

Santa Monica Democratic Club 2026 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. Only registered Democrats are eligible for our consideration. 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. Please send the completed questionnaire to smdemocrats@gmail.com by 11:59pm on June 8, 2026. Interview appointment times with our Executive Committee will be scheduled on a first come first served basis for the weekend of June 20/21 as the questionnaires are returned. None of these questions shall be construed as litmus tests. There are no questions that must be answered a certain way to be considered for our endorsement.

General Information

Candidate Name: Ericka Lesley

Email Address: erickalesley2024@gmail.com

Candidate's Current Occupation: Commissioner

Candidate's Employer: Santa Monica Rent Control Board

Campaign Contact Person (if other than candidate): [Sandi Cook](#)

1. What qualifications do you bring to this office?

My qualifications for this office are grounded in a combination of public service, policy expertise, and community leadership. I bring more than a decade of experience advocating for residents, a strong foundation in public policy through the Santa Monica College Public Policy Institute, and a proven record of leadership with the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, local community organizations, and the NAACP.

As the first Black woman elected to the Rent Control Board, I have firsthand experience navigating complex policy issues, building consensus, and making decisions that protect working families and preserve housing stability. Throughout my career, I have worked closely with residents, stakeholders, and community leaders to address challenges, advance equitable solutions, and ensure that voices too often left out of the conversation are heard. I understand the issues facing our community because I have spent years working directly with the people most affected by them, and I am prepared to bring that experience, perspective, and commitment to the City Council.

2. Why are you running?

I am running for City Council because working-class residents in Santa Monica deserve a strong voice at the decision-making table, and throughout my service on the Rent Control Board, I have worked to be that voice.

As the first Black woman elected to the Santa Monica Rent Control Board, I have used my position to help residents navigate complex systems, advocate for policies that better serve working families, and ensure that communities too often overlooked are included in decisions that affect their daily lives.

My experience on the Rent Control Board has given me a firsthand understanding of the challenges facing our city—from seniors living on fixed incomes and families struggling with the rising cost of living to long-term residents at risk of displacement. I have seen how policy decisions impact people's lives, and I have learned that effective leadership requires both listening and action. I am running to bring that experience, advocacy, and commitment to City Council so that Santa Monica remains a place where everyone—not just the privileged few—has the opportunity to thrive.

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?

The top priorities of my campaign are affordability, homelessness, and public safety—three issues that are deeply interconnected and have a direct impact on the quality of life for Santa Monica residents.

On affordability, I am committed to protecting rent-controlled housing, expanding deed-restricted affordable housing, particularly on publicly owned land, and preserving Santa Monica as a city where working families, seniors, and long-term residents can continue to live and thrive. We cannot build a healthy community if the people who work here can no longer afford to stay here. On homelessness, I support a coordinated regional strategy that combines compassion with accountability. We must increase access to permanent supportive housing, mental health services, and substance abuse treatment while also ensuring public spaces remain safe, clean, and accessible for everyone.

On public safety, I believe in a community-centered approach that strengthens traditional public safety resources while investing in prevention. Expanding mental health crisis response, youth programs, workforce development, and economic opportunity can help address the root causes of crime and improve public safety for all residents.

What sets me apart from other candidates is that I do not view these challenges in isolation. Housing instability contributes to homelessness. Homelessness affects public safety and quality of life. Lasting solutions require a comprehensive approach that addresses the underlying causes, not just the symptoms. My experience as a Rent Control Board Commissioner has given me firsthand insight into how these issues intersect, and I am committed to advancing practical, balanced policies that deliver real results for the entire community.

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

Dr. Richard Tahvildaren-Jessewin Santa Monica Malibu School Board member; Nichelle Henderson, Los Angeles Community College Board Trustee; Joel Khoury(former rent control

board member), Brittani O'hara-Grant Councilmember, Kathryn Kosmeya-Dodge, Amber Sellers Lawrence, KS Commissioner, Bobby Scott Mayor Center Point,AL ,

5. How long have you lived in Santa Monica? Where else have you lived?
I moved to Santa Monica in 2009. After being relocated frequently as a military brat, I finally found a true sense of community and belonging here.

