

Andrew Boone

San Jose City Council, District 6
Stagehand

Top 3 priorities citywide

1. Affordable Housing for Everyone – Expand Navigation Centers to serve all unhoused residents with housing and social services, reduce rents by building housing we can actually afford – and by building a lot of housing especially near public transit stations.
2. Safe and Affordable Transportation for Everyone – Eliminate all transit fares, establish world-class extensive, fast, and frequent bus and rail services throughout San Jose and beyond, re-design all public streets as Complete Streets safe and convenient for people of all ages and abilities using any mode of transportation including walking, skating, scootering, and cycling.
3. Prosperity for Everyone – Raise the Minimum Wage to \$25/hour, Rent Control with maximum annual rent increases of 1% with duplexes, triplexes, quadriplexes, and Accessory Dwelling Units included. Universal Health Care: Tax Corporations to provide high-quality health care to all San Jose residents. Climate Change – Slash Greenhouse Gas Emissions in San Jose: 50% by 2025, 80% by 2030.

1. Who is your Campaign Manager?

Myself

2. What is your Campaign Budget?

\$5,000

3. Please share your Top Ten Endorsements:

Monica Mallon

4. Would you support or oppose a 3 county ballot initiative for a permanent 1/8 cent sales tax to fund Caltrain?

Oppose

I do not and will not support any proposed sales tax for Caltrain. In fact I founded and direct the only existing opposition campaign dedicated to defeating this specific sales tax, called Vote NO Caltrain Sales Tax 2020 (nocaltraintax.org). The proposed tax is damaging for many reasons, most importantly because sales taxes are the most regressive tax we can possibly choose to fund better transit service. Sales taxes disproportionately burden our lowest-income residents, and are already over 9 percent in the Bay Area and could exceed 10 percent after the 2020 elections. Taxing large corporations and wealthy property owners instead is a far fairer and more economically productive policy, because it both frees up money for residents who will spend it immediately on the necessities of life and finances public services with funds from those whose operations will be least affected by a tax – the wealthy.

Another problem with the Caltrain Sales Tax is that it is only “necessary” because Caltrain/SamTrans/San Mateo County Transportation Authority continues to pursue a long-outdated and spectacularly-damaging policy of spending hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars annually on highway traffic capacity expansion projects. For example, 14 miles of Highway 101 in San Mateo County are now being widened from 8 to 10 lanes with new toll lanes for around \$600 million – the same amount as would be generated in six years by the proposed new Caltrain Sales Tax. The tax proposal provides zero reform of the agency's dysfunctional governance structure, in which only local elected officials are eligible to be appointed as members of the Boards of Directors, rather than being directly elected by voters and therefore accountable to residents. The lack of any democratic governance structure is exactly what allows Caltrain and other local transportation agencies including the Valley Transportation Agency to continue funneling billions of taxpayer dollars into highway expansion projects rather than better public transit against public will.

5. *Do you support funding to complete a valley to valley connection through high speed rail?*

Oppose

I do support California High Speed Rail in concept but do not support prioritizing this high-cost project above other more critically-needed transportation needs such as local bus service. High Speed Rail will serve only California's relatively wealthier residents, and will not be affordable for low-income residents to use regularly or at all. Our poorest neighbors cannot even afford to ride the bus across the city for \$2, let alone a super-fancy new train to the Central Valley for \$100. We need to fund local bus and rail services that expand work and education opportunities for many more people than the small segment of the population doing inter-regional mega-commutes, a type of commute that we should not be encouraging anyway. I support constructing California High Speed Rail after investing adequately in our local bus, rail, bicycling, walking, scooting, and other active transportation systems, and the immense \$70+ billion cost of the new rail system would go a very long way if spent instead on low-cost, high-benefit services such as buses and bicycles.

