



BASIC INFORMATION

Name: Kim Alvarenga

Candidate for: San Francisco Board of Supervisors District 11

PERSONAL WALKING EXPERIENCE

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

We are all familiar with the many physical and mental health benefits of walking. San Francisco has a Transit First policy. This means giving priority to transit and balancing the use of our streets for pedestrians, bikes, and cars. Our streets are reaching capacity. The more cars on our streets, the worse becomes traffic and delays in transit service. Good access to reliable transit benefits neighborhood service shops and other amenities. I live at the door step of McLaren Park and walking in the park regularly with my 4 year old son is an important part of our recreational life. I want him to learn early in life, walking as a recreational and transportation life style. My job involves travel to all bay area counties and much of it is done by auto. However, whenever possible, I include walking during the day as much as possible, to get from one location to another. It is a time to reflect.

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.

Our federal and state governments are not fully funding San Francisco's transportation needs. They don't fully appreciate the importance of improving mobility and accessibility needed to keep San Francisco alive. Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in California. The state has taken steps to require cleaner fuels and vehicles, but land use patterns that lead to urban sprawl, high vehicle miles traveled and traffic congestion are leading causes of global warming. There is less need for cars where transit, bicycling, walking and other modes are viable alternatives.

Coming from many years of work in community based nonprofits, I am a strong advocate of coalitions collaborating and working together to promote a common good. Safe Routes to School is an excellent example of a coalition including your organization, the San Francisco Department of Public Health, San Francisco Unified School District, San Francisco MTA, Department of Environment, San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, Presidio YMCA Bike Program, and School District Office of Sustainability working with schools to encourage our children to walk and bicycle as a part of life.

We are seeing an increasing number of deaths involving pedestrians and bicyclists. If we really want to deal with these tragic loss of lives, we must take steps to make street safety improvements, traffic crime enforcement, and effective education for drivers, pedestrians, and

bicyclists. *WalkFirst, which as adopted in 2014, provided a roadmap of pedestrian safety projects and programs urgently need to reduce pedestrian injuries and fatalities. However, the latest report I heard, funding has again been delayed until next year. If I were elected to the Board of Supervisors, it would be one of my priorities to be a strong advocate for resources to carry out this plan*

VISION ZERO

3. If elected, what steps would you take to ensure the implementation of Vision Zero projects? In your answer, please explain whether you pledge to prioritize safety improvements that narrow crossing distances and slow traffic (bulbouts, “road diets,” etc.) over other competing demands for street space, including parking or automobile lanes.

As I explained above, transportation is the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in California. There is less need for cars where transit and other modes are viable alternatives. One of my budget priorities would be implementation of WalkFirst and providing safe, easily accessible public transit and making other modes of transportation a desirable mode of movement. The purpose of Vision Zero is to make improvements to make streets safer, educate on traffic safety, and enforce traffic laws so we will reach Zero. Narrowing crossing distances and mechanisms to slow traffic are an important part of making non auto use preferable.

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

Yes.

POLICY/LEGISLATION

5. 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?

If elected to the Board of Supervisors, I will work with our state legislative representatives to pass legislation and allocate funding to permit automated speed cameras. I would also work with state legislators to give local municipalities the ability to reduce speed limits in non school zones because there are streets/neighborhoods where the speed limit should be lower than 25mph. In 2007, state law permitted local municipalities to reduce speed limits near schools and most of the school zones in San Francisco have been reduced to 15 mph. I would work to reduce speed limits in all school zones.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

6. Approximately 41% of San Francisco elementary school students live within walking distance of school. Unfortunately, only 25% take the short journey by foot. 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 and safety of children walking and biking to school?

I support public education policy that considers racial/socio/economic balance in assignment of students to public schools. Providing school buses that make attending school easy and safe is a priority. Most of San Francisco families are working families and often family schedules are rushed in the morning. As I mentioned above, I am a strong supporter of Safe Routes ToSchool and commit to fund and expand as a program priority.

WALKABILITY/WALKING MODE INCREASE

7. 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?

Yes. We must fund and implement WalkFirst. My District 11 is a district of working class families. Many of the merchants having businesses on the merchant corridors are not thriving. One of the most desirable qualities of an area for merchants is "foot traffic". Promoting walking trips is not only for combating climate change, it is a necessity to help my district merchants draw people who will stop by their store when they are walking in the neighborhood.

8. Walk San Francisco believes that everyone deserves equal access to enjoyable places to walk, and that our street space can be better used by shifting excess street right-of-way from private automobiles to places for people to walk and gather. How do you feel about projects like these that improve our public realm, and how will you support them?

Yes. Please see my above answers.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

9. 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?

Whenever I have had the opportunity to speak at public hearings or meet with community organizations around transportation issues, I remind people of the importance of making improvements to our streets and roadways so that people would be encouraged to walk, bicycle, take public transit. It is a health issue and also a public safety issue in that as more people walk on the streets there is less likely to be criminal activity on the streets. In my District 11, certain commercial areas have a high frequency of drug dealing and other undesirable activity. I also am a big supporter of community policing so our public safety officers can know their neighborhoods and intervene if unusual behavior takes place. Aside from poor inaccessible public transit, one of the biggest discouragement of people getting out of their cars is fear of what will happen on the street.

10. 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?

I am bless that I do not need to travel with an assistive device. However, all of us have friends and family who have had the good fortune to live a long life but who have come to a point that they need a cane, wheelchair, or other equipment to get about. We don't want our friends and loved ones to be prisoners of their homes because our sidewalks and streets are not set up and safe to accomodate them. We must also educate people to be respectful of individuals with handicaps and whenever possible, provide personal consideration and assistance. We must provide the type of environment where a day outside, is a day of joy. A City where residents have the freedom and choice to get about out of the car, is a City which creates a sense of vibrancy and wholeness. It is our responsibility and duty to work towards that goal.