

**GREEN PARTY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY QUESTIONNAIRE for
ALBANY CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES 2008**

Candidate name: Farid Javandel
Occupation: Transportation Engineer
Campaign Chair: self
Treasurer: Kathryn Javandel

1. Why did you choose to run for the Albany City Council?

I was originally asked to run for Council by people who appreciated my work on the Traffic and Safety Commission. I am running for reelection so that I can continue my efforts to enhance environmental and economic sustainability in Albany.

2. Please give a brief summary of your background and qualifications for the office of City Council.

I grew up in Albany and most of my family and friends still live in and around Albany. I am a transportation engineer with both public and private sector experience working for Cities, and in addition to my current work on the City Council I have been a volunteer on the Traffic and Safety Commission.

3. Elected office provides the opportunity to proactively lead by placing new ideas on the agenda for consideration and development. What are some specific ideas you intend to pursue if elected?

I have already advocated and supported various sustainable practices, but I would like to keep pursuing others such as improvements to pedestrian safety and bike facilities so that Albany parents will be less likely to drive their children to school. Kids who grow up walking and biking are more likely to continue doing so as adults and rely less on automobiles as their sole mode of transportation. A very simple example would be to establish a policy and mechanism for removing overgrown vegetation that obstructs sidewalks. I would also like to take further steps in support of green building policies, such as incentives for solar and wind power systems on homes and businesses.

4. Albany is currently conducting a visioning process for the waterfront to proactively establish the community's desires for this part of the city. Do you support the current visioning effort? Why or why not? What is your vision for the future of the Waterfront? What was your position on the development proposed by Magna/Caruso?

I support the waterfront visioning process and have long been an advocate of this sort of long range planning before any development could happen at the waterfront. The only votes that I have cast on the council that any one might erroneously try to interpret as opposed to the visioning process have been related

to contract process and timing, such as when I suggested that the Council should wait for two weeks to approve the contract so that we would have information on our annual budget before we chose to roughly double the contract cost. I happen to think that informed decisions are superior to uninformed decisions and hoping for the best. That is consistent with my view of why a comprehensive long range vision for the waterfront is in the best interest of the citizens of Albany and Magna as the current land owner. It would be just as irresponsible to engage in any development at the waterfront without a long term community supported plan as it would be to hire a contractor to begin remodeling your house before you had an architect develop plans. I did not support the Caruso development concept for many reasons. It was far too large, too close to the water, likely to have significant and uncorrectable impacts in an EIR, and highly unlikely to be approved by the citizens of Albany under Measure C. My long term vision for the waterfront would exclude gambling whether based on horse racing or any other form. Although I believe that the City and school district need replacement revenues for current property taxes and other fees currently generated by the racetrack, I think those could be generated by various commercial facilities closer to the freeway, leaving significant open space for parks and active recreational uses which are a significant need in Albany.

5. What is your opinion of the proposed development at UC Village? What do you think the city's goals should be in negotiating with the University regarding the UC Village/Gill Tract property?

I believe that any commercial development along the San Pablo frontage of UC village should serve the local community including UC Village. Innovative techniques should be used to ensure that any grocery store at that location serves the local community in a way that eliminates the need for current automobile trips to other grocery stores. Perhaps village residents could be allowed to walk home with shopping carts or be served by a fleet of shared electric vehicles too transport groceries. The City should advocate for retention of Little League fields in their current locations and agricultural uses on the Gil Tract.

6. What is your opinion concerning dense infill developments, such as have occurred at the former mortuary site on San Pablo and are under discussion for Safeway on Solano and planned for the southeast corner of El Cerrito Plaza? What mitigations do you envision to balance the impact of dense infill?

I support properly designed transit oriented development as a means of meeting the City's housing and sustainable transportation goals. Simply having mixed use or high density is not sufficient. There should be an actual facilitation of the connection to Transit. There should be more accommodation for bike parking and less for single owner cars. Car share pods should be a standard component of such developments. I also believe that it is important to achieve a jobs/housing balance through proper location of such land uses to offer opportunities for people to live and work within a community so that they need not have a driving commute.

7. What is your vision for future development along Solano and San Pablo Avenues?

I would like to see development that focuses the greatest intensity near transit and maintains a pedestrian friendly environment.

8. Albany's General Plan states "The City of Albany is committed to working toward an overall goal of reducing reliance on the automobile as the primary means of transportation." How do you envision supporting this goal?

I envision a combination of tactics starting with the enhancement of walking and biking facilities to offer better alternatives to driving. I would like to see a significant reduction in kids being driven to school. In Albany every school is within walking distance. We could facilitate walking "school buses" or even declare car free zones around schools during certain times.

