

Candidate Name: Lana Negrete

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Candidate's Current Occupation: Santa Monica City Councilmember; Owner, Santa Monica Music Center

Candidate's Employer: Santa Monica Music Center

Campaign Contact Person (if other than candidate): Dveen Babaian (dveen.babaian@gmail.com)

GENERAL INFORMATION

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What qualifications do you bring to this office?

I currently serve as a Santa Monica City Councilmember and previously served as Mayor. My perspective is shaped not only by my experience in elected office, but by decades of involvement in the community as a small business owner, nonprofit founder, renter, mother of 4 daughters (2 stepdaughters who attended our schools) and 2 currently in our public schools, and lifelong Santa Monica resident.

I own and operate Santa Monica Music Center, a family business that has served the community for more than five decades. Through my nonprofit, Outreach Through the Arts, I have worked to provide free music education and mentorship opportunities for underserved youth. Prior to joining the City Council, I spent years advocating for students, families, youth sports, small businesses, and neighborhood issues.

As a Councilmember, I have worked on issues ranging from public safety and homelessness to economic recovery, affordable housing, transportation, environmental sustainability, and government transparency. I believe my combination of lived experience, community involvement, and governing experience allows me to bring a practical and balanced perspective to City Hall.

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Why am I running?

I am running because I love Santa Monica and believe there is still important work to do.

Over the last several years, our city has faced significant challenges, including homelessness, public safety concerns, economic recovery following the pandemic, affordability pressures, and declining public trust in government. While progress has been made in many areas, I believe residents continue to want a city government that is accessible, transparent, accountable, and focused on delivering results.

My goal is to continue building a Santa Monica that is safe, compassionate, economically vibrant, environmentally sustainable, and welcoming to people from all backgrounds. I am running to continue advocating for practical solutions that improve quality of life for residents while preserving the character and values that make Santa Monica unique.

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?

My campaign is focused on four priorities: public safety, addressing homelessness with accountability, practical solutions and compassion, economic recovery, and government transparency.

Public safety remains a top concern for many residents. Everyone should feel safe in their neighborhoods, parks, business districts, and public spaces. I support data-driven policing, violence prevention, mental health services, and coordinated responses that address both crime and its underlying causes.

Homelessness requires a regional approach that includes housing, treatment, mental health services, prevention, and accountability. I support expanding access to behavioral health care, substance use treatment, and supportive housing by way of expanding those services outside of Santa Monica while continuing to advocate for measurable outcomes. Santa Monica needs support from the region and can't continue to be the only support city in the region.

Economic recovery remains essential. As a small business owner, I understand firsthand the challenges facing local businesses. I will continue supporting policies that help businesses open, expand, and succeed while creating good jobs and maintaining Santa Monica's economic vitality.

Finally, I believe restoring trust in government requires greater transparency and public engagement. Residents deserve meaningful opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their neighborhoods and clear communication about how and why decisions are made.

What distinguishes my campaign is that I approach these issues through the lens of someone who lives them every day as a renter living in a rent-controlled unit, business owner, parent, nonprofit leader, and current Councilmember.

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

At this early stage of the campaign, I have not yet formally sought organizational endorsements.

I am grateful to have received support and encouragement from numerous community members, neighborhood leaders, business owners, public safety professionals, educators, and elected officials.

Current supporters include:

- Ray Jackson, Hermosa Beach City Councilmember and California Coastal Commissioner
- Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board Member
- Maria Leon-Vazquez, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board Member

Additional endorsement discussions are ongoing.

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

I am a lifelong Santa Monica resident. I was born and raised in Santa Monica and have spent nearly my entire life in the community. My family and I briefly lived in Inglewood and Lawndale before returning to Santa Monica full time.

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

Yes.

What is your history of watching, attending, or speaking at Santa Monica City Council meetings? (If incumbent, prior to your own service.)

Before my appointment to the City Council in 2021, I followed City Council meetings and attended meetings when issues affected areas where I was actively involved, including public education, youth sports, parks, small business issues, and neighborhood concerns.

I participated in public comment on multiple occasions, particularly regarding youth programs and community services . My engagement with City Hall began long before I held elected office and was rooted in my desire to advocate for the community I have called home my entire life.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

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

Approximately \$20,000.

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

My goal is to raise approximately \$100,000 by Election Day.

