

LAGUNA ADVOCATES

Complete Candidate Question Bank

September 15, 2026 forum follow-up • Revised September 19, 2026

Scope. This is a consolidated question bank—not a transcript and not a claim that every question was asked during the live forum. Candidates are not expected to answer every question. Questions were edited for clarity, brevity, duplication, and fairness.

Privacy. Names of residents who submitted questions are omitted. A submitter's name will be disclosed only with that person's express permission.

How to read it. Candidate-directed questions appear first. All remaining questions are directed to every candidate unless the wording states otherwise. Numbering is continuous throughout the document.

Candidate-directed questions

1. **Sue Kempf:** Why do you need another four years? What remains undone, why was it not completed, and what would you accomplish that a new Councilmember could not?
2. **Sue Kempf:** You supported term limits for boards and commissions. Why do you oppose—or why have you not supported—the same principle for the City Council?
3. **Sue Kempf:** What exact budget supports the statement that the Promenade was approximately \$500,000 under budget, and will you support one complete, all-in accounting from the temporary closure through final completion?
4. **Sue Kempf:** What was the public process for making the Promenade permanent and removing mature trees, and why do you believe that process was sufficient?
5. **Alex Rounaghi:** You have described yourself as independent. Identify one significant issue on which you broke with the other incumbents, the result you sought, and what happened.
6. **Alex Rounaghi:** What should voters use to measure your independence now?
7. **Nick Aronoff:** You have identified St. Catherine's for public use. What is its highest feasible public use, and should the City formally study it—or another site—for a smaller hospital and 24-hour emergency department?
8. **Nick Aronoff:** What evidence and funding would make that proposal realistic rather than aspirational?
9. **Mark Orgill:** What exact budget and completed result should voters use to judge whether the Promenade was an investment in quality?
10. **Mark Orgill:** Do you still believe the public will embrace the completed Promenade? Why or why not?
11. **Mark Orgill:** Do you agree that Council gave the Promenade higher priority than completing the Glenneyre Street lighting work? If yes, why was that the right sequence? If no, identify the record that shows otherwise.
12. **Ashley Cintas:** Name one specific City expenditure you would reduce or defer. Identify an approximate amount, the service consequence, and the test you would apply before supporting a new tax or fee.
13. **Ashley Cintas:** You have said restaurants should not bear the burden of a special tax aimed at visitors. What alternative would you support to ensure visitors cover a greater share of public costs attributable to tourism?

- 14. All candidates other than Ashley Cintas:** Do you agree that restaurants should not bear the burden of a visitor-focused tax? If so, what alternative would capture more revenue from visitors? If not, what visitor-related tax or fee would you support, and why?
- 15. Joy Berry:** Name one unanimous Council decision that should have produced meaningful dissent. What should the dissenting position have been?
- 16. Joy Berry:** What would you do when consensus conflicts with your own judgment?
- 17. Laura Parisi:** Using your financial and treasury experience, name the City's first unfunded priority and explain how you would pay for it without an unsupported revenue assumption.
- 18. Laura Parisi:** What currently planned expenditure would move down your list?
- 19. Edward Bayuk:** What measurable service level—such as calls, attacks, response times, or education demand—would justify funding another Animal Services officer? Until that threshold is met, what would you do now?
- 20. Karen Martin:** What specific enforcement right should neighbors have when a completed project materially differs from its approved plans or story poles? Who decides whether a change is material, who pays for verification, and what is the remedy?

Questions for all candidates

Candidate introductions and distinctions

- 21. Incumbents:** Why do you need another four years? What remains undone, why was it not completed, and what will you accomplish that a new Councilmember could not?
- 22. Challengers:** What is the first ordinance, resolution, or formal Council direction you would introduce? Why does that distinguish you from every other candidate?
- 23.** Name the candidate who presents the strongest philosophical contrast with you and state the fundamental disagreement.
- 24.** What experience most directly prepares you to make difficult land-use, budget, and public-safety decisions on the Council?