6. Will you pledge to serve on the City Council for your entire four-year term?
Yes, if elected, I pledge to serve my entire term.

7. What is your history of watching, attending, or speaking at Santa Monica City Council meetings? (If incumbent, prior to your own service.)
For the past 14 years, I have consistently attended Santa Monica City Council meetings—watching, attending, and speaking to stay informed and contribute to the civic process.

Campaign Finance

1. How much money have you raised for your campaign to date?
\$2,000.00

2. How much do you intend to raise by Election Day 2026? \$100,000.00

3. Candidates for local office often choose not to take campaign contributions from particular types of organizations or industries who are out of step with their own values. Are there any such sources from which you would decline donations? If so, which?

Airbnb, The Apartment Association, SpaceX, and Neuralink, to name a few.

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? If so, which party and why?
I am a lifelong Democrat.
I have never registered as a member of another political party.

2. 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 canvassed and phone-banked for Sion Roy, Karen Bass, and Juan Camacho.

3. Which political candidates and/or ballot measures have you endorsed or supported publicly in the past? Please list as many as possible, especially where you endorsed during a contested primary. Sion Roy, Alicia Mignano, Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein, Keith Coleman, Measure GS.

4. 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

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

Santa Monicans for Renters Rights (steering committee member), The Santa Monica Democratic Club, The Santa Monica Area Interfaith Council, The Westside Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Coalition (Chair of the Community Light Award Committee), NAACP, Downtown Santa Monica, PTA(Parliamentarian), IEEDAC (Chair), BAAPAC (Vice-Chair), AASSSPG (Vice-Chair), Local Control Accountability Plan committee, The Congressional Black Caucus, The New Frontier Democratic Club, The African American Chamber of Commerce, The Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, The Santa Monica Black Agenda (Chair), National Black Caucus (Regional Director)

6. Please confirm that you have read the latest version of the California Democratic Party Platform, as found below. List any items in the CDP Platform with which you disagree.
<https://cadem.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/CDP-Platform-2026-FINAL-Platform-Adopted-2.22.26.pdf>

I have read the California Democratic Party Platform as adopted and have reviewed the current version. While I believe our platform should continue to evolve as times change, I do not disagree with any of its provisions at this time.

City Governance

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

Over the past few years, the City Council has shifted direction to place greater emphasis on supporting downtown Santa Monica businesses, improving cleanliness and public safety, and pursuing major opportunities such as partnerships tied to the Olympics, FIFA, and the revitalization of the Civic Center. These efforts are important and show progress. However, more comprehensive attention is needed across the entire downtown corridor—from Lincoln Boulevard to Ocean Avenue. While the Promenade remains the jewel of our city, the surrounding streets that lead to it must also be strengthened. Many small businesses along

these corridors continue to feel overlooked and under-supported, and a more inclusive approach to economic revitalization is essential.

2. What changes, if any, would you support to make Santa Monica's system of government more democratic, representative, transparent, or effective? Please discuss any structural or governance reforms you would be interested in exploring.

I would support an update to the accessibility of data and information on the city's website to make information easier to find in plain English.

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

Santa Monica could build a better collaboration effort for homelessness by sharing data with neighboring cities for vacancies, placement and sharing street outreach team efforts as a safety network with a unified standard of data metrics to prevent people falling through the cracks of a system designed for prevention.

4. How do you assess Santa Monica's current approach to public input on legislative advocacy, and communication with residents on major policy decisions? What specific steps would you take to strengthen public trust, transparency, and accountability in City decision-making?

Santa Monica's approach to public input has improved in recent years, but many residents still leave the process feeling frustrated and unheard. Too often, engagement relies on traditional formats that can be difficult to access or navigate—especially for those who are unfamiliar with policy or unable to attend Council meetings.

To strengthen trust, transparency, and accountability, the City must prioritize more inclusive and accessible engagement. This includes hosting regular community listening sessions, expanding outreach beyond formal meetings, and clearly communicating policy proposals in plain language. Equally important is creating systems to track and report back on community input—so residents can see how their feedback is being considered and reflected in decisions. These steps would help ensure that engagement is not only available, but meaningful and responsive.