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?

I evaluate contributions based on compliance with campaign finance laws and whether accepting a contribution would create an actual conflict of interest or undermine public trust.

I believe transparency and full disclosure are essential. I am committed to making decisions based on what is in the best interests of Santa Monica residents rather than any donor or special interest.

PARTY/ACTIVISM

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How long have you been a registered Democrat? Have you ever been registered as a member of another political party, or as Decline To State? If so, which party and why?

I have been a registered Democrat for my entire voting life and have never been registered with another political party other than briefly as an Independent possibly as a teenager.

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?

My civic involvement began through community advocacy rather than traditional political activism. Over the years, I have advocated for public education, youth programs, small businesses, arts education, neighborhood issues, and community engagement.

My work through Outreach Through the Arts, Santa Monica Music Center, school organizations, and community groups has provided opportunities to work alongside elected officials, community advocates, and residents to advance local priorities; such as Legislative Rep for PTA council advocating for our youth, NAMM foundation advocating for music and arts to be a part of the school day and OTTA advocating for at risk youth.

I have also publicly supported candidates and ballot measures that align with my values of public education, community investment, environmental stewardship, and social equity.

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*.

Over the years I have supported local, county, state, and school board candidates whose values aligned with public education, environmental stewardship, social equity, economic opportunity, and community engagement. As a current elected official, I have endorsed candidates for local office, including Santa Monica City Council and Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board candidates, who demonstrated strong leadership, fiscal responsibility, and a commitment to practical problem solving. I have also supported local education funding measures benefiting Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, along with ballot measures that invested in school facilities, public infrastructure, and essential community services.

Have you ever signed for or publicly supported efforts to recall a public official from office? If so, please list the name(s) of the officials and why you felt they should be recalled.

No.

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

Current and past involvement includes:

- Santa Monica Democratic Club
- St. Monica Catholic Church
- Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce
- Rotary Club of Santa Monica (Honorary Member)
- Santa Monica-Malibu PTA Council (Legislative Representative)
- Will Rogers Learning Community PTA
- John Adams Middle School PTA
- Santa Monica High School PTA
- Greater Los Angeles Women's Health Council – 2026 Society
- National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM)
- NAMM Foundation Ambassador
- Independent Cities Association (ICA) Board Member
- Westside Cities Council of Governments Representative
- Catholic Elected Officials Network
- National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO)
- Founder and Executive Director, Outreach Through the Arts

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

I have reviewed the California Democratic Party Platform. I share the platform's commitment to protecting democracy, expanding economic opportunity, promoting environmental sustainability, supporting public education, advancing civil rights, and ensuring access to healthcare. As a local elected official, my focus is on effective implementation and measurable results. Whether addressing housing production, climate resilience, or public health initiatives, success must be measured through clear

benchmarks, transparent reporting, and demonstrated community outcomes—not simply the adoption of policy goals.

CITY GOVERNANCE

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

Santa Monica has faced significant challenges over the past several years, including recovery from the pandemic, homelessness, public safety concerns, fiscal pressures, and state housing mandates. The Council has made important progress in advancing housing planning requirements, supporting economic recovery for local businesses, and addressing public safety concerns. However, the City must improve transparency, communication, public engagement, and execution of policy decisions. Residents deserve confidence that their voices are heard and that City Hall is accountable, responsive, and focused on results.

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 support expanding opportunities for public participation and strengthening transparency around major policy decisions. The City should provide clearer communication regarding council actions, release complex agenda materials earlier, and create more opportunities for residents to engage before major decisions are made.

Major land-use proposals, budget decisions, and infrastructure projects should include robust community outreach well before final council votes, supported by accessible summaries of key issues and multiple avenues for public feedback, both in person and online.

I also support governance reforms that improve access to local government, strengthen public trust, and ensure residents are meaningfully included in decision-making processes.

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

Homelessness. Many of our biggest challenges are regional and cannot be solved by any one city acting alone. Santa Monica should continue partnering with neighboring cities, LA County, Metro, and state agencies to coordinate housing production, behavioral health services, homelessness prevention, transportation investments, and public safety strategies.

Homelessness, in particular, requires shared responsibility across the region. Santa Monica has carried a disproportionate share of that burden and should continue pressing for stronger regional commitments and accountability. This includes coordinated outreach efforts, expanded mental health and substance-use treatment resources through the County, and shared performance metrics that clearly track outcomes and responsibilities across jurisdictions.

