* Name:Jessica Ho
* District: 4

Q2

Affordable Housing: How will you support infill development throughout the City along with affordability measures to keep residents in SF? How will you respond to pushback from your constituents regarding height and/or density? How will you support more compact walkable mixed-use neighborhoods as the City addresses its housing needs? (please limit your response to 250 words)

I believe that infill development and smart city planning is key to achieving more much-needed affordable housing, but I believe that the project must have community buy-in in order for the project to be successful. Many residents in the Sunset district have historically strongly opposed density and height. However, I also recognize there is a growing contingent of residents that are interested in more density and building in the fourth district. As Supervisor, I believe it is my responsibility to represent the desires of my residents, and I believe it is possible to respect both residents that choose not to develop and those that wish to see more density. For instance, I am a strong supporter of the affordable housing for teachers project on 43rd and Judah, and MidPen’s community engagement has been crucial in helping the neighborhood support this project. I also would be interested in finding opportunities for mixed-used neighborhoods along our transit corridors given that there are areas along Irving and Taraval where buildings have not reached the existing height limits. Similarly, I would support infill developments in other districts as long as the general sense from the surrounding neighborhood is also supportive, which I believe has been and can continue to be successful through robust community engagement.

Q3

Walkable and Bikeable Streets: How will you support safer streets? How will you help implement Vision Zero? How will you support walkable and bikeable streets in the City? Please include your thoughts about existing initiatives other than Vision Zero and what your response would be to opposition to better bike infrastructure in your neighborhood (such as traffic calming, bike lanes, bike and bike share docking stations?) (please limit your response to 250 words)

Safety is always my top priority, but any measures that SFMTA or the City takes to make streets safer must also take into consideration the impact on the surrounding community. For instance, the L-Taraval project was originally intended to increase safety, but our residents are being negatively impacted by the project through construction, loss of parking, and having to walk longer in between muni stops, which can be a huge burden for those who are disabled or have small children. The Sunset district has a high number of children, families, and seniors, and the Sunset district is one of the furthest districts from downtown, which requires many people to have cars in order to and from where they need to go. Transit first does not mean transit only for our residents as many residents get around by car, public transportation, biking, walking, and other forms of transportation. I am interested in working with all our residents to make these modes of transportation safer. For instance, we have many dedicated bike lanes in our district, but these bike lanes are not clearly demarcated and can be very dangerous. I would be also interested in exploring the possibility for a bike share docking station for those who would like to bike to and from their destination, among other measures to help implement Vision Zero.

Q4

Reliable, Fossil Free Public Transit: How will you close the MUNI funding gap identified in the Mayor’s Transportation 2030 Task Force? How will you help fund vital new BART cars and station improvements? How will you address opposition to transit lanes in your neighborhood? Will you recommit MUNI to its fossil free pledge and ensure our future procurements eliminate diesel from San Francisco's public transportation fleet? (please limit your response to 250 words)

I think that we should leverage the funding that Prop J and Regional Measure 3 will bring to the City to help generate revenue for transit to close the MUNI funding gap, and I think we should also look at a partnership with developers and other private companies in San Francisco to help pay to invest in MUNI. A strong public transit system is essential for employees to get to and from work. Currently, MUNI’s on-time performance is approximately 80 percent, which means that if someone relies entirely on public transportation to get to work, they will be late one day a week. This is unacceptable for a metropolis, world-class city such as San Francisco. For BART cars and station improvements, I would defer to the BART Board but would think that Regional Measure 3 should also help pay for new BART cars and station improvements. There may also be an opportunity for developers and businesses throughout the Bay Area to help pay for a better public transit system so that it would benefit their employees and patrons. Yes, I recommit MUNI to its fossil free pledge, and I would work to ensure that future procurements eliminate diesel from the public transportation fleet.

Q5

Energy Efficiency: What should the City do to encourage energy conservation by residents, businesses, and the City itself? Please include your thoughts on how the City can work, or continue to work, with homeowners and landlords to improve overall housing efficiency with efforts to upgrade windows, insulation, thermostats, fuse boxes, refrigerators, etc. (please limit your response to 250 words)

I think there should be a financial incentive to help low-income landlords and homeowners to improve housing efficiency with efforts to upgrade windows, insulation, thermostats, fuse boxes, refrigerators, etc. Many homeowners and landlords in District 4 are small property owners that own less than six properties and are struggling as is to pay all of the taxes and fees to the City. I think everyone can agree that we would like to conserve energy, but I also think that if we were to require many of these homeowners and landlords to pay for these improvements while not being able to recoup their costs anywhere else, I believe they would no longer be able to afford to live in San Francisco. That’s why I think that if the City were to require homeowners and landlords to do these renovations, we would help those who can not afford to do these renovations with financial assistance. For landlords and homeowners that can afford to make these renovations, however, I absolutely believe that we should require these entities to make sure that we are doing everything we can to conserve energy through renovations. This could be achieved through education and even fines if the renovations are not completed by a certain date.

