* Name:Sonja Trauss
* District: 6

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)

Almost 80% of residentially zoned land in San Francisco is off-limits for affordable housing, because it is zoned for low density. I intend to change that by introducing an affordable housing overlay for the whole city. There is no neighborhood where affordable, multi-family housing is inappropriate, and our zoning should reflect that. Read more here: https://medium.com/@sonja\_21231/legalize-affordable-housing-everywhere-1fe3c284da9b In District 6, we have built 60% of the city’s new housing in the last 10 years, and 50% of the affordable housing. Districts 6 & 10 together built 80% of the city’s housing in both categories. I am proud of my district, and I welcome the future development that is planned in 6, however, this concentration of development in the Eastern part of San Francisco is not geographically equitable, nor is it sustainable in the long term. It is essential that neighborhoods in the rest of San Francisco also build new housing in the coming 10 years. Only a few years ago, calling for new housing on the West side would have been politically impossible, but now I believe we are at a moment where building there will be possible. The political conversation has changed because the need for housing has grown exceptionally dire. Due to the organizing work I and others have done, there is a vocal, ascendent constituency that is demanding that the City of San Francisco grow to accommodate its growing population by building dense, walkable, mixed use neighborhoods, all over the city. not only in D6.

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)

60% of SF’s housing was built in D6 in the last 10 years, but in much of D6, the built street environment is still oriented toward cars. We have to change this. I will make it my priority to widen sidewalks (at least 15’), have crosswalks painted at every intersection, increase space for bus, bike, scooter and human powered transportation generally and decrease space for private vehicles. I intend to institute timed lights, like the system in LA (https://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/02/us/to-fight-gridlock-los-angeles-synchronizes-every-red-light.html). Timed lights will enable us to slow traffic down - we can time lights so traffic moves at 20 mph or less, while also ensuring that drivers do not feel frustrated. I will also advocate for increased use of Leading Pedestrian Intervals to gives pedestrians a 3–7 second head start when entering an intersection with a corresponding green signal in the same direction of travel. We do not have enough LPIs in San Francisco. In the short term, I will prioritize enforcement of the “don’t block the box” rule. This will reduce gridlock. I will mitigate opposition to bike infrastructure by ensuring that stakeholders understand the overall vision for the district, and by accommodating business’ reasonable needs for loading zones and access to their curb cuts.

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 am thrilled that recent funding measures RR and RM3 passed to help pay for BART and MUNI needs. As a community organizer, I am aware of the power of well organized constituent groups. To overcome opposition to transit lanes, I will work closely with organizations like SF Transit Riders, the League of Conservation Voters, and local community groups that favor better bus service to make sure they know how to make their members’ voices heard at the MTA and at the Board of Supervisors. I am happy to recommit MUNI to its fossil free pledge. I think the MTA should study developing its surface parking lots as market rate housing, and other properties for other profitable uses. We should follow the examples set in Asian cities - where transit agencies actually make money, because of the way they develop the valuable land they own around their stations.

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)

For one - apartments and new construction are more energy efficient than single family detached homes and old construction, so allowing homeowners to tear down their own homes and build small apartment buildings will result in more energy efficiency. For existing buildings, I would like to explore ways the SF Department of the Environment could get tenants involved with increasing energy efficiency in their buildings. Because tenants typically pay for energy, residential landlords don’t currently have the proper incentives to improve their buildings to save energy.

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)

Clean Power SF is a very important program, and I think most San Franciscans don’t know very much about it, or why they should opt into the dark green, 100% renewable version. We definitely need to continue to spread the word. Increasing the number of subscribers is good for our climate goals, and increases the affordability of the program. In the long run, I’m excited about the prospect of creating a city-owned, clean energy alternative to PG&E. Since Prop A passed in June, we are one step closer to not having to rely on PG&E at all - Prop A could allow the city to borrow money to build our own grid. As a Supervisor, I would support this effort.

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)

I will work with SFPUC to diversify Water Supply Assets to increase resilience of our water delivery in the case of drought or natural and other disasters. We need to increase the San Francisco Groundwater Supply Project and build more wells around the Bay Area. Additionally, I will work for increasing awareness to existing city rebate programs such as the Laundry-to-Landscape (L2L) Graywater and expand access to rainwater harvesting. Furthermore, I will partner with local business and individuals to promote the “Adopt-a-Drain” program to help with storm drain clean-up – similar to “Adopt-a-Highway” – by promoting or highlighting businesses or individuals through street pole banners for taking ownership of specific storm drains.

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)

I am happy that San Francisco has successfully banned plastic straws. I will propose a ban on non-biodegradable single use plastics such as plasticware, cups, and lids at restaurants and events in the City serving food and drinks. San Francisco leads the nation in reducing waste. In 2014, the BOS restricted sale of water bottles smaller than 21 oz. on city property/during City government events and barred the use of public funds for the purchase of disposable water bottles. Plastics like those used in making disposable water bottles can take up to 1,000 years to decompose. We can accomplish Zero Waste. In 2012, SF already set a North American record for diverting 80% of waste from landfills, but over half of what still goes in the landfill bins can be recycled or composted. I will work with SF Environment on marketing campaigns to achieve our Zero Waste goal.

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)

Please reference Section 5 on housing, where I talk about how higher density housing is more sustainable per capita than single-family housing. Additionally, please refer to Section 6 on Renewable Energy for how I am planning to help San Francisco achieve our environmental goals as a City. I will ensure that the Geary and Van Ness BRT projects are completed by the anticipated 2021 completion date now that local and federal EIRs have been obtained. This will increase transit frequency and decrease car dependance for travelers on these two key corridors. I support divestment from fossil fuels. SFERS currently is only planning on partial divestment from fossil fuels - we can do more by following NYC’s example where the city is planning to fully divest its $189 billion pension plan from fossil fuels within the next 5 years. The SFERS Board voted in January 2018 to pursue a phased divestment of “riskiest dirtiest fossil fuel assets” in its portfolio - but not from all fossil fuel securities. SFERS invests over $24 billion and administers a defined benefit retirement plan for over 65,000 active and retired employees of the City and County of San Francisco and has already divested from coal companies in May 2017 - why stop there?

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)

The San Francisco League of Conservation voters should endorse me because I am the candidate that is going to be able to make the most impact on the built environment in San Francisco - increasing density, increasing walk & bikeability and reducing the need for cars. In 2014, while I was working as a high school math teacher, I started organizing pro-housing renters to advocate for policies that would create more housing in the Bay Area. I am proud of growing this movement to a 1500 member group in San Francisco, and encouraging other organizers to start similar pro-housing groups all over the state of CA. At the end of 2015, I founded a non-profit that enforces state housing law by suing localities in the Bay Area that refuse to build their state mandated Housing Needs Allocation. The website is here: www.carlaef.org. City council people and planning commissioners all over the Bay are learning they can’t ignore the state law. Before I founded this non-profit, there was no organization whose primary mission was to enforce the Regional Housing Needs Allocations in California. While litigating our first case against the City of Lafayette, where the City was trying to build 44 luxury single family homes instead of 315 moderate-income apartments, we discovered ways the Housing Accountability Act could be made stronger. So we wrote these into amendmendments and had them passed in 2017, as SB 167. I did all this as an ordinary citizen. Imagine what I could accomplish as Supervisor.