

Santa Barbara City Council Candidate Questionnaire on Transportation

Brought to you by the Community Environmental Council, Coalition for Sustainable Transportation, and Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition.

Deborah Schwartz

- 1. Do you agree with the City's Circulation Element vision statement, "Santa Barbara should be a city in which alternative forms of transportation and mobility are so available and so attractive that use of an automobile is a choice, not a necessity"? If not, how would you improve it?**

The key to having a strong and healthy city is providing well rounded transportation options for city residents. I think that anything we can do to make it possible for residents not to have to rely on a car for everyday transportation will have numerous benefits for traffic, the environment, help reduce congestion and improve our overall quality of life.

- 2. Given that dangerous walking condition exist in Santa Barbara's Eastside, what might you do to make the Eastside a safer place to walk – more lighting, re-pavement of crosswalks, speed bumps, more police enforcement, or something else?**

Working to make our neighborhoods and business corridors as safe as possible for pedestrians is not only an important public safety issue but and economic one as well. Making business corridors safe for pedestrians will help promote business by making local business more accessible for customers. Lighting, fixing unsafe sidewalks, speed limit enforcement and crosswalks are important improvements that I support.

- 3. Is it the City's duty to improve the jobs/housing imbalance in Santa Barbara? If so, what would you have the City do to accomplish this? If not, how can this imbalance be best addressed?**

Santa Barbara's jobs and housing imbalance has a negative impact a variety of aspects of the quality of life in our city. The local economy, the environment, public safety and the health and diversity of our community. Addressing this issue should be a top priority for city leaders. It is becoming more difficult for middle class families to live here. At the same time, renters make up about 60% of City residents, but most of our rental housing inventory was constructed with a life expectancy of 20-30 years. Housing policies have made it so much of this existing housing inventory has now deteriorated with minimal new rental housing having been constructed in recent years. We need to update our city housing policies to provide more options for middle class families and renters. This is essential in order to keep our local economy strong and our city a great place to live, work and raise a family.

- 4. Please list three specific things you would prioritize to improve our regional transportation. How would you pay for them? How long would it take to accomplish them?**

We need more transportation options than ever before to move commuters more cost effectively and with a lower carbon footprint to and from their homes to work. As a member of the Coalition for Sustainable Transportation, I am a staunch advocate for multi-modal

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transportation options. Accessible, safe, and cost-effective transportation options including bus, bicycle, and walking must be incorporated into policy-making priorities. Potential public transportation improvements include 1) review MTD transit routes for optimal City coverage and neighborhood connectedness, 2) recommend more timely MTD coordination with rail transit and north-south commuter Clean Air Express, and 3) prioritize transit oriented development and planning policies that ensure the places where people live and work are within close proximity to public transit. During difficult economic times it has been challenging to improve and expand public transportation. However, making a long term commitment to expanding public transit as well as working to find new ways to maximize what we already have available to important first steps.

- 5. Do you support the State of California’s goals for new and retrofitted “net zero energy” building that generate as much energy as they use? If so, how can the City be a leader and help its citizens meet this challenge? If not, why?**

Yes. Santa Barbara has a long and rich history as a leader on environmental issues. Many of the city’s efforts to increase the amount of energy we use from renewable sources and retrofitting city facilities to be more sustainable have served as models for energy efficiency through the nation. I whole heartedly support “net zero energy” policies and as a City Councilmember will spearhead the effort to adopt these goals and work with the community and stakeholders to find ways to help private citizens and local business become more energy efficient and sustainable. Moreover, I strongly support these policies not only for the environmental benefits, but for the economic ones as well. Adopting these goals and policies will help create jobs as well as grow the burgeoning green technology industry here locally.

- 6. Given projections of increased traffic levels in Santa Barbara, how would you best mitigate our upcoming street congestion?**

We need to take a comprehensive approach to mitigate street congestion. On the city council I will advocate for all forms of transportation including the Plan Santa Barbara Circulation Element and the Pedestrian Master Plan policies that support this.