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 has made efforts to engage residents, but many community members remain disconnected from decision-making processes. Trust depends on transparency, accessibility, and responsiveness.

The City should improve communication before major policy decisions are made, use multiple outreach channels, present information in a more accessible format, and provide timely updates on projects and initiatives affecting neighborhoods. Residents should receive clear project timelines, regular status updates, and concise explanations of how public feedback influenced final decisions on housing developments, transportation projects, and neighborhood improvements.

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.

Implementation is where public trust is either strengthened or lost. One example is a major City-supported affordable housing development. The City should publish project milestones, construction timelines, budget updates, occupancy targets, and regular progress reports that are easily accessible to the public.

For any major initiative, the City should establish clear performance metrics, provide regular public reporting, engage stakeholders throughout implementation, and conduct ongoing evaluations to ensure taxpayer dollars are used effectively and intended goals are achieved. When benchmarks are not met, the City must identify obstacles, communicate corrective actions, and adjust implementation strategies promptly rather than waiting until project completion to assess results.

JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

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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 play an important role in protecting the rights, safety, and dignity of all residents. While many issues are addressed at the federal and state level, cities can ensure equal access to services, promote civic participation, protect constitutional rights, and foster inclusive communities where residents feel safe and respected.

Santa Monica should continue supporting transparency, public engagement, equal protection under the law, and policies that ensure all residents have access to City services regardless of background. Local government works best when residents trust that their voices matter and their rights will be respected.

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 has a responsibility to acknowledge and learn from past inequities while ensuring that Black residents remain an important part of the City's future. This includes preserving cultural history, preventing displacement, supporting homeownership opportunities, investing in small businesses, and ensuring meaningful representation in community decision-making.

As a first-generation American who grew up in a working-class family, lived in rent-controlled apartments throughout Santa Monica, including the Pico Neighborhood, and was raised by divorced parents, I understand firsthand many of the challenges families face when trying to build stability and opportunity. My perspective on equity is shaped not only by policy discussions, but by lived experience.

I believe the City should continue investing in practical pathways to opportunity. This includes expanding access to financial literacy programs, college preparation support, workforce development, entrepreneurship training, first-time homebuyer education, and scholarship opportunities. If we are serious about creating equity, we must invest in helping families build long-term economic stability and generational wealth.

As someone who has spent much of my career working with youth through education, music, and mentorship, I believe one of the most meaningful investments we can make is ensuring young people and families have access to the tools, resources, and opportunities they need to succeed.

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

Santa Monica should continue following state law, protecting due process rights, and ensuring that residents can access City services without fear. Immigrant families contribute tremendously to our community, workforce, schools, businesses, and culture.

The City should continue partnering with trusted community organizations to provide information, legal resources, language access, and support services while ensuring residents understand their rights and responsibilities under the law.

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?

A recent example of this work is the Virginia Avenue Apartments rehabilitation project. Many of the residents are long-time Santa Monica families who have deep roots in the Pico Neighborhood. As concerns emerged regarding communication, project timelines, temporary relocation, and access to information, I advocated for greater transparency and accountability throughout the process. My goal was to ensure residents had clear information, meaningful engagement opportunities, and confidence that their concerns were being heard throughout the rehabilitation effort.

For me, addressing inequities is not only about creating new opportunities, but also about protecting existing residents from displacement and ensuring that long-time families can remain part of the community they helped build.

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 long been a welcoming and inclusive community, and I believe we should continue to be a place where all residents are treated with dignity, respect, and equal protection under the law.

The City should continue supporting policies that prevent discrimination, ensure equal access to services, promote safety, and foster a community where LGBTQ+ residents feel seen, valued, and supported. Everyone deserves the opportunity to live, work, and participate in civic life without fear of discrimination.

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 support recruitment, hiring, mentorship, and professional development efforts that help ensure City staff reflect the diversity of the community they serve. This includes expanding outreach efforts, supporting leadership development opportunities, reviewing hiring practices, and ensuring all employees have access to advancement opportunities.