5. City policies often succeed or fail at the implementation stage. Please describe a specific example from your own experience of how you would ensure a major City initiative is effectively executed once adopted.

City policies often succeed or fail in implementation, so I focus on ensuring that execution aligns with the original intent. For example, when the Rent Control Board adopted a more expansive community outreach program to better reach historically overlooked residents, I took an active role in supporting its implementation.

I followed up with staff to ensure outreach materials were translated into the languages spoken by our Ethiopian community, including Amharic and Tigrinya. I also worked with staff to identify well-attended community events where we could establish a meaningful outreach presence. In addition, I explored budget options to secure professional translation services where needed. By staying engaged after adoption—asking questions, identifying gaps, and helping connect resources—I worked to ensure the policy was not just approved, but effectively carried out in a way that truly served the community.

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 like Santa Monica play a critical frontline role in protecting democratic norms and civil liberties, especially during times of increased federal threats. They can do this by being proactive in three key ways:

1. Affirming a clear commitment to residents' rights through policies and public statements that uphold equity, inclusion, and constitutional protections.
2. Embedding human rights into local policy decisions, ensuring that City actions consistently reflect and protect the dignity and rights of all residents.
3. Strengthening democratic participation by expanding access to civic engagement, increasing transparency, and making it easier for residents to have a meaningful voice in local decision-making.

By taking these steps, local government can serve as a strong and trusted safeguard for the community.

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?

To support and uplift Black communities in Santa Monica, the City must take an intentional and sustained approach to equity and inclusion. This includes preserving and honoring Black history,

expanding access to economic and community resources, and addressing the impacts of past inequities.

Equally important is actively engaging the full diversity of Black perspectives in the policymaking process—across age, neighborhood, income, and lived experience—so that no single voice is treated as representative of the entire community. The City should also ensure meaningful representation on boards and commissions, helping to elevate Black voices in decision-making and shape a more inclusive future.

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

Here's a polished version that is clearer, more professional, and policy-focused:

To protect Santa Monica's immigrant communities, the City should adopt policies that ensure local resources are used to serve residents, not to support federal immigration enforcement activities. This includes prohibiting the use of City personnel, funds, or resources to assist with immigration enforcement operations, restricting immigration enforcement activities on City-owned property to the fullest extent permitted by law, and requiring federal agents to present a valid judicial warrant before accessing non-public City facilities or records. These measures would help build trust between immigrant residents and local government, ensuring that all community members feel safe accessing City services, reporting crimes, seeking assistance, and participating in civic life without fear. Santa Monica should continue to be a welcoming and inclusive city that protects the rights, dignity, and safety of all its 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 City Council should take a proactive and intentional role in addressing historical inequities and preventing further displacement in the Pico Neighborhood. This begins with acknowledging past harms and committing to policies that repair and prevent them from continuing. Strengthening tenant protections—particularly in light of SB 79, which includes two transit stops in the Pico area—would be an important step in reducing displacement pressures. At the same time, the Council should focus on expanding economic opportunities, supporting local businesses, and investing in community-based initiatives that build long-term wealth for residents.

Ultimately, the City's role is to ensure that revitalization does not come at the cost of displacement, but instead supports stability, opportunity, and a thriving, inclusive future for the Pico Neighborhood.

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 has a long and proud history of supporting LGBTQ+ residents, and at a time of increasing national attacks on LGBTQ+ rights, the City must be more committed than ever to serving as a true safe haven.

The City should strengthen and enforce local nondiscrimination protections in housing, employment, and public accommodations, while ensuring that all City services are fully inclusive—particularly for transgender individuals and LGBTQ+ youth, who often face heightened vulnerability. In addition, Santa Monica should invest in LGBTQ+-affirming mental health services and partner with community-based organizations that provide direct support to those most at risk.

Finally, the City should continue to uphold its values by ensuring that local resources are not used to enforce policies that undermine LGBTQ+ rights, including access to gender-affirming care. Through these actions, Santa Monica can protect residents, affirm dignity, and lead with clarity and compassion.

