


**Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee**  
**Endorsement Questionnaire for Fresno City Council Candidates**

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Candidate's Signature: 

Date: **March 5, 2018**

**Please limit your responses to no more than 300 words per question.**

1) As a City Council member, describe what you will do in each of the following areas:

a) Improving air quality

**There are two distinct methods to address the poor air quality found in Fresno. First, policies to address the number polluting industries and where they are located can be addressed. The city, in conjunction with the county and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District can follow-through with plans already approved, but not yet actualized. For District 3 this is important because of the proposed growth associated with the recently approved Southwest Specific Plan.**

**Secondly, efforts to increase the number of trees and other vegetation in the city must become a priority. The process of photosynthesis helps remove carbon from the atmosphere. I am aware of and have participated in tree planting event with Tree Fresno and the city. Although, the effects of such efforts will not be realized until the future, I believe it irresponsible to not complete this simple act.**

**Lastly, I would work to convert the city's vehicle fleet to natural gas and electric technologies. I would also look for ways to expand the city's bike lane infrastructure and accessibility.**

b) Improving Fresno's public transportation levels of service

**As a frequent past FAX consumer in the 70'-80's, I was shocked to learn that the FAX system had not changed much since those days. The only changes to the system had been to extend routes where needed. There had been no variation of service, until recently with the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) work.**

**In addition to BRT, I would suggest investigating regional routes (NW, NE, SW & SE) and direct service routes to such locations as Fresno Airport, Amtrak/Greyhound Terminals, and all colleges/universities from locations like Downtown, Manchester, River Park, and others. Also, major employers (city, county, school districts, etc.) could offer their employs reduced fare rates and express services to increase ridership.**

c) Reducing urban sprawl

**The city of Fresno has gone as far north as possible. It now is boomeranging back to the city's origins of Downtown, Chinatown and Southwest (District 3) as exemplified by the TCC and HSR investments. I believe that this will help slow the 40-year history of urban sprawl.**

**Not realizing that Fresno is a major metropolitan city also must be addressed to reduce sprawl. An investigation of major cities in the United States show that they grow upwards and not outwards. City regulations preventing the upward expansion of the city must be reviewed for relativity. This may also reduce recent frictions over the loss farm lands, to progress and modernization caused by urban sprawl.**

- d) Supporting high-speed rail

**I fully support HSR and the advantages such traffic will bring to Fresno. I am, at the same time, extremely excited and overly concerned about HSR being centered in District 3.**

**My excitement derives from the immense opportunity and long-over due progress that is already occurring in District 3. Downtown and Chinatown have received attention that has missed them for the past 40-years. Replacement of infrastructure, upgrading of transit paths, and the modernization of existing structures are just a few of the recent occurrences. The approval of the Southwest Specific Plan almost doubles the size of Southwest Fresno. These things provide a tremendous amount of opportunity for a portion of the city long overdue for such attentions.**

**However, I am overly concerned because the city has a horrible history of ensuring that potential meets expectations. I direct people to the Central Unified SD area. This area is a mix-matched of city and country, urban and rural disarray. I am also concerned with the hint of gentrification that is occurring in Downtown Fresno and predicted for Southwest Fresno.**

**As the next representative for District 3, creating and implementing plans that honor the past with the infusion of the present will be priority number 1. My support of HSR and all that it encompasses will be key to moving District 3 into the future.**

- 2) What specifically do you plan to do to ensure that Fresno's stock of affordable, safe and decent housing increases significantly while you're on the City Council? Include in your answer if you support and would you strengthen a comprehensive routine interior code inspection program for rental housing?

**I would support periodic scheduled (internal and external) inspections of rental properties. The city has a responsible to ensure the safety of its citizens. Safety comes in many forms, of which, housing is one. Safety is one of Maslov's hierarchy foundational elements. People will not function at full-capacity if their safety is compromised. This carries over to more than existing housing. New developments must also be reflective of safety. I would also commit to increasing funding to the inspection program to ensure that the work is completed efficiently and timely.**

**The recent developments and growth of the city will affect what is considered "Affordable Housing". I am concerned with the lack of "Affordable Housing" and the elevated number of "Low Income Housing" that is prevalent in District 3. The modernization of Downtown and Chinatown, in combination with the expansion of Southwest, provides tremendous opportunities. Unfortunately, most of the conversations have centered around more "Low Income" versus more "Affordable" housing.**

- 3) Evaluate the successes and failures of City Hall's approach to ending homelessness and what, if anything, you would do differently. Include your position on the new anti-camping ordinance.

**Being homeless is NOT a crime. Many of the recent actions from the city has been to criminalize homelessness.**

**I DO NOT support the anti-camping ordinance, although there are certain areas which should not be camped upon (any area that jeopardizes the safety of the camper or the public).**

**From my many years working in public education, I have learned that there are many circumstances that cause homelessness. I would seek a multitude of resolutions to address homelessness. Service areas to address such factors as mental health, low educational attainment, loss of employment, drug/alcohol abuse, and traumatic/sudden lose must be adopted.**

**As councilman, I would take a proactive position to address homelessness. There are cities across the United States having success with lowing the number of homeless. Some of the reported data is being disputed for its accuracy, but any step forward is a step in the right direction. I will embark upon seeking resources and programs to successfully lower the number on homeless in the city by engaging civic services and community support programs such veteran services, to develop a systematic approach.**

- 4) What do you see as the most important components in cultivating a productive and cooperative and useful relationship between the Board of Supervisors and the City Council?

