies, the Council has recognized the problem and the Promenade realignment plan is a promising start that I support. But I am not convinced the current approach goes far enough or moves fast enough. Tourism and foot traffic have not recovered to pre-pandemic levels the way they have in comparable coastal cities, and that has real consequences for the city's tax base, small businesses, and the everyday experience of living here. This deserves more urgency than it has received.

The city has talented staff and real resources. The gap between what Santa Monica could be delivering and what it actually delivers is a governance and accountability problem as much as anything else, and that is something a new council can address directly.

2. What changes, if any, would you support to make Santa Monica's system of government more democratic, representative, transparent, or effective?

I support instituting public-facing performance dashboards so residents can track how the city is doing on key metrics in real time. I also believe we need clearer shot clocks on city decisions so that businesses and residents are not left waiting indefinitely for permits and approvals.

On democratic participation, I want to ensure that public engagement processes are genuinely accessible and actively uplift voices that are not well represented in the current system, including renters, working families, and people who cannot show up to a Tuesday night council meeting. Outreach needs to go to where people are, not just wait for them to come to City Hall.

I also want to change how the city handles community input on major infrastructure initiatives. Right now we have a pattern where the city develops a broad plan, gets community buy-in, and then relitigates each individual phase as it moves into implementation. The bike network is a perfect example. We have a citywide route plan with broad public support, but each segment requires its own expensive outreach and grant process, which creates endless delay and allows opposition to relitigate decisions that were already made. The right approach is to do genuine, comprehensive community engagement upfront on the full vision, incorporate that feedback into the plan, and then execute each phase without starting from scratch every time. That is how you build trust and actually get things built.

3. How can Santa Monica better collaborate with neighboring cities and LA County on regional challenges such as homelessness, housing, and transportation?

Santa Monica cannot solve regional problems alone, and we have been bearing a disproportionate share of the burden for too long. On homelessness, we spend more per capita on services than almost any city in the region and the results do not reflect that investment. That is not an argument for spending less, it is an argument for demanding that LA County coordinate a regional strategy where every city pulls its weight rather than exporting the problem to us.

On housing, I want Santa Monica to be a vocal advocate for transit-adjacent density across the entire region, not just in cities like ours that have already done the hard work of upzoning. The housing crisis will not be solved by Santa Monica alone, and our neighbors need to stop using local control as a shield against growth.

On transportation, I want to actively push for expanded Metro service and infrastructure that connects Santa Monica to the broader region, including a proper expansion of Metro Bike into Santa Monica. Right now our bikeshare network stops at the city boundary in ways that make no sense for how people actually move around the Westside. Regional mobility should mean seamless connections, not invisible walls at city limits.

4. How do you assess Santa Monica's current approach to public input on legislative advocacy, and communication with residents on major policy decisions?

There is room for significant improvement. Public meetings are often structured in ways that make it difficult for working families and people without flexible schedules to participate meaningfully. Comment processes can feel performative rather than influential. I want to see more proactive, plain-language communication from the city on major decisions before they are finalized, not just after. Transparency is not just about posting information somewhere it can be found. It is about actively communicating in ways that residents can actually engage with.

5. Please describe a specific example from your own experience of how you would ensure a major City initiative is effectively executed once adopted.

In my professional work managing complex operational programs, the discipline I bring is straightforward: define clear ownership for every step, set measurable milestones, build in regular check-ins to catch problems early, and be willing to course-correct rather than defend a failing approach.

But in Santa Monica, the implementation problem often starts even earlier than execution. We have a habit of spending significant money to develop beautiful plans and then never allocating the budget to actually build them. The Bergamot Area Plan. The Land Use and Circulation Element. The Bike Action Plan. Countless mobility and streetscape studies. These documents sit on shelves while the vision they describe goes unrealized. A plan without a funding commitment is not a plan, it is a wish list, and passing it lets elected officials claim credit for progress that never comes.

If I am on the council, I want every major initiative to come with an honest answer to two questions before we adopt it: who owns implementation, and where does the money come from. I would push the city manager to build that expectation into how initiatives are staffed and budgeted, and I would use my seat to hold that process publicly accountable rather than letting the gap between policy and reality quietly widen.

Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

1. In light of increasing federal threats to democratic institutions and civil liberties, what role should local governments like Santa Monica play in protecting democratic norms and residents' rights?

Local governments are increasingly the front line of defending democratic norms when federal institutions are under strain. Santa Monica should be clear and consistent that it will not cooperate with federal overreach into areas that violate residents' constitutional rights. That means robust sanctuary policies, transparency about how city data is handled and shared, and active legal defense of residents' rights when necessary. We should also be vocal, not silent, about what is happening at the federal level. Local elected officials have a responsibility to tell the truth about threats to democracy and to model the kind of accountable governance that federal leadership is failing to provide.

2. What role should the City play in supporting and uplifting Black communities in Santa Monica, addressing past inequities, and ensuring that Black residents continue to have a meaningful presence and voice in the City's future?

Santa Monica's Black population is roughly 5% of residents today, and that number reflects a history of deliberate displacement, from the destruction of the Belmar Triangle in the 1950s and 60s to the ongoing market pressures that continue to push Black families out. Acknowledging that history honestly is the starting point, not a box to check.

Santa Monica already has strong rent control protections, but they only help people who are already housed here. The deeper problem is that when a rent-controlled unit turns over, rent resets to market-rate and the pool of people who can afford it shrinks dramatically. Individual landlords discriminate in tenant selection constantly, and almost never in writing. You cannot prosecute your way out of that. The real solutions are structural: building enough housing at all income levels to reduce the scarcity that gives landlords the power to be selective, expanding

housing voucher programs, and investing in community land trusts that take units permanently off the speculative market. City hiring, contracting, and decision-making bodies also need to actively reflect a commitment to this community, not just declare it.

3. In what ways can/should the City of Santa Monica protect its immigrant communities from federal enforcement raids in our community?

Santa Monica should maintain and strengthen its sanctuary policies, which means city staff and law enforcement do not assist federal immigration enforcement absent a judicial warrant. The city should actively communicate those protections to immigrant residents so that people know their rights and are not afraid to use city services or report crimes. We should also ensure that city-funded legal services include immigration support, and that the city is prepared to respond publicly and forcefully when federal enforcement actions target our residents.

4. What role should the City Council play in addressing historical inequities and ongoing concerns about displacement, economic opportunity, and community investment in the Pico Neighborhood?

The Pico neighborhood has been historically underserved and underinvested relative to the rest of Santa Monica, and that pattern continues. The City Council should be directing capital investment, program resources, and staff attention in ways that correct that imbalance, not just maintain the status quo. That means prioritizing infrastructure improvements, small business support, and community facilities in the Pico area.

On housing, rent control is the primary protection keeping long-term residents in place, but it only protects people who are already in their units. The city should be doing more to help those residents stay, including low-interest loan programs to help landlords maintain and upgrade older buildings so that tenants are not living in deteriorating conditions while also not being pushed out by renovation-driven rent resets. We should also be actively investing in community land trusts and other permanently affordable housing models that take units off the speculative market entirely, so that affordability in Pico is not just dependent on whether a given tenant happens to still be in place.

One policy I want to explore seriously is Tenant Opportunity to Purchase, which gives tenants and community land trusts the right of first offer when a building comes up for sale. It is one of the most promising tools available for preserving affordable housing in place without ongoing subsidy, and several cities have begun implementing versions of it.

On economic opportunity, small business support in Pico should be a specific priority, not an afterthought, including access to capital, technical assistance, and city contracting opportunities for businesses that are rooted in and serve the existing community.

I would want to see specific, measurable commitments to the Pico community, not general platitudes.

5. What role should the City of Santa Monica play in protecting and supporting LGBTQ+ residents, particularly at a time of increasing political and legal attacks on LGBTQ+ rights nationally?

Santa Monica should be an unambiguous sanctuary for LGBTQ+ residents and a visible counterpoint to the hostility coming from federal and state policy in other parts of the country. That means continuing to fund LGBTQ+ community services and organizations, ensuring city facilities and programs are fully inclusive, and making clear that discrimination of any kind is not

tolerated. It also means the city should be actively vocal in opposing state and federal attacks on LGBTQ+ rights, not quietly supportive. Representation in city hiring and on city bodies matters too. Additionally, Santa Monica cannot be a haven for LGBTQ+ people who are not here, that's why it is crucial to bring down the cost of housing so that members of the community can move to Santa Monica and benefit from our protections.

