SILVAR Legislative Committee
Candidate Questionnaire

This questionnaire is being sent to candidates for local public office. The information will be used by the Silicon Valley Association of REALTORS® Legislative Committee (SILVAR LC) to make a determination regarding support of candidates. SILVAR LC reserves the right to use this material including, but not limited to, publishing responses. The information will remain on file at the Silicon Valley Association of REALTORS®, 19400 Stevens Creek Blvd. #100 Cupertino CA 95014.

Please complete this questionnaire and return by 5 p.m. 9/1/2016 to:

Silicon Valley Association of REALTORS®
Government Affairs Director
19400 Stevens Creek Blvd., #100
Cupertino, CA 95014
FAX: 408-200-0101 - jepstein@silvar.org

Candidate Information

Name Lucas Ramirez

Office Sought Mountain View City Council

Address P.O. Box 390211, Mountain View, CA 94039

Day Phone [redacted] Evening Phone [redacted]

Fax N/A Email Lucas@RamirezforCouncil.com

Website www.RamirezforCouncil.com Occupation Digital Product Manager

Campaign Information

Campaign Committee Name Ramirez for Council 2016

FPPC#1384620 Treasurer Emily Ramos

Address (no P.O. Box) [redacted] Mountain View, CA 94040

Phone [redacted] Fax_____

Chair/Consultant_____n/a_____ Campaign Budget $24,000

Campaign Contribution Limits in your City (if applicable) N/A

Maximum Contribution you will accept N/A - I have reached my fundraising goal.

Candidate Questions

1. Why do you want to run for office and what are your goals if you win? What are the biggest challenges facing your city?

The biggest challenges facing Mountain View are the crisis in housing affordability and severe traffic congestion. I am running to promote smart growth policies and jobs/housing balance, which are both long-term solutions to these challenges. I also want to work to increase the confidence and trust of the public in government by ensuring that residents have access to timely information and ample opportunity to provide input on crucial issues.

2. What organizations/individuals are supporting your candidacy?

Jerry Hill, California State Senator
Jim Beall, California State Senator
Bob Wieckowski, California State Senator
Joe Simitian, Santa Clara County Supervisor
Paul Fong, California State Assembly (Ret.)
Mike Kasperzak, Mountain View City Councilmember
Gary Kremen, Santa Clara Valley Water District Board of Directors
Julia E. Miller, El Camino Healthcare District Board of Directors

Additional endorsements on the website:
https://www.ramirezforcouncil.com/endorsements

3. Many local municipalities are looking for ways to increase revenue.
    a. What types of taxes, if any, would you support increasing?
    b. Would you support a transfer tax on the sale of residential property?
    c. Do you think the taxes on the sale of real property, homes and businesses, are too high, just right, or too low?

I would support increasing the transient occupancy tax (including extending the TOT to short-term rentals provided through services like Airbnb) and the housing impact fee on commercial development/commercial linkage fees. Mountain View already has a transfer (conveyance) tax. There does not appear to be a need to increase the tax on the sale of real property.

4. Cities are looking at different ways to fund and develop below market rate housing:

a. Do you support the use of impact fees on construction of: (i) residential rental; (ii) residential ownership; (iii) commercial?
b. If your city already has impact fees, are they too low, the right amount, or too high?
c. Beyond impact fees, how would you fund and/or develop below market rate housing in your community?

I support impact fees on all types of development. Mountain View already has impact fees on both commercial and residential development. Since there is a strong nexus between new commercial development and the demand for housing, I would support increasing the impact fee on commercial development. I will support Measure A to provide a regional source of funding for BMR housing that can be leveraged with municipal, state, and federal funding sources. I also support density bonuses, inclusionary zoning, public/private partnerships, and developing affordable housing on public land.

5. Some cities in this region have rent control (also called rent stabilization) and just cause eviction.
    a. What requirements should there be on a landlord prior to terminating a lease/evicting a tenant? Do you support a "just cause" eviction ordinance, and if so, how do you define that?
    b. Do you support rent control/rent stabilization with vacancy decontrol? If so, what amount would you permit a landlord to raise the rents per year and why?
    c. For both rent control and just cause eviction, what do you believe is the smallest number of units a parcel should have for it to apply – single family homes, duplexes, three unit buildings, four unit buildings, or larger?

