



# Candidate Questionnaire For City Council 2020

Please download and complete the questionnaire and email the completed document to [info@SouthBayPA.org](mailto:info@SouthBayPA.org). By submitting your responses to this questionnaire to the South Bay Progressive Alliance (SBPA), you agree that your responses are public and that we may share your responses with others.

Name: Andrew Boone                      City Council Jurisdiction: San Jose City Council District 6

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Committee Name: not yet established

Line of Work: stagehand

## Candidate Pledge:

***If you cannot not make the following 4 affirmative pledges, the SBPA cannot endorse you at this time.***

**CORPORATE-FREE.** As a corporate-free candidate I commit to refuse donations from corporations, industry lobbyists, corporate representatives, and Political Action Committees (except for union PACs and PACs that refuse corporate donations) and publicize that I am a corporate free candidate in my campaign literature.

YES  NO

**PLEDGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY.** I commit to publicize and hold regular listening sessions with my constituents, to stay in touch with their needs and concerns.

YES  NO

**PROGRESSIVE POLICIES.** I commit to author, co-author, support, promote and defend people-focused progressive policies and practices that incorporate SBPA core values to improve communities and the quality of life for my constituents.

YES  NO

**DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION.** I commit to help level the playing field for ALL people and prioritize the development of leadership among under-represented communities.

YES  NO

General Questions:

**1. Endorsements—**

- a. Who are you endorsing, from national races all the way down ballot to local races?

Bernie Sanders, Tulsi Gabbard, Elizabeth Warren, Andrew Yang, Howie Hawkins, Ann Ravel, Magdalena Carrasco, Jenny Higgins Bradanini, Huy Tran... and I will definitely think of some more...

- b. Which candidates, if any, are you endorsing anyone else in your own race?

In the San Jose City Council District 6 election, I endorse Jake Tonkel and Marshall Woodmansee.

- c. Who has endorsed you?

Monica Mallon

- d. Whose endorsements are you seeking or expect to receive?

I am seeking the endorsements of various community leaders, labor unions, and non-profit organizations. I hope to receive endorsements from those individuals and groups who have demonstrated a commitment to fighting for social and environmental justice.

- 2. Campaign Funding —**How much money do you plan to raise for your campaign? Where will the money come from? Describe sources of financial contributions for your campaign that you would refuse to accept (if any).

I plan to raise \$3,000 to \$5,000 for my campaign for City Council, from small donations from individuals. I would not accept donations from corporations or PACs and would not expect any to be offered any.

City Council Questions:

- 1. Motivation:** Why did you choose to run for this office?

The San Jose City Council must serve the needs of people and planet rather than serving corporate profits. Our highest priorities must be to rapidly slash greenhouse gas emissions, provide affordable or free housing, health care, and education to all residents, raise wages and benefits for low-income workers, provide a safe and practical public transit system everyone can use, and end all forms of discrimination.

- 2. Priorities:** What do you believe are the major issues facing residents of your district? What are some specific tasks (e.g. specific legislation, policies, etc.) you intend to accomplish while in office?

Maintaining adequate wages, housing, and health care and the major issues facing San Jose residents. We also need safe and affordable transportation services, clean air and water, and more park space.

3. **Qualifications:** Please give a brief summary of your background and qualifications for being a City Councilmember, and include any community volunteering or activism. If you're an incumbent, how would you assess your own job performance? Please give some specific example of accomplishments and setbacks.

I have actively advocated for better transportation, housing, and labor policies as a volunteer in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties for ten years. I served on the East Palo Alto Planning Commission, East Palo Alto Public Works & Transportation Commission, and City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee as an appointed volunteer. I have attended and participated in hundreds of city council and other city meetings especially in San Jose, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Palo Alto, Mountain View, Sunnyvale, and Santa Clara. Observing these cities and others as a reporter for four years and lobbying their city councils for twice as long have provided an experience and understanding of how decisions are made and how the reforms we so desperately need can actually be enacted.