Q6

Renewable Energy: What specific changes would you make to CleanPowerSF to expand residents’ awareness of the program, affordability, and environmental impact? (please limit your response to 250 words)

I think that the benefit of Community Choice Aggregation programs such as CleanPowerSF is that qualified residents are automatically enrolled into the program. While they do require residents to pay an exit fee, the price for CleanPowerSF at 43% renewable energy is less than what residents pay now and will pay off in the long-term. I think that the program could also improve its outreach by notifying everyone on their mailing list (and e-mailing list) about the 100% renewable energy option and provide important key facts about the program. Another thing that the program could do is outreach to community groups and attend their meetings to inform residents about this program. Another way is to encourage Supervisors, the Mayor, commissioners and community leaders to share the program through their networks.

Q7

Water Sustainability & Conservation: How will you ensure the City sustainably manages its water supply, wastewater, and stormwater runoff? How will you enhance the City's water resiliency and reduce its reliance on imported water through efficiency programs, recycling, distributed and green infrastructure, regional coordination, and/or stormwater management? (please limit your response to 250 words)

Supervisor Katy Tang has been a huge advocate of the Front Yard Ambassador Program, which encourages residents to beak up concrete in their front yards so that rainwater is better captured and does not flow into to the wastewater system and flood into the ocean. I think this is a program that needs to be expanded not only in our district but citywide. In regards to our water supply, I applaud the SFPUC’s efforts for blending groundwater from the Westwide Groundwater Basin aquifier to help provide a more reliable, local source of water in the event of droughts and emergencies. I think it is crucial that the City continues re-evaluating the integrity of the basins in which we store our water supply in the case of emergencies so that they will hold up in the case of a disaster, and I think that we should continue finding creative solutions to ensure that we have a supply of drinking water.

Q8

Zero Waste: What specific actions would you take to ensure the City meets its Zero Waste by 2020 goal? Have San Francisco’s recent steps to meet its goal, including banning styrofoam containers, some bottled water sales, and plastic bags (and potentially soon plastic straws) been successful? What’s next? (please limit your response to 250 words)

Supervisor Katy Tang has recently proposed an ordinance to ban the use of plastic straws and non-recyclable plastic items like coffee stirrers in San Francisco. Given that San Franciscans use 1 million plastic straws a day, I believe that this is a bold step forward in reducing waste in San Francisco. However, I know this is only one step in the effort to change the “throw away” culture. I hope that one day we will be able to change the culture of restaurants providing single use food-ware that is non bio-degradable, and I know that these are the steps that San Francisco needs to take in order to reach its Zero Waste by 2020 goal. Some cities have implemented a fee for persons who would like to use single-use food-ware, and I think this legislative proposal would at least start the conversation of changing the “throw-away’ culture in our City. With these steps – one day – I hope that we can be all be trained so that we will bring our own reusable food-ware to restaurants and reduce our environmental footprint.

Q9

Combating Climate Change: How would you update and implement San Francisco’s Climate Action Plan? How would you push City departments to meet their Climate Action Plan goals? Would you support divesting from fossil fuel investments? (please limit your response to 250 words)

Mayor Ed Lee created a robust and admirable plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and I applaud the City for being on track to reduce levels of greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. As 2020 approaches, however, I think it behooves us to look at new technology and plan even further to continue reducing our environmental footprint. Technology has advanced rapidly so that there are alternatives to diesel fuel for trucks, cars, and other vehicles, and I think the City should incentivize residents to also utilize these cleaner options for transportation. Further, I think the City should continue investing in clean public transportation options for residents so that residents do not have to rely on cars to get to and from where they need to go. As Supervisor, I hope to continue championing Supervisor Katy Tang’s efforts to promote electric vehicles among our City fleet and to eliminate diesel trucks on the streets of San Francisco.

Q10

Your Environmental Priorities: Why should the San Francisco League of Conservation Voters endorse you? What will your top environmental priorities be in office? If you are an officeholder, please highlight the environmental achievements you are proudest of. (please limit your response to 250 words)

I believe that the San Francisco League of Conversation Voters should endorse me because I would like to continue Supervisor Katy Tang’s legacy of advocating for environmentally friendly legislation in San Francisco. As Supervisor, I would not only want to continue to change the “throw-away” culture that Americans are so entrenched in, but also I would like to work with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to look at regional air quality issues and figure out where I can be effective in making our air cleaner and better for all San Franciscans. I believe that my State and Federal experience as well as my experience working on environmental, health, homelessness, and housing issues for Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn gives me a unique perspective in being able to solve these complex issues, and I look forward to working with the San Francisco League of Conservation Voters to help San Francisco become a leader on environmental, housing, and public transit issues.