Landlords should comply with state noticing requirements and other requirements currently enforced under state and municipal law. I would support a "just cause" eviction ordinance that would allow a landlord to evict a tenant for criminal activity, nuisance, failure to pay rent, or violation of a lease. (The ordinance also would allow landlords to exit the rental housing market, "go out of business," or move into a vacated unit.)

I support rent stabilization with vacancy decontrol and fair cost pass-throughs. I think rent increases tied to the San Francisco Area CPI, with minimums and maximums to protect landlords and tenants from abnormally low or high inflation rates, are reasonable. Single family homes and duplexes should be exempt. I would support exempting triplexes in which the property owner lived in one of the units.

6. How much housing to build is a major issue of debate in our community:
    a. Is the city currently zoning for too much housing, not enough or just right?

b. If you think the city needs more housing, how do you balance the need for more housing with preservation of existing neighborhoods?
c. Do you have any strong preferences about where housing should go and where it should not?

The city is not currently zoned for enough housing. I support rezoning the primarily/exclusively commercial areas of the city, notably North Bayshore and East Whisman, to allow for mixed-use development with high-density housing. In areas near existing neighborhoods, I support strategies to appropriately integrate new housing, including setbacks, step-backs, building articulation, and incremental density. I would not support developing open space or building housing in environmentally sensitive areas.

7. Should a city's General Plan or Specific Plans be strictly followed, or should city councils grant variances if developers agree to conditions the city finds favorable?

Since neither the General Plan nor Precise Plans can reasonably anticipate every possible circumstance in which alterations would be desirable, I think it is appropriate to grant variances when the conditions are favorable to the city.

8. Should a city have any laws that require a homeowner to take actions prior to the city allowing the sale of the home? Examples of these point-of-sale requirements are requiring the performance of an environmental audit of the home or conducting a sewer lateral inspection and replacement. These laws only apply to homes being sold and do not apply to all homes, like the requirement to have a smoke detector or a strapped water heater.

Point-of-sale requirements may be well-intentioned, but they are not effective in achieving the desired result, and they can disrupt the sale of the property if they are burdensome and costly. If appropriate and reasonable, such requirements should be applied to all homes, not only those to be sold. For more substantial requirements, the city should consider implementing programs to assist homeowners in making upgrades or conducting environmental audits.

9. What are your thoughts regarding mandatory historic preservation requirements for residential homeowners? How should decisions on what qualifies as historic be made?

Excluding properties of true historical significance, I am generally not supportive of mandatory historic preservation requirements. Before such requirements are imposed, the property would have to be recognized by an authoritative body, such as the Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission, and formally designated as a historic structure in the city's Register of Historic Resources.

10. Should there be more or fewer restrictions on homeowners as they renovate or expand their homes?

In general, I favor fewer restrictions on homeowners who renovate or expand their homes. Burdensome requirements may result in illegal/unpermitted alterations or discourage improvements from being made altogether. Any requirements imposed must be reasonable, and there must be some nexus between the requirement and the improvement being made by the homeowner.

11. In what situations would you support using the power of eminent domain in your city? Do you have a broad or narrow definition of "public benefit"?

I would support eminent domain only if it is essential to complete a major public works project that would benefit the city. The BART extension to Silicon Valley, for instance, has required the use of eminent domain, and I think it is appropriate given the regional benefit that that project will provide. My definition of "public benefit" is fairly narrow. Such benefits will vary depending on context, but in all cases should be reasonable and proportional.

12. Do you support the reasonable placement of open house signs on public property?

Yes - if the placement is temporary, and if it does not obstruct any kind of traffic or in any way interfere with the affairs of the city, then I have no problem with open house signs being placed on public property.

13. Have you ever held any previous elected or appointed offices or served on any civic committees or commissions? If so please list them and the dates of participation.

- Mountain View Human Relations Commission (2013 - present; Chair 2015 & 2016)
- VTA 2000 Measure A Citizens Watchdog Committee/Citizens Advisory Committee (2015 - present)

14. Is there any additional information you would like to tell us? You may attach an additional sheet, resume, or campaign literature if desired.

My approach to governance will be inclusive and collaborative. I will solicit input from all stakeholders.

___Lucas Ramirez_____ 9/1/2016_

(Please sign above)

(Please date)

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. If you have questions, please contact Jessica Epstein at [redacted].