College Democrats at UCSC

Santa Cruz City Council Candidate Questionnaire

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| All questionnaires will be published publicly on the UCSCDems.com websiteMust be completed and submitted by August 30th, 2020Send completed, by email, to BlueSlugs@gmail.com |

1. **CANDIDATE IDENTIFICATION**
	* Elected Office You Seek: Santa Cruz City Council
	* Candidate Name: Martine Watkins
	* Occupation/Profession: Councilmember / Senior Community Organizer at the Santa Cruz County Office of Education
	* Email address (this is our preferred manner of communication unless you specify otherwise): watkinsforcitycouncil@gmail.com
	* Home/Office Phone: (831) 334-0399
	* Cell Phone: (831) 334-0399
	* Incumbent: X Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
	* Former campaigns for elected office, and their outcomes: N/A
	* Appointed offices currently/formerly appointed to:

For over 15 years, prior to being elected to City Council in 2016, I volunteered with organizations and efforts focusing on social justice, including the Digital NEST, Dominican Hospital Community Advisory Committee, the ACLU, and was appointed to the Santa Cruz Commission for Prevention of Violence Against Women. I currently serve on the Farmers Market Board, Childhood Advisory Council, and as an Executive Committee member for the Children's Network. I most recently joined the Board for the United Way of Santa Cruz County.

* + Organizations you are a member of:

I’m a member of the Children’s Network, the Childhood Advisory Council, United Way of Santa Cruz County, the Criminal Justice Council, and the Youth Violence Prevention Network.

1. **DEMOCRATIC AFFILIATION**
	* Approximate number of years as a registered Democrat? Over 20 years Santa Cruz County \_\_\_\_\_ Elsewhere
	* Describe your involvement with the Democratic Party at the Local, State or National level over the last few years.

I became a proud Democrat the day I turned 18 and could vote. The fundamental democratic value - that we're greater together than we are on our own - was instilled in me by my parents who have been lifelong Democrats. Democratic leaders have made extraordinary strides to ensure the betterment for all in our society - operating from that central democratic theme of social responsibility and recognizing that we must uplift our most marginalized population. It is this fundamental Democratic value that has guided my policy choices during my term as a Santa Cruz City Council member and as Mayor.

Being an elected official in the Trump years has only furthered my commitment to supporting the Democratic party and the importance of getting our country back on track. At this pivotal moment in history, all citizens and future generations need Democratic leadership. I’m committed to do all I can to support the Democratic party.

I have contributed to Democratic candidates by supporting and volunteering on campaigns for Ryan Coonerty, Zach Friend, Faris Sabbah, Michael Watkins, Jimmy Panetta and Donna Meyers, to name a few. My support includes attending fundraisers, walking precincts, doing literature drops, standing on busy street corners with signs, and calling prospective voters.

Locally, I am a Democratic Women’s Club member. I am also proud to be Congressman Jimmy Panetta’s California Democratic Party Delegate. In this capacity, I attend, vote and experience the thrill of the CA State Conventions.

1. **INFORMATIONAL QUESTIONS**

**General Questions**

1. What are your main campaign priorities?

My immediate priority is to ensure the health and safety of our residents. I will continue to work with our community partners to leverage resources and support our most vulnerable residents and businesses. I will work with Congressman Panetta and state elected officials, including Assemblymember Mark Stone, to continue to advocate for federal and state resources to come to smaller cities like Santa Cruz.

**Creating a healthy community:**

I want to use this pivotal moment in time to transform Santa Cruz towards a more equitable and resilient future for the families that live here and for the students who are here during their University time but also afterwards should they want to stay in Santa Cruz. I recoginze that shortages in housing, lack of competitive jobs, and pressures from covid and now the wildfires will make for some difficult years ahead for our community.

I’m running for reelection because I want to build on my experience to continue our vision to co-create long term solutions to make Santa Cruz as healthy, equitable, and sustainable a community as possible. I’m most proud of the timeliness of the Health in All Policies initiative which provides us with the foundation to implement systemic shifts toward health, equity and sustainability. Health in All Policies is an academic framework for policy makers; in reality it clarifies our role as a government that serves our community more equitably. For example, the City Human Resources department is including equity and implicit bias training for employees now as a result of HIAP. Another example is the City Manager’s office is training department heads and their staff to incorporate health, equity and sustainability in how the city communicates about the benefits and impacts of an action. I will continue to collaborate with our residents, workers, education, businesses and nonprofit stakeholders to find solutions that improve the public health and well being of our community for the short and long term. I am committed to finding solutions to affordable housing, climate change, racial justice, social mobility, houseless-ness, with a focus on preventive investments.