Democracy, Measure E, and election structure

- 25.** Is 50 percent plus one the democratic standard a Council winner should ultimately meet? Explain your position.
- 26.** Should Laguna Beach study a majority-vote runoff system such as Seal Beach uses? Why or why not?
- 27.** Do term limits operate as a meaningful check on the accumulation of political power? Explain your position.
- 28.** Is Measure E best understood as one form of election reform, one check on political power, both, or neither?
- 29.** Which better advances voter choice and checks on concentrated power: Seal Beach's majority-runoff structure or Laguna Beach's current at-large, multi-seat plurality structure? Explain your answer.
- 30.** After reviewing the Orange County comparison, has your position on Measure E or term limits changed or become more qualified? If not, what evidence could change your mind?
- 31.** If Measure E is not the election reform Laguna needs, what specific reform would you propose instead?
- 32.** Have you publicly endorsed, supported, or coordinated campaign activity with another candidate in this election? If yes, identify the candidate and the form of support.
- 33.** When three candidates mutually support one another for exactly three open seats, does that function as a slate? Why or why not?
- 34.** Does Laguna's at-large, multi-seat plurality system advantage candidates who share a common voting bloc when alternatives are divided among a larger field?
- 35.** Should Laguna Beach directly elect its mayor rather than have Council select the mayor?

- 36. Should Laguna Beach use districts, numbered seats, ranked-choice voting, runoffs, a primary, or some combination? Describe the model you prefer.
- 37. Should the City maintain a searchable public page showing candidate contributions, major endorsements, and cross-endorsements in one place?
- 38. If new information changes your understanding, are you willing to change a position publicly? What standard would you use?

Hospital, emergency room, and inpatient care

- 39. How do you intend to preserve acute-care hospital, emergency-room, and inpatient services in Laguna Beach?
- 40. Is a standalone or minimal 24-hour emergency department without inpatient acute care enough to say Laguna's hospital was saved? State your minimum acceptable service level.
- 41. If an agreement cannot be reached with Providence, what should the City do next?
- 42. Should Laguna Beach pursue another operator, another location, or both while Providence negotiations continue?
- 43. Would you support a bond measure to continue 24/7 emergency care in some form? What facts would voters need first?
- 44. Would you direct the City's legislative advocate to seek a narrowly tailored state law allowing continued acute care in an SPC-2 building if independent engineers find life safety acceptable and the operator maintains specified earthquake insurance?
- 45. If an alternative location were feasible, would you support a replacement hospital and a new provider? What funding sources would you consider?
- 46. What is the single most important question the Hospital Task Force should ask Providence, and what answer would you require?
- 47. Should Laguna Beach commission independent engineering, retrofit-cost, healthcare-needs, and operator-feasibility analyses before accepting an operator's estimates?
- 48. Should the City establish a parallel path that evaluates alternative operators, sites, financing, and ownership models?
- 49. Would you consider eminent domain only as a last resort if voluntary acquisition failed and independent legal and financial analysis found the property necessary and feasible for a public healthcare project?
- 50. Should Laguna Beach begin a public land-use process now to determine which healthcare uses should be preserved at the existing property?
- 51. Would you lobby for state legislation giving communities greater review when acute-care services are eliminated or hospital property is converted?
- 52. Should the City use every lawful zoning, entitlement, and land-use tool to obtain binding healthcare commitments?
- 53. Would you support a regional hospital district, joint-powers authority, grants, philanthropy, public-nonprofit ownership, or some combination?
- 54. If someone you love had a time-sensitive emergency, would the service level you support permit evaluation, stabilization, and medically necessary admission in Laguna Beach?

Forest Avenue Promenade

- 55. Will you support one public, all-in accounting from the temporary closure through final completion, including design, consultants, staff time, construction, trees, drainage, furniture, security, maintenance, lost meter revenue, and contingency?
- 56. Should that accounting be published before Council approves additional Promenade spending?
- 57. Were Councilmembers told before approval that the plan would remove mature trees? If not, why not?

58. Should Council compare the permanent Promenade with a flexible or hybrid design before the next irreversible decision?
59. Should drainage performance and flood risk be independently verified before final acceptance?
60. What should restaurants pay for exclusive use of public space, and should the amount reflect market value and City-provided furnishings and utilities?
61. Non-incumbents: What one feature of the completed Promenade would you change first?
62. Was tsunami exposure considered adequately in the design and emergency planning?
63. What aesthetic and fiscal standard should voters use to judge the finished result?
64. Should the City publish invoices, change orders, credits, discounts, and the source of each funding allocation in a searchable project ledger?
65. How should Laguna Beach protect the remaining mature trees on Forest Avenue and Ocean Avenue?