9. Where should the funding for the city budget come from in the future? How do you propose to ensure Albany's future financial health?

Albany's financial health depends on balancing our income and expenditures. Unless citizens wish to give up certain services we always need to strive for maximized revenue and follow a pay as you go approach so that we don't waste money on interest payments. Our economic development activities need to focus on establishing healthy and sustainable businesses to supplement property tax revenues. We should also continue to set the appropriate fees for services.

10. Do you think the City Council should try to participate in or influence regional, state and/or national policy? What are your criteria for making this decision?

Although City government's primary focus should be on the City of Albany, we play an important role on the regional level through our participation on regional boards. We can also lead by example when we roll out new programs and demonstrate to the rest of the region how things can be improved. We also have the opportunity to participate in organizations like the League of California Cities to work collaboratively to present unified messages to state government. I find more promise in such methods than simply passing resolutions that are more easily dismissed or ignored by others.

11. What would you propose for Albany's response to the current global warming crisis?

I think that we need to continue implementing the recommendations of the Clean and Green Task Force of which I was a member. We need to continuously look for ways to encourage or require sustainable practices. This includes more energy efficiency as well as increasing the use of solar panels and other forms of energy generation that do not emit green house gases.

12. What is your vision of Albany in 5, 10, 20 years? How would you promote community-wide dialogue and participation regarding sustainability?

I envision a community where local traffic volumes diminish over time because people walk and bike more. In 5 years electric or alternative fuel vehicles will be the norm. In 10 years, few families own more than one car and many don't own a car at all because you can get most places without one and longer trips are easy by transit or car share. In 20 years nobody drives kids to school any more. The air is cleaner and people are healthier. Energy use has diminished and more homes are either off the grid or selling back their surplus electricity. Ornamental landscaping has been replaced by edible landscaping such as fruit trees. In order to advance sustainable practices we need to provide education of what is possible, encouragement through incentives, and ultimately various levels of enforcement.

13. What is your opinion of the proposed charter amendment to switch from an appointed to elected mayor?

I think the citizens have a right to choose their form of government, but I am concerned that the proposed charter amendment has some flaws in the proposed implementation and has been advanced in a manner that has been unnecessarily insensitive to public input.

14. Who else has endorsed you or is supporting your candidacy?

I have been endorsed by various individuals in the community including advocates of biking and walking and youth sports.

15. The following are the 10 Key Values of the Green Party (more details available at <http://www.cagreens.org/platform/10k.shtml>). In view of these values, why do you feel your candidacy merits Green Party endorsement?

Green Party 10 Key Values:

1. Ecological wisdom – The fact of limited resources makes this a necessity and it is one of the standard criteria by which I judge decisions before the Council.
2. Social Justice - I was part of the Council that established the Social and Economic Justice Committee for the City of Albany.
3. Non violence – I believe in non-violence and in its verbal equivalent of being able to hold calm polite conversation even between people of differing political views. This should be clear to those who have observed me on the Council.
4. Grassroots democracy - As demonstrated by my past campaigns I do not believe in big money campaigns. I have tried to share factual messages through simple communications and personal interactions.
5. Decentralization – involvement of more people in the political process allows a greater diversity of views and offers better outcomes. An example of this is in making appointments to City committees and commissions where I try to appoint intelligent people with a variety of views and then give them the freedom to act for themselves rather than tell them how I want them to vote on every issue.

6. Community based economics – I concur with the philosophy that income should correlate to effort and benefit to society and that in the modern economy where there is ability to mass produce electronic media with little or no incremental cost, the traditional financial model is outdated and lacking in social equity.

7. Feminism – I believe in equality of all people regardless of gender or any number of other traits that people may use to distinguish one another. I previously served in various positions on the Board for the Sacramento Women’s Transportation Seminar. I declined a nomination for the presidency of the chapter because I still felt there was a symbolic value in having a woman serve in that role.

8. Respect for diversity – My own family is an exercise in diversity of ethnic origins, religions, nationalities, and other characteristics. Respect for diversity comes naturally to me.

9. Personal and global responsibility – I believe in leading by example and in providing opportunities for others to do what is right. As a transportation engineer I am proud to be able to commute to work by bike, even though I had to change jobs to make that possible in place of my previous method of carpooling.

10. Sustainability – I view the need for sustainability as a simple fact and a broad philosophy that applies to small and large parts of all our lives. The need for environmental and economic sustainability is one of the key points of my campaign.

14. Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?

I am dedicated to a reasonable and structured approach to government where all individuals have an opportunity to be heard and all persons are treated fairly regardless of their views.