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1. What specific policy changes will you prioritize should you be elected?

**Supporting parents and childcare:**

I will build on my experience in education to help children and working families balance work and learning. Democrats have long acknowledged childcare as a crucial economic driver. Like so many parents balancing working from home and providing childcare and distance learning for our children, I know firsthand that childcare is the only way to fix the economy. I will passionately and persuasively integrate childcare into our recovery planning. I will advocate for allocating funding for workers and residents, whether through the Children’s fund or other revenues to support childcare, like building on our existing children’s fund as a resource. I am fully committed to prioritizing childcare and mobilizing the city to provide childcare for our essential workers, as we did when the first shelter in place was instituted. Working at the County Office of Education with Child Development Programs, I will bridge my experience in education and childcare, to leverage partners and support city workers. This includes connecting workers to the childcare resource and referral service so they can access qualified childcare options available to them.

**Resilient Santa Cruz:** Maintaining Santa Cruz’ resilience is a top priority. I will prioritize climate adaptation. The post pandemic recovery efforts will prepare the city for future climate change and other stressors. I will establish robust economic and post-Covid19 green recovery strategies through an equity lens. As we see more housing being built in our downtown, I’ll advocate to integrate childcare, open spaces, walkable communities, healthy food options, and safe multimodal transportation options. I believe climate solutions are health solutions.

**Economic recovery:** Santa Cruz needs leadership that is versed in working intentionally with State and Federal leaders,local businesses and the University. Some cities do this really well and we need to do it better in Santa Cruz. I will champion a post-Covid green economy, seek ways to create well-paying green jobs, continue to invest in clean air, clean water, and clean energy, affordable housing and establishing walkable communities, and emphasize innovation and infrastructure while uplifting those who’ve been left behind. And as we recover, we have to seek climate solutions as health solutions. I will work toward establishing more workforce development options to build a pipeline of skilled workers from our city, for our city. As a member of the Santa Cruz City Council COVID Recovery Subcommittee, I will be charting a course for assisting local businesses getting back on their feet but also attracting new jobs to Santa Cruz. I will work to make sure testing and tracking is available through partnerships with UCSC and the County. I will work alongside Congressman Jimmy Panetta to bring resources that, with a new president, will be available to local communities.

**Affordable Housing:** Santa Cruz is a desirable location with limited space for growth. Therefore, a myriad of policies must be explored to address the high cost of housing. I value a diverse population, and that requires multiple housing options. I favor building more affordable housing. As a member of the Housing Blueprint Subcommittee, we gathered community input to identify ways to preserve the affordable housing we have, create more affordable housing, and maintain community vitality. The specific policy recommendations include: community engagement to legalize unpermitted dwelling units; more accessory dwelling units online, prioritize more affordable housing Downtown, use parking policy and density bonuses to build more affordable housing, allocate resources to support tenants, and maintain existing affordable housing units. I will continue to advocate a limit to University growth.

Lastly, the shortage of affordable housing is impacting not only the poor, but also the working middle class. I specifically want to continue the work the city has started collaborating with large local employers (including, health and education) to address the need for workforce housing in Santa Cruz. Employer assisted housing is a way to provide workers with rental assistance or grants/loans for home purchase. As policy makers, we must be responsible and nimble. Given the vast number of people unemployed and struggling to pay their rents and mortgages, I support housing protection policies. I will continue to work with the City and State to assure that state and federal funds come to smaller cities like Santa Cruz, including emergency relief for affordable housing. I will continue to advocate drawing down state and federal resources to help our City navigate our financial challenges.

As leaders, our role is to use data, hear from the community, welcome and look for commonalities between diverse perspectives to make the best decisions for all citizens.

**Affordable Housing**

1. Scenario: As a council member, a housing development is being proposed that would create 100 new housing units. The development meets the minimum affordable housing requirement, but less than your desired number of affordable units.
	* Would you approve the housing development even if it does not meet your personal preference for the number of affordable units created? Please elaborate.

In most cases, yes, as long as we get community benefits from the housing development. There are also legal constraints and now State legislation that prohibits local cities from stopping development projects that meet certain standards so we have to be mindful of the legal costs associated with stopping a project because it doesn’t meet our personal preferences. The city is no longer able to build affordable housing directly in many cases but can require developers to the extent possible to meet our affordability goals.

