



**Mark Leno**

**1. Do you support YIMBY Action’s ballot measure to streamline zoning-compliant affordable and teacher housing in San Francisco?**

I support streamlining approvals for affordable housing projects as these types of units must be built and available as efficiently as possible. With SB35 taking effect this year, new streamlined approvals for affordable housing projects will be a helpful leg up to avoid bureaucratic delays and potential environmental and discretionary review appeals. I was encouraged to see such wide consensus on SB35’s benefit for affordable housing projects. There may be need to clarify that the provisions of the measure would not allow for absolute diminution of commission authority.

**2. Do you support State Senator Scott Wiener’s new transit-oriented housing bill, SB 827? Be specific about any amendments you think it needs.**

I have been watching the responses to Senator Weiner's new proposed SB 827 bill with interest. Its basic premise—to incentivize increases in density for transit-oriented development—is straightforward and I agree with that entirely. The devil of course will be in the details. I agree with concerns about risks of resident displacement in lower income communities and the lack of affordable housing required for new development enabled by the upzoning. It is my understanding that Senator Wiener is aware of these concerns and plans to address these issues as the bill moves through the legislative process. It is also important for me to think about how state bills like this work at the ground level. As Mayor I will need to consider the factors at a local level, not just assume upzoning and development incentive policies work the same everywhere. I was a state legislator for many years, and I know the caution about one-size-fits-all policies from the state capitol that can play out very differently in communities across the state and even in neighborhoods within one city.

**3. How many units of housing do you believe San Francisco should add over the next 10 years? Do you plan to continue Mayor Ed Lee’s commitment to add 5,000 units per year?**

I do support an ambitious housing production goal, which I believe must also include an ambitious affordable housing production goal. The City Planning Department released 2016 data which indicates that while the City did see 5,000 new housing units, only 16% was for low-income and middle-income households. We can and must do better, if we are to achieve a sustainable goal of 5,000 units of housing per year for the next 10 years. San Francisco is in an era of rapid growth and we must take action to meet the demands for housing that is truly affordable. As our population grows, we need to be vigilant about anticipating and taking action to address all changes in infrastructural demands and capacity to ensure our city remains accessible to both current and new residents alike. Undertaking this delicate balance of competing needs can only move forward if we maintain an open dialogue with various stakeholders, have strong and bold leadership, and don’t settle for status quo solutions.

**4. How do you think inclusionary housing percentages should be calculated in San Francisco? Be specific about how you think about the costs and benefits of this policy.**

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YIMBY Action advocates for affordable and market-rate housing to address our housing crisis and bring down the cost of housing in San Francisco and the Bay Area.



I authored San Francisco's first Inclusionary Housing Ordinance in 2002, which has resulted in a significant portion of the City's overall annual affordable housing unit production. I think all market rate developers should be required to build integrated mixed-income communities. The amount of inclusionary housing required should be based on capturing some of the value from profitable development in this City. There are now quite sophisticated analyses that are done to bear out that value and how much affordable can be asked for in return.

The City Controller released findings last year that indicated land values in San Francisco jumped by 350% in just five years. There is a lot of potential for development value to be captured and tied back in to affordable housing. It is to our advantage that San Francisco has a very strong real estate economy and our Inclusionary policy has been able to set a high bar while still being financially feasible for development investment. I think that is the kind of win-win policy we should always be aiming for.

**5. Do you support market-rate home construction in your district? What do you think the construction of market-rate housing accomplishes?**

I support building market-rate housing, when we harness its power to provide for mixed-income communities, especially for the city's middle income residents who are being squeezed out. Market rate housing will continue to be developed, and as always the pace will rise and dip with real estate cycles. As Mayor I want to make sure that low-income and middle-income housing is keeping up at the same pace. I believe that good housing policy, and the leadership it takes to deliver results, is when all needs are being met equitably. The Planning Department data shows a real discrepancy in the types of housing that is being created across the city. There has been a disproportionate amount of market rate housing built over the last several years, which plays a critical role in our economy and affects overall housing production. However, the slow pace of affordable housing production for 70% of San Franciscans cannot continue crawling at its existing slow rate while simultaneously thousands of market rate units are being created.

