

August 15th, 2016

Dear Candidate for Santa Cruz City Council,

Bike Santa Cruz County promotes bicycling through advocacy, education and community building. To allow our membership and the bicycling community at large to make informed decisions in the November election, we are distributing this questionnaire to you and your fellow candidates, and request that you respond by **Tuesday, September 6th** by email to [director@bikesantacruzcounty.org](mailto:director@bikesantacruzcounty.org). We sincerely thank you for taking time to respond.

The Bike Santa Cruz Steering Committee will determine our candidate endorsements based on responses to the questionnaires that we receive by the deadline. We may also consider other factors, such as voting records in office and achievements or community service that advance bicycling. We may endorse any number of candidates for any particular office, as our endorsement simply means that, in our opinion, a candidate will help improve conditions for people who ride bicycles.

Regardless of whether we endorse your candidacy, we will provide thousands of readers of our newsletter, website, online social media feeds, and membership emails with an analysis of your positions on transportation issues. We will publicize our endorsements through these channels as well as inform the press. If we endorse your candidacy, we will accept your campaign sign for display in our downtown office storefront window, and inform our members on how to help with your campaign.

**1. Do you currently ride a bicycle or use any other form of alternative transportation?**

I do. As a community organizer of education programs, my job requires I travel throughout the county most days. I also have two young children, so I feel like the wheels I mostly use these days are in the form of a stroller! My husband bikes to and from work everyday (he is a teacher). And we live in a walkable community, which allows us to ride or walk to most places we need to go. If I’m not working throughout the county, I prefer to bike or walk to and from locations.

**2. What specific accomplishments and qualifications demonstrate your capacity to improve the transportation system in your community/district?**

I feel that I have done all that I can to be professionally and personally qualified for this position. I work in education and have done so for over 10 years. In my position as Senior Community Organizer of numerous educational programs, I am able to apply my background in student services, community organizing, grant writing, government and health policy, strategic planning, program management, and data analysis to support the success of students and programs. In addition to directly overseeing support service programs, I act as the Educational Services community liaison through the participation and leadership of multiple collaborative partnerships. I work closely with our Regional Occupation Program, which includes several technical education courses on bike repair.

I have a B.A. from UCSC in Legal Studies, and a Master’s degree in Public Policy from CSUMB and the Leon and Sylvia Panetta Institute of Public Policy.

I’ve volunteered with organizations and efforts focusing on social justice for over 15 years, including the Digital NEST, Dominican Hospital, the Child Care Planning Council, ACLU, and the Commission for Prevention of Violence Against Women.

I will work to make sure our city is safe, healthy and sustainable for all of our children and community members.  I will enact policies that promote a healthy community.

**3. The City of Santa Cruz has stated Climate Action Plan goals that include doubling bike ridership, reducing car trips to elementary and secondary schools by 30%, and decreasing single occupancy vehicle use by 10% by 2020. How do you plan to lead the City in achieving those goals?**

Firstly, I want to applaud Santa Cruz as a leader in planning to mitigate the impact climate change through the development of the city’s Climate Action Plan. The city’s climate action plan can be updated and marketed to city residents. By raising this awareness, the city can build community support for strengthening and funding the activities set out in the climate change action plan. Furthermore, the city is positioned to seek federal resources (specifically those from FEMA) to strengthen efforts through fiscal support.

One of my goals is to bridge the city’s relationship with education. The city can, and should, partner with Santa Cruz City Schools develop safe routes to schools, to reach it’s goal in reducing car trips to elementary and secondary schools by 30%.

Another goal is support the implementation of the Rail-Trail and bike lanes across Santa Cruz to increase safe bike travel options for our residents.

**4. Planning is underway for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail, a multi-use path along the rail line from Davenport to Pajaro. If you support this trail, how will you get the remaining City of Santa Cruz segment, which runs between the Eastside of the San Lorenzo River and 17th Avenue, built in the next 4 years?**

I do support the trail! I believe planning and leadership will be what it takes to be able to get the City of Santa Cruz’s segment built. I will seek resources to support the effort and be an active leader to steward of the efforts.

**5. Do you support a train or other public transportation along the rail line as part of a rail with trail facility?**

I support Measure D, which includes a feasibility study of a train, prior to the removal of the tracks. If feasible, and environmentally efficient, I will analyze the policy options involved in supporting a train or another form of public transportation along the rail line.

**6. In many cases, adding new facilities for people on bikes requires parking removal. How would you balance the concerns of people on bikes with those of who oppose removal of parking spaces?**

This is the job. It requires community building and conversations so that both perspectives are heard. I will work toward developing a proposal that has community support.  Also, by marketing the idea of a new, safer biking option, it could be convincing for people to change lifestyles.

**7. Implementing innovative bike treatments like** [**protected bikeways**](http://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/cycle-tracks/one-way-protected-cycle-tracks/) **has been shown to dramatically increase bike ridership in cities across the U.S. Do you consider these facilities to be of value? If so, how would you propose to implement them in your district?**

Yes, I do consider these to be of value. I would propose them by presenting research on how this could positively improve our community and contribute to building a healthy Santa Cruz.

**8. Santa Cruz County is consistently ranked #1 or #2 in the state for cyclist injuries and fatalities. What steps would you take to improve safety for people on bikes?**

This is absolutely troubling. Developing safer streets for bikers will be a priority to me. I would begin by researching other communities that have successfully implemented pedestrian and bike safety action plans and would develop measurable goals and objectives to ensure we are continually monitoring our success.

**9. How do you plan to create new safe routes to schools in your district?**

Bike-pools are a great way for families to have healthier lifestyles as is extending Safe Routes to Schools to all of our schools. As a professional in education and someone who has been successful at bringing in revenue through grant funded efforts, I believe that I can be the bridge between education and the city of Santa Cruz to truly see movement with this effort.

**10. Do you support removing automobile traffic from Brookwood, so as to create a 2-way bicycle and pedestrian route to the Prospect Heights neighborhood?**

As someone who lives near Prospect Heights and has a child attending school in the area, I understand the question well. Before committing to supporting or opposing removing automobile traffic from Brookwood, I want to speak to neighbors and stakeholders to fully understand the impact of the policy option.

**11. How would you improve King Street for bicyclists?**

Similar to above, I would begin by focusing on consulting stakeholders and analyzing the bike safety issues. I would then establish a robust action plan that prioritizes bike safety - including creating signage to discourage wrong way bicycle riding and developing complete streets.

**12. What else would you like our members to know about you? Please include how your campaign can be contacted, such as your website, email, telephone, Facebook page, or other methods you want to share.**

I grew up in Santa Cruz County and my husband and I are now raising our two young daughters (1.5 and 6) here. I strive to be a person and leader of integrity - open-minded, collaborative, and reflective.

I aim to be a policy leader that analyzes and solves complex social problems in diverse environments by applying my experience, knowledge, and skills in public policy, social research, education administration, and community organizing.

I want to shift how we design policies from a band-aide approach that is often reactive to the latest symptom of a much deeper program. I want to be part of our cities foresight in designing policies that work to ensure our city is safe, economically vibrant and sustainable for all of our children and community members.

I am proud to have a broad and diverse list of supporters, from local elected officials, business leaders, to government, nonprofit, and health leaders in Santa Cruz. I am honored to have received the endorsements of SEIU and the Democratic Women’s Club.

My website: [www.martinewatkins.com](http://www.martinewatkins.com)

My campaign email address: [watkinsforcitycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:watkinsforcitycouncil@gmail.com)

My personal cell phone is: 334-0399/ campaign phone: 316-4727

Facebook page: Martine Watkins for Santa Cruz City Council

Feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your consideration!