1. What strategies and policies will you champion to increase affordable housing?

We live in a desirable location, with limited land use space, and are impacted by Silicon Valley and the University. We have to use a myriad of approaches to make inroads to housing affordability in Santa Cruz. As stated above, I will continue to build on the foundational policy recommendations that came out of the Housing Blueprint Subcommittee. The specific policy recommendations to increase affordable housing include: community engagement to legalize unpermitted dwelling units; more accessory dwelling units online, prioritize more affordable housing Downtown, use parking policy and density bonuses to build more affordable housing, allocate resources to support tenants, and maintain existing affordable housing units. I will continue to advocate a limit to University growth.

1. How will you balance approving new housing developments with maximizing affordable units?

It is a delicate balance between getting the most affordable units we can and still allowing development to occur. Like you, students and academics, I value data and information. I have learned this is a very polarizing topic, and we have to remember where we are so aligned in our values to seek inclusionary housing to maximize affordable units. For many years, our city’s leaders share the values to support inclusionary affordable housing, the differences of opinion are marginal and lie often within a 5% window of what that optimal amount could be. Our community needs us to seek areas of where we agree to move policy for the community given the best information we have. In order to do that we need to compromise (without compromising our values). We should use regular pro formas, feasibility studies and nexus studies to best understand the market changes, to get the best most optimum inclusionary percentage we can. This also includes how to leverage dollars from our affordable housing trust fund and partnerships with nonprofit developers to maximize affordability. Absent being able to fully subsidize the development, we cannot let good get in the way of perfect. We need housing and we cannot stop all development.

**Policing in Santa Cruz**

The College Democrats at UCSC has previously written in support of getting cops off UCSC’s campus as the COLA strikes occurred in the beginning of 2020. You can read our full statement at [UCSCDems.com](http://ucscdems.com). After UCSC’s Black Student Union released demands to the UCSC Administration, the College Democrats at UCSC voted unanimously in support. Their demands included abolishing the UC Police Department at UCSC.

1. Do you support or oppose reducing the Santa Cruz Police Department’s budget and redistributing the funds to other city services?

 Check one: Support (I support this conceptually) Oppose

* + If yes, how much of a budget reduction and what departments would you prioritize in receiving increased funding?

Frankly, all budgets, including the police budget, will be reduced due to the economic recession associated with Covid. In regards to public safety, my approach to policy making is to make as informed, inclusive and comprehensive policies decisions as I can. I’m all for criminal justice reform. We’ve had an ineffective system rooted in racism that has systematically led to mass incarceration and generational trauma for black and brown people. You can reduce funding in one department one year and then a crisis can occur or leadership changes and the funding can be restored by a different council. I’m interested in true systemic shifts and the Covid-19 pandemic is a chance to focus that attention on what can—and should—be changed, including changing our criminal justice system and approaches to policing.

Our criminal justice system is ineffective and has historically oppressed, criminalized and marginalized Black people. And the solution can’t be oversimplified. Truth and reconciliation and reparations have been swept under the rug, and our history of systemic injustice has been allowed to fester. It has now re-surfaced. Not to minimize the power of this course of action in some jurisdictions, the solution is more complex. True healing requires systemic shifts in education, health, and criminal justice systems, including ongoing training in unconscious bias and thorough a more complete teaching of Black history as integral to our country’s history. Last, we must invest in our Black children and families to break the cycle of poverty and oppression.

* + If no, what other reforms would you like to see enacted in the Santa Cruz Police Department?
1. What specific changes would you like to see enacted for the Santa Cruz Police Department?

The SCPD has engaged the Black community to review their policing practices, budgets, and policies and hear from the Black residents their experience with law enforcement. This could range from reviewing officers' performances to partnering with mentoring programs to support Black youth.

Given my experience working with key justice and community partners to implement diversion and justice programs, I am committed to prioritizing building and expanding coalitions to resolve racial injustice in Santa Cruz County. I will apply my experience in diversion and prevention for an holistic approach to public safety. A safe and healthy community is one where people trust and have reliable access to government services.

 During the Health in All Policies listening tour, community members told us that to feel safe, they must be valued and have access to resources. We must focus on equity and have law enforcement officers receive training in unconscious bias, the history of systemic racism, and thoroughly screen new recruits for prejudice. I am also committed to continuous improvement, transparency, listening to the community, and having public safety include investments in preventive programs and appropriate social services.

