

Questionnaire for candidates for the office of
San Francisco Supervisor, District 10
General Election, November 2, 2010



Candidate/Campaign Information

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Anticipated budget: \$143,000
Funds raised to date: About \$80,000, including private contributions and public financing matches.
Percentage of donations under \$50: Excluding public financing, the campaign has raised roughly \$34,000 from 266 contributors. 140 donors, about half, are for \$50 or less.

Please write a brief response (fewer than 150 words) to each question.

1. Why are you running? Why should we vote for you?

San Francisco, and District 10, is at a critical juncture. We face chronic budget deficits, high unemployment, a shredded safety net, crime hotspots, and a decline in student achievement. Yet, District 10 is poised to become the home of a new City, which could usher in greater economic prosperity, increased equity, and growing tax revenues.

San Francisco, and District 10, needs a supervisor that has the skills, courage, patience, and wisdom to help lead the way through these complex challenges. I have a quarter-century experience working on public policy issues, at the local, state, and federal levels. I've repeatedly and successfully taken on large economic and institutional interests, including Babcock and Brown and Pacific Gas and Electric Company. I have a head for governance. But my heart is firmly rooted in the community, as is evidenced by my work with San Francisco Community Power and the *View*, among other things.

2. What sets you apart from your opponents?

I have a ten-year record of service throughout the district that goes beyond advocacy. Since 2001, SF Power has worked in Bayview-Hunters Point, Dogpatch, Potrero Hill, and Visitacion Valley, helping low-income families and small businesses reduce their energy and water consumption, with concomitant economic and environmental benefits. The nonprofit has trained and employed dozens of District 10 residents.

I'm also the candidate with the most skills and experience in public policy and governance on a wide array of issues, including affordable housing, child care, land use, energy, and tax policies. While I haven't been elected to office, I've been appointed to state and local committees or task forces; served as staff with the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB), U.S. Congress, and U.S. Treasury Department; analyzed hundreds of proposed policies on a wide range of topics; and teach in the public administration/policy programs at Mills College and SFSU.

3. Potrero Hill Democratic Club endorses fiscally responsible and socially progressive candidates. Please give examples of why you fit these criteria

My first job after graduating from the Institute of Public Policy Studies, University of Michigan, was as a budget examiner with U.S. OMB. That experience gave me a firm basis in public finance, and a keen understanding of the need for fiscal responsibility. More recently, I've served as a budget advisor for the U.S. Treasury Department, counseling the governments of Niger – one of the world's poorest countries – and Senegal about how to cost-effectively achieve their policy goals, which revolve around social and economic justice.

I've helped more than 20,000 small Bay Area businesses and low-income families in Southeast San Francisco conserve energy and water. There's no more fiscally responsible and socially progressive act than training and employing unemployed community members to help hard-pressed families and struggling neighborhood businesses cost-effectively reduce their utility bills, putting money in their pockets, while providing tangible environmental and health benefits

4. What are the top three issues facing San Francisco? What will you do about those issues?

Address the City's chronic budget deficit while enabling essential services to be delivered in a high-quality fashion. Budget cuts need to be done with a scalpel, rather than an ax. A systematic approach should be taken to examine key program goals, what outcomes are actually being achieved, and how performance can be improved through better coordination, management, and leveraging all available resources. Additional taxes need to be considered.

Nurture equitable, and environmentally and economically sustainable, prosperity in Southeast San Francisco. District 10 isn't the problem, it's the solution. Thoughtful, community-guided growth in the district can lead the way towards an environmentally and economically sustainable future.

Effectively support families and youth. The City needs to develop better information about which after-school and summer programs work, and which don't, and ensure geographic access to high-quality opportunities. Innovative public-private partnerships should be explored to support family-oriented open space and recreational opportunities.

5. What are the top three issues facing District 10? What will you do about those issues?

Jobs. There are multiple ways of spurring employment opportunities. Responsible development will create jobs as part of construction and the longer-term economic activity that's engendered. City-sponsored training programs should always be linked to financially sustainable employment opportunities.

Youth and children. City funding that supports children and youth should be well-coordinated to ensure maximum benefits. Muni, Parks and Recreation, after-school and child care programs should be managed as a web of support to make sure that this population receives the services it needs. City leaders should play a larger role in encouraging wealthy residents to help pay for these initiatives.

