



Ruth Ferguson - *Ride the Vote!*

2024 SF Community College Board candidate questionnaire

1. What office are you running for?

Community College Board Trustee

2. What is your name?

Ruth Ferguson

3. Do you have a section on your website about public transit, transportation, or mobility? If so, please provide a link.

I do not, but as I shared with the League of Conservation Voters: "I strongly support providing free or highly subsidized transit for CCSF students. Parking is highly subsidized for students on CCSF's campus and I believe transit the College should support alternative transportation methods as well. I would also advocate adding CCSF to Clipper BayPass should MTC extend its pilot program, a study that I was fortunate to participate in as a graduate student at UC Berkeley."

4. How do you usually get around San Francisco? Please tell us when and why you use cars, trains, Muni buses, bikes, walking, wheelchairs, or any other mode you frequently use for transportation.

I love taking Muni buses around San Francisco. I live on Santa Marina Street and Mission Street, and a major consideration when moving into my current home was the proximity to transit options. I also often take BART, but most commonly you will find me on the 49, 14, 14R, and 24 buses.

I was raised in a rural community and didn't have access to public transit until college. I would travel across Seattle from campus to my workplace using a free (subsidized) pass for University of Washington students. I've been an avid transit rider ever since, and most recently took Muni buses and BART every day while commuting from San Francisco to UC Berkeley as a graduate student.

I use public transit in San Francisco because it is convenient, affordable, environmentally friendly, and makes me feel more connected to my community.

I also love to walk around this city. Growing up, I would walk with my dad, up and down the gravel road to my house. There aren't sidewalks near my parents' house – the street off of this gravel road has only ditches on the side – so this routine was our only option to get walking exercise without jumping in the car first. My parents still live in the same home I grew up in, so when they parents come to visit I love walking with them around this city. My sister also lives in San Francisco, and we take them all around and let them marvel at how special San Francisco is with us.

5. How often do you ride public transit?

Nearly every day!

6. If elected, what would your top transportation priorities be? This can include priorities related to public transit, active transportation, driving, or any other mode of transportation.

Please see my answer to question #3. I also strongly support the Frida Kahlo Way Bike Lane project.

7. San Francisco's [Transit First Policy](#) applies to all officers, boards, commissions, and departments of the city and county, and states that within San Francisco, travel by public transit, by bicycle and on foot must be an attractive alternative to travel by private automobile. How will you use your position to advance the Transit First Policy for people commuting to and from City College?

By supporting subsidized transit options for students, promoting protected pedestrian and bike lane projects like on Frida Kahlo Way, and exploring other opportunities to promote ridership. As Trustee, I would also request the administration prepare an audit to identify how many faculty, staff, and students, respectively, are utilizing highly-subsidized parking at CCSF. I would use that information, as well as equity considerations, to take next steps on identifying methods to address overly abundant parking that may incentivize driving over transit.

8. How can City College help make access to campus easier for people who cannot or do not drive?

By offering and negotiating transit subsidies, which could be offset by increasing revenue made through currently subsidized parking.

9. Earlier this year, the City College Board of Trustees approved a [Green New Deal for City College](#), which calls for City College to “promote mass transit methods, including free public transit for students,” but sets no specific benchmarks toward achieving that goal. How can public transit help meet City College’s climate goals? Should City College set more specific transportation goals to encourage bus ridership over cars and reduce carbon emissions?

Yes, as I answered in the previous question, I believe City College should set more specific transportation goals to offset the cost of subsidizing transit ridership and reduce car usage on campus.

In the short-term, City College must identify and implement low-cost interventions to improve environmental standards. Eliminating unnecessary waste (e.g. paper textbooks), pursuing methods to subsidize transit, and reduce energy usage in underutilized buildings are good places to start.

In the longer-term, I will advocate for City College to contract with an analyst to identify opportunities to reduce emissions. Additionally, I will support the administration in lobbying state and federal lawmakers to identify subsidies to improve campus energy efficiency.

10. What role do you think law enforcement, fare enforcement, community ambassadors, and private security should play, if any, in patrolling the transit lines that serve City College?

I lack expertise on this subject and would be interested in understanding BATR’s point of view. However, I will share that I believe transit should be available and affordable to everyone. As a participant in MTC’s BayPass, when my transit was fully subsidized, it impacted my life and my transit decisions (e.g. taking BART to get places more quickly since it didn’t cost an additional fare, instead of taking the bus the whole route).

Although regional transit agencies are struggling and fare enforcement may be encouraged, it’s hard for me to believe that fare enforcement is the answer. But I would be very interested in understanding your organization’s perspective and welcome the conversation.

11. A [1993 ballot measure](#) made it official city policy that all elected city officials must ride Muni or other public transit to work at least twice a week. If elected, how closely will you abide by this policy?

I was not familiar with this ballot measure, but that's awesome! I work from home and therefore do not commute to an office, but I use public transit to commute to the vast majority of meetings and events. I am confident I will easily abide by the policy.

12. Students are working to get fare free student transit passes for all students at City College. This year, City College [received discretionary funding](#) from Senator Padilla (Dem-CA) to start a transit pass pilot program. To fully fund fare free passes, City College will need to find additional funding. Do you support using the funding remaining from past years of the Free City funds to offer fare free transit passes for students who live in San Francisco? What other funding pathways should City College pursue to provide transit passes for all students?

Yes, as I've indicated in previous answers. I would love for City College to be included as a campus participant in MTC BayPass. I would pursue grants from foundations such as the San Francisco Foundation, in addition to transit and equity-focused private foundations, to provide transit subsidies for City College students.

I would also lobby state lawmakers, city officials, and federal lawmakers. As a former legislative staffer in the California Legislature, I focused on housing and transportation policy. I have lobbied legislators in several professional and community roles over the past 15 years of policy advocacy, and would collaborate with lawmakers to find additional funding streams to subsidize community college transit affordable.

13. Did you support the SFMTA's [Frida Kahlo Way Quick-Build Project](#), which will remove some curb parking spaces to add pedestrian safety improvements and bike lanes on Frida Kahlo Way and Judson Avenue? Why or why not?

Yes – very much so! Please see my previous answers.

Note: This Ride the Vote! questionnaire is provided to the public for informational purposes only and does not imply endorsement by San Francisco Transit Riders. San Francisco Transit Riders does not endorse electoral candidates. Responses to this questionnaire are presented as submitted by the candidate unless otherwise noted.



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