I would work collaboratively with the City Manager to evaluate workforce data, identify barriers to advancement, and establish measurable goals that promote inclusion while maintaining a highly qualified workforce.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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

Addressing affordability requires more than housing alone. The City should support good-paying jobs, workforce development, small business growth, childcare access, transportation options, and educational opportunities that help residents build long-term economic stability.

As a small business owner, I understand firsthand the challenges facing local businesses. The City should continue reducing unnecessary barriers, streamlining permitting, supporting entrepreneurship, activating commercial districts, and creating an environment where businesses can succeed while supporting workers and generating local revenue.

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?

Downtown Santa Monica remains one of the City's most important economic engines. We must continue focusing on public safety, cleanliness, activation, business attraction, permitting reform, and support for existing businesses.

I support expanding successful activation efforts, streamlining approvals for new businesses, encouraging adaptive reuse of vacant spaces, improving wayfinding and visitor experiences, and continuing investments that bring residents and visitors back downtown. A vibrant downtown requires both public and private sector collaboration.

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?

The Entertainment Zone has shown promise as one tool to increase activity and support local businesses. While it is still relatively early, initial results suggest it has helped attract visitors and create additional economic activity.

I support continuing to evaluate its performance using measurable data and community feedback. If successful, I would be open to exploring expansion into other appropriate commercial areas while ensuring that public safety, neighborhood compatibility, and quality of life concerns are addressed.

HOUSING/DEVELOPMENT

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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?

Santa Monica and the broader region are facing multiple housing challenges at once. We have a shortage of deed-restricted affordable housing, rising rents, barriers to homeownership, increasing housing costs for seniors and working families, and a growing disconnect between wages and the cost of living.

As a first-generation American who grew up in rent-controlled apartments in Santa Monica and currently lives in a rent-controlled apartment today, I understand firsthand how important housing stability can be for families. My own family benefited from the ability to remain in Santa Monica because affordable housing options existed.

The causes of our housing crisis are complex and include decades of underproduction of affordable housing, rising construction costs, limited public funding, increasing demand, stagnant wages, and the loss of naturally occurring affordable housing. I do not believe housing affordability will be solved through market-rate production alone. In a coastal community like Santa Monica, demand will likely always exceed supply. We must focus on affordability, preservation, anti-displacement policies, and pathways to homeownership in addition to housing production.

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 been a regional leader in investing in affordable housing, homelessness prevention, supportive housing, and tenant protections. The City has consistently stepped forward to provide services and resources, often carrying a disproportionate share of responsibility compared to neighboring jurisdictions.

However, affordability remains out of reach for many working families, seniors, young adults, and longtime residents. We continue to lose residents who helped build our community because they can no longer afford to stay.

I would prioritize preserving existing affordable housing, expanding deed-restricted affordable housing, preventing displacement, increasing housing opportunities for seniors, strengthening homelessness prevention programs, and expanding behavioral health and substance-use treatment resources. I would also continue advocating for greater regional responsibility so Santa Monica is not carrying these burdens alone.

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?

The most effective policies are those that create affordable housing while protecting existing residents from displacement.

I support increased state and federal funding for affordable housing, stronger homelessness prevention programs, incentives for affordable housing production, preservation of existing affordable housing, adaptive reuse opportunities, and investments that help seniors and working families remain in their homes.

I also believe local governments should retain flexibility in how they meet housing goals. Housing policy is most effective when local communities can help shape implementation while still contributing to regional housing needs.

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?

Santa Monica should continue contributing its fair share toward regional housing needs and creating opportunities for additional housing, particularly affordable housing, workforce housing, and housing near transit and services.

At the same time, local governments should retain meaningful input regarding neighborhood compatibility, infrastructure capacity, environmental considerations, and implementation strategies. Residents deserve a voice in how growth occurs.

I support thoughtful housing growth that prioritizes affordability, protects existing residents from displacement, preserves neighborhood character where appropriate, and ensures infrastructure and public services can support additional growth.

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 I was concerned about its impact on existing residents and the continued erosion of local decision-making authority. My concerns were not about housing production itself, but about whether the legislation adequately protected tenants and existing communities from displacement.

The addition of anti-displacement protections was an improvement, but I continue to believe local governments should retain the ability to adopt stronger protections when local conditions warrant them.

As a renter living in a rent-controlled apartment, I believe preserving existing affordable housing is just as important as producing new housing. Existing residents should not bear the burden of housing production through the loss of housing stability.