6. 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?

I want to see the city commit to transparent, published data on hiring, promotion, and compensation by demographic group, and to set clear targets for improvement where gaps exist. That includes pipeline programs that actively recruit from underrepresented communities, including at the entry level, and ensure that pathways to advancement are equitable. I would work with the City Manager to build these expectations into the city's HR systems and annual performance reviews, and to hold the organization accountable through public reporting.

Economic Development

1. Beyond housing, what should the City do to address cost of living and support a sustainable local economy, including small businesses and workers?

The single most impactful thing the city can do for small businesses is reduce the time and cost of starting and operating one here. That means streamlined permitting, lower fees, a business concierge program to help owners navigate city processes, and shot clocks on every application so there is predictability. For workers, I support strong labor standards and ensuring that the city's own contracting reflects the wages and conditions we want to see in the broader economy. On cost of living more broadly, housing is the dominant driver, but we can also reduce barriers to the kinds of retail and service businesses that make neighborhoods more affordable and convenient to live in.

2. What specific strategies would you pursue in the next four years to address commercial vacancies and support the long-term vitality of Downtown Santa Monica?

Third Street Promenade and Downtown Santa Monica need a strategy, not just hope. That means working with the stakeholders and DTSM on a real activation plan: regular programming, pop-ups, markets, and events that bring people downtown even when storefronts are empty. It means reviewing ground-floor use requirements and making it easier for smaller, independent operators to afford Downtown rents. And it means being honest that the current vacancy situation is partly a result of policy choices around fees, permitting, and zoning that made it harder to operate here. I want to see a dedicated Downtown economic recovery strategy with clear goals and accountability. Medium-term, the most sustainable strategy to support businesses in Downtown is to add more residents to the area who will spend nearby, by building more housing.

3. What is your assessment of Santa Monica's Entertainment Zone program thus far? Has it been successful, and would you support expanding it?

I was a public supporter of the Entertainment Zone from the beginning and I am glad it has worked out. The concerns some people had about public safety and neighborhood impacts have simply not materialized. What has happened instead is more life, more community events, more reasons for people to be downtown and stay downtown. That is exactly what we were hoping for. The retail-driven promenade model is not coming back, and honestly that is fine. The

future of downtown Santa Monica is experiential: live music, events, food and beverage, and programming that gives people a reason to show up that goes beyond shopping. The Entertainment Zone fits that future perfectly.

At this point I think the question is not whether to expand it but where it makes the most sense. I support the expansion to Main Street, Montana, and across Downtown, and would like to see that expansion monitored and improved as needed. I would want to make sure any expansion is done with input from the businesses and residents in each area, but I do not think we need to be timid about it. The program has earned the benefit of the doubt.

Housing / Development

1. How would you describe the housing affordability crisis facing Santa Monica and the region, and what do you see as their primary causes?

California's population has roughly doubled since 1970 while Santa Monica's population has barely changed. That mismatch between housing supply and the number of people who want to live here is the core driver of the affordability crisis. It was not an accident. It was the result of decades of deliberate policy choices at the local level: restrictive zoning, lengthy approval processes, high development fees, and community opposition to new construction. The result is that the people who keep this city running, teachers, nurses, service workers, young families, cannot afford to live here. That is a policy failure and we can change it.

2. In what specific ways has Santa Monica succeeded or fallen short in addressing housing affordability and homelessness, and what policy approaches would you prioritize?

Santa Monica has made meaningful strides on its Housing Element and has built truly affordable housing through public investment. But we have also presided over a system where fees are among the highest in the region, timelines are among the longest, and too many projects never get built because the economics do not pencil.

