**Campaign for Sustainable Transportation**

**2024 City Council Candidate Survey**

**Climate, Safety and Vehicle Miles Traveled**

Santa Cruz consistently rates near highest of a list of similar California cities in rates of injuries to bicyclists and pedestrians (according to rankings of the [Ca. Office of Traffic Safety](https://www.ots.ca.gov/media-and-research/crash-rankings/)). In 2019, the City Council adopted Vision Zero, an international campaign for achieving zero serious injuries due to traffic collisions. Four years later the City has yet to take the first step in implementing Vision Zero: creating an Action Plan.  Would you prioritize Vision Zero by supporting a policy to spend 80% of Traffic Impact Fees to make our streets safer for bicyclists and pedestrians until such time as Santa Cruz achieves its  goal of zero serious injuries by 2030?

Background:

The City has a history of devoting 80% of its Traffic Impact Fee on new development to projects that expand auto capacity and vehicle miles traveled, like the intersection expansion on Hwy 1 and River St. and the intersection at Ocean and Water St.   California law now prohibits environmental impact reports from requiring expansion of roadways. We need to stop expanding intersections, and undo the damage that those expansions have caused, especially “slip lanes” (free right turn lanes) which require bicyclists to merge into traffic and are likewise dangerous for pedestrians.

YES

We know that traffic speed is the main contributor to the severity of injuries. If a neighborhood group were to prepare a conceptual traffic calming plan for its streets, would you support the City establishing a process for such a plan to receive consideration and funding?

Would you support measures already listed in the Climate Action Plan to reduce driving, e.g. transportation tax; congestion pricing; parking maximums; facilitate remote work

YES

UCSC plans a significant increase in enrollment, which will result in increased traffic. Would you support a City policy to cap vehicle trips to campus at current levels (modeled on the Santa Clara County policy that limits vehicle trips to campus to 2001 levels)? In order to enforce this cap would you support extending the City’s existing parking tax to campus?

YES. It is also worth mentioning the support for expansion of Metro service and mass transit options to support multi-modal access to campus without relying on individual car transportation.

What should the City do to respond to sea level rise citywide and in the Downtown Plan Expansion South of Laurel?

As a candidate for Santa Cruz City Council with a background in the water department and Ecology, I am committed to implementing a comprehensive climate resiliency and mitigation plan that prioritizes the safety of all living residents, our non-human counterparts included.

We will Invest in climate-resilient infrastructure that can withstand extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts, ensuring the safety and well-being of all residents. Building in close proximity to vital biological resources we should utilize the Dark Skies International guidelines and recognize the relationship to the river and the ocean. We must prioritize vulnerable communities in climate resilience planning, considering their unique needs and exposures. We are all in need of clean and reliable water and to maintain that resource takes critical long term planning and an understanding of the future variability in rainfall, saltwater intrusion, and consumption profiles.

The San Lorenzo River is our community crown jewel as the lifeblood of our potable water system and realization of habitat conservation and restoration. Developing the river’s biotic health and utilizing it as a focal point to cherish in our future development must be a priority.

How should auto, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic be configured on West Cliff Drive? For example, do you support separating bicycles and pedestrians? Would you support narrowing of vehicle lanes (e.g. to 9 ft) if that could accommodate a dedicated lane for bicyclists?

Background:

West Cliff is a heavily used recreation spot for City residents and tourists. The path combining pedestrians with bicycles and ebikes is unsafe. Separating bicycles from pedestrians would require creating a bike lane from some street space currently used by cars, eg. parking space. Over 90% of letter writers to the City Council supported separating bicyclists and pedestrians.

YES

The community showed overwhelming support for speed reducing infrastructure and multi-modal access. I support a single lane for cars and protected transit for bicycles.

West Cliff is a challenge for us environmentally and fiscally. The costs associated with our management and preservation require us to think with a long-term mindset of the complexity of the space and the benefit of reducing car traffic.

**Housing and Transportation**

Our mission statement includes: *We support measures to protect and increase the supply of affordable housing near jobs to reduce demand for motorized transportation and encourage stable and healthy communities.* The data suggests that the rising cost of housing in our community is resulting in longer commutes. For example, since 2013 vehicle trips to UCSC are [growing at a faster rate](https://campaignforsustainabletransportation.org/sustainable-land-use-planning/ucsc-growth/) than student enrollment.

How should the City respond to the RHNA allocation it has received?

Our need for housing, specifically the prioritization of affordable housing at all income levels, will require building partnerships with public and private agencies and developers. Generating housing stability now for generations to come will benefit our community by fostering economic and social diversity in neighborhoods, creating opportunities for working families to grow in our community, and supporting our most vulnerable populations like seniors, veterans, and those with disabilities. Advocating for Tenant protections to eliminate unjust evictions and displacement while utilizing inclusionary zoning policies and community land trusts will further increase the ability for our communities to maintain diversity and accessibility for all of us

What are the best ways to achieve our housing goals while minimizing VMT [vehicle miles traveled]?