Fiscal responsibility, taxes, and visitor revenue

66. Before supporting a 2028 tax proposal, should Council publish a five-year forecast showing recurring revenues, recurring costs, reserves, and unfunded obligations?
67. Should a major capital project above a stated dollar or General Fund threshold require voter approval? State the threshold.
68. Should every major project disclose acquisition, financing, staffing, maintenance, replacement, and opportunity costs before approval?
69. Would you support bringing a one-cent sales-tax proposal to voters in 2028? What spending reductions or efficiencies must occur first?
70. Do endorsements from employee organizations create an appearance problem when Council votes on compensation and long-term labor contracts? What disclosure or recusal rule should apply?
71. Should exceptionally long employment or labor agreements require an independent fiscal-risk assessment and a supermajority Council vote?
72. Should visitors bear a larger share of visitor-generated public costs? Identify a lawful revenue source aimed at visitors.
73. Should Laguna Beach pursue development-impact fees or regional contributions from inland development that increases beach, traffic, and public-safety impacts?
74. Should Laguna Beach explore regulated cannabis retail as a revenue source? State the safeguards and expected net revenue.
75. What is one consultant contract, program, or capital project you would reduce, defer, or subject to a new return-on-investment test?

Public official accountability and public participation

76. Has Council service become effectively full time? If so, what change in compensation, staffing, or expectations is justified?
77. Should each Councilmember have one paid aide who reports to that member and handles constituent cases?
78. Alternatively, should Laguna Beach fund one independent ombudsman service for all residents?
79. After presenting facts, costs, alternatives, advantages, and disadvantages, should staff reports contain a staff recommendation, or should the policy choice be left entirely to Council?
80. Name one City decision in which public participation changed your position or materially changed the outcome.

81. When Council directs an item to return and it never returns, who is accountable: staff, the City Manager, or Council? What deadline rule would you adopt?
82. Have you accepted contributions from developers, City contractors, employee organizations, or persons with significant matters before the City? Identify the category and the safeguards you would use.
83. Should technical building and engineering decisions, including stop-work orders, be made by qualified professionals rather than policy officials?
84. Should the Building Division remain within Community Development or become structurally independent?
85. Should Councilmembers hold regular individual town halls outside formal Council meetings?
86. Incumbents: What significant Council action did you sponsor that tangibly improved residents' quality of life?
87. Should the City publish a public tracking page for Council directions, promised return dates, responsible staff, and status?

Public safety, infrastructure, and civic assets

88. Should already-approved public-safety and infrastructure work generally be completed before major new discretionary projects?
89. If the City's legislative advocate cannot pursue everything equally, which comes first: hospital seismic legislation or greater local control over ADUs in high-fire, evacuation-constrained, or historic areas?
90. Which Fire Station 1 alternative deserves the first complete feasibility and cost study: Lot 10 beside Art-A-Fair, Lot 15 at the former Transit Depot, or retaining Fire Station 1 beside City Hall while relocating the Police Department?
91. Should preserving a viable, year-round Farmers Market be a required condition in selecting the Fire Station site?
92. If no equivalent Farmers Market location is available, should Lot 12 be removed from consideration?
93. What criteria should control the Fire Station 1 choice: seismic safety, emergency response, construction cost, parking, employee and festival use, or Farmers Market viability?
94. Should the City publish a side-by-side site matrix before narrowing the Fire Station alternatives?
95. What priority should apply to the former Gelson's site, St. Catherine's, parking, beaches, and sand loss?
96. Should completion of the Glenneyre Street lighting work take priority over additional discretionary downtown improvements?
97. Should Laguna Canyon Road undergrounding, pole hardening, evacuation, and maintenance responsibilities be evaluated together before the City seeks greater control from Caltrans?