The deeper problem is what does get built. Our cost structure has effectively filtered out everything except the most expensive market-rate housing. Missing middle housing, the basic studios, one-bedrooms, and small apartment buildings that used to house young people, service workers, and seniors on fixed incomes, is almost nonexistent in new production. We need housing of all types, not just luxury units that satisfy state mandates on paper. That means studios and small apartments for young people just starting out, and it means housing options that allow seniors to right-size into something appropriate for their stage of life while freeing up the larger homes and apartments they have been in for decades for the families who need them. That kind of natural turnover is one of the most underrated tools we have and we are not doing enough to enable it.

On homelessness, we have spent heavily without proportionate results because we lack an integrated approach to moving unhoused residents through interim housing and services to permanent housing options. The solution is to both improve our own approach and build a regional strategy with the county and city of Los Angeles which would create sufficient housing and mental health services to meet the need.

3. Which state or regional policies or legislative approaches do you view as most relevant to addressing housing affordability and housing production in Santa Monica?

The most impactful state tools for Santa Monica are the ones that reduce the cost and friction of building at all income levels. Density bonus law has been useful and I want to see the city apply it in good faith rather than looking for ways to minimize its impact. The elimination of discretionary review for projects that comply with existing zoning is probably the single highest-leverage reform available, because discretionary review is where good projects go to die, buried in delays and conditions that make the economics fall apart.

CEQA reform is long overdue and directly relevant to housing production. The law as currently applied is routinely used by neighbors and interest groups to delay or kill housing projects that have nothing to do with genuine environmental harm. I support exempting infill housing that meets existing zoning from CEQA review entirely, and streamlining the process for projects near transit. The irony is that blocking dense infill housing near jobs and transit is itself an environmental harm, and CEQA is increasingly being used to produce the opposite of its intended purpose.

On missing middle specifically, the state legislation enabling duplexes and small multifamily buildings by right is important and Santa Monica should be implementing it in the spirit it was intended rather than looking for the narrowest possible reading. The ADU reforms of recent years have been among the most successful housing production tools the state has deployed and we should continue to build on them.

4. What is your philosophy on how and where new housing should be constructed, and how should authority be balanced between state and local control?

New housing should be built where people want to live, near jobs and transit, and Santa Monica has both in abundance. I believe the state has a legitimate and necessary role in overriding local exclusionary zoning when cities are not meeting their obligations. Local control is valuable for shaping the character and quality of development, but it cannot be used as a veto on growth altogether. Santa Monica should absolutely accommodate substantially more housing over the next decade. We have the bones for it and a moral obligation to the region to do our part.

5. Did you support SB 79 before it included any protections for existing rent-controlled housing and its tenants? Why or why not? Do you believe the anti-displacement provisions go far enough?

Yes, I supported SB 79 before the rent control protections were added. My reasoning was straightforward. Nearly all of the land affected by the bill in Santa Monica had already been rezoned through our Housing Element process, so the practical impact here was minimal. More importantly, Santa Monica already has some of the strongest displacement protections, right-to-return provisions, and relocation assistance requirements in the state. I felt that our protections and specific land issues were acceptable based on the overall regional impact of the bill and the crisis.

The bigger picture for me was that SB 79 was really a bill about Los Angeles and other regional cities that have been dragging their feet on housing production for years while the entire region suffers the consequences. Getting those cities to do their part was worth supporting.

On whether the anti-displacement provisions that were ultimately added go far enough: I think they are a meaningful improvement and I am glad they were included. For Santa Monica specifically they are largely additive to protections we already have in place. For cities that had weaker protections going in, I hope the provisions are robust enough in practice, but that remains to be seen.

6. What do you see as the mission or purpose of Rent Control in a city where 70% of the population are renters?

Rent control in Santa Monica exists to provide housing stability for the majority of residents who rent, to protect long-term community members from displacement by market forces, and to ensure that the city retains economic and social diversity. Without rent control, the market dynamics in a city as desirable as Santa Monica would rapidly displace everyone except the most affluent. That is not the city I want to live in or represent. In a city with so many cost burdened and long-time lower income renters, it is a foundational protection.

7. What role should tenant protections, such as eviction protections for nonpayment of rent or right to counsel for tenants facing eviction, play in the city's overall housing strategy? Do you favor expansion of the right to counsel program?