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?

To advance diversity, equity, and inclusion among City staff, I would focus on three key initiatives. First, I would support regular anonymous employee climate surveys and pulse checks to identify workplace culture concerns, barriers to inclusion, and opportunities for improvement. Second, I would advocate for clear, transparent hiring, promotion, and advancement criteria so all employees understand pathways to leadership and professional growth. Third, I would promote ongoing diversity, equity, and inclusion training, coupled with measurable participation and accountability metrics to ensure these efforts lead to meaningful outcomes.

As a Councilmember, I would work collaboratively with the City Manager to assess implementation strategies, identify necessary resources, and establish measurable benchmarks for success. Together, we can create a more inclusive workplace culture while ensuring progress is tracked transparently and reported regularly to both City staff and the community.

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?

First, we should invest in small business growth by creating a city-supported incubator that provides shared commercial space at below-market rates. This would reduce barriers to entry for entrepreneurs, support local innovation, and help ensure our business community reflects the diversity of Santa Monica.

Second, we need to better support workers in a changing economy. That includes expanding access to micro-credential and workforce training programs in emerging sectors like clean technology and digital industries, creating clear pathways into well-paying, future-oriented jobs. At the same time, the City should explore portable benefits and protections for gig and part-time workers, who are too often left out of traditional employment systems.

Together, these strategies can help build a more inclusive, resilient economy that works for both businesses and working families.

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?

To address commercial vacancies and ensure the long-term vitality of Downtown Santa Monica, I would pursue a phased, activation-to-stability strategy over the next four years.

Phase 1: Immediate Activation.

Launch high-energy, destination-driven events to quickly draw people back downtown. This could include an open esports tournament with pop-up vendors, local food, and public viewing spaces—activating vacant storefronts and creating immediate foot traffic.

Phase 2: Cultural Investment.

Partner with local artists and cultural organizations to host festivals, art installations, and performances that establish Downtown as a hub for creativity and community. These efforts would not only fill empty spaces but also build a distinct identity that attracts residents and visitors year-round.

Phase 3: Sustained Community Use.

As new housing comes online, align programming with the needs of residents by expanding family-oriented events, markets, and public space activities. The goal is to create consistent, everyday foot traffic that supports small businesses and fosters a sense of belonging.

By sequencing activation, cultural investment, and long-term community programming, we can turn vacancies into opportunities and build a downtown that is vibrant, resilient, and economically sustainable.

3. What is your assessment of Santa Monica's Entertainment Zone program thus far? Has it been successful in supporting economic activity and Downtown vitality, and would you support expanding the program to additional areas of the City? If so, where? Why or why not?

My assessment of Santa Monica's Entertainment Zone program is that it has been a positive step toward revitalizing Downtown. We've seen increased foot traffic along the Promenade, driven both by curiosity and by the events and experiences the program has introduced. That kind of activation is critical to bringing energy back to our commercial core.

I would support thoughtfully expanding the program to other areas of the City—particularly Main Street. Main Street already attracts a broad mix of residents and visitors, and an Entertainment Zone there could amplify existing activity, support local businesses, and extend economic benefits beyond Downtown.

That said, any expansion should be done strategically, with clear metrics for success, community input, and attention to public safety and quality of life. If implemented well, this program can be a valuable tool in strengthening Santa Monica's economic vitality across multiple neighborhoods.

Housing / Development

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

The housing affordability crisis in Santa Monica and across the region is fundamentally a mismatch between rising housing costs and stagnant wages. Too many residents, particularly renters, are paying more than 50% of their income on housing, leaving little room for other basic needs and making long-term stability increasingly out of reach.

This crisis is driven by several key factors: a long-standing shortage of affordable housing production, rising construction and material costs, increasing insurance rates, and escalating land and property values. At the same time, demand continues to outpace supply in a highly desirable coastal region.

Taken together, these pressures have created a deeply constrained housing market that is pushing out working families, exacerbating inequality, and threatening the economic and social diversity that defines Santa Monica.

