

The League to Save Lake Tahoe urges our members and supporters to consider the environment when they vote. We distributed the following three-question survey to all 11 candidates running for South Lake Tahoe City Council. Below are the complete and unedited responses we received. Candidates not represented below did not submit responses.

QUESTION 1 OF 3

Litter is a pervasive issue in Tahoe. As a City Council member, how would you have voted on the recent proposed ordinance to ban plastic water bottles? And, what actions would you take to help address plastics and other litter at their source?

Cody Bass:

I voted yes on this progressive ordinance to be part of a global solution at a local level. I believe that we have a responsibility as stewards of this lake to always create policy that will protect our lake for future generations. As the city implements this policy and begins to enforce it, I will work to further the protection of Lake Tahoe through more policy's that limit single use waste.

Joby Cefalu:

In Speaking with waste experts water bottles are made from recycled water bottles. We should build out sustainable infrastructure for Tahoe Tap, educate the community, and communicate the effort for conservation. The focus should be on eliminating styrofoam and plastics that create the micro plastic problem.

David Jinkens:

I spoke in favor at the city council of the plastic bottle ban and urged the City Council to go further and ban microplastics., the most insidious plastic polluter of them all. We must better manage and educate locals and visitors to respect and protect our environment and not accept litter as a normal cost of doing business.

Nicole Ramirez Thomas:

I would vote yes! We have a global plastics problem, exacerbated by the pandemic. Local ordinances that ban plastics tell corporations that they need to offer non-plastic packaging. Moving on to ban less recyclable plastics would further this opportunity to reach large corporations. I do think implementation of the plastic bottle ban will be key to its success.

Scott Robbins:

The ban on plastic bottles, encouraging the public to "drink Tahoe tap", was a small but positive step in the right direction and such policies would have my continued support. As a council member, I will additionally push for and support efforts to reduce over-tourism more broadly, favoring a "quality over quantity" approach that seeks to address litter and pollution impacts at their sources.

Chantelle Schenning:

I support the ban on plastic water bottles in conjunction with the funding for refilling stations and other alternatives. Dynamic policy addressing issues at the source and offering feasible alternatives is more effective than one dimensional solutions. I will advocate for waste receptacles proportionate to foot traffic and explore other regulations for pollution.

Nick Speal:

I'm proud of the city for banning plastic water bottles and committing to providing Tahoe Tap water stations. I would have done exactly the same myself. This is not the first plastic we have banned, and it won't be the last as we take inventory of the plastics that are ending up in the lake and the alternatives we can provide to enable people to enjoy our beaches more sustainably.

Tamara Wallace:

I am a city council member. I support every part of the ordinance - except the timing.

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QUESTION 2 OF 3

Tahoe needs to be able to withstand the impacts of the climate crisis, including the risk from intensifying wildfires and prolonged drought. Which specific actions in the City's [Climate Action Plan](#) would you prioritize for implementation?

Cody Bass:

Staying focused on becoming 50% municipal emission free by 2025 is something within our control as incoming council members and will ensure we meet the goal of 100% by 2032. As the plan is ambitious we must set goals that may seem impossible at the outset but are the true motivation in the daily action needed to further the ultimate goal. I am proud to have passed & supported this plan.

Joby Cefalu:

Utilizing our defensible space experts on the City staff and enforcing both public and private defensible space ordinances. Continue fostering thinning programs that started after the Angora Fire, in the same environmentally sensitive manner they began. All local water purveyors must provide adequate water for fire flow for the entire district they serve. The City can help foster this effort.

David Jinkens:

The greatest risk to SLT is catastrophic fire. Sadly, the CTC and USFS owns many vacant parcels of land in the city limits that are fire hazards. These parcels must be made fire safe on an urgent basis to protect the forest, habitat, lake, groundwater, locals and visitors, and our economy. City government must lead this safety effort. Fire waits for no one.