Tenant protections are essential complements to rent control and housing production policy. Building more housing does not help anyone if existing tenants are being displaced before that housing gets built. I strongly support the right to counsel program for tenants facing eviction. The power imbalance between a landlord with an attorney and a tenant without one is enormous, and the data consistently shows that representation dramatically improves outcomes for tenants.

I favor expanding the right to counsel program with LAFLA using Measure GS funds.

8. Based on results from the first few years of implementation, do you believe that 2022's Measure GS should be amended? If so, how and why?

Measure GS had admirable goals and I understand why voters supported it. Funding schools, homelessness prevention, and affordable housing through a transfer tax on high-value properties sounds like a sensible way to make the wealthiest transactions contribute to community needs.

The results have been more complicated. The measure was projected to raise \$50 million annually and has fallen significantly short of that. Meanwhile residential sales above the \$8 million threshold dropped by more than half and commercial sales by nearly three quarters in the first year alone. Most importantly, multifamily housing development took a direct hit, because the tax applies at the point of sale and makes the economics of building and eventually selling larger apartment projects much harder to pencil. That is exactly the opposite of what we need right now, hampering the creation of both market-rate and affordable housing.

I would support amending Measure GS to exempt multifamily residential development from the transfer tax. The goals the measure was designed to fund remain important and I want to find ways to achieve them, but we should not be making it more expensive to build the housing Santa Monica desperately needs. I would want to reform GS in a way that would allow it to continue funding schools, affordable housing, the rental aid program and more without impacting the creation of new housing. I would look to find funding to achieve the goals of GS if reformed.

9. Are you committed to using the public land identified in the existing Housing Element to generate the number of deed-restricted affordable housing units identified? How else do you believe the City should create below market-rate housing?

Yes, fully committed. Public land should be used for public benefit, and affordable housing is among the highest and best uses of city-owned land. Beyond the Housing Element sites, I believe we should be actively looking for additional opportunities to use city land, air rights, and financing tools to generate more deed-restricted units.

That said, not all city-owned land is created equal and we should be strategic about how we use it. Our most valuable parcels, particularly those downtown and close to the beach, may generate far more public benefit if leveraged for their highest economic value, with the proceeds or ground lease revenue directed toward affordable housing development elsewhere or used to cross-subsidize units on the same site. Getting the most out of scarce public land means thinking carefully about where affordable housing dollars go furthest, not just assuming that using each piece of land for affordable housing is the best way to build more affordable housing.

More broadly, I think we need to be more ambitious than the standard toolkit. Community land trusts and partnerships with nonprofits and the city are important and we should be pursuing them fully. We should also be exploring newer models that other cities are developing. Social housing, where a public entity owns and operates mixed-income housing that generates enough revenue from market-rate tenants to cross-subsidize affordable units, offers a path that does not depend entirely on ongoing subsidy. Public banking is another tool worth serious examination, giving the city access to lower-cost capital for affordable housing investment without the overhead of private financing. Santa Monica should be at the front of that conversation, not waiting to see what works elsewhere.

10. Do you support an expansion of Santa Monica's ongoing financial assistance program to additional severely rent-burdened and/or rent-burdened households? If so, to whom would you expand the program and how would you finance the expansion?

Yes, I support the new Renters Aid Program, the Preserving Our Diversity (POD) program, and doing even more. Rent burden is one of the most acute affordability problems facing Santa Monica residents and the current program does not reach everyone who needs it. Financial assistance to severely rent-burdened households is also one of the most effective tools we have for preventing homelessness before it happens. Keeping a family stably housed is far less expensive and far less damaging than trying to rehouse them after they have lost their home, and the human cost of that instability, particularly for children, is enormous.

I would prioritize expanding eligibility to additional severely rent-burdened households, particularly households with children who are most at risk of the long-term consequences of housing instability. Financing should come from a combination of Measure GS funds, the general fund, and state and federal grant programs. Homelessness prevention should be treated as a budget priority because the cost of preventing homelessness is a fraction of the cost of addressing it after the fact.

Public Safety

1. How would you assess public safety and quality of life in Santa Monica today? What specific trends concern you most, and where do you see progress?

Santa Monica remains a wonderful place to live. Crime rates have been trending down and the dramatic encampment conditions that some other cities are dealing with are not what we see here. That context matters despite what some sensationalist voices may say.