1. Do you support or oppose abolishing the Santa Cruz Police Department, in a way similar to Minneapolis? **Please elaborate.**

 Check one: Support \_\_\_\_\_\_ Oppose X

Certainly, some communities need to rebuild their police department from the ground up. I hope that the outcome of the Minneapolis decision results in the outcomes we’ve learned from the Camden, New Jersey experience in which they dismantled their corrupt racism and violent police force and rebuilt their police department from the ground up.

Like most people, I believe police practices should undergo significant reform. For Santa Cruz, I don’t see the solution to dismantling racism and violence as the abolition of SCPD. We have to start where we are and improve practices. This is the same SCPD that has one of the most progressive chiefs in the state. Our sheriff has embraced 21st century policing and our probation division is known nationally for embracing restorative practices and diversion programming. can improve programs, practices, training, and other tools for improving policing and public safety, but to completely dismantle them at this time. I am all for criminal justice reforms. As for funding reallocations, this needs to be evaluated and informed by data. I support solutions to systemic racism, black oppression and police brutality and I support investments in black communities and given black police brutality and the legacy of racism. I do think there is some opportunity to remove certain responsibilities from the Police Department and shift them to other agencies. Of course, part of such a shift is to move the funds that support the function to the new agency.

1. What do you envision for the future of our justice system?

I envision our society reexamining public safety and holistically look to build safe and healthy communities (invest upstream) as opposed to putting all our resources into the justice system after crimes have occurred. This is essentially looking at the social determinants of health. What makes for a healthy community where people can thrive and how do we build those communities? How do we build communities where people are healthy and cared for as opposed to treating health conditions after they arise. This is the same perspective I have when I think of our justice system.

**COVID-19 Pandemic**

1. Do you support or oppose extending the eviction moratorium until the COVID-19 pandemic has ended? **Please elaborate.**

 Check one: Support X Oppose \_\_\_\_\_\_

This is also complicated in that we have to holistically understand how to support our renters from being evicted due to the impacts of Covid. We also need to work with our financial institutions so that we aren’t displacing renters and penalizing property owners in order to insure that those most severely impacted by the economic impacts of the pandemic aren’t forced into houselessness.

1. Do you support or oppose erasing compounded rent debt accumulated through the COVID-19 pandemic? **Please elaborate.**

 Check one: Support X Oppose \_\_\_\_\_\_

When considering rent relief, a landlord also needs to assess its financial obligations and cash reserves. Some landlords may be able to grant temporary concessions, others may struggle to meet their mortgage and other obligations as a result of a substantial reduction in rent payments. Landlords and lenders must prioritize temporary relief in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and allow for mortgage forbearance on the condition that they suspend evictions for renters unable to pay rent due to the impact of COVID-19.

I support solutions to compounded rent debt while also being mindful of legal constraints and the potential for a domino effect for those who rely on rents to maintain their mortgages. We can continue to partner with nonprofits and support renters by providing emergency rental relief for those who need it. We need to work with our State and Federal representatives to bring resources to our smaller cities to provide relief and support state legislation to protect renters. We must prioritize assistance for our most vulnerable renters. We have enacted such protections/policies and will increase the budget for those programs as needed. We must keep tenants in place now.

1. Do you support or oppose canceling rent during the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic? **Please elaborate.**

 Check one: Support \_\_\_\_\_\_ Oppose \_X

We can’t universally cancel rent during the pandemic but holistically find solutions to support those needing support as outlined above.

1. What specific COVID relief policies/packages to students are you in support of?

We can work closely with the University to leverage resources to support students specifically. Holistically, our responsibility is to serve all residents with support including students, low income residents, hospitality employees and families struggling to live here.

1. What policies and assistance do you support to expand our healthcare capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic?

As many as possible. We must prioritize people’s health, especially our most vulnerable. We can work with nonprofit entities that provide assistance and direct clinic and healthcare. Principally, I’m for universal health care, medicare for all, and any way that tangibly leads us toward expanding essential healthcare for all people. I am also willing to listen to union members who’ve negotiated and fought hard for their medical benefits as we navigate federal legislation as I know this has been a point of contention. I support Medicare for All, but understand that the fight for that has to happen after the Nov. 3 election. In the meantime, I do support Biden’s public option approach as an improvement and step in the right direction. Polls indicate that Medicare for All is not supported by the people Biden needs to support him in the swing states if he is going to beat Trump in November.

