

Coastside Democrats Candidate Survey

An email address is required to ensure integrity. Please note this form in its entirety will be posted for Public Review.

Email *

dgorn@sbcglobal.net

Thank you for your interest in applying for the endorsement of the Coastside Democrats. Please complete this submission by **Friday, September 4, 2026**. All Club members will vote on candidate endorsements.



Half Moon Bay (HMB) City Council

The HMB City Council sets priorities and policies, makes final decisions on all major City matters, adopts ordinances and resolutions, appoints the City Manager and City Attorney, and approves the annual budget.

The City of Half Moon Bay holds district-based elections for its five city council seats to staggered four-year terms. There are three districts up for election in 2026: Districts 1 (Brownstone), 4 (Ruddock), and 5 (Penrose).

1. Candidate Name *

David Gorn

2. As a Club under the California Democratic Party, we only endorse fellow Democrats. Please state how long you have been registered to vote as a Democrat: *

- ☒ Always been a registered Democrat
- ☐ Have been a registered Democrat for the last ten years
- ☐ Have been a registered Democrat for the last five years
- ☐ Just registered as a Democrat this election cycle.

3. I certify the information provided on this application and in any subsequent interview or written submission is true and correct. *

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Statement Questionnaire

4. Why are you running for this office? *

I've served on the Half Moon Bay Planning Commission for 6 years, and previously served out an appointed term on the City Council. I've lived here since 1995, and I've sat on the board of Coastside Children's Programs, Coastal Lit and worked on multiple school bond measures.

Half Moon Bay is a little slice of paradise, and I'd like to make sure it stays that way, and make sure it grows purposefully. Half Moon Bay is facing a critical time right now; the state is pushing large-scale projects with no public hearings, and that's a dangerous precedent that can only get more intense, as the state continues to attack Measure D. We need affordable housing, thriving downtown businesses, a balanced budget with no structural deficit, and at the same time need to protect the Coastside's beauty and small-town character. That's a lot of work.

Good intentions only go so far – you need to work hard and stand up for this city to get it what it needs, and that's something I know how to do. I can't wait to get started.

5. What will be your top priorities if elected? *

Protect Measure D, number one. The state has been trying to kill it. Measure D is working, and I'd say it's the principal reason Half Moon Bay has retained its open space, and maintained its rural and small-town character. Balance the budget, eliminate the structural deficit, support building the public swimming pool at the high school, keep downtown businesses thriving, encourage infill and ADU development, investigate incentives for owners of vacant homes to rent (one attempt to increase rental stock and make rentals more affordable), establish a live/work (and a work/live) plan for Half Moon Bay, help the county establish urgent care capabilities, fight for public hearings and transparency for large building projects, advance safety initiatives especially to address the Coastside's high-fire risk, secure funding to complete the trail on the east side of Hwy 1, and the long-delayed Poplar bike path. There's a lot more, but that's a good start.

6. Please explain how your background and experience have prepared you for this office. *

Editor of the HMB Review; served on the City Council as an appointee; served six years on the HMB Planning Commission. On the board of several nonprofits. More school bond measures than I can count. I also think I built up a decent fund of knowledge from all my years in public radio/media at KQED as deputy news director and NPR as editor and reporter covering science and the environment.

7. What do you see as the major issues on the Coastside? *

Affordability, state overreach in eliminating public hearings and public input on major projects, protecting Measure D, keeping Half Moon Bay the lovely place it is, growing with intention and purpose.

8. Is there anything in your background which, if you receive the Club's endorsement, could cause embarrassment to the club? If so, please provide the details. *

No

9. Who is supporting your campaign at this stage (e.g., endorsements, donors), and are there any potential conflicts of interest we should know about? *

Just started the campaign, but I do have endorsements from planning commissioners past and present, Council members former and present. No conflicts of interest.