6. *Would you support a measure dedicated to build and operate a world class, seamless integrated transit system to better serve Bay Area residents, funded through a one cent sales tax, to better serve the transit dependent and those of us still in our cars?*

Oppose

I do not support and will continue to strongly and stridently oppose the proposed “Faster Bay Area” Mega Tax – a one percent sales tax hike for the entire San Francisco Bay Area that is by far the most damaging and ill-conceived of any transportation tax ever proposed for the region. In fact I founded and direct the only currently-existing opposition campaign to ensure this tax is not approved: Vote NO Mega Tax November 3, 2020 (nometagatx.org). This tax would entrench our home the beautiful Bay Area even further into dependence on automobiles, dysfunctional public transit, and continued high per-capita greenhouse gas emissions. Why? Because spending 20 to 30 percent of \$100 billion in estimated revenues on expanding highways for more rush-hour car traffic by building new highway interchanges and widening highways with new lanes – exactly what every recent transportation sales tax in the region (2014 Alameda

County Measure BB, 2016 Santa Clara County Measure B, 2018 San Mateo County Measure W, and 2018 Regional Measure 3) has done – will result in exactly that – more car traffic. Build it and they will come. Dedicating such high levels of funding (20 to 30 percent) to highway expansion means that public transit service is starved for funding by that same amount – possibly up to \$30 billion over 40 years in this case. Build transit service NOT highways!

I would support a tax measure that is NOT a sales tax dedicated to build and operate a world-class, seamless integrated transit system to better serve Bay Area residents. But I do not support taxes to build bigger traffic jams and mega-transit project boondoggles like extending BART from the San Jose Diridon Caltrain Station to the Santa Clara Caltrain Station, a segment already served by Caltrain and VTA buses 522 and 22! I especially do not support new taxes for which public opinion and input is simply ignored by corporate interests whose leaders foolishly seek to keep destroying nature by maximizing greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles and highway construction projects. This is insane and must end. The extinction of life on Planet Earth is now occurring faster than ever before with millions of species at risk of extinction including human beings due to catastrophic climate change - and it is exactly these transportation taxes that dump tens of billions of dollars into highway expansions that are a major cause. Expanding highways to place even more cars on them and on all our other streets instead of investing in an expansion of our public bus and rail transit services is one of the worst decisions we can possibly make in 2020. Vote NO Mega Tax for Highways by November 3, 2020!

7. Do you support Google's plans for the Diridon Station Area?

Oppose

I do support the development of vacant land in the Diridon Station Area with housing, businesses, parks, schools, public art, and more, especially on land immediately adjacent to the station and to SAP Center which is currently only being used as surface car parking lots. I do support the vision established by San Jose's 2014 Diridon Station Area Plan to provide enough jobs and housing to create a vibrant walking-oriented fun and beautiful urban community in which thousands of people can thrive without cars, as downtown San Jose already is just blocks to the east.

However, neither City of San Jose nor Google have considered our pleas to develop an adequate amount of housing along with the Diridon Googleplex to avoid pushing rents even higher and displacing thousands of city residents. The jobs-housing balance is WAY off with this project: 20,000 high-paying jobs and perhaps even 10,000 more not-so-well-paying-jobs but only 3,000 – 5,000 new housing units. Such a massive imbalance along with the exorbitant salaries paid by Google to its mostly male workforce is a powerful engine for the displacement of lower-income families, and as such should have been the first problem addressed with Google's project. Instead the San Jose City Council has turned a blind eye to the need for affordable housing development to be integrated in the Diridon Googleplex. I would consider supporting the Google project if the housing issues were addressed and Google agrees to hiring

union labor for the construction work and guaranteeing that the jobs created are also unionized from the beginning.

Another major risk of Google's Diridon development is that it could bring an even bigger glut of killer car traffic to downtown San Jose than we already suffer from. City of San Jose and especially SAP Center have poor records regarding land use development and street design policies and are not likely to support any truly transformational type of development strategy such as a "Car-Free Diridon Station Area" or "World-Class VTA Bus Service To and From the Diridon Station Area". The Diridon Station Area must be developed in such a way that reduces motor vehicle use and enables thousands of residents to live care-free and car-free lives. When and if Google's Diridon project achieves these aims, I will consider supporting it.

8. *Do you support any revenue generating vehicles (please be specific) to build more affordable homes?*

Support

I support all four of these taxes – real estate transfer tax, commercial-only parcel tax, general parcel tax, and vacant land tax – because they are paid by our relatively wealthiest residents, not our poorest residents. Only residents who own or are buying LAND would pay these taxes, so we are talking about people in far better financial situations than most residents who cannot even dream of ever owning real property in San Jose. The city council's discussion of these taxes on June 4, 2019 was productive and interesting.

