

Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee
Endorsement Questionnaire – Madera City Council District 5

Candidate Information

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Please use no more than 100 words to respond to each question:

- Last year the council bought 150 solar street lights and placed 130 on the West side of Madera. Your district is on the East side. How would you vote if elected?
I would request an independent assessment of where the greatest need for lighting in Madera is and encourage residents in my district to share how they're directly impacted by lack of sufficient lighting in their areas. My vote would consider the greatest need and an equitably representative portion to address the needs of my district.
- Many parts of your district lack sidewalks and people have to compete with cars to get to where they are going. How would you ensure that children can walk to school safely?
I will advocate for installing sidewalks and repairing existing damaged sidewalks that make it unsafe for pedestrians, especially those with special needs and the elderly, to walk. I will ensure children can walk to school safely by calling for clearly visible posted speed limit signs around the schools in my district in need, for flashing crosswalk indicators and radar speed signs.
- The cannabis ordinance as it is currently written only allows for 2 equity permits. Would you vote to increase that number?
Yes, I would vote to increase that number.
- Do you support high-speed rail? Explain why or why not.
I have been supportive of high-speed rail since its proposal because of the longstanding inadequate access to public transportation which inevitably leads to higher levels of pollution. Our economy and increasing population require safe, reliable and diverse transportation options. We must work to seriously mitigate the impact to our local natural resources. We must prioritize good paying union jobs for local workers and support educational partnerships that equip residents with the skills required to fill maintenance and technical high speed rail jobs long term.
- How should your city address the needs of the homeless population in your city?
With a 70% increase of the unhoused population in Fresno and Madera Counties in the last census, and less than a 1/3 of bed capacity, clearly not enough resources

are allocated to support our unhoused. A viable long-term plan to address their needs requires the most basic necessities of bedding and shelter in place. But we must go beyond that to address the root causes of homelessness, including affordable housing, unemployment, access to treatment for substance abuse and mental health issues.

- Do you support your city being or becoming a sanctuary city for undocumented immigrants? Explain why or why not.

Absolutely. Madera was built and continues to be run by the labor of immigrants, and beyond that, the sanctuary city designation makes absolute sense in terms of public safety and cost effectiveness. All Maderans are safer when our whole community works collaboratively with local police, and engagement is a two-way street.

Residents need to be able to trust public servants in order to work with them. When an undocumented person knows they can report crime without fear of repercussions, such as the risk of being turned over to federal authorities for the civil violation of unlawful presence, we're all safer.

- What will the candidates do to improve the situation on the corner of Clinton St. & Rd 28 as parents drop off their kids at Millview Elementary (The situation feels unsafe for parents, teachers, and students and it's only a matter of time before someone is seriously injured.)

This already deadly situation could be made safer by lowering the posted speed limit of 35 mph to the standard school safety zone of 25 mph. Speed limit signs need to be clearly visible from roadways directly leading up to Millview Elementary, but especially from Road 29 toward Tozer and from Clinton St because motorists tend to drive at higher speeds there. We should also install flashing crosswalk indicators and radar speed signs. While some students are guided by adults, all children deserve to feel safe without requiring additional presence. We should implement a city-wide safe driving behavior awareness campaign.

- How can you improve the parks in the district to make them more attractive to younger residents and safer for families? Many young African American youth would like to have an outdoor basketball court, for example, could you make that happen?

Parks in my district can become more attractive and safer through maintenance and upgrading. The fields at Madera Sunrise Rotary Sports Complex, for example, have a lot of holes which can easily cause injuries to athletes. Parks should also be open and made accessible to youth groups and organizations to host activities without excessive fees to encourage community outdoor recreational activity. For example, hundreds of kids go to the swimming pool at Centennial Park every summer, but only the children's pool has received upgrading recently. Yes, I support having an outdoor basketball court and I believe we can achieve it.

- What will the candidates do to bring new stores and restaurants to the district? This would assist residents with jobs and easier access to food and basic needs. Rancho San Miguel is a good start but there's no pharmacy within walking distance for elderly.

Candidates and staff should prioritize bringing to Madera good paying jobs and businesses that seek to become a part of the community and not solely profit from its workforce and investing that elsewhere. While as residents we provide the labor, we must also see investment into our community for the improvement and

attractiveness of our City. There are many local residents who would like to start and/or expand their own small businesses and the City should emphasize financial/business education and equal access/assistance in the permit process for all interested locals.

Candidate Signature:

Elsa Mejia

(Your electronic signature confirms candidate's permission to post responses on the CVPPAC Web site.)