We must develop safe routes for bike commuting and enjoyment. Continuing our rebate program encouraging bike and E-bike transit for downtown workers, expanding the County’s buffered bike lane project along Soquel, and completion of the city’s segments of the Rail Trail are steps to ensure safe and enjoyable transit routes while minimizing our carbon footprint.

By providing efficient transportation options we safeguard our environment and our future. Advocating for the development of housing along transit corridors minimizes our carbon footprint and provides access to sustainable transit options in our community.

In summary, my stance emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive transportation strategy that considers equity, environmental impact, and community well-being. I am dedicated to exploring alternatives that address these concerns while promoting a sustainable and accessible public transportation system in Santa Cruz.

What is your strategy for ensuring that working people can live in Santa Cruz close to where they work?

Addressing housing issues is a top priority for me, recognizing the significant challenges residents face, including rent burden and the difficulty in building generational wealth. Here's how I plan to approach housing issues:

* **Affordable Housing Initiatives:**
	+ Advocate for and support the development of affordable housing projects to increase the availability of affordable homes for residents. This includes working with local developers, non-profit organizations, and government agencies to create housing options that cater to various income levels.
* **Tenant Protections:**
	+ Strengthen tenant protections to ensure fair and just housing practices. This may involve advocating for just-cause eviction policies, and other tenant rights to provide stability and security for renters.
* **Community Engagement:**
	+ Engage with the community through town hall meetings, surveys, and other forums to understand their specific housing concerns and gather input on potential solutions. Community involvement is crucial for developing policies that truly reflect the needs of the residents.
* **Incentives for Affordable Housing Developers:**
	+ Implement policies that provide incentives for developers to prioritize affordable housing projects. This could include tax incentives, expedited permitting processes, and other measures to encourage the private sector to contribute to the affordable housing stock.
* **Collaboration with Non-profit Organizations:**
	+ Collaborate with non-profit organizations and community groups dedicated to affordable housing. Partnering with these organizations can enhance the effectiveness of initiatives and bring valuable community input into the decision-making process.
* **Inclusive Zoning Policies:**
	+ Review and update zoning policies to promote inclusivity and diversity in housing options. This may involve allowing for a mix of housing types in various neighborhoods, encouraging higher density in appropriate areas, and ensuring that zoning policies align with the goal of affordable housing.
* **Transportation-Oriented Development:**
	+ Explore opportunities for transit-oriented development that integrates housing with public transportation. This approach can not only address housing needs but also contribute to sustainable urban planning.

By addressing housing issues through a comprehensive approach, I am committed to working towards a Santa Cruz where residents have access to affordable, stable housing, and where the community as a whole can be a part of what makes us a dynamic city.

Would you support an ordinance that would require new developments to unbundle parking costs from the cost of renting or purchasing a unit?

Background:

California legislation now exempts new developments within a half mile of transit from the requirement to build parking. Developers save by building less parking, and adding more residential units. The savings can be shared with tenants if tenants who don’t own cars are allowed to opt out of paying for parking. Studies of developments that allow tenants to opt out of purchasing parking show **reduced vehicle ownership** and **significantly lower rents** and purchase prices. [Gabbe & Pierce (2017)](https://garagealternatives.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Gabbe-Pierce-Access-2017.pdf)  found that bundling the cost of a parking space adds an average of 17% to a unit’s rent. [More info.](https://campaignforsustainabletransportation.org/sustainable-land-use-planning/parking-policy-to-reduce-housing-cost-support-car-lite-households/)

YES

Would you support an ordinance guaranteeing the right of tenants to legal counsel?

Background:

At our Transportation Justice Conference this August (see video of the panel, [Transit Oriented Development Without Displacement](https://sustainabletransportationsc.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=6603770d75f89b69d1b9c4e4a&id=3bbfec5bd9&e=5642f213ea)), Fernando Marti reported that in San Francisco tenants have the right to counsel, funded by the City. [Research finds](https://www.urbandisplacement.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/19RD018-Anti-Displacement-Strategy-Effectiveness.pdf) that right to counsel has a high degree of effectiveness in preventing displacement.

YES

What is your position on the Housing for People ballot measure?

I support that our community is galvanized and energized to speak to the future planning of our community. The ballot measure is a voice of our community and I support everyone’s engagement on the issue

The City Council recently adopted changes to the Downtown Plan to eliminate the requirement that housing comprise at least 60% of the floor area of buildings on the river side of Front St. between Soquel and Laurel. This change was to allow a hotel to be developed. What are your thoughts about this action?

We need affordable housing. That is our priority.