9. *Are you in favor of a ballot measure that will prohibit campaign contributions from advocates for development and tie the San Jose Mayoral term to the Presidential Election Cycle?*

Support

Absolutely YES I am in favor of the proposed San Jose Fair Elections Initiative filed by a coalition of social justice groups including the Asian Law Alliance and Silicon Valley Rising and I will be actively campaigning door-to-door for the measure and collecting signatures for it. I have supported the reform to re-schedule future San Jose Mayoral elections to U.S. Presidential election years (2020, 2024...) since 2014, when it was clear that a gross miscarriage of democracy occurred with the election of Sam Liccardo as Mayor. The margin of victory was so narrow that Liccardo would not have gained this public office and its massive power had the election simply occurred in 2012 or 2016 instead, when more residents voted. This event made painfully clear how far from democracy we still remain in San Jose, simply due to outdated election rules intentionally written to keep political elites and corporate interests in power and block policies that truly serve the public interest from being enacted.

It is absurd to label labor unions as "special interests" that "negatively impact" elections and it's disappointing to continue seeing such sophomoric name-calling in our local public discourse. Labor unions represent workers and their families, negotiating with the owners of businesses in order to secure fair wages and working conditions. These are not a "special interest" - labor unions are in the general interest, the interest of everyone. What is not in the interest of everyone are the policies pushed by corporations and landowners – and these special interests

are much stronger when fewer people vote. Yes, Mayor Liccardo says holding elections for San Jose Mayor at the same time as U.S. President will “distract” from the Mayoral election and somehow negatively impact them. Sigh. Both data and simple observation prove the Mayor's assertion nonsensical. More people would vote for Mayor during U.S. Presidential elections than during the current mid-term elections. More people voting means more people are engaged and interested in the election, not fewer. Also during Presidential elections there is more discussion and interest in elections at all levels – including state and local – and there are advertisements on television, radio, newspapers, and online. It is simply a part of American political culture that interest in elections peaks during presidential election years. The proposed Fair Elections Initiative recognizes this and its passage is critical to San Jose's future.

10. Do you support requiring all new buses purchased with federal funds be zero-emission beginning on October 1, 2029 (which is California's deadline for transitioning all transit bus purchases to zero-emission buses)?

Support

Yes. In fact I support that only electric buses are purchased from now on starting in 2019 by local transportation agencies such as the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). Shanghai is already operating 100 percent electric buses for its public bus fleet – over 16,000 electric buses – there's no reason VTA can't purchase and operate just 500 electric buses. If they cost more just don't build highways and/or tax corporations. Problem solved.

11. Will you work with the Silicon Valley Leadership Group to secure additional funding to protect our region and help advance a common vision for a healthy and resilient SF Bay?

Support

I do not favor building ever-higher sea walls and levees to keep out the advancing seas as our only or primary strategy. Wetland restoration must be done first, as wetlands naturally provide a major defense to storm surges and rising seas. We must also enact sensible land use practices that include a gradual retreat from the San Francisco Bay and Pacific Ocean to higher elevations. In the simplest sense this means at least not building new commercial or residential buildings in areas next to the Bay that we know will experience ever-increasing flooding in coming decades and eventually will go under water permanently. Just don't build there. Build close to public transit stations which is what we should be doing anyway. Of even greater importance than how to protect ourselves from rising sea levels is slashing greenhouse gases to nearly zero as soon as physically possible so that the seas don't rise as much in the first place. Treat the cause not just the symptoms.

12. Do you support or oppose a proposed amendment to Proposition 13?

Support

Absolutely YES I support this Property 13 Amendment. Corporations have benefited excessively from this tax loophole for decades and caused irreparable damage especially to public education due to the resulting under-funding of all types of public services statewide. Reforming Property 13 is extremely important to California's future and I will work to inform as many voters as possible as I canvass during my own campaign for San Jose City Council.

13. If a public charter school's petition is approved to operate within your local school district, meaning their proposal meets key pupil outcomes as indicated by state law, would you approve the school's bid to rent or build facilities beyond those already owned by the district?

Oppose

Probably not. I do not understand the details of this proposal enough to make an informed decision. But since public charter schools are being promoted here by the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, they're probably a bad idea. Change my mind. What's wrong with traditional public schools again?

14. Tell us about a time when you were opposed to a position of one of your major supporters. What was the issue? How did you handle this situation?

Pass