Nicole Ramirez Thomas:

I would prioritize transportation. Addressing transportation offers several opportunities: an opportunity to educate and create a culture shift that encourages public transit and non-vehicular transit; it offers the opportunity to build infrastructure that addresses other items in the plan and the City's strategic plan goals; and it contributes to energy resource diversification strategies.

Scott Robbins:

The regular traffic jams stretching to Placerville are possibly the most visible contributions to our carbon footprint. Accelerating work on a tourist-specific (non-resident, non-workforce) basin entry fees, used to fund mass transit services around and especially into the basin from Sacramento and San Francisco, could go a long way to reducing total carbon output.

Chantelle Schenning:

CS-1 Manage vegetation and reduce wildfire risk to promote sequestration. We owe it to our brave firefighters who saved our city last year to do our part to mitigate hazards that contribute to larger, less controllable wildfires. Ensuring that we properly clear out dry brush and other dead vegetation that acts as kindling is essential to protecting our city and its residents.

Nick Speal:

Climate change is our biggest long term threat, so I'm committed to 50% emissions reductions by 2030. Most CO2 comes from heating old buildings, so let's start there. Let's support homeowners to retrofit insulation and save money on gas bills. Let's do the same for City buildings too! I'll also streamline approvals for new energy-efficient homes to address the climate and housing crises together.

Tamara Wallace:

The city is currently in negotiations with Liberty Utilities on the franchise agreement. I have been pushing for massive change in this agreement (ie, additional storage for solar generated power, etc.)

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QUESTION 3 OF 3

Transportation affects the Lake and our community, some would say mostly in a negative way. What do you see as the biggest transportation issue in Tahoe, and what meaningful actions can the City take to address the problem?

Cody Bass:

Reliable, efficient, and sustainable transit is our biggest current need. The city must lead the way in bringing together our local partners to take control of the funding and governance to deliver this crucial need. We must begin contributing to the service when we have results, we also have got to be willing to support whoever is delivering transit in our city to the fullest level possible.

Joby Cefalu:

We need to provide transportation to both locals and visitors that put more people in fewer vehicles. Micro transit is a great start and the City of South Lake Tahoe has funded their portion. This program needs to be expanded throughout the entire area and more vehicles need to be added that have greater capacity. Also, continue encouraging the importance of biking and expansion of trail systems.

David Jinkens:

1. Better, more efficient, cost effective, reliable, and regular micro-transit. No more large LA type busses that few use. 2. Build more park and ride or parking centers where visitors can park their cars and take public transit, trails, bikes etc. to their destinations.

Nicole Ramirez Thomas:

I think there are several challenges. One, getting tourists and locals to take public transportation is a culture shift. We need to approach it that way. Two, the needs for reducing visitor traffic versus the needs for locals are different and the two should not be conflated. The transit study indicated we should build on the existing infrastructure. I would look at the next steps to doing that.

Scott Robbins:

A significant proportion of our tourism service sector work dinner shifts which typically don't end until 10-11pm, after local transit services have stopped. For too much of our workforce, public transit simply does not exist. We can and should extend service hours to enable our whole workforce to be able to use our bus and micro-transit services.

Chantelle Schenning:

The lack of public transportation and walkability. Transportation is the largest contributor of emissions, and this is in part due to the lack of safe alternatives to utilizing personal vehicles (i.e. road conditions are not conducive to biking). The City can develop infrastructure for increased walk/bike-ability and better public transit with electric buses.

Nick Speal:

15 million people visit Tahoe every year, and we need better regional transit to help them get here without a car. I'd sure love easier access to Reno and Carson City. On the City's part, I'll make significant investment into local transit to run our free electric buses later at night and cut the traffic to popular destinations like Emerald Bay and ski resorts.

Tamara Wallace:

Lack of transit for locals and tourists. The city recently put money into micro transit. That has been hugely successful. I would love to bring Lake Link to the rest of the community and Meyers.