

(This has been pasted in from the email message containing the candidate's responses.)

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

Candidate name: Nick Pilch

Occupation: Software Engineer

Campaign Chair: myself

Treasurer: myself at present

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

My service to the community and to the city seems to have lead me to this point. I'd like to take my service one step further to the city council. I believe that my ability to reach out to all citizens is an important quality for Albany right now.

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

I am married and have a 9-year old son. I am an environmentalist and Sierra Club member. Here's a history of my community and public service:

Volunteer work with Friends of Five Creeks, including trail advocacy (early 2000s), which lead me to:

Co-founded the citizen's group Albany Strollers and Rollers - 2004

I've organized Albany's Bike to Work Day festivities every year since 2004

Traffic and Safety Commissioner - 2006

Parks and Recreation Commissioner - 2007

Parks and Recreation Commission Chair - 2008

As a human-scale transit advocate with Albany Strollers and Rollers, and as a Traffic and Safety Commissioner, I have advised the city on numerous projects with a human-transit component and helped the city garner grant money to complete these projects. I have advocated for the needs of cyclists and pedestrians in numerous Commission and City Council meetings.

As a Parks and Recreation Commission Commissioner, and as its chair, I helped create the Tree Task Force, strongly supported the creation of an Urban Forestry program at the city, oversaw the completion of the parks upgrades, oversaw the Ohlone Greenway safety improvements and took the lead on the future design of the Greenway paths.

I have a history of working with numerous people and groups and getting projects done.

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 will push for the full implementation of the city's Bicycle Master Plan and ensure completion of the Pedestrian Master plan.

-I will push for trail, sidewalk and street enhancements that promote human-scale transit (and make Albany a more beautiful and livable).

-I will work to bring City CareShare to Albany. Albany is a natural for car-sharing programs with its free parking and dense population.

-I will promote community gardens. As Parks and Recreation Commission chair, I approved Albany's first community garden at Ocean View Park.

-I will work towards getting a salaried economic development director.

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 do support the visioning effort. I believe it is an excellent opportunity for all voices to be heard and for solutions to be presented that can meet the needs of most citizens. My vision for the waterfront is for minimum development and maximum open space and the restoration of the Cordornices/Creek wetlands. I did not support the Caruso-designed development.

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?

The city's goals should be to serve the citizens of Albany. It appears that the current undeveloped land is large enough to accommodate many uses and serve the needs of many groups, including UC. I think the city should stand firm and bargain hard with UC. I believe creek restoration can happen, ball fields can remain, development be done and open space can remain as well.

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 believe in dense infill development. The needs of neighbors must be addressed. To mitigate, activity should be located away from current neighbors, and I support buildings being "stepped down" towards the neighbors so as to minimize visual impact and loss of light. I believe that these new developments should be well served with public transportation and should have first class bicycle facilities so as to minimize the number of new car trips needed.

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

Development that would improve and/or complement Albany. Good-looking development (unlike the development at the mortuary site, but more akin to the building on the corner next to it) I would like to have businesses that allow Albany residents to do all their shopping in Albany (the addition of a hardware store is one example). If infill housing is called for, and I believe it likely will be, see answer 6 for my vision of what that should be like. I support Albany's hiring of an economic development firm so that experts may advise us on future development.

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?

My bicycle and pedestrian advocacy work has already done a great deal to help the city towards this goal. I will continue this work, making Albany safer and more pleasant for bicyclists and pedestrians.

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?

The city has hired an economic development firm to help with this. I support that, and support exploring the addition of a city staff person dedicated to this

task. I propose that Albany begin to increase its revenue, so that it may considering hiring more staff, be prepared for difficult economic years, and so that it may perhaps consider capital improvement projects without the need for bond funds. This is just good common sense. Bond funds that increase taxes will likely increase the economic divide in our town. I absolutely support economic sustainability.

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?

Absolutely, especially regional and state policy. The greater the potential effect on Albany, the more Albany should be involved.

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

Albany already has the beginnings of a good response. Albany has sustainability and carbon reduction goals. Albany encourages going green. I think Albany should do everything it can to encourage conservation, discourage the user of fossil fuels and wood burning fireplaces, and put economic incentives in place to encourage solar projects, gray water systems, etc.

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

My vision is that Albany continue to support its greening. My vision is that Albany would be laced with pleasant safe trails for walkers and bicyclists and all those using human-scale transit. I see people enjoying a revamped waterfront. I see solar systems powering all city facilities and many other businesses and homes. I see the city with enough funds to have hired additional staff for maintenance of our current parks and future open space and trails. I see the city with a complete complement of businesses that the citizens may walk or bicycle to.

If elected, I would pursue frequent town hall meetings where such discussions about sustainability could take place. I would gladly host an email list or a blog as well. Citizens appreciate being informed.

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

I generally favor the idea, but I fear that it will not get support because of the way in which it has been put forward.

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

Preston Jordan, David Arkin, Charlie Blanchard, Kim Linden, among others. My wife, Jennifer Simmons, is a Green Party member.

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:

Ecological wisdom

Social Justice

Non violence

Grassroots democracy

Decentralization

Community based economics

Feminism

Respect for diversity

Personal and global responsibility

Sustainability

Having read the 10 key values, I can honestly say that I support all of them. I am also particularly concerned with something that seems to lie across a number of these values, which is the growing economic divide in our country.

My work with Albany Strollers and Rollers goes directly to sustainability, ecological wisdom and personal and global responsibility and grassroots activism. By helping people rely less on fossil fuels and pollute less with their cars, I am making Albany and the planet more sustainable.

A sustainable Albany must improve the existing walking and cycling features to help us all, children and adults, confidently reduce our automobile reliance. This reliance is environmentally unsustainable, and also damages our community bonds. Automobile usage demonstrably reduces the number

of community relationships we form. These are the essence of our social fabric and a key to maintaining the "small town" we love. To support this shift away from automobile usage, though, we need to redesign the remaining barriers to human-scale transit, such as the impediment Buchanan presents for safely traveling on foot or bike to our waterfront. As a co-founder of Albany Strollers and Rollers, I have a record of success on such issues. and, if elected, I will lead full implementation of Albany's Bicycle Master Plan so those who desire can become as transportation sustainable as possible.

I support woman's rights. I am a long time (>10 years NOW member).

14 (16?). Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?

I believe my goals and ideals are very much in line with the Green Party. I am a long-time environmentalist (Sierra Club member - 18 years) and Sierra Club National Outings Leader (as well as a local leader). I've led people on backpack trips to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge twice and I've been there myself a total of three times.

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