



## 2015 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: Francisco Herrera

Candidate Race: Mayor

### PERSONAL WALKING EXPERIENCE

1. Please describe what role walking plays in your life.

**Walking, for me, is and has been a life saver, a nurturing experience, and a way of building community. When I worked in war-torn El Salvador and in San Francisco after the '89 earthquake, I found that walking was an excellent way to reduce stress and ward off illness. I now walk regularly as a way of reducing all the stress in my life; and, as an added bonus, as a way of getting some excellent exercise. Walking has also given me the opportunity encounter and meet people face to face, which is a great way to build community. A leisurely stroll through the city's many neighborhoods allows me to fully enjoy the beauty and diversity that is San Francisco..**

### BIG PICTURE

2. Describe your vision of a healthy, safe, equitable, and sustainable transportation system for the city and the role that walking plays in that vision.

**VISION: For the future of San Francisco, I see electric cars and electric buses that will be equitably funded by already existing taxes and fees. As mayor, I would place a high priority on keeping our streets clean, safe and in good condition. I would encourage street beautification projects and thus create incentives for people to enjoy being outdoors and enjoy the experience of walking in their communities. Additionally, affordable housing throughout the city will allow people to live close to - and walk to -where they work.**

### VISION ZERO

If elected, what steps would you take to ensure the implementation of Vision Zero projects? In your answer, please explain how you would address trade-offs that may result from building a

safe transportation system (e.g., the removal of parking in order to improve visibility of pedestrians at intersections, or the removal of vehicle lanes to slow traffic and shorten pedestrian crossing distances, etc.).

**3. “Bulb-Outs,” “sharrows” are good. Street beautification projects, in addition to making streets more ascetically appealing, also create a much safer walking experience for pedestrians and those who rely on public transit. For example, dedicated mid–street island bus stops make boarding and exiting buses much safer, as people step off and on an island rather than a traffic land. Furthermore, as mayor, I will make much needed improvements to MUNI such as making it cleaner, and more comfortable, affordable and reliable. This will provide people with the incentive they need to leave their cars at home. Policies like the Netherlands’ deep investigation of pedestrian fatalities and ways to avoid those deaths through adopting more pedestrian friendly legislation is another an important step I will take. I will do all I can to provide as much protection to pedestrians as possible, particularly the elderly who make up a large percentage of pedestrians killed each year. The central purpose of our policies will be to reduce the number of cars on our streets and drastically reduce their speed, which is the number one cause of pedestrian fatalities.**

4. What would you do to ensure there is enough funding for pedestrian safety improvements and Vision Zero projects?

More people have died in the last three years in pedestrian fatalities than in the previous three years. Muni is slower now than it was 100 years ago, when every 20 seconds there was a trolley picking people up at the Ferry Building. I would start by funding more community education regarding pedestrian safety and the need to slow traffic down in order for the larger community to become more sensitive to the need to fund these projects. I would also make sure all downtown businesses (ie Twitter) pay their fair share of taxes. I would charge the Google busses a larger fee than the dollar per stop they now pay. The budget is a political decision and my priorities would be to fund policies that save human life.

#### POLICY/LEGISLATION

The most dangerous transportation behavior in the city is speed, as it exponentially increases a victim’s risk of injury or death. Two key strategies that have effectively reduced speeds in other states and countries are automated speed cameras and decreased speed limits. Unfortunately, the State of California doesn’t permit automated speed enforcement and only allows speeds lower than 25 mph in school zones. Do you support these strategies? If so, how will you work with your community and State legislators to change these (and similar) laws so the City can use these strategies to save lives?

