

Transportation Questionnaire for Bay Area Candidates

March 5th, 2024 Primary Election

Name: Karen Mitchoff

Which office are you running for?: California State Assembly District 15

1. Which counties does the jurisdiction of the office cover?

Contra Costa

2. Which forms of transit and active transportation (bicycling, walking, scooters, wheelchair) do you use on a regular basis and for what types of trips-- and why?

I use an electric vehicle on a regular basis, mostly for errands and visiting friends

3. Would you seek additional funding for Bay Area transit and what form of funding do you think makes sense?

I do support add'l funding for Bay Area transit, but having served on the Contra Costa Transportation Authority and ABAG (MTC), I know the difficulties of raising funds through bridge tolls and rate hikes. I would support sustainable financing from the state as long as money is spent wisely and has transparency (BART has done a horrible job at transparency)

4. Public transit in the Bay Area is highly fragmented, with 27 transit agencies, each with different fares, schedules, branding, and customer information. Do you believe it should be a priority for the region to create a well-coordinated transit system? And as an elected leader or potential member of a local transit agency board, would you support state legislation that advances a more integrated, high ridership system, even if it diminishes local control?

I support consolidating transit agencies within each county as a first step. One big giant overarching transit agency for the entire Bay Area is not feasible at this time but could happen if the regional agency concept worked well and had outcomes that allowed for such a mega-agency

5. Transportation is the largest single source of carbon emissions in California, and in the Bay Area, and the largest share of transportation emissions come from single occupancy vehicles. What are your top priorities to achieve substantial reduction in transportation-related GHG emissions?

Transition to electric vehicles, transition away from fossil fuels, incentives for folks to use public transportation more often

6. The Bay Area still has road projects under development that would increase Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), greenhouse gas emissions, and air pollution. What decisions would you make about projects that increase VMT and pollution?

We won't be transitioning to all public transit or other forms of transportation that don't increase VMT and/or pollution tomorrow, but I have been involved at CCTA with doing the groundwork to get us there. We must continue the hard work of reducing the public's need for private vehicle ownership,

but, again, that's not happening tomorrow so we must continue with technology developments to incentivize the public away from their personal vehicle for daily use

7. Transit priority improvements are proven to make taking the bus faster and more reliable, while also reducing operating costs. Should local governments be able to stop transit priority improvements on local roads?

No

8. What do you think are the most important actions that can be taken to make public transit comfortable, accessible, and safe for all communities?

Consistent schedules, routes that deliver folks where they want/need to go, better access to transit (buses running more often)

9. Traffic violence and deaths in California are increasing annually; in 2021, 4,258 people died in vehicle crashes, a 10.7% increase from the prior year. If elected, what will you do to reverse the trend, increase street safety, save lives and reduce injuries in our community? What policies or specific projects would make the greatest impact?

Vision Zero policies are being implemented in Contra Costa County. I've seen the success of roundabouts and would like to see them more in use. Using telematics in cars to provide feedback to drivers about dangerous driving habits and/or conditions

10. What do you think are the biggest access and mobility needs for disadvantaged populations in your district, and how would you propose to solve them?

We have three transit agencies in Contra Costa providing bus service but they haven't been coordinated with schedules for folks needing their services until now. I made sure that Measure X dollars would go towards a implementing the transit study for the public to have better and seamless access to rides for everyday errands and tasks

11. In what circumstances do you support removing parking or repurposing vehicle travel lanes to create safer and more efficient bus, biking, and walking options? How do you propose balancing the demands of different interest groups who may disagree on how streets should be designed?

When people can't find places to park, they do so illegally or to the detriment of neighboring communities ... so doing away with parking at this time is not something I support; however, I do support providing few parking spaces at multi-family housing and educating folks moving in that there are not two spaces for every home unit. I will always be in favor of options that create safer and more efficient bus, biking and walking options as long as the data supports such conversion.

The "Transportation Questionnaire for Bay Area Candidates for Office" is sponsored by a coalition of partners- Transbay Coalition, SPUR, Seamless Bay Area, San Francisco Transit Riders, Silicon Valley Bike Coalition, and Bike East Bay to help educate the public on these important issues.