Specific Questions for Your Office

10. For which District are you running? *

- ☒ District 1
- ☐ District 4
- ☐ District 5

11. Is the city in a financially stable position and, if not, how do you propose making it financially secure? *

Having a structural deficit isn't viable, long-term. The Council has really struggled with this one. I'd like to look at our legal fees, to start with — I'm not sure lawyers are needed at every Council and PC hearing, for instance. The city staff have actively solicited grants, but I'm guessing that's an open avenue.

12. What is your position on the use of Flock cameras in our community? *

Argh. They don't even work! But if they did work, I still think they're a much greater danger to liberty and privacy than the benefits they might offer.

13. What is your plan to protect our farmworker community from ICE harassment? *

Half Moon Bay has done a good job in protecting everyone who lives here from harassment. It's a public safety issue, not a political one.

14. How do you think HMB should address the healthcare needs of coastal residents? Do you support an Urgent Care facility on the Coastsides? A Healthcare District? *

The emergency room at Seton in Moss Beach (when it eventually opens) is inadequate. There is no physician on staff; they're on call, and it can take a long time for them to arrive. And if we have an actual emergency on the Coastsides with closed roads and/or downed communication, those physicians wouldn't be able to get here at all. The best option, I think, is to have the county clinic at Shoreline Station offer some urgent care services — same-day labs, x-rays, etc. — basic but vital emergency services. Congressman Liccardo is confident he can get federal funding for equipment if the county can arrange operational expenses. Since medical personnel already staff the clinic, I think you'd be looking at the cost of a part-time lab tech. That seems like low-hanging fruit to me.

15. Homeless encampments and long-term parking of RVs/campers are difficult issues. How ★ do you think the city should address these problems?

Forgive me for digressing a bit, but the visible homeless are roughly a third of the homeless population. Many homeless are working. They're couch-surfing, staying with relatives, living in cars because the cost of rent is greater than their lower wage job. It doesn't take a huge financial investment to help them. As for the visibly homeless, that is a tougher nut — unless you want to institutionalize people, the best you can do is offer help: food, showers, help with psych or drug use issues. That is being done, and the city should be proud of its efforts (including the transitional housing center). If you're talking about the regular complaints about the river encampment, I think it's cruel to roust people just because their presence seems bothersome.

16. Given the statewide push for more housing construction, and the need on the Coastside ★ for more housing (both market rate and low income), what is your position on the city's housing element and mandates from the state?

It is not affordable to live in Half Moon Bay, and housing for the people of Half Moon Bay and surrounding communities is vital. After building Stone Pine Cove, Lesley Gardens senior housing, Moonridge, Main Street Housing and other smaller affordable housing projects, I haven't seen any real change in affordability — in part because projects like the senior housing didn't go predominantly to locals, so the local benefit was blunted. I do appreciate the 100% affordable project MidPen is doing, and I am very hopeful the school housing project will help local teachers live here. But I think we also need to look at the exorbitant cost of rent in Half Moon Bay. It's crazy to have 10 people share a house, or live 6 to a room. It's why we established the STR ordinance, so long-term renters won't be ousted in favor of a handful of AirBnB rentals. There are a lot of vacant homes in Half Moon Bay (261 of them, if I'm remembering the number right); maybe landlords need some kind of incentive to rent them out long-term.

17. What is your position on the 555 Kelly affordable housing project for senior farm workers ★ including the "Let the Voters Decide" referendum related to it?

I voted for it. The idea was perfect — because it was city property, the city would make sure locals got in there. The process, though, was flawed. Because of the density bonus, things like parking, traffic, safety, height were off the table. That's what drove people crazy about it, no one was heard because those basic concerns were dismissed because of the density bonus. Affordable housing was the Council's target, and it's a noble and powerful use of city time and land. I wish it had been treated like a normal project, it would have passed easily, with less fighting.

Submit When Finished

Click Back to return to a previous question. Click Submit when you are done.

Feel free to contact demclubcoastside@gmail.com if you have any questions.

Final results will be posted on <https://coastsidedems.org>

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