SB 79 prohibits projects requiring demolition of rent-controlled housing occupied within the past seven years, or demolished within seven years before a development application is submitted. This prevents the most obvious form of displacement — demolishing an occupied rent-controlled building.

But it doesn't address: naturally occurring affordable housing, levels of affordability minimums, and right to return.

Yes. I believe Santa Monica should retain the ability to adopt stronger local protections for existing rent-controlled housing and tenants than those provided under SB 79.

SB 79 includes important anti-displacement provisions, including restrictions on redevelopment of properties containing rent-controlled or recently occupied housing. These provisions help prevent some of the most obvious forms of displacement and represent an improvement over earlier versions of the bill.

However, I do not believe those protections go far enough. The bill does not fully address issues such as right-to-return protections, preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing, replacement affordability levels, relocation impacts, or long-term community stability. For many tenants, displacement is not simply the loss of a unit; it is the loss of community, support networks, school stability, and economic security.

As a renter living in a rent-controlled apartment, I understand the importance of housing stability. Santa Monica should continue pursuing housing production while also preserving existing affordable housing and strengthening protections that help long-time residents remain in the community. Housing production and anti-displacement efforts should work hand in hand.

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

Rent Control exists to preserve housing stability, protect residents from displacement, and maintain socioeconomic diversity within our community. In a city where approximately 70% of residents are renters, Rent Control serves as one of the most important tools available to help working families, seniors, people with disabilities, and long-time residents remain in Santa Monica.

As someone who grew up in rent-controlled housing and currently lives in a rent-controlled apartment, I understand firsthand the opportunities that housing stability can create. Rent Control allowed families like mine to remain in Santa Monica, access our public schools, build community connections, sustain a business in Santa Monica, serve our community, and create a better future for the next generation.

The mission of Rent Control is not simply to regulate rents. It is to preserve the social fabric of our community and ensure that Santa Monica remains accessible to people from a variety of economic backgrounds.

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 has provided an important source of funding for affordable housing and homelessness-related initiatives. As implementation continues, I believe the City should evaluate whether additional emphasis should be placed on preserving existing affordable housing in addition to producing new units.

Some of our most affordable housing already exists in older apartment buildings occupied by seniors, working families, and long-term residents. Strategic investments that preserve those units, assist responsible property owners with rehabilitation and maintenance, and prevent the loss of naturally occurring affordable housing can have tremendous value.

I would also support continued investment in housing for seniors, aging-in-place strategies, homelessness prevention programs, and deed-restricted affordable housing for low-income and workforce residents.

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?

Yes. Public land provides one of the strongest opportunities to create permanently affordable housing because it significantly reduces development costs and allows the City to maximize public benefit.

Public land can help create affordable housing opportunities for a range of residents, including workforce and middle-income households who often earn too much to qualify for traditional low-income housing programs but still cannot afford market-rate housing in Santa Monica. Many long-term residents are effectively trapped in their current housing because they lack affordable options that would allow them to move to units with more space, better amenities, or housing that better fits their changing family needs.

When appropriate for a site's location and surrounding neighborhood, public land should be leveraged to support mixed-use and mixed-income developments that maximize community benefit while helping projects pencil out financially. This approach can expand housing opportunities, strengthen neighborhood vitality, and ensure that public assets are used strategically to address a broader range of housing needs.

However, affordable housing production should be part of a broader strategy that also includes preserving existing affordable units, protecting rent-controlled housing, rehabilitating aging housing stock, supporting senior housing, pursuing public-private partnerships, and leveraging state and federal funding opportunities.

As a Councilmember, I am particularly interested in preserving the affordable housing we already have. Preventing the loss of existing affordable units is often just as important as building new ones.

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, particularly for seniors on fixed incomes, families facing temporary financial hardship, individuals at risk of homelessness, and residents experiencing unexpected medical or economic crises.

Prevention is often far less expensive than homelessness intervention. Helping a resident remain housed is typically more cost-effective and more humane than addressing homelessness after it occurs.

Any expansion should be data-driven and financially sustainable. Potential funding sources could include Measure GS revenues, state and federal grants, housing-related revenues, philanthropic partnerships, and targeted local funding streams that do not compromise the City's ability to maintain other critical housing investments.

PUBLIC SAFETY

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?