1. How will you support community needs during the COVID-19 pandemic and prevent budget austerity?

As policy makers, we have to be responsible and nimble. Given the vast number of people unemployed and struggling to pay their rents and mortgages, I support housing protection policies. I will continue to work with the City and State to assertively assure that state and federal funds come to smaller cities like Santa Cruz, including emergency relief to affordable housing. As a community organizer, I will build on my relationships and work with local partners to leverage their services, while protecting public health and supporting State and County directives, to help local businesses reopen safely, restore jobs and assist them with resources for those employees laid off or furloughed.

**Homelessness**

1. What specific policy changes will you pursue to protect unhoused folks, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Homeless is everything. It’s poverty, systemic inequities, it’s mental health and substance abuse, it’s cyclical and generational, it’s temporary and lasting. We must not oversimplify our response to homelessness. The homeless I see in my role as a Community Organizer are often invisible faces of homelessness. Children and families struggling to find housing and living in doubled/tripled up households There are systemic approaches to improving people's lives to stop the pattern of folks headed toward homelessness and there are immediate responses to various homeless populations.

There are also immediate ways to manage homelessness including hygiene resources, homeward bound programs to return those who need support to their communities of origin and networks of resources. To expand our partnerships with the county and the recovery, mental health and other services.

1. How will you work towards eliminating homelessness in Santa Cruz? What are previous examples of supporting our unhoused population?

We have an opportunity to transform our approach to homeless. We saw this trajectory underway in our response to homelessness when Covid began. Setting up shelters and services to ensure the health of our homeless populations was cared for. We must keep this momentum going. We now have the compounding impact of those left displaced and unhoused because of the CZU lightning complex fire. This is an opportunity for us to meet people’s needs where they are, to identify solutions and systemically shift our approach to housing those in need.

1. Scenario: As a council member, there is a proposal to designate an overnight parking location for unhoused folks living in their vehicles. The location is close to a school and near residential zones, but does not violate any regulations. Some local residents meet with you and oppose the designation.
	* What do you tell them?

This depends on how the program is managed and vehicles are selected. This scenario is already happening in partnership with schools and churches/faith institutions in various areas around the City and County. Essentially the County Office of Education identifies families living in their vehicles and works with the association of faith communities to find a safe sleeping space for them with anonymity. Children have a right to attend their schools of origin and allowing families to shelter near their schools is critical. More so we must prioritize families and homeless foster youth so that we can interrupt the trajectory of homelssness and care for our children.

* + Would you support or oppose the designation? What other factors might you consider? Please elaborate.

Please see above.

1. Do you support or oppose a housing-first approach to address homelessness? **Please elaborate.**

 Check one: Support X Oppose \_\_\_\_\_\_

We know housing first is a evidenced based best practice. To the extent we can, we must prioritize a housing first approach. The challenge is that we have a shortage of housing here and that impacts all populations. We have to be realistic that we cannot house all people in Santa Cruz but we can help them get on their feet and find success in life.

**UCSC-Centered Issues**

The College Democrats at UCSC has previously heard from a County representative regarding the potential negative impacts of UCSC’s Long-Range Development Plan on the Santa Cruz community and housing. The plan includes preparing to increase enrollment up to 28,000 students by 2040.

1. Do you support or oppose UCSC’s long-range development plan (LRDP)?

This is still in development. I, like most Santa Cruzians, support limiting UCSC growth.

* + If you do not, what actions or strategy would you take as a city council member to prevent the growth?

We are advocating to limit UCSC growth and with the County support have a shared position to advocate for city impacts associated with growth. It is likely that the University will be looking at their resources and approach post-COVID as well. We can also advocate that growth can also include remote learning. Furthermore, emission limits could inform and constrain what could move forward. The CEQA process continues to provide that engagement process for the City to pursue with the University and is a strong process.

1. If city council elections must transition to district elections, how would you redistrict the UCSC campus? What considerations will you take into account in preparing for this possible future?

It would be premature for me to determine this prior to having a demographer and community input prior to making designations. This must be an inclusive and informed process that is transparent. There will need to be outside consultants to help guide this process to ensure transparency.

**Social Justice**

1. What policies will you fight for in order to achieve greater racial justice in Santa Cruz? This issue spans across many issues we have asked about before, so we hope your answer is deep and nuanced as well.