4. **Housing:** If elected what policies and programs would you put in place to address affordable housing, market-rate housing, and homelessness? Should the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act be repealed? Would you implement rent control in your city? If so, what would your rent control policy look like?

In San Jose we must prioritize the development of housing over that of office space, which means zoning more parcels for residential development, upzoning existing residential land, and removing other barriers to construction of affordable housing units. The city should open as many new Navigation Centers to provide our unhoused neighbors with temporary housing and the social services as we need – yes this includes building thousands of housing units in central, transit-accessible locations for unhoused residents. Absolutely YES the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act should be repealed. I support maximum annual allowable rent increases on rent-controlled units of 1%, and expanding rent-control to include duplexes and Accessory Dwelling Units.

5. **Public safety:** How would you prioritize and address the most important public safety issues facing the residents of your district? Consider community trust, racial tensions, police conduct, use of force, etc.

We must end the killing and maiming of residents by police officers immediately, and this *can* be done with more extensive and effective training. Police officers face complex and challenging job requirements, and thus should benefit from at least two years of professional education. We must acknowledge that economic disparities and racial discrimination drive social division and crime, and address those disparities. A \$25/hour minimum wage, expanded unionization of local industries, better public education including tuition-free college, and comprehensive health care would all go a long way towards a more peaceful society.

6. **Diversity:** What policies and practices would you implement for inclusiveness and diversity in city government, particularly for women, people of color, and the LGBTQ+ community?

We need to take seriously our role in ending all forms of discrimination in employment, housing, health care, and education. City of San Jose should maintain a database of businesses that includes information on salaries and benefits received for groups of employees, and use it to ban disparities based on gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Providing a system of Universal Health Care for all residents as San Francisco and New York have done would be a major achievement and benefit for everyone but especially for residents who face routine discrimination. Likewise providing affordable public housing to any residents who need of it would greatly assist women, people of color, and LGBTQ+ residents. City meetings and other activities must not take place at times that disproportionately exclude women and people of color who are more often working than white men on Tuesdays at 1:30 pm when City Council meetings begin, for example.

7. **Criminal justice:** What can be done to improve our local criminal justice system? Do you support the current sanctuary policy of your city and the current county policy?

We must implement a system that is restorative rather than punitive, as rehabilitation programs all the world have proven successful, and we must seek to reduce our prison population. Santa Clara County and San Jose are

still waging a War On Drugs – prosecuting and imprisoning residents for selling or possessing illegal drugs. Our goal should be to keep people out of jail rather than keeping people in jail. Yes I support the current sanctuary policies of San Jose and of Santa Clara County.

8. **Land use:** How would you balance development vs. preserving and/or enhancing open spaces? What are the most important land use issues facing your district?

Open spaces and parks continue to be threatened in San Jose, even as the city is taking a major step forward this year by preserving Coyote Valley from development. We should enact a stronger Urban Growth Boundary to prevent any more development, of any type, at the city's urban fringes, and we must adopt stricter zoning regulations to stop large developments in riparian habitats. San Jose should construct new city parks and expand existing parks, and there are plenty of vacant and underutilized parcels on which to do so. Housing is the most important land use issue in San Jose and all of California. We can zone more land for housing, upzone existing residential parcels, and eliminate other barriers that prevent sufficient affordable housing from being built.

9. **Business:** How do you view business growth in your jurisdiction? What, if anything, would you do to ensure residents are not displaced? Under what circumstances would you support corporate subsidies, tax breaks, and credits, to attract business to your city?

San Jose's longstanding economic development strategy – to attract large corporations with high-paying office jobs - does not provide a path to prosperity for the vast majority of city residents and in fact drives the mass displacement and homelessness we're suffering from. We need to focus on developing **middle-income jobs** and **manufacturing jobs** that do not require expensive college degrees and do not discriminate against women and people of color as the high-tech sector does. For example the city could permit hundreds of additional cannabis dispensaries and other small cannabis businesses to operate, rather than banning them, to create thousands of accessible jobs and at the same time provide a sizeable revenue stream for the city. I do not support corporate subsidies or tax breaks and credits under any circumstances.

