

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

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

a) Improving Air Quality:

Improving the air quality of the City of Fresno is a challenging effort, given we are surrounded by a largely agricultural and industrial economy. But the City Council has to do its part in protecting the health of its citizens, young and old alike.

There cannot be a tradeoff between individual health and economic growth. If the health of individuals suffers, so does the economy.

The City Council must direct its representative to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control Board to require the Air Pollution Control District it oversees, to look after the health interests of ordinary citizens and not be another lobbyist for industry.

Our main pollutants in the city are emissions from agricultural and industrial processing, dairy herds in outlying areas, transport trucks, automobiles, restaurant cooking, fireplaces, leaf blowers and traffic that stir up the dust, smoke and allergens that settle in our urban neighborhoods.

b) Improving Fresno's public transportation levels of service:

The city population keeps increasing as does the costs associated with a private automobile. Regular bus service should be expanded along with the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system.

District 5 is underserved by the FAX system of Fresno. Expand the system of bicycle lanes, make them wider and safer. Consider a shuttle service to areas downtown and around congested areas, for handicapped and jury duty residents where sufficient handicapped parking is not available or far from other city destinations.

c) Reducing urban sprawl:

The City must help re-direct residential growth back towards the older and neglected neighborhoods. Encourage infill where there are blighted areas and establish safe and attractive areas to live in. Provide for more and better maintained parks and green space, especially where few exist.

d) Supporting high-speed rail: Encourage HSR activity from the City Council:

I support HSR and would encourage the City Council to support its construction, and partner with the State of California to make it successful in the future. The city will benefit from

ease of access to the larger urban centers, north and south. HSR will take pressure off of expanding airports and freeways, especially important for Fresno where we have run out of room for expansion of both.

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 encourage the city to seek State and Federal grants for more low income and affordable housing that is also safe and clean. The city must also encourage retrofit of existing homes and apartments.

I support comprehensive routine rental inspections in order to ensure a basic level of safe and sanitary living conditions. Without a comprehensive inspection program many rental owners might tend to let properties go without proper maintenance, allowing them to become hazardous to the health of residents without their knowledge.

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.

Homelessness is a huge national issue. The State of California has problems with homelessness in every major city. As such, it should not be treated as a crime for someone to be homeless and jobless. Everyone should have a safe and clean place to lay their heads at night.

State and Federal programs must deal with the issues of poverty, mental health, drug abuse, lack of education. These problems go far beyond the city limits of Fresno.

The City Council should first see after people setting up campsites in the city, not criminalize them. We should work to expand social programs sponsored by the Federal and State governments. Sanitary facilities should be provided by the city in order to maintain the health of its neighborhoods, especially where the homeless encampments are located. They do need to be located in a safe and hopeful environment, not a permanent solution to the lack of affordable housing we have experienced in the past decade.

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?

The City and County must begin to see we are all in the same boat. Air pollution, access to safe drinking water, homelessness, poverty, mental care, and veterans' issues must all be looked at by both bodies.

Regular meetings between representatives of the two must result in improved coordination of land-use issues and efficiencies of governing. Better and more consistent roads and sidewalks would be one goal where county islands and leapfrog development have occurred. The lessening of county islands within District 5 would be an improvement.

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?

Continued, and in-depth training of police in the cultural differences of ethnic groups, especially within neighborhoods of color, and better understanding of the LGBTQ community. Expand the use of body cameras and the sharing of the results with the public. Expand the City's Office of Independent Review that reviews police policies and Internal Affairs investigations.

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?

Immigrants need protection too! The recent increase of attacks upon immigrants must be policed and violators prosecuted. The City Council must protect foreigners, as well as our own citizens. The city should commit to being a sanctuary for undocumented immigrants. It's the least we can do to thanks those who mostly toil in the fields and in other low paying jobs.

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?

The City Council has starved the Parks Department budget of maintenance and operations money for that past 50 years at least. They have built parks, then let them deteriorate until they need total replacement, which never happens. Low income neighborhoods have suffered the most.

District 5 has numerous pockets of low income residential areas that have been denied new green space and maintenance of existing parks for many years. The City Council should allocate more resources to the Parks Budget. Last year's study of parks resulted in the "2017 Fresno Parks Master Plan, a community-based vision and road map for planning a complete and functional park system." This study should be the roadmap to a better parks system and the City Council should back it wholeheartedly.

Aside from that, there will be a citizens' led initiative on the November ballot, called "Fresno for Parks and the Arts". Citizens of District 5 should vote 'Yes' on this initiative and keep after the City Council to increase their funding of the Parks Department to make up for their shortcomings of the past.

8) What is your position on unions and unionization? What will you do so support city workers?

Unions are a very necessary institution in American life. They look after their workers' interests and benefit the city with reliable, trustworthy and well-trained workers. I oppose any privatization of city services and will work with union representatives to see their objectives respected.

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

Medical and recreational (Adult use) of marijuana is a settled fact in California, having been allowed under state law. The medical benefits of marijuana, for many people, can't be denied. As for recreation use, we need to consider it like any other drug and not tax it out of the competitive market. Just like for alcohol and cigarettes people need to consider others when they operate in a social setting or a workplace and safety of others.

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).

A) As a veteran child, a Hmong woman and immigrant from Laos during the Vietnam War, and having seen the toll war can take on individual soldiers and their families alike, I want to continue to advocate for the better services and care of Veterans and form a Veterans Commission.

B) I am an advocate for women and children issues, an advocate for domestic violence recovery and I fight against Human Trafficking.

C) Economic Progress in small business, minority and women-owned businesses, combined with neighborhood safety. I plan on forming a District 5 Local Businesses Association and revitalize pass associations to form Only 1 Associations. Create more Jobs to combat homelessness.

D) Reinforce and collaborate with substation police to cross cultural training sensitive to all ethnicity as District 5 holds the most diverse group population, Police force should have more and recruit more diverse police officers on the force. Immediately enforce MORE neighborhood policing through the district. Form a Third Party Police Commission.

E) The number one complaints from the residents, we must fix our STREET INFRASTRUCTURE from pot holes to no speed bumps or stop signs or have lights near or around school and churches, better lighting or install light poles in many areas that do not have any street lights. Have more frequent street and neighborhood street cleaning and pick up.

F) Have a PARK in district 5 to reflect that we actually have a decent family park and bike trails to making bike lanes in our streets and neighborhoods. Have a few of our run down soccer parks maintained with proper security and police officers visible. Have the park fully maintenance as the residents have been NEGLECTED.

Thank you,