Correcting that imbalance is a priority to get this City on the right track, and as Mayor I intend to take a "both/and" approach to market and affordable housing.

**6. If market-rate projects are opposed in your district, how will you interact with developers and project opponents to reach a deal?**

I have a proven record of working with various stakeholders across our city and state to find common ground and create the best possible solutions to make our housing more affordable and neighborhoods more livable. For example, in creating the City's first Inclusionary Housing policy, I worked with developers, community activists, and affordable housing advocates for two years to achieve consensus. During my years in the State capitol, I was proud to author over 160 bills, and learned that a willingness to listen and respect difference of opinion is key in developing policy. As Mayor, if there is a development project impacting vulnerable communities in gentrifying neighborhoods or a project may displace vital community services, those are valid concerns that I



will want to see resolved by including those stakeholders in negotiating the best feasible and reasonable project for their neighborhood.

**7. Do you support upzoning in San Francisco, particularly on the westside and in single-family-home-only neighborhoods? Where would you push for upzoning, and how?**

Yes I do support upzoning and the concept of transit-oriented-development. When I was a Supervisor the Market-Octavia Plan was underway, and before that the Octavia Boulevard Plan. All of that planning for future development was predicated on upzoning and infill, especially along the commercial and transportation corridors. I followed last year's process for HomeSF closely and believe that policy has effectively upzoned sites along many corridors on the west side of the City.

Going forward for further upzoning of neighborhoods, I think the approach should be to plan for each district, working with residents, along with developers, planners, and affordable housing experts to set housing goals and create implementable development and infrastructure plans. I also think the citywide ADU legislation passed last year unanimously by the Board of Supervisors provides a good template for upzoning single-family neighborhoods with minimal impact and actually results in new middle-income housing.

**8. How would you interact with supervisors who do not want housing in their district?**

With the housing crisis facing our city, I think it would be difficult to identify a supervisor that does not want housing in their district. The challenging part is to move forward and develop the plans, policies, and programs to get housing to actually be created in all districts across the City. As Mayor I will focus on working with supervisors from all eleven districts to meet the needs of each neighborhood in our very diverse city.

**9. Do you support a by-right process for zoning-compliant housing developments in San Francisco, including market-rate housing? If not, be specific about how you would expedite housing construction in the city.**

I recently heard that a Planning Commission briefing revealed the City has about 38,000 approved units right now, and that number has been growing over these last few years. It seems that housing approvals is not the problem in San Francisco, though it may be in other places. There are efficiencies that can and should be created, such as setting clear timelines for Planning Department reviews and improving coordination with other departments that have a role in reviewing projects. I support the process improvement mandates that Mayor Lee announced to get agencies, procedures and processes to be more efficient. I also think our City needs to be more assertive about expectations that approved projects actually get built, and built quickly. Last year I followed with interest the growing discussion about setting time limits on project entitlements -- in other words, a use-it-or-lose-it policy that requires construction to begin within a limited period of time when development projects receive any kind of public benefit such as streamlining or upzoning, etc. This could potentially be an important streamlining reform as are reforms to the approvals process itself.



I believe we should also develop innovative construction methods, such as union-built modular construction, that could reduce costs by as much as 20% and more importantly the time to get units on the ground, by building a factory on public land right here in the City.

**10. How do you think San Francisco can work with the rest of the Bay Area to address regional housing needs?**

San Francisco is undergoing dramatic change and we must embrace the reality that as our population increases, so do the strains not only on our housing needs, but on the capacity of our transit systems as well. We must seriously commit to working with our regional partners in a much greater way to develop smart, sustainable regional planning that addresses both job growth and housing costs and needs in a comprehensive way, and unlock opportunities to streamline regional infrastructure demands and projects. I believe in creating affordability of housing across all income levels, not just a lot of housing regardless of its affordability. As Mayor that's where I think San Francisco can play a real leadership role in the region.