I am bi-racial. I have overseen restorative justice programs. Championed banning flavored tobacco and menthol cigarettes in Santa Cruz. I’ve enacted systems change policies such as Health in All Policies. And I’ve dedicated my entire professional life to these causes. I am about actionable solutions and have proven that I don’t just say I care about these causes I actually produce policies that illustrate how I can impact health equity for black people and those marginalized in Santa cruz.

I’ve already begun working with our police department, chief and members of the black community to seek policies and programs to reverse past injustices within the law enforcement professions and ways to improve policing so it is informed, officers are trained and services provided are aimed to repair past harms. I don’t think this proposal deals with the reality of the City of Santa Cruz and its public safety situation. We don’t have correctional officers unions in our city and given the public stances of our Police Chief and our POA on criminal justice and police reform, I would not refuse to accept donations from such organizations. Of course I would work with them to make sure that they continue to support the kind of reform all communities need in the public safety operations and training.

1. What policy changes do you support that directly help transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming folks in Santa Cruz? How will you ensure your campaign is inclusive of transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming folks?

Using gender neutral language and ensuring we have non-binary bathrooms available. Allowing for nonbinary designations. Using nonbinary best practices and including training for human resources on nonbinary designations. Practicing ally-ship and ways to create an inclusive environment.

Furthermore, promoting, refining and enforcing the City of Santa Cruz maintains and promotes a working environment free from discrimination and harassment; and provides all current and prospective employees with equal opportunity in employment regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, disability, medical condition, sex, gender, physical characteristics, marital status, age, sexual orientation, organizational affiliation or veteran status.

The City is committed to take action against any harasser which will end the discriminating or harassing conduct. The City Manager fully accepts and supports the City’s commitment to prevent discrimination and harassment as a means to assure full equal employment opportunity (EEO) for all employees. The Equal Employment Opportunity Committee (EEOC) acts in an advisory capacity to the City Council in all matters EEO and is responsible for serving as a communication channel between City employees, the community, the City Manager and the EEO Coordinator on any EEO activities and concerns.

1. What policies will you pursue locally to protect our climate? What work have you been involved with previously to protect our environment?

I feel I have proven to be an effective policy maker. I’m committed to leading with pragmatic yet robust approaches to embedding climate change and resilience into every aspect of our city’s policies. The Health in All Policies Framework is a great start. I will build on that as a foundation and champion climate change policies. I will vote to invest in climate solutions and work to bring in outside funding through grants. I believe the best policies are created together. I will unite and collaborate with all members of the community. As a member of the recovery team, I have brought in our Climate Action Manager to the committee so that everything we do is informed through a lens of climate resilience. My vision is a green economy and the creation of the most climate resilient city possible. This cannot be ideological or a zero sum game. This has to be pragmatic and bold. I feel I have proven to be a leader that is both pragmatic, transparent, seeks community input and able to achieve results.

The City has made progress as emissions reductions internally and we need to expand that more broadly to our community. I believe we will have a shift in how people think about work and where that can happen. Our carbon footprint is linked to our employment centers - the University, south county, the outer westside and mid county near Dominican and Sutter. We have to work towards getting people closer to where they work through providing safe commute options.

If most of our emissions come from transportation then making Santa Cruz a place where you can live, work, play and age is also critical. Our recent downtown amendment allows for more housing in our downtown so that people aren’t having to drive into and out of Santa Cruz for work. I am committed to supporting and expanding our TDM, with biking and walking becoming increasingly more favorable for commuters, how can we improve safer places to do this? I will explore these opportunities.

We must continue to invest in clean air, clean water, and clean energy, like the city’s conversion to Monterey Bay Community Power. We must continue to invest in more solar projects and solar distribution for our city infrastructure. We still need to do more. We can continue to update our aging vehicles with electric vehicles and I will encourage METRO to expand its electric bus fleet as well.

As we move forward with recovery everything we do has to be to make Santa Cruz as resilient as a community as possible. We can see climate solutions as health solutions. Through economic development we can work to envision a green economy that is aimed toward creating good-paying green jobs. We can update our planning policies like the recent electrification policy to ensure we’re building green buildings. I’d like to encourage more passive housing being built.

Everything we do has to be climate resilience informed and as we recover from covid and the recent fire, we must use data, emphasizing innovation and green infrastructure while uplifting those who’ve been left behind and involving the community in all aspects of decision making.

*Martine Watkins* August 30, 2020

Candidate Name Date