Santa Cruz YIMBY is a grass roots organization of people who want to see more housing built in their communities. We believe that creating more housing creates more opportunity to drive less and walk more. We believe that more housing means more competitive pricing and that we might be able to afford to own a home. We believe that building housing near jobs in our community creates a truly sustainable community.

Santa Cruz YIMBY Candidate Questionnaire – State Senate 17th District

Maria Cadenas

1. Do you support SB 50 as it is currently written?
   
   Yes ☒  No ☐

   If no, how would you modify it for you to support it?

   If yes, are there improvements you would suggest?

   after close review and consideration of changes to SB50, I would like to update my response to support. There is still a lot of room to enhance and strengthen the bill to fight displacement and the volume of affordable housing. This includes additional funding to support the community engagement aspects of the bill. I believe on balance this is a bill that helps address housing and that the additional two years provide more time for local input. My commitment will be work with our district, especially communities at risk of gentrification and displacement to ensure that they have the support they need.

2. What do you think the state government’s role should be in addressing the housing crisis?

   The State can provide much needed accountability and clarity on development and housing element plans for local jurisdictions. The state can also provide tenant protections and funding and support for affordable development and first time homebuyer programs.

3. What do you think the legislative and administrative response of cities in the district should be to the passage of SB 330, The Housing Accountability Act,
which prohibits a local agency from making housing development projects for low- and moderate-income as well as emergency shelter too onerous to build?

SB 330 provides much needed clarity and a streamlined process for zone and housing plan alignment.

4. **Area job growth has far surpassed home creation in recent decades resulting in lack of affordability for groups ranging from teachers to service workers to students, lengthening commuting times, and homelessness.**

   **What is your analysis of the problem?**

   Current job growth is in certain areas and industries, most outside our immediate district that also contributes to traffic and an increased carbon footprint. Not to mention the added pressure to local workers such as teachers and nonprofit workers to find affordable housing. We have look at the way we are determining our housing/job balance to look at housing “fit” in our planning efforts.

   **What is the appropriate role for the state in addressing it?**

   The state can and should provide guidelines and clarity on housing element components and work to clarify housing fit as a key way to determine and oversee housing needs at local levels

5. **Although there is a shortfall of housing at all income levels, the shortfall has been particularly stark in extremely low (ELI) and low income (LI) categories. In our current Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) cycle, how can cities be supported in meeting their ELI/LI RHNA targets?**

   The state can provide additional funding, beyond SB1 and SB2 to help with local efforts, and provide strong accountability for compliance.

6. **Do you view current levels of ELI/LI production as acceptable? If not, how would you propose helping cities achieve RHNA goals for BMR (Below Market Rate) housing? Please address both (a) funding sources (b) siting (particularly in areas with high land costs) in your response.**

   ELI/LI production levels need to increase, and cities need additional funding resources to achieve RHNA goals.

7. **Governor Newsom has stated that he would like to see 3.5 million new housing units built by 2025. How many homes would you like to see approved/built during your term?**

   I support the governors goal for housing, in so far we look at housing fit and affordable housing mix.
8. Many cities in California have a long history of discriminatory housing policy targeting low-income residents and people of color, from redlining to minimum lot sizes to single-family-only home zoning designed for exclusion. What do you believe needs to be done locally and at the state level to specifically remedy these injustices and preserve (or enhance) our socioeconomic diversity?

The issue of inequities in policy must be addressed by creating policy that takes into consideration the lived experiences of low-income households, including people of color. This is not limited to housing. However, as housing policy and implemented, ensuring appropriate tenant, renter protections, support for low-income communities so they are not disproportionately carrying the density push, and possible tax changes to provide renter credits are tools that should be explored. These are addition to zone and density rules.

9. What changes to transportation policy and investment do you think are necessary to support housing growth? How would you connect transportation and land use planning?

As we move to fit the needed housing development, we should consider the impact on climate through the creation of increased density and walkable communities near workplaces.

10. Would you support a large regional transit funding ballot measure? What projects, conditions or policies would you want to see with such a measure? Would you support requirements to ensure regional coordination in planning, delivering, and operating public transportation?

Our district is large and relatively rural, with most of the land falling in unincorporated areas. Any transit measure should consider how rural communities would implement a viable transit plan that will be quite different than our urban neighbors. Nonetheless, there needs to be investment in public transit that aligns and works with workers and families.

11. Do you believe Prop 13 needs to be reformed? If so, how would you propose to do so?

Prop 13 should be reformed to only cover residential properties and small businesses.

12. What is our moral obligation, if any, to addressing the housing crisis?

Housing is a human right.