Ensuring safe and peaceful streets. Jobs and effective youth engagement will help create safer streets. In some blocks (e.g., near the Potrero Hill water tower site; in parts of Portola) better lighting is needed. Catalyzing thriving commercial districts and active pedestrian traffic will create a more enjoyable and peaceful environment.

6. Do you think the overall tax burden is shared equitably among businesses and individuals in San Francisco? If not, what changes in tax policy would you advocate to remedy any inequity and/or what would you do, if elected?

Burden is best measured by examining the range of taxes and fees assessed on businesses and individuals by all government levels. That said, I'm concerned that too much of SF's tax burden is placed on too few shoulders, and that the City's business tax system - specifically the payroll tax - allows larger entities to avoid paying their fair share.

A parcel or commercial rent tax would increase the number of businesses paying taxes. Reducing the payroll tax for employees making less than six figures, and collecting taxes from firms located outside San Francisco who are selling into the City, as well as companies that are commuting their employees out of San Francisco, could level the playing field for in-City businesses.

Proposition 13 creates extreme inequities for residents and businesses. While supervisors have a limited ability to address this state policy, I'd advocate for reform, including pursuing a split role.

7. How do you propose to address the needs of District 10 youth, in the face of drastic cuts to youth programs?

All of the City's youth-serving institutions – from the Academy of Science to the Zoo – should offer accessible, quality programs to needy teenagers and young adults. A case

management system should be established – a MyYouth counterpart to MyMuni – that matches youth with low- or no-cost opportunities, along with public transport support.

Young adults should be provided with educational opportunities that are linked with longer-term employment. There are multiple ways training, educational support, and open space dollars can be used to place youth on a productive path. Available funds could be directed to support a beach maintenance program at Warm Water Cove and other recreational areas. A refrigerator replacement and repair program oriented towards low-income families would provide a financially sustainable way of creating green jobs in the community. Such an approach would create a diversity of benefits, including safer, cleaner recreational areas, and putting youth on productive paths.

8. How do you envision bringing more jobs to all parts of District 10?

District 10 is where future employment growth in the City will occur, at Pier 70, the Shipyard, and Schlage Lock. In addition to ensuring that these developments are job rich, commercial activity needs to be encouraged on San Bruno Avenue, Third Street, Leland Avenue, and other retail corridors.

Throughout the district there's vacant storefronts and derelict lots. To encourage owners to rent or maintain their property, a one-time property tax credit could be offered for leasing space that's been empty for more than one year, or for making property improvements that produce public benefits (e.g., exterior house painting; landscaping). This would spur construction hiring and fill-in empty spaces in commercial districts. The City should remove the uncertainty in the permitting process that often precludes small businesses and property owners from playing a role in economic revitalization, and consider imposing a limit on the amount of time to approve certain permits.

9. Please give your views on Rebuild Potrero.

I'm delighted that after decades of isolating the needy in substandard "temporary" housing, breeding crime and reinforcing poverty, we're now working to make things right.

Financing remains a central concern. The proposed higher population density needs to be matched with necessary services – transportation, schools, and recreational and educational amenities – or it'll cause increased congestion and associated pollution, and disenfranchised families. State-of-the-art telecommunications and environmental infrastructure should be deployed. Utility infrastructure could be owned by the City or the community itself, and could include high-efficiency co-generation along with small scale wind and solar.

A careful eye must be kept on transiting residents to their new homes. There must be a clear pathway to pay the ongoing public amenities costs. The nightmare of recently planted recreational spaces becoming trash-choked, graffiti-filled, and vandalized, or steadily deteriorated building stock due to a lack of maintenance or poor construction, is all too easily conjured.

10. Please give your views on Lennar's plans for Candlestick/Hunters Point.

The only thing more toxic than parts of Hunters Point is the public dialogue about Lennar's plans. I'd have pursued a different strategy, including a larger set of developers working under a master plan, and a focus on securing anchor tenants, particularly job-generators and environmental organizations.

While it has its flaws, a conceptually acceptable plan has been created, including a robust community benefits agreement. Going forward careful attention needs to be paid to ensure that federal authorities properly address toxic issues; transportation and environmental issues are effectively managed; Lennar meets all of its obligations; and the community is engaged in constructively.

Plan changes prompted by the 49ers abandoning Candlestick Park, modifications to proposed transportation routes over Yosemite Slough, and potential financially-related factors need to be carefully monitored. A greater emphasis should be placed on creating long-term employment opportunities at newly available parcels, as opposed to more housing.

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with us.