Public safety remains one of the top concerns I hear from residents, business owners, employees, and visitors. While crime statistics provide important information, quality of life is often measured by whether people feel safe walking in their neighborhoods, visiting parks, using transit, shopping downtown, or allowing their children to play outside.

I believe Santa Monica has made important progress in recent years through investments in public safety staffing, technology, behavioral health response programs, homelessness outreach, and partnerships between City departments. However, challenges remain, particularly regarding homelessness, behavioral health crises, retail theft, repeat offenders, and quality-of-life concerns in public spaces.

The City should continue investing in a balanced public safety approach that includes law enforcement, prevention, mental health services, homelessness interventions, and accountability. Success should be measured not only by crime statistics, but by whether residents feel safe and whether public spaces are clean, welcoming, and accessible to everyone.

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?

The City should continue investing in a balanced public safety strategy that combines law enforcement, homelessness outreach, behavioral health services, prevention programs, and accountability.

Key priorities include maintaining adequate police staffing, supporting the Downtown Substation, expanding technology investments such as the Real Time Crime Center, strengthening behavioral health response programs, improving homelessness outreach efforts, and increasing access to treatment services.

If additional funding is needed, I support investments that improve measurable outcomes and coordination among public safety partners. Success should be evaluated through crime trends, response times, homelessness outcomes, treatment referrals, repeat calls for service, and resident perceptions of safety.

ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE

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 should continue investing in climate resilience strategies that protect residents, businesses, and public infrastructure. This includes expanding urban tree canopy, improving emergency preparedness, protecting vulnerable populations during extreme heat events, strengthening coastal resilience planning, and ensuring public facilities are prepared for wildfire smoke and other climate-related impacts.

Climate planning should focus on practical, measurable actions that improve public health and community resilience while protecting future generations.

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 supported the closure of Santa Monica Airport because I believe it represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a significant public asset for future generations.

I envision a Great Park that includes open space, sports fields, walking and biking paths, cultural and educational opportunities, recreation facilities, community gathering spaces, environmental restoration, and amenities that serve residents of all ages.

As Santa Monica continues to grow, access to open space becomes increasingly important, particularly for renters and families who may not have access to private outdoor space. Preserving and expanding parks, recreational facilities, and community-serving green spaces should remain a priority throughout the City.

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

Yes. I supported the City’s decision to prioritize natural grass on public land and would continue to support that approach.

While I understand there are differing opinions regarding artificial turf and field accessibility, I believe natural grass remains the preferred option for publicly owned recreational spaces based on the information available to me and the policy direction previously adopted by the City.

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

Environmental justice requires ensuring that all residents have access to clean air, safe parks, healthy neighborhoods, quality public infrastructure, and environmental protections regardless of income or neighborhood.

I believe the City should continue focusing on equitable access to parks and open space, climate resilience investments, tree canopy expansion, safe transportation infrastructure, and environmental improvements in historically underserved areas. Environmental investments should improve quality of life for all residents while prioritizing communities that have historically received fewer resources.

MOBILITY

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

I use a variety of transportation options, including walking, driving, rideshare services, public transit, and occasionally biking. However, like many Santa Monica residents, I rely heavily on my vehicle for both work and family responsibilities.

As the owner of Santa Monica Music Center, our family business regularly transports instruments to and from local schools throughout Santa Monica and neighboring communities for repairs and service. Many of these instruments are large, fragile, and simply cannot be transported using public transit. My vehicle is an essential part of operating our business and serving students and music programs throughout the community.

As a parent, I have also spent years driving my children to school, sports practices, choir performances, orchestra rehearsals, and other activities. These experiences have reinforced my belief that transportation planning must reflect the realities of how people actually move throughout our city.

My transportation habits inform my belief that Santa Monica should support a variety of mobility options rather than assuming one solution works for everyone. Walking, biking, transit, rideshare services, and personal vehicles all play important roles. Residents have different needs based on age, physical ability, family responsibilities, work schedules, and economic circumstances. I believe our transportation policies should expand choices and accessibility rather than limit them.

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

Pedestrian-oriented spaces can be valuable when they are carefully planned and supported by surrounding businesses, residents, and accessibility needs. I would evaluate future opportunities on a case-by-case basis and only where there is strong community support and demonstrated benefit.