Coyotes, mosquitoes, health, and emergency readiness

98. Should Laguna Beach add an Animal Services officer for coyote response, public education, and enforcement?
99. Should the City publish coyote calls, pet attacks, response times, citations, and enforcement outcomes?
100. What specific fine or enforcement response should apply to intentional coyote feeding?
101. Should wildlife corridors and food attractants be addressed together with enforcement and public education?
102. Before approval, should Orange County Mosquito and Vector Control assess both pooling and discharge scenarios for the Aliso Creek Estuary project and require a monitoring and response plan?
103. If extended berm closure creates an unacceptable mosquito, bacterial, or public-health risk, should intervention be permitted even when it temporarily conflicts with habitat goals?
104. Would you approve the estuary project before the public knows the parking loss, playground plan, annual maintenance cost, and funding source?
105. Should the City establish objective thresholds for water circulation, mosquito counts, bacterial measurements, and intervention at the Aliso berm?

- 106. Should Laguna Beach conduct an actual neighborhood wildfire evacuation exercise, not only an agency tabletop exercise?
- 107. What measurable evacuation-time, route-capacity, and communications standards should the City publish by neighborhood?

Development, neighborhoods, and quality of life

- 108. Should material project changes require new story poles, renewed public notice, and an appeal opportunity before construction continues?
- 109. Should staff reports expressly analyze cumulative evacuation, emergency-access, traffic, and wildlife-displacement effects before significant land-use approvals?
- 110. Should large projects in high-fire or evacuation-constrained areas receive an independent fire and evacuation assessment?
- 111. Should potential wildlife displacement into neighborhoods be considered when approving development adjoining open space?
- 112. When state housing requirements conflict with Canyon scale and character, where should legally movable housing capacity be placed?
- 113. Should Laguna Beach acquire privately owned open-space parcels in steep or high-fire-severity areas? Identify funding and priority criteria.
- 114. Should Laguna Beach acquire control of Laguna Canyon Road from Caltrans? State the wildfire, undergrounding, maintenance, and financial conditions.
- 115. Should a project built materially differently from its approval be subject to a clearer correction, penalty, or revocation process?
- 116. Before expanding automated license-plate-reader use, should the City publish retention, sharing, audit, and misuse rules?
- 117. Should Laguna Beach support a community land trust to retain artists, seniors, and local workers?
- 118. Should Councilmembers disclose developer meetings and recuse when campaign support or financial relationships create an appearance of bias?
- 119. How should Laguna Beach protect historic scale and character while complying with state housing law?

Parking, commercial vacancies, beaches, and tourism

- 120. Does Laguna Beach's parking policy primarily serve residents, visitors, or businesses? What one change would rebalance it?
- 121. Should resident parking permits receive preferential treatment at more City meters?
- 122. Should attracting a grocery or comparable resident-serving use to the former Gelson's site be an explicit City priority? What lawful role should the City play?
- 123. Would you commit to a Coastal Sediment Assessment and consider beach replenishment where science, cost, and permits support it?
- 124. Should parking rates, time limits, intercept parking, and transit be restructured to reduce downtown circulation and resident impacts?
- 125. Should the City study a vacancy tax or another lawful tool for long-term commercial vacancies?
- 126. Why is increased tourism beneficial or harmful to residents socially, fiscally, and environmentally?
- 127. Should voters approve the permanent removal of a substantial number of public parking spaces for another use?
- 128. Should Laguna Beach pursue off-site or regional parking partnerships to reduce peak visitor traffic?

129. What specific policy would reduce overuse impacts at Heisler Park and other heavily visited coastal areas without unfairly restricting residents?

Closing questions

130. What should Laguna Beach look like 10 years from now, and what is your first action toward that vision?
131. If voters do not select you, which other candidate would you most trust to advance your vision, and why?
132. If ranked-choice voting existed and you were eliminated, whom would you want your supporters to rank next?
133. If you could return to Laguna Beach 10 years from now, what accomplishment would you be proudest to attribute to your Council tenure? Conversely, what change would you most fear finding if you are not elected?

Source and editorial note

Source. Question wording was consolidated from the organization's moderator scripts, public submissions, forum preparation notes, and post-forum follow-up. Factual premises should be rechecked against official records before publication if circumstances have changed.

Non-endorsement. Advocates for Laguna Residents PAC has not endorsed any candidate in this election.