

## **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.

### **Jerry Matteo**

- 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?**

One of the dangerous faults with the General Plan is that insufficient parking is designed into it. You cannot force people [through design] to not use cars. It is both impractical and unconstitutional. People's freedom of choice needs to be preserved. Forcing or coercing people to use public or mass transportation is a socialist behavior. To encourage people to be more environmentally conscious and purchase a hybrid or electric vehicle and then provide no place to park them, is an example of "short-sighted thinking". Although the city has done much for bicycle riders, they can do much more, such as ceasing the building of bulb-outs and unnecessary roundabouts. They are serious road hazards for bike riders. The ideal solution needs to be a plan which focuses on providing sufficient transportation fluidity, whether someone "chooses" to BUS, BIKE or DRIVE.

- 2. Given that dangerous walking conditions 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?**

There are many pedestrian trouble spots in Santa Barbara in general, not just in the Eastside neighborhood. I believe many of these spots can be remedied [cost effectively] by striping, lighting and adding signage at critical crosswalks.

- 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?**

A major cause behind our job/housing imbalance is the types of businesses that we allow in our city. Having too many low-wage-job type businesses does nothing to support people's ability to afford to live here. Also, the importing of workers from out of town when filling job vacancies, not only adds stress to our affordable housing demand of our local residents, it also adds to the congestion of commuter traffic. For the sake of the community, the city first needs to research and evaluate what the average cost of living is for a homeowner in our city; second, before new businesses are allowed to operate in our city, they must show that they will provide a reasonable living wage that would meet that average, as well as show how many jobs will be provided for local residents.

Another major cause for rental housing shortage is an increase in the foreign student population. This is a complex matter which will take the cooperation of several departments in order to come up with a workable solution.

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### **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?**

1) Regulate taxi services, e.g., unify rate, put a maximum on the number of permits and vehicles per company, require that all companies and independent drivers have proper insurance and sufficient off-street parking for cars not in service and require annual inspection of vehicles. To encourage clean air support, I would suggest a three tier rate for permits based on the vehicle's eco-status e.g., high for combustion vehicles, moderate for hybrids and low for all-electric vehicles and pedi-cabs.

2) Examine what it would take to convert over to buses that run pollution-free on hydrogen.

3) Explore expanding the electric shuttle system to replace some smaller MTD routes with low ridership and using larger buses for more high-volume express routes.

### **5. Do you support the State of California's goals for new and retrofitted "net zero energy" buildings 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?**

We need to build as green as possible when repairing or building new, especially when deciding directions for the general plan. End-user energy savings and cost savings are not always a good measure to use in making green choices. E.g. Fluorescent lamps over incandescent, cost more to manufacture, rely on oil for some components, contain mercury and other toxic chemicals that get dumped in the earth and create a huge carbon footprint when being shipped from half way around the world. It is more Earth-friendly to use low-voltage incandescent and supplement our lighting needs with skylights, windows, solar tubes and solar panels.

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

An important item to include in the housing portion of the general plan is to provide one car per bedroom, NOT per unit.

I would encourage businesses to stagger work hours when practical. Hiring local employees reduces commuter traffic.

By restricting State Street traffic from Victoria Street down to Gutierrez to be used by commercial, public transportation and emergency vehicles only, I believe traffic will become more fluid up and down Chapala and Anacapa streets and at all connecting streets crossing State. State Street will also become safer for shuttles and more bike-friendly for pedi-cabs and cyclists in general.