10. **Transit:** What specific proposals do you have to alleviate traffic? What are your views and positions on public transit-oriented development?

A successful strategy for reducing car traffic congestion must focus on reducing car use, rather than expanding highways and roadways to maximize car traffic volumes as City of San Jose is still doing even after seven decades of abysmal failure. To reduce our dependence on automobiles, we must invest more in public transit, especially bus services, fix the design of streets so they are not lethal to walk or bike, and develop much more housing in jobs-rich areas like Santa Clara County. What we should NOT do is pass even more sales taxes to pay for transportation “improvements” when many of the projects that get funded expand highways for more car traffic, which simply builds bigger traffic jams over time.

11. **Environment:** What local policies would you propose to locally address climate change and the environment? Do you think your city should be a zero-carbon city?

First of all San Jose must adopt a Climate Emergency Declaration as over 800 cities worldwide have done. The city must update its 2018 Climate Smart Plan to include all emissions (for example emissions from airplanes are not counted) and establish a set of programs to cut emissions by 50% by 2030. This requires reductions of about 5% every year which means that frequent reporting and effective oversight by residents must also be established. Bold programs must be established. I support transforming a large area of downtown San Jose into a car-free zone / pedestrian streets, as has been done in many large European cities with great success both for sustainability and for business. We must establish a moratorium on highway traffic capacity expansion projects, which are both

consuming huge amounts of taxpayer dollars but also permanently increase emission levels by increasing motor vehicle traffic volumes. I support converting some highways to greenways with no cars, but with paths for walking and bicycling, lanes for rapid bus service, and lush gardens and parks. Ban Cars First on Highway 87. In addition to *reducing* capacities of our highway networks, a vastly expanded public transit system is also critical to cutting emissions. With adequate funding levels, taking the bus or train for everyday trips can become commonplace in San Jose, and by following modern design principles, streets can be made non-lethal for people walking and bicycling. San Jose can and must vastly expand the amount of food produced locally and organically in community gardens citywide. Allowing the closure of Middlebrook Gardens at 76 Race Street is an example of exactly the wrong thing to do. Our buildings must also be re-designed to consume far less electricity for lighting, heating, cooling, and ventilation. Many technologies already exist to create a far more energy efficient city. Yes San Jose should be a zero-carbon city and will probably rely heavily on solar electricity production to do so.

12. **Budget:** If you were on Council, what decisions would you make differently from this year's budget? Do you think the city needs additional revenue, and if so, how would you generate it?

Absolutely the City of San Jose needs additional revenue. We underfund almost all of our public services compared with neighboring cities, which spend up to three times as much per resident on services. San Jose should raise our astoundingly-low tax rates on large corporations from the \$60 per employee per year assessed by the 2016 Measure G to something more like \$1,000 per employee per year. The city can raise new property taxes to pay for housing, transportation, education, and other programs – property taxes are paid by those who own land - our wealthiest residents.

13. **Youth:** What are your priorities and policies for youth in your city and how would you implement and finance them?

We must enable and empower our young residents rather than placing barriers to their success such as unliveably-low wages and unaffordable rents and health care. I support lowering the voting age to 16 years, raising the minimum wage to \$25/hour, and providing Universal Health Care to all San Jose residents. We must vastly expand the amount of housing available and especially smaller units and “affordable-by-design” apartments. The city's Youth Commission should be empowered to have a similar level of influence over decisions as is vested in the Planning Commission.

14. **Education:** How could your city improve education opportunities for its young people? What is your position on charter schools?