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 to address these challenges?

Santa Monica has made meaningful progress on housing affordability through strong rent control protections and a robust Affordable Housing Trust Fund. These tools have helped stabilize rents, preserve existing affordable units, and protect long-term residents from displacement in an otherwise high-cost market.

However, the City has fallen short in addressing homelessness at the scale and speed the crisis demands. While there have been important investments in services and housing, the challenge continues to outpace local efforts.

Moving forward, I would prioritize two key policy approaches. First, deeper regional collaboration with Los Angeles County and neighboring cities to ensure a more coordinated and equitable response to homelessness, including shared responsibility for housing and services. Second, we must significantly reduce the time and cost required to build affordable housing by streamlining permitting processes and removing unnecessary barriers to development. By pairing strong tenant protections with faster housing production and regional coordination, we can take a more effective and comprehensive approach to both affordability and homelessness.

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, and why?

Several state and regional policies are especially relevant to addressing Santa Monica's housing affordability and production challenges.

AB 2011 and SB 6 are particularly important because they allow for housing development on commercially zoned land, opening up underutilized retail and office corridors for residential use without requiring lengthy and uncertain rezoning processes. These tools can help accelerate the production of affordable and mixed-income housing while making better use of existing developed land.

SB 9 and SB 10 also play a critical role by allowing for increased density in single-family neighborhoods through duplexes and small multifamily development. These policies help address long-standing constraints on housing supply in areas that have historically been resistant to change.

Taken together, these state-level approaches reflect an important shift toward enabling more housing production across different land use types, which is essential if Santa Monica and the broader region are going to meaningfully address the scale of the affordability crisis.

4. In considering state-mandated housing requirements, what is your philosophy on how and where new housing should be constructed, and how should authority be balanced between state and local control? Do you believe Santa Monica should accommodate substantially more housing growth over the next decade? Why or why not?

Housing growth should be strategic, equitable, and informed by meaningful community input—but it cannot be indefinitely delayed in the face of a regional crisis.

In my view, new housing should be prioritized in areas that can best absorb growth, including near commercial corridors, transit-adjacent locations, and underutilized or already-developed land. When paired with tools like density bonuses, this approach allows us to increase housing supply while minimizing displacement and preserving neighborhood character where appropriate.

On the question of state versus local control, I believe both levels of government have an essential role. The state has a clear responsibility to ensure that all cities contribute fairly to meeting regional housing needs, particularly given that local resistance in many jurisdictions has helped fuel California's affordability crisis. At the same time, local governments bring critical insight into community context, infrastructure capacity, and implementation realities that state policy alone cannot fully account for.

For Santa Monica specifically, I do believe the City should accommodate substantially more housing growth over the next decade. That growth must be guided by clear priorities: expanding affordable and workforce housing, protecting existing tenants, and ensuring that infrastructure, public services, and livability keep pace with development.

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 of SB 79 as adopted go far enough? Why or why not? Do you believe Santa Monica ought to implement greater protections for existing rent-controlled units and their tenants than SB 79 provides? Why or why not?

I did not support SB 79 in its original form because it lacked sufficient protections against displacement, particularly in communities like the Pico neighborhood that are already experiencing significant housing pressure.

Without strong safeguards, policies that create new development incentives can unintentionally accelerate displacement and neighborhood change. We have seen historically that when redevelopment incentives are introduced without robust tenant protections, they can contribute to rent increases, speculative property activity, and the gradual erosion of long-standing communities. When those pressures intersect with low-income and rent-burdened households, the risk of gentrification increases significantly.

In my view, the anti-displacement provisions as originally drafted did not go far enough. Protections that apply only at the point of demolition are not sufficient to address the broader, indirect pressures—such as rising rents, tenant harassment, and speculative acquisition—that often displace residents long before redevelopment occurs.

Santa Monica should go further than SB 79 in protecting existing rent-controlled housing and tenants. That means strengthening safeguards that stabilize neighborhoods early, preserve existing affordable units, and ensure that policy changes do not inadvertently accelerate displacement in the communities we are trying to protect.