That said, there is a real and persistent sense that our public spaces are not as clean and welcoming as they should be, and that perception has measurable consequences for tourism, for small businesses that depend on foot traffic, and for residents who want to feel comfortable in their own parks and on their own streets. That is not a trivial concern even if it is distinct from a serious crime problem.

Where I see progress is in the city's investment in an integrated system of care, mental health response and unarmed outreach, which represent a more sophisticated and effective approach than relying solely on traditional enforcement. The challenge is that those efforts are still not scaled to the level of need, and too much of our response depends on traditional policing. The cleanliness and public realm issues we are experiencing are real, but they will not be fully solved at the city level alone.

2. What specific steps should be taken in the next two years to improve public safety in Santa Monica? If additional funding is required, how should it be allocated?

I support a clear and enforced baseline of public order: parks are for everyone, sidewalks are for walking, and public drug use is not acceptable. That requires the police department to consistently enforce those standards. But enforcement alone will not solve the underlying problem. I want to invest more in unarmed mental health response teams for calls that do not require a police officer, expansion of shelter and treatment options so that when people are moved from encampments they have somewhere to go, and rigorous accountability for outcomes from every dollar spent on homelessness programming. Metrics should include people successfully housed, people connected to treatment, and measurable improvement in public space conditions.

Environment & Climate

1. What steps should Santa Monica take in the next four years to prepare for climate impacts such as extreme heat, wildfire smoke, and sea level rise?

Santa Monica needs to be planning seriously for all three threats. On extreme heat, that means investing in cooling infrastructure in parks and public spaces, ensuring our urban tree canopy is maintained and expanded, and creating a network of cooling centers that are actually accessible and welcoming. The city should also make sure that it is engaging and serving the needs of its most vulnerable residents, particularly senior citizens living in housing that lacks air conditioning. Targeted support may be needed. The city should also look at de-paving and returning more of our land to nature, as a natural way to reduce the urban heat island effect. On wildfire smoke, we need improved air quality monitoring and public communication systems so residents know when to stay indoors and where to find clean air. We also must be thoughtful about mitigating wildfire risks on our northern edge where fire hazard severity is high. On sea level rise, the city needs to engage with residents and property owners about the long-term risk to coastal infrastructure and begin the planning work now for managed adaptation rather than waiting until it is a crisis.

2. What specific ideas do you envision for the future of the Santa Monica Airport land after its closure, and how can the City more broadly preserve and expand its green spaces?

Close the airport and build a great park. The airport land represents the most significant opportunity for new open space in Santa Monica in a generation, and I believe the primary use should be a large, world-class public park accessible to all Santa Monicans.

The challenge is making sure this actually happens in our lifetime rather than becoming another plan that sits on a shelf waiting for funding that never materializes. That means being intentional now about the financing model, whether that is a dedicated bond measure, state and federal open space grants, public-private partnerships, or some combination. The city should be building that financial foundation in parallel with the planning process so that when the airport closes we are ready to build, not starting from scratch on how to pay for it.

On preserving and expanding green space more broadly, I support maximizing the urban tree canopy and protecting existing parks from encroachment. But I also want to think more creatively about how we add new green space throughout the city, particularly in our denser neighborhoods where residents have the least access to it. That means looking at underutilized alleyways, surface parking lots, street segments, and rooftops as opportunities for pocket parks, green corridors, and community gathering spaces. As Santa Monica grows denser, access to quality outdoor space becomes more important, not less, and we should be designing that into how we grow.

3. Do you support the Club's resolution calling for a citywide ban of artificial turf on locally owned public land?

Yes. Artificial turf has real environmental and health downsides, including heat island effects, microplastic pollution, and chemical concerns. Natural grass managed well is preferable for public spaces. I support moving away from artificial turf on city-owned land and investing in native and drought-tolerant landscaping that serves both environmental and recreational goals.

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

The most significant environmental justice issues in Santa Monica are air quality disparities in neighborhoods closer to the freeway and airport, the unequal distribution of green space and tree canopy across the city, and the disproportionate impact of climate-related hazards on lower-income residents who have less capacity to adapt. Addressing these requires directing environmental investment, including greening, cooling infrastructure, and air quality monitoring, toward the neighborhoods that have historically received less of it, particularly around the Pico corridor.