**A cease to the finger pointing. The county and city must establish a system of shared responsibilities to address the myriad of needs in the 5<sup>th</sup> largest city in the state. Areas such as homelessness, incarceration & bail, roads & traffic, air pollution, water access and contamination, and the large county patches inside the city must become shared responsibilities.**

**As councilman, I will establish regular and direct communications and meetings with Supervisors Pacheco and Quintero, as well as the others, to change the atmosphere of disjointedness currently present. County supervisors will have a significant role in the new Fresno. These meetings would be in addition to any such formal meetings already occurring.**

- 5) Police accountability in Fresno has been a longstanding concern of the progressive community. What exactly do you propose to require greater accountability of the police to the citizenry of Fresno, especially in interactions within neighborhoods of color and the LGBTQ community?

**I support the Office of Independent Review and will work to ensure that the office has the resources and cooperation necessary to efficiently conduct its job.**

**I have shared that our police department has historically seen everything as a nail and itself as a hammer. I do not believe this is the correct approach. Police officers must have the capacity to arrest and detain, as well as serve and protect. Service and protection does not seem to be the focus of the department recently.**

**I am hopeful and excited about some of the things occurring in the Southwest Policing district under the leadership of Captain Mark Salazar. He has his officers serving and school mentors and youth sports coaches. He is working to create a different public relationship and perception of his officers. I applaud his efforts, as that was how things were when I was growing up. The president of our Little League (L.H. McDaniels) and a couple of the youth football coaches (James Brewer) were police officers. Others like Bob Mitchell, Ray Williams, and Jack Kelley were huge supporters and community legends. I believe the Captain Salazar's efforts need to be supported and expanded. Additional city resources can be combined with his efforts to increase the departments outreach and impact.**

- 6) Given national attacks on immigrants, what steps should the City Council take to support our vibrant immigrant community, especially our undocumented neighbors and DACA recipients?

**The rights of all people should be protected. As I have learned working in the school system, all children are welcomed in American schools, regardless of their immigration status.**

**I would publicly state the position of the city, "That the city of Fresno's law enforcement agents' are not concerned with a person immigration status, but whether they have broken the law."- Dyer, January 2017**

**I understand the immigration laws from the perspective of K-12 education. I will need to learn more about the specifics outside of the educational realm. I would call on relationships with organizations such as Mi Familia Vota to help inform and guide me.**

- 7) The city has uneven park and green space distribution. What are two specific ways to address this issue, ensuring more access to green space, particularly in low-income neighborhoods?

**I have learned in conversations with Fresno's new Parks and Recreation Director, that the department I underfunded for a city of its size. I also learned from an overall report provided to the council from an independent auditor, that the city's southern parks have been neglected for quite a while. I will work diligently to address both factors and change outcomes from the Parks and Recreation Department.**

- 8) What is your stand on unions and unionization? What will you do to support city workers?

**I am a current member of Madera Unified Teachers Association (MUTA). Unions serve the important function of oversight of employers. I do not mean that all employers are bad, but American industries need oversight and monitoring.**

**I do not support the privatization of city services. I am surprised at the amount of city services that have been given to private companies. I also understand that a residual effect of privatization is to diminish unions, their membership, and their influence. I was a supporter on “No on Measure G”, making phone calls at the Democratic Headquarters.**

**I will work with city employees to ensure that their interests are appropriately represented through conversations, direct action, and collaboration.**

9) What is your position on medical marijuana and recreational marijuana dispensaries within the city?

**Medical marijuana is a necessity for those who suffer. I have numerous friends that are now able to function regularly because they are a medical marijuana user. I am in full support of medical marijuana usage.**

**Voters have approved recreational marijuana use in Fresno County, and the city of Fresno. First, marijuana needs to be recategorized federally. Secondly, Fresno needs to develop a policy and procedures around marijuana that is absent of the racial/ethnic biases that currently exist.**

**For me, dispensaries in the city is about responsibility; Responsible usage, responsible accessibility, and responsible monitoring. Marijuana use is the same as alcohol use to me. Both can be used responsibly in private social settings but can become criminal when used in excess. Responsible accessibility to me, means that there is no one council district that is inundated with the burden of housing most of the dispensaries. Responsible monitoring involves developing new policies and enforcing current laws equitably. This involves not targeting certain populations and issuing punishment equitably to offenders. Ultimately, the city of Fresno will benefit financially from investing in a method to responsibly grow, house, distribute, and monitor the use of marijuana in the city.**

**Finally, if Fresno fails to act, surrounding cities and communities will reap the financial benefits of the marijuana industry. Once again, allowing the cities racism and bigotry to interfere with engaging in sound and beneficial social practices.**

10) In conclusion, tell us what you consider to be the top three progressive priorities of your campaign (these can include issues addressed above, or add details not yet addressed in this questionnaire).

- 1) My campaign is about “People”. I will to actively represent and engage the “People” of District 3, continuously seeking ways for their direct engagement in the cities political processes. One such way that I will accomplish this is through the establishment of neighborhood and community councils constructed around geography, interest, and issues.**
- 2) Work to be an advocating servant-representative for District 3. For far too long, the elected officials for District 3 have forgotten to serve and represent. Recent decisions and votes for District 3 have been in direct opposition of the district’s constituents. I believe this happens more from disconnection, than malice, although the net effects are the same. I am committed to actively engage and mobilize people in District 3, and throughout the city.**
- 3) Use my keen knowledge of people and love for the city of Fresno to create a new, vibrant, and inclusive community for all.**

*Thank you so much for your time and energy in completing this questionnaire. Your answers will be distributed to our members prior to our March endorsement meeting through the CVPPAC Web site.*