Lowering the voting age to 16 years so that students can participate in the election of their own School Board and City Council members is one critical reform. Our local schools are underfunded and understaffed, and improving funding levels is not only the responsibility of the various School Boards but also of the City of San Jose. The city can, for example, pass a tax on corporations to provide more funding to local schools. Privately-owned and governed schools should not receive public funding.

15. **Elections:** Would you support electoral and campaign finance reform? If so, what kind? How would you propose to improve civic participation in your city?

Yes I support a number of pro-democracy reforms for San Jose. The city's current structures and rules are actually designed to *discourage* civic participation and minimize the influence that residents have over public policy. Absolutely elections must be free and fair, which means they must be financed with taxpayer dollars while corporate donations are banned, the requirements to run for office must not be purposefully obfuscated and so difficult to decipher, and elections for the office vested with the most power – Mayor – must be rescheduled to occur during U.S. Presidential election years when voter turnout is up to 20% higher. City Council meetings and other city meetings should be scheduled for weekday evenings when the most people can attend rather than during weekday afternoons. The City Council must hear non-agendized public comment at the beginning rather than at the end of meetings. The city's civic culture must change dramatically – from one oriented on keeping people out to allow special interests to rule – to one truly grounded on the public's will and values.

16. **Access:** How do you propose to make yourself accessible and accountable to the residents of your city?

I propose hosting frequent and accessible Town Halls, modeled on those hosted by our local members of Congress. These allow residents an opportunity to ask any question and receive an answer from the council member or city staff right away. I would also implement a case tracking system to keep track of complaints and suggestions from the public, so that (ideally) every phone call and email comment would be recorded and addressed.

17. What is your position on payday lenders and marijuana dispensaries in your city?

All lenders operating in San Jose should be required to follow reasonable standards for interest rates and repayment terms. I support expanding the number of cannabis dispensaries to potentially hundreds, by simply reforming the city's current zoning restrictions that rule out over 95% of available retail locations. Denver, Portland, Seattle, and other large cities are benefitting from large legal cannabis industries, while San Jose is leaving valuable tax revenue in the pockets of unregulated street vendors of drugs and blocking cannabis-related jobs from existing legally but only permitting a total of 16 cannabis dispensaries city-wide.

18. **Anything Else?** Is there anything else you would like to share?

I have been and will continue lobbying the City of San Jose to address pollution of all kinds but especially air pollution. We know that highways, airports, and industrial facilities put harmful pollutants into the air but have little idea what level of harm is being done to public health because the city neglects to even study the issue. Air pollution is a silent killer disproportionately of people of color, due to the location of many apartment buildings right next to highways.

## Positions on Issues

**Please answer YES or NO for each statement.**

Do you support raising the minimum wage in your city? YES  NO  To what amount? \$25/hour

Do you support a restorative justice program in lieu of prosecution? YES  NO

- Do you support ending bail bonds? YES  NO
- Do you support participatory budgeting (citizen involvement in city budgeting)? YES  NO
- Would you support an elected rent board? YES  NO
- Do you support a civilian review board of your police department? YES  NO
- Will you support City divestment from fossil fuels? YES  NO
- Do you support funding projects to reduce the number of cars on the road? YES  NO
- Do you support Ranked Choice Voting? YES  NO
- Do you support Proportional Representation? YES  NO
- Do you support “amending the Constitution to make clear that corporations and other artificial entities do not have Constitutional rights and that money is not speech and campaign spending should be limited through regulation”? Pledge from MTA (<https://movetoamend.org/take-pledge-amend>) YES  NO
- Do you support free public education from pre-school through graduate studies? YES  NO
- Do you support legalization with a path to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S.? YES  NO
- Do you support marriage equality and the right of transgendered individuals to use the restroom of their choice? YES  NO
- Do you support the use of city funds to develop worker-owned cooperatives? YES  NO
- Do you support an ordinance or charter amendment to create a public bank for your city? YES  NO
- Do you support Medicare for all? YES  NO