Mobility

1. Which methods of transportation do you personally use to get around Santa Monica, and how do your transportation habits inform your policy positions?

I walk, bike, and use transit regularly in addition to driving as little as I can. I have been personally involved in advocacy for mobility improvements in Santa Monica for years, through Santa Monica Families for Safe Streets and Santa Monica Greenways, specifically because I believe our streets can and should be safer and more accessible for people who are not in cars. My transportation habits have directly shaped my policy views: I know from personal experience where the infrastructure gaps are, where pedestrians and cyclists feel unsafe, and what the difference a protected bike lane or a well-designed crosswalk makes.

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

Yes, where the evidence supports it. Third Street Promenade shows that pedestrianized streets can generate tremendous economic and civic value. I would want to explore options on portions

of Main Street and Ocean Avenue, and look carefully at whether any residential-adjacent corridors could benefit from traffic calming or pedestrian priority treatments. Any expansion should be done in partnership with affected businesses and with an assessment of economic and community impacts.

3. What changes should be made to promote safety for bike riders, pedestrians, and other alternate modes of transportation?

Protected bike infrastructure that is physically separated from traffic, not just painted lanes. Better crosswalk design with improved visibility and signal timing. Traffic calming on residential streets that are used as cut-throughs. Consistent enforcement of laws protecting pedestrians and cyclists. And a strong commitment to completing the network so that biking and walking are viable options for everyday trips, not just recreational activities. I have been advocating for these improvements for years and will continue to push for them from the council.

4. Do you support additional Metro rail lines being built in Santa Monica, and if so, which potential projects would you support?

Yes, absolutely. The E Line has been transformative for Santa Monica and we should be building on that momentum. Extending the D Line from Westwood through to Santa Monica should be a regional priority, and the city needs to be an active and vocal advocate for making that happen rather than waiting for Metro to prioritize it on its own. Getting that direct connection to the Wilshire corridor would fundamentally change how the Westside connects to the rest of Los Angeles. In the long-term a north-south subway to connecting the planned Sepulveda line to the Lincoln corridor and LAX would be a regional gamechanger.

More broadly, Santa Monica should be engaged and assertive in regional transit planning conversations. We have real leverage as a destination city and a major employment center, and we should be using it to push for investments that serve our residents and reduce car dependency across the region.

5. Should shared mobility devices such as scooters, e-bikes, and self-driving cars be encouraged or discouraged in Santa Monica?

Encouraged, with appropriate management. Scooters and e-bikes expand mobility options, reduce car trips, and are particularly valuable for the first and last mile of transit connections. The city should manage them thoughtfully, with clear rules about where they can be ridden and parked, and accountability for operators whose devices create hazards. Self-driving vehicles require careful evaluation as the technology and regulatory framework develop, with pedestrian and cyclist safety as the primary lens.

6. Should the overall amount of street parking in Santa Monica be reduced in order to encourage other modes of transportation?

In areas with good transit access, yes. Parking takes up enormous amounts of urban land, contributes to car-centric design, and has real costs to pedestrian and cyclist safety. I support gradually right-sizing parking supply in transit-rich areas and reallocating that space to uses with higher community value: protected bike lanes, sidewalk improvements, parklets, and transit amenities. This should be done thoughtfully and with attention to the needs of businesses and residents who depend on driving.

Ballot Measures

1. Do you support the California Billionaire Tax Act, which would impose a one-time emergency 5% tax on those worth more than \$1B?

Yes. California faces constant fiscal pressures and the wealthiest residents have the capacity to contribute more. A one-time 5% tax on billionaires is a reasonable and targeted measure to generate public revenue for pressing needs. I support it.

2. Do you support the state ballot measure which would require voters to present government-issued identification when casting ballots?

No. Voter ID requirements as typically structured suppress turnout among communities that are less likely to have government-issued ID, including low-income residents, elderly people, immigrants, and renters. The evidence for the problem these measures claim to solve is essentially nonexistent, while the evidence for their suppressive effect is well-documented. I oppose this measure.

