

**Please fill out the following:**

**Name:** John Avalos

**Neighborhood you live in:** The Excelsior (D11)

**Occupation:** District 11 Supervisor

**Questions**

**1. What is the worst thing about San Francisco, why? And what should be done about it?**

We need to reclaim our city from entrenched political interests. I want to govern in the sunshine, without backroom deals or political maneuvers. I will create a Municipal Bank of San Francisco to invest and leverage our tax dollars here, prioritize business loans to small businesses, and revitalize our local economy.

**2. What proposals do you have for creating job growth — and preventing job losses — in San Francisco?**

Last year I championed the nation's strongest local hiring measure to get San Franciscans in the building trades back to work on city-funding public works projects, and as Mayor I will expand this ordinance into all sectors. I will also collaborate with our education system to create educational programs that put our youth and our students directly into the green tech jobs of tomorrow.

**3. Do you believe that increased revenues are needed to balance the City Budget? If yes, what are the most equitable means to increasing revenues from:**

- Residents to pay for the various services needed in San Francisco?
- Workers who commute into San Francisco via private cars, car pools, or one of the transit options available (ferry, bus, Caltrain, BART)?
- Visitors who come to San Francisco for business or pleasure travel

As Mayor I'll pursue innovative solutions to our cashflow problems, and have already begun the charge with my Real Estate Transfer tax on high-end commercial buildings last year, which has already brought in \$50 million this year alone, and without which we could not have balanced the budget. I believe we need to eliminate the Payroll Business Tax, which only discourages job growth, with a revenue-generating Gross Receipts Tax, to level the playing field in favor of small businesses. I will do everything in my power to create new revenue streams for street traffic congestion and regulation and Muni. Muni must have the funds to function effectively, with an overhaul on the way we think about and budget for transit, I am optimistic we can solve these problems without further raising rates.

**4. Which City and County of San Francisco departments and/or services should be reduced, consolidated or eliminated and why?**

The top positions of the Police and Fire Departments, middle managers in city departments, top elected officials, and the general manager of the MTA are generally overpaid. The Fire and Police Departments are bloated at the top of the payscale, and we continue to pay millions in unnecessary overtime pay in these departments.

**5. What strategies do you have for encouraging San Francisco city departments to become “customer focused” and to work together as a single “City Family” instead of disparate fiefdoms?**

We have to refocus city services on truly serving the residents of this city versus those corporations, big businesses and other moneyed interests. City officials are far more willing to jump through hoops to make Twitter or America’s Cup happy than they are to fix our parks or pavements. A strong executive with a vision and commitment to serving all of our neighborhoods is what is needed to make government work for everyday people in this city.

**6. Do you support the need for taxing entities known as “Business Improvement Districts” or “Community Benefit Districts”, each covering their own microcosm within San Francisco, or do they perform services that taxpayers should expect to receive from the city government anyway? If you support such districts, what do you believe are the best uses for such taxing entities?**

Self-taxing districts work best when they are able to partner with city services to really maximize our resources. The city shouldn’t cut back on basic services simply because the community choose to tax themselves. Any services that these Districts elect to be taxed for should complement, not substitute, what the city already provides.

**7. How will you mitigate traffic congestion in downtown San Francisco to improve the safety, health, and welfare of pedestrians? Do you believe “pedestrian malls” would be feasible in some parts of the city?**

I absolutely believe pedestrian malls are feasible, and I believe it’s time to envision car-free Market Street and car-free Valencia Street. As an avid bicyclist, I can assure you that biking down Market Street is a dangerous and stressful experience. The potholes and uneven pavement, combined with the aggressive drivers, create an overall harrowing experience. To improve congestion and pedestrian and bicyclist safety, I will look into congestion pricing and creating a dedicated greenway for bikers in order to reduce the amount of drivers on Market.

**8. How should the City pay for substantial future changes in San Francisco transportation infrastructure?**

As Mayor, I will raise new revenue to increase funding for Muni, roads, bike and pedestrian projects by \$100 million. Possible sources include: Vehicle license fees, a carbon tax, congestion pricing, increasing the hotel tax or expanding Infrastructure Impact Fees citywide.

**9. Do you believe the continuation of the Patrol Special Police, for those communities that wish to hire them, impacts public safety positively, negatively or neither?**

Residents have the right to feel secure in the place where they work live and play; the city has the obligation to provide this security to its residents. While I do not have direct experience with the Patrol Special Police, I believe that any public safety force should have necessary training, experience, and accountability.

**10. What are your views on the San Francisco Fire Department's Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT)?**

The city needs a solid neighborhood based emergency response system. They're a wonderful resource for our neighborhoods and a great way to empower our citizens to be more responsible and active in our communities. It's a program I fight to restore in the Budget every year, and would love to figure out a way to get a more stable source of funding for it.

**11. Tens of thousands of new residential dwellings are planned to be built in the Rincon Hill/Transbay and Mission Bay neighborhoods over the next decade. What infrastructure investments need to be made now to ensure families who move into these areas do not ultimately feel forced to move to the suburbs to raise their kids or to care for their senior parents?**

We should be preserving and maintaining our parks and open spaces, and give greater partnership and support to our local schools; I believe one of the most important functions of government is to provide and maintain public, free access to open spaces.