The Third Street Promenade is successful because it was designed specifically for that purpose and serves as a regional destination. Not every street is suited for the same approach.

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

The City should continue investing in safe intersections, protected bike infrastructure where appropriate, improved lighting, crosswalk enhancements, traffic calming measures, and education for all roadway users.

Safety improvements should be data-driven and focused on reducing injuries while maintaining access and mobility for everyone.

Do you support additional Metro rail lines being built in Santa Monica?

I support regional transit investments that improve mobility, reduce congestion, and connect residents to jobs, schools, and services. Any future rail expansion should be carefully evaluated based on ridership, cost effectiveness, neighborhood impacts, and overall community benefit.

Should shared mobility devices be encouraged or discouraged?

Shared mobility devices can play an important role in providing transportation options and reducing vehicle trips. However, they must be managed responsibly to address safety concerns, sidewalk obstruction, enforcement issues, and accessibility impacts.

I support thoughtful regulation that balances innovation, safety, and accessibility.

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

Not as a standalone policy. Transportation planning should focus on expanding choices rather than reducing options.

While some parking adjustments may be appropriate in specific locations, many residents, workers, seniors, families, and small businesses continue to rely on vehicles. Any parking changes should be data-driven and accompanied by viable transportation alternatives.

BALLOT MEASURES

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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 believe those with the greatest financial resources should contribute fairly to society and that government has an obligation to fund essential public services and investments.

At the same time, I believe tax policy should be carefully evaluated to ensure it achieves its intended goals without creating significant unintended consequences. I have not studied the full details of this proposal sufficiently to take a firm position on the measure, but I would evaluate it based on its effectiveness, economic impacts, legal viability, and whether it generates meaningful public benefit.

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

Yes, provided that implementation is accompanied by significant efforts to ensure accessibility.

I believe election integrity is important and that voter identification requirements can help strengthen public confidence in elections. However, government also has a responsibility to ensure that obtaining identification is accessible, affordable, and available to all eligible voters.

Any voter identification requirement should be paired with robust public outreach, adequate implementation time, and programs that help residents obtain identification without creating barriers to participation. Protecting both election integrity and voter access should be the goal.

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?

Generally, I believe local communities should retain the ability to make decisions about local funding priorities and revenue sources. Local governments are often best positioned to understand the needs of their communities and should have flexibility to address those needs responsibly.

At the same time, I believe any tax or fee proposal should be transparent, accountable, and clearly connected to public benefit. I would evaluate any statewide restriction based on its impact on local control, fiscal stability, and the ability of communities to fund essential services.

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?

No. I supported the closure of Santa Monica Airport because I believe the property represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a significant public asset centered around open space, recreation, environmental benefits, community gathering spaces, cultural uses, and amenities that will serve generations of Santa Monicans.

While I strongly support affordable housing throughout Santa Monica, I do not support housing on the airport site. My concerns are not rooted in opposition to affordable housing, but rather in the long-term planning implications of introducing large-scale residential development onto this unique property.

I do not believe we have adequately studied the infrastructure impacts associated with adding thousands of housing units to the site, including impacts on transportation systems, public safety services, schools, water and sewer infrastructure, recreational needs, and overall quality of life.

Santa Monica is already accommodating substantial housing growth throughout the city. As density increases, access to parks, sports fields, open space, and community-serving amenities becomes even more important, particularly in a city where approximately 70% of residents are renters and many families lack access to private outdoor space.

Once housing is built on this land, that decision is effectively permanent. I believe the airport property should remain dedicated to a Great Park and community-serving uses that provide lasting benefits to residents across all neighborhoods and generations.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

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

Yes, I support the goal of Medicare For All and believe that access to affordable, high-quality healthcare should be available to everyone regardless of income, employment status, or pre-existing conditions.

My perspective on healthcare is shaped not only by policy discussions, but by personal experience. As a breast cancer survivor, I experienced firsthand the importance of access to quality healthcare, treatment, and support services. No one should have to worry that a medical diagnosis will lead to financial devastation or prevent them from receiving the care they need.

I support efforts that move us toward universal healthcare coverage and believe healthcare should be treated as a basic necessity rather than a privilege. With respect to AB 1900 specifically, I support its goals and would continue reviewing the details of implementation, funding, and long-term sustainability to ensure the program delivers quality care while remaining fiscally responsible.