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

The mission of rent control is to ensure that long term residents are not priced out of the city they call home. Specifically that means controlling residential rents so working families, seniors, and low income residents can remain stable. It means limiting the grounds for eviction so tenants are not removed or through harassment. It means preserving existing rental housing stock rather than losing it to conversion or demolition. It means encouraging property owners to maintain their buildings to a livable standard. And it means ensuring rental property owners receive a fair return on their investment.

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 newly adopted right to counsel program, and if so, how would you fund such an expansion?

Tenant protections should be understood as a core component of any effective housing strategy, not a separate or secondary policy area. Preventing displacement and keeping people stably housed is one of the most cost-effective ways to reduce homelessness and avoid the far higher public costs associated with crisis response services.

I strongly support the expansion of the City's right to counsel program. Access to legal representation in eviction proceedings is a critical tool for preserving housing stability, protecting long-term tenants, and maintaining the economic and cultural diversity of our communities. It also helps ensure fairness in a system where tenants are often at a structural disadvantage.

In terms of funding, I would prioritize pursuing available state and county resources, including eviction prevention and tenant defense grant programs. In addition, I would explore long-term, sustainable funding mechanisms that reflect the cost savings generated by preventing homelessness in the first place.

Strengthening tenant protections is not only a moral imperative it is a fiscally responsible approach to stabilizing communities and addressing the broader housing crisis.

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?

Based on the early years of implementation, Measure GS should be reviewed to ensure it is being applied as originally intended and that its impacts are transparent, equitable, and effective.

If amended, I would support clarifying and narrowing the allowable uses of Measure GS funds so they are more explicitly directed toward core community priorities. In particular, that would include strengthening protections for diversity and equity programs, supporting local schools, and expanding rental assistance for residents most at risk of displacement.

The goal of any amendment should be to ensure accountability and focus—so that Measure GS continues to serve its intended purpose of stabilizing communities and supporting residents facing rising costs, while maintaining public trust in how these funds are allocated.

9. Are you committed to using 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 in Santa Monica?

I am fully committed to using publicly identified land in the Housing Element to help generate the City's required deed-restricted affordable housing units. Public land is one of the most powerful and accountable tools we have to directly address the housing crisis, and it should be prioritized for community-serving uses, including deeply affordable housing.

In addition to leveraging public land, Santa Monica should pursue a broader set of strategies to expand below-market-rate housing production.

First, we should strengthen inclusionary zoning requirements to ensure that a meaningful and enforceable percentage of units in new market-rate developments are permanently deed-restricted and accessible to low- and moderate-income households.

Second, we should more aggressively pursue adaptive reuse of underutilized commercial and office buildings, particularly those experiencing post-pandemic vacancy. Converting existing structures into housing can often reduce costs, shorten timelines, and minimize environmental impacts compared to new construction.

Together, these approaches—public land use, stronger inclusionary policies, and adaptive reuse—can help the City more effectively meet its affordable housing obligations while creating long-term housing stability for residents.

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 strongly support expanding Santa Monica's financial assistance program to additional rent-burdened households. When residents are spending more than 30 to 50 percent of their income on rent they are one emergency away from displacement. I would prioritize working families who earn too much for traditional affordable housing but not enough to keep pace with rising rents and additional Seniors on fixed incomes. The financing for this expansion would come from a long term vacant property fee.

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 is safer than it was a couple of years ago with a fully staffed police department public safety is improving. However, increased wildlife interactions, mental health crises and the intersectionality of street homelessness and public safety are causes of concern.

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 across policing, unarmed response, and prevention programs? What metrics should the City use to evaluate success?

Expand the deployment of mental health responders and social workers (funding from department of mental health) (track number of crises calls in comparison to repeat calls for service)

Improve lighting in high crime areas as a deterrent to crime (track crime rates before and after)

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?

Develop a heat emergency response plan, install a network of air quality monitors, establish air quality protocols, distribute air filtration units and N95 masks for wildfire smoke.

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?