**Laws to limit traffic enforcement and prevent cities from reducing speed limits stem from a time when the car was seen as society's primary mode of transportation. Today, this view is not just**

**obsolete, it's fatal for the planet's future. Transportation in general, and cars in particular, are the City's number one source of Greenhouse gases. Just as the horse and buggy had its day, so the private auto must be superseded by sustainable forms of transit.**

**San Francisco's population is larger today than ever before in history, and it's going to get larger. It absolutely needs a first-rate public transit system not to be mired in permanent gridlock, but that is impossible if too many people own cars, park cars and drive cars. Period. Laws that forbid us to make laws like reducing speed limits and installing automatic speed enforcement result from the fear of alienating drivers, and the inability to see that a very different, and better, future is possible. Such laws will encourage people to do what needs to be done -- get out of their cars. We'd like to see Walk San Francisco join us in a Vision Positive -- not just zero fatalities (though certainly that) -- but a City where it's safe for kids and elderly to walk anywhere, a City that's not contributing to global warming by the (literally) millions of tons that its cars belch each year, a City that looks to the future not the past, a City we can be proud and happy to live in. We have a lobbyist and legislators in Sacramento We must be clear and decisive in the direction we give them and the pressure we apply state-wide and in collaboration with other municipalities to make needed changes possible.**

#### SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

5. Given the student assignment policy, 41% of San Francisco elementary school students live within walking distance of school. Unfortunately, only 25% take the short journey. Studies have shown that children who walk to school enjoy key health benefits and academic advantages, as well as getting more quality bonding time with parents. What would you do to increase the number of children walking and biking to school, and what would you do to increase safety around local schools?

I am one of those parents who enjoyed walking to school with my children during most of their elementary education period. Crossing guards, count down pedestrian signals, blinking or reflector cross walk lights all help, but too many cars on our streets is "the SUV in the living room." San Francisco needs to implement a policy at least as effective as those of Mexico city and Paris, which reduced traffic by 50% by issuing coded license plates in such a way that would only allow them to be used on alternating days of the week depending on that code. All else being equal, these policies would cut injuries and fatalities in half.

#### WALKABILITY/WALKING MODE INCREASE

6. The City has established a goal to steadily increase the percentage of all walking trips and walking trips for commuting in the next 5 years. Do you support this goal? If yes, what would you do to help the City realize it?

Given so many people have now been displaced from San Francisco, due to the run away speculative housing market practices, we have to work

regionally to bring down the cost of MUNI, SAM TRANS, BART, AC Transit and other public transportation services. Internally we have the ability to bring price of Muni to zero, as we have done for children and the elderly. We need living wage jobs and affordable housing so people who work in the city can live here and walk to work instead of having to drive to work from a far flung suburb.

7. Walk San Francisco believes that everyone deserves equal access to enjoyable places to walk. Walk SF is working with community groups and the City to install '[Intersection Murals](#)' that will advance this goal, as well as other Pavement to Parks projects that reclaim wide/dangerous intersections for public use (e.g., Persia Triangle). How important are these projects to you, and how will you support them?

When I walk I notice places where pedestrians don't have the right of way. Many friends of mine walk to work and can't cross certain intersections (ie market and Dolores) without going out of their way, which makes pedestrians second class citizens (ie. Going from the Panhandle into Golden Gate). We need to give priority to pedestrians in policy making and enforcement. I will support these projects by identifying funding sources for enforcement and popular education of the issue and bringing back working families to San Francisco.

#### OTHER EXPERIENCE

8. Have you championed or strongly supported any other initiatives that are in line with Walk San Francisco's mission of making walking in San Francisco safe, so that our community is healthier and livable?

My good friend Paul Nixon (RIP), got me very involved with protection of cyclists and pedestrians in his arduous campaign to get bicycle lanes, countdown pedestrian signals, support for Critical Mass, Sunday streets and the fight to extend the bicycle lane all the way down San Jose Avenue, among other efforts to make pedestrians safe in our own city. I will work to bring more lighting to pedestrian overpasses, many of which people avoid because of safety concerns.

9. Is there anything else you'd like to share with the people of San Francisco, all of whom walk or travel with an assistive device at some point?

Walking is not only a healthy activity, it improves life expectancy and the quality of life and community among us. Walking is ultimately a social justice issue as well. The majority of the world walks to work, to school, which is much more sustainable than our fossil fuel dependent practices. San Franciscans continually show regard for human development, may we nourish the political will to continue this tradition.