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

I support closure of Santa Monica Airport as scheduled in 2028.

The future of the airport has been debated for decades, and I believe Santa Monica should honor its commitment to the community and move forward with closure as planned. The airport property represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a public asset that will benefit residents for generations.

I support transforming the site into a Great Park with open space, recreation, sports fields, walking and biking paths, cultural and educational opportunities, environmental restoration, and community-serving amenities that improve quality of life for residents across the city.

As Santa Monica continues to grow, access to parks and open space becomes increasingly important, particularly for families, seniors, and the many residents who live in apartments and do not have access to private outdoor space. The airport site offers a unique opportunity to address those needs while creating a lasting legacy for future generations.

For these reasons, I support closure of the airport as scheduled and do not support extending aviation operations beyond 2028.

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

Union workers should trust that I will fight for them for the same reason that non-union workers, small business employees, service workers, teachers, healthcare workers, and working families should trust me: I believe every worker deserves dignity, safe working conditions, fair compensation, and the opportunity to support themselves and their families.

My first job as a teenager was working in a union-represented grocery store. I understand the important role unions have played in improving wages, benefits, and workplace protections for many workers.

At the same time, my responsibility as a City Councilmember is to represent all workers, not only those represented by a particular organization. Throughout my service, I have consistently focused on the needs of the people doing the work rather than the interests of any single stakeholder group.

I believe public policy should strive for fairness and consistency. Workers performing similar jobs should have access to strong workplace protections, fair wages, and safe working conditions regardless of whether they are represented by a union. My focus is on improving outcomes for working people and ensuring that economic opportunity is available to everyone struggling with the high cost of living in Santa Monica.

As a small business owner, lifelong resident, renter, and former union member, I understand both the challenges facing workers and the importance of maintaining a healthy local economy that supports good jobs. I believe those goals can and should work together.

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 effective local government requires ongoing engagement, not just during election season or when a vote is scheduled. If elected, I would continue meeting regularly with community organizations, neighborhood groups, advocacy organizations, labor representatives, business stakeholders, and civic groups, including the Santa Monica Democratic Club.

Throughout my time on City Council, I have made accessibility and communication a priority through community meetings, office hours, newsletters, public forums, neighborhood events, and direct conversations with residents. I believe community buy-in is strongest when people are engaged early in the process, before decisions are made, rather than after policies are already finalized.

The Santa Monica Democratic Club has long played an important role in civic engagement and public dialogue. I would welcome opportunities to attend meetings, share information, listen to concerns, answer questions, and receive feedback on major policy proposals. Even when we may not agree on every issue, I believe respectful dialogue and community participation lead to better decision-making and stronger public trust.

As a Councilmember, I view community organizations as valuable partners in helping identify concerns, improve policies, and ensure that local government remains responsive to the people it serves.

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

One important topic not fully addressed in this questionnaire is the growing intersection of mental health, substance-use disorders, homelessness, and public safety.

Many of the challenges facing Santa Monica are interconnected. Residents, businesses, first responders, healthcare providers, and service organizations regularly encounter situations where untreated mental illness, addiction, housing instability, and public safety concerns overlap. Yet these issues are often discussed separately rather than as part of a broader behavioral health crisis.

Santa Monica has invested significant resources into homelessness services and public safety programs, but local government cannot solve these challenges alone. Greater regional coordination, expanded treatment options, improved access to mental health care, and stronger partnerships with Los Angeles County are essential.

I believe meaningful progress in these areas would improve quality of life, public safety, health outcomes, and long-term community well-being. Addressing the root causes of behavioral health challenges while maintaining accountability and compassion will remain one of the most important issues facing Santa Monica in the years ahead.

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?

Yes. I used generative AI as an editing and organizational tool to help compile, structure, and refine portions of my responses. The views, experiences, policy positions, and perspectives reflected in this questionnaire are my own and were developed through years of community involvement, public service, and personal experience.

If elected, I believe AI can be used responsibly to improve government efficiency, expand language accessibility, enhance customer service, assist with information management, and help residents more easily access public information. However, AI should never replace human judgment, transparency, accountability, or public oversight in government decision-making. Any use of AI in governance should be implemented thoughtfully, ethically, and with appropriate safeguards to protect privacy and maintain public trust.