I envision a Park that includes expansive open green space and recreational amenities, community gathering spaces and cultural facilities. I would advocate for the preservation and expansion of green spaces & greening underutilized public spaces through community gardens and urban forestry.

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

Yes, I support the ban on artificial turf . This is a healthier choice for our children.

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

Santa Monica's most significant environmental justice issues are air quality, water runoff, sea level rise and environmental climate change. The impacts of the air quality decline due to the freeway can be reduced by planting more plants by the freeway to filter the air particles from exhaust from the cars

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 occasionally catch the bus, infrequently ride the train and walk around the city. I utilize these forms of transportation to stay in tune with how clean and efficient operations are working around the city.

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

Yes, Santa Monica should explore expanding pedestrian friendly streets beyond the Third Street Promenade. Streets worth considering are Ocean Avenue and Main Street which already has a strong support for a pedestrian only street to support local businesses.

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

For pedestrians I would focus on improved crosswalk visibility, signal timing near schools and senior centers, and traffic calming measures like raised crosswalks and reduced speed limits. For bicyclists I would prioritize a bike lane network.

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

Yes, I support additional Metro rail expansion in Santa Monica. The Expo Line has demonstrated that residents will use reliable rail transit when it connects them to jobs, services, and the broader region. The projects that I would support is the D line & the Sepulveda corridor connecting the valley to the Westside.

5. Should shared mobility devices (eg, scooters, e-bikes, self-driving cars) be encouraged or discouraged in Santa Monica?

Shared mobility devices should be encouraged but with smart regulation and thoughtful management. The city needs additional oversight for self-driving cars, there are too many Waymo stuck on the street

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

Reducing street parking does not reflect the accessibility needs of the disabled community or the needs of families with young children.

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? Why or why not?

I support the intent of this tax act. However, I have some reservations in regard as to how it would be structured.

2. Do you support the state ballot measure which would require voters to present government-issued identification when casting ballots? Why or why not?

No, this ballot measure takes our country back to the Jim Crow era. I believe that this ballot measure is not in the best interest of those eligible to vote.

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? Why or why not?

I do not support a bill that would limit local government control to raise revenue from taxpayer funds.

4. Do you support the proposed parcel tax to fund SMMUSD? Why or why not?

Yes, I support a parcel tax to fund SMMUSD. Strong public schools are foundational to a healthy community. A parcel tax provides a stable locally controlled funding source the district can count on.

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? Why or why not?

The proposed ballot measure brings together two of our community's most urgent priorities: the need for deeply affordable housing and the importance of preserving and expanding public green space. Both are critical to Santa Monica's long-term sustainability and deserve careful, thoughtful consideration.

The opportunity to create approximately 3,000 units of affordable housing could represent a significant step toward addressing our housing crisis, particularly for working families and residents who have been historically priced out of the region. At the same time, the vision of a Great Park offers lasting environmental, recreational, and quality-of-life benefits that would serve generations of residents.

Given the scale and impact of this proposal, my support is contingent on a transparent process and robust community engagement, especially with those most directly affected. I would want to closely evaluate key details, including how affordability is defined and enforced, eligibility requirements, long-term park funding and maintenance, and whether the overall plan truly reflects the needs and priorities of the community.

Ultimately, I am committed to approaching this decision with a focus on equity, sustainability, and ensuring that any outcome delivers tangible benefits for both current and future residents.

Additional Questions

1. Do you support Medicare For All single-payer healthcare? If so, do you support AB1900 (Kalra) specifically?

I support single payer healthcare. Ab1900 is a bill that has been a much needed tool for the health of California.

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

The closure of the airport should be our primary focus to ensure that it is closed on time and in an orderly and thorough fashion

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

Union workers of Santa Monica should trust me to fight for their jobs as I have marched with them on the picket lines

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 would engage the Santa Monica Democratic Club along with other local organizations to ensure community buy-in.

5. What is the most important topic that was left off of this questionnaire? Do you support or oppose data centers? Why or why not?

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?

I utilize perplexity to look up information and utilize DeepSeek to rephrase my findings along with my personal experiences and perspectives. I would utilize these tools for research in governance.