**12. How could the City and County of San Francisco better retain families in San Francisco?**

Developing and building new affordable housing units will ensure families have adequate and affordable places to live. Additionally, the promotion and expansion of early childhood education and afterschool child care will encourage families to make their homes in San Francisco, as well as make it easier for families with young children to stay. As Mayor I will seek to secure and expand funding for these educational programs, as well as provide greater support to our schools.

**13. How does the City provide new recreational and open space needed by the additional residents moving into Supervisorial Districts 3 and 6 over the next 20 years as higher density residences are built?**

Every development should be maximized for open space but the waterfront also has great potential for expanding open space and recreation, not just for the neighborhoods close by but also citywide.

**14. There are more “Place of Entertainment” permits in the South of Market District than any other area of San Francisco. How will you manage the conflicts of residents who work 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the nightclubs that want to operate between 8 p.m. to 5 a.m.?**

Many families move to SOMA because of its proximity to transit, nightlife, and work. With any neighborhood in a small city, there is potential for conflict, and it's a businesses' responsibility to be a good neighbor and be respectful of their nearby residents. The city has a responsibility to undertake smart land use and development planning.

**15. Many believe San Francisco city government today operates under a corrupt “pay-to-play” system where a cartel of businesses, lobbyists, associations, and non-profits support particular politicians in exchange for favors that may not be in the best interests of most San Franciscans or the long-term fiscal health of the City. Do you believe this is true and, if so, what structural changes to city government would you recommend to remedy the situation?**

This is one of the reasons I'm running for Mayor, having witnessed how corporations and entrenched corporate interests hold sway over some of our politicians, who care about these business interests over our neighborhoods. As Mayor, I will increase transparency and accountability, whether it be for private or non-profit services, and aim to conduct government in the sunlight. The best counter to special interests is an active, engaged community that has the access and the power to open up City Hall to our neighborhoods and communities.

**16. How would you improve east-west connectivity of MUNI service in South of Market?**

I will make Muni a daily issue of my administration, and increase its funding. Past administrations have used the MTA as an ATM, with millions going to other departments instead of serving riders, and as Mayor I'll put a stop to unnecessary work-orders from the MTA to other departments, so that we can reduce overtime and provide riders with the service they deserve, fully fund and implement the TEP, and provide free passes for youth and students to make San Francisco a truly transit-first City.

**17. How should the City and County of San Francisco change rules or incentives to support the creation and success of small businesses? What can OEWD do to work with new communities or those lacking neighborhood services and small businesses to attract those businesses to those newly developed areas of SF?**

With the power of the purse strings, a Municipal Bank in San Francisco would enable us to use our own tax dollars to stimulate our local economy and to prioritize business loans to small local businesses. We should move away from a Payroll Tax, which discourages job growth, and move toward a Gross Receipts Tax. Additionally, successful

implementation of the expansion of Local Hire will ensure that the city contracts will hire local residents, who will then reinvest that money back into local businesses.

**18. What steps would you take to address the current epidemic of homelessness and panhandling on city streets, especially in the downtown area? Specifically, how would you treat mentally ill street people? How would you fund your plan? What is the best way to work with various advocacy groups who might stand in the way of your plan?**

I'll create programs to ensure early intervention to prevent homelessness; ensuring families don't lose their homes in the first place. The city has a Continuum of Care program, it's just not being implemented. If we adequately fund social services programs that focus on prevention, it will save us money in the long run. We can also improve communication channels between city departments and advocacy groups to increase the program's success and to make the most of our funds.

**19. What steps would you take to curb gang violence in the city?**

Fully support our schools and families, and fund afterschool programs to encourage an alternative to life on the streets, stop defunding Recreation and Parks. My Local Hire legislation is aimed at helping our youth and young adults get into apprenticeships and building trades, and provide them with the skills and opportunities to get them out of the cycle of life on the streets.

**20. What is your main motivation to be Mayor of San Francisco for the next 4 years? How will you gauge your success?**

I am running for Mayor of San Francisco to make San Francisco work for all of us, to turn the city around, and make it a beacon for the nation. We can show that economic recovery happens when we prioritize the needs of the middle-class and working people over the interests of big corporations. Under my administration, each department will have clear goals and methods for improvement, and I will ensure that there are direct channels for me to stay connected to the people and communities that elected me to office.

**Please return your candidate's completed questionnaire to [SBRMBNA@gmail.com](mailto:SBRMBNA@gmail.com) with the subject line: Mayoral Questionnaire - CANDIDATE NAME no later than Friday, October 14th at noon. Responses will be posted to [www.SBRMBNA.com](http://www.SBRMBNA.com) in the order they are received.**

**Thank you very much for providing your perspective on issues of great concern to residents of the South Beach, Rincon Hill, South Park, and Mission Bay neighborhoods.**

**Please stop by to visit with SoMa waterfront residents at Red's Java House at Pier 30 on Saturday, October 15th between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.**

**Best of luck!**