3. Do you support the proposed state taxpayer initiative which would limit the ability of local governments to raise revenue through certain taxes and fees including real estate transfer taxes?

No. Santa Monica and other cities need the fiscal tools to fund housing programs, public services, and infrastructure. A state measure that ties the hands of local governments in raising revenue through transfer taxes and fees would directly undermine our capacity to invest in affordable housing and community services. I oppose it.

4. Do you support the proposed parcel tax to fund SMMUSD?

Yes, and I have publicly endorsed it. Strong public schools are foundational to the kind of city Santa Monica can be. Families make decisions about where to live based on school quality, and investing in SMMUSD is an investment in the long-term vitality of the community.

5. Do you support the proposed ballot measure which would set aside 25% of the airport land for 3000 units of affordable housing, in addition to the remainder which would become a Great Park?

I strongly support closing the airport and building a great park, full stop. The airport land is the most significant opportunity for new open space in Santa Monica in a generation and I believe its primary purpose should be exactly that: a world-class public park accessible to all Santa Monicans.

On the specific ballot measure, I have reservations and do not support it at this time. A 3,000 unit affordable housing commitment sounds ambitious but a promise without a clear funding mechanism is not really a plan, and I worry it sets up an expectation the city cannot deliver on. The park comes first and I do not want to see that vision compromised or complicated before we have even closed the airport.

Additional Questions

1. Do you support Medicare For All single-payer healthcare? If so, do you support AB 1900 (Kalra) specifically?

Yes. Our healthcare system is appalling in its inefficiency, its inequity, and the toll it takes on working families. Medicare for All is the right structural solution and California should be leading the way. I support AB 1900 as an important step toward building the policy framework for

single-payer, even though full implementation will ultimately require federal cooperation that is not available under the current administration. Getting the architecture right now so we are ready to move when the political conditions allow is exactly the right approach. The status quo is not acceptable and waiting for a perfect moment to act is how nothing ever gets done.

2. Do you support closure of Santa Monica Airport as scheduled, or are you open to continued aviation use beyond 2028?

I support closure as scheduled, full stop. Continued aviation use beyond 2028 would foreclose a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a world-class public park for all Santa Monicans, and would continue to impose noise and air quality impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods that have put up with them long enough. It is time to close the airport and build the park.

3. Why should union workers in Santa Monica, especially those in the hospitality industry, trust that you will fight for their jobs?

Because I believe that a thriving local economy and strong worker protections are not in tension, they are mutually reinforcing. Santa Monica's hospitality industry depends on workers who are treated fairly, paid living wages, and protected from arbitrary displacement. I support strong labor standards, the right to organize, and responsible contractor requirements on city-funded projects. I would work with unions and workers to ensure that city policy supports good jobs, not just economic activity.

4. 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 believe ongoing engagement with civic organizations like the SMDC is essential for good governance, not just a box to check at election time. I would commit to regular communication with the Club's leadership, attending forums and meetings, and seeking input on major policy proposals before they are finalized. Community buy-in is not just good politics. It makes for better policy because it surfaces concerns and perspectives that pure staff analysis often misses.

5. What is the most important topic that was left off of this questionnaire?

Schools and families. Santa Monica is increasingly challenging for families with children, not just because of housing costs but because of classroom overcrowding, access to childcare, and the general sense that the city is not optimized for the people who are trying to put down roots and raise the next generation here. I would like to see more explicit attention to what it takes to make Santa Monica a place where families can afford to stay and thrive, including by becoming homeowners.

6. Please describe whether and how you used generative AI tools in preparing your responses. If elected, how would you use these tools in governance, if at all?

After preparing my initial responses, I used AI tools as a formatting, editing and organizational aid. AI is an excellent time saver but all output must be reviewed. All positions expressed here are mine, grounded in my platform and my years of civic engagement in Santa Monica. I would not have used AI tools to generate positions I do not hold.

In governance, I see real potential for AI to improve city operations, particularly in making information more accessible to residents, streamlining permitting workflows, and improving the city's ability to analyze service delivery data. I would approach any use of AI in governance with strong transparency standards, ensuring residents understand when and how these tools are being used, and with clear human accountability for every decision.