

**QUESTIONNAIRE
GREEN PARTY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY
2014 ENDORSEMENT DECISION**

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YouTube Channels

1270 Emeryville videos

<https://www.youtube.com/user/EPOAUS>

254 Regional videos

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqi3M-gWCVFyKOv6GMD4Ccw>

Line of work: Retired with Social Security

Videographer, Consultant for a group of smaller Emeryville Property Owners

1. What are three major issues in Emeryville that need to be addressed now? What creative ideas do you have to address these issues?

1) Community Engagement and Public Outreach. The end of redevelopment is a substantial impact to Emeryville which was 95% Redevelopment Area. It is a turning point in Emeryville history. It hopefully ends an era of City Manager domination of our City government. For years City Leaders have disengaged and even misled the community to accomplish Staff objectives.. Community input was ignored to the maximum extent possible. Developers were instructed no to talk to community.

A new era is upon us. As a top priority the council should establish a structure for community outreach and input. I suggest an annual city council retreat, and two community meetings where both residents a business people are invited. We could have polling at the community meetings where everyone's opinion is counted. the City Manager and Mayor should be accountable to the community on a regular basis. The rest of the answer to this question is found in Number 4 below.

2) *Lack of affordable housing, low paying jobs, local hire and new small businesses development.* The cost of living in Emeryville continues to grow beyond the reach of many existing residents. The city continues to encourage large mega rental housing projects with developers seeking to maximize profit. Existing large rental projects create revolving door residents, with little or no interest in the city. Affordable units provided in mega rental projects are not sustainable. *The city should only allow ownership housing.* Money collected from fees, and other sources must be

used to subsidize low income residents to become permanent owners. Priority given to residents locally employed, and/or those being displaced.. The creation of for sale units continues to provide rental housing, since many units are not owner occupied. However, individual owners develop relationships with tenants and are less likely to focus on rent increases.

The City should be more informed of regional subsidies from ABAG, and MTC. Affordable housing is a statewide crisis. The city should support and encourage a state wide effort to establish some form of rent control.

*The push for larger bedroom units only makes sense, if they are not affordable. (emphasis added) The question of attracting families is clearly driven by the quality of the schools. The city must recognize making it more difficult and/or more expensive to drive discourages families. Every family has a car, it is the best and safest way to move your kids when necessary. What is the threshold for the number of larger bedrooms which should be created..?. There are **already enough school aged kids in Emeryville. However, it appears the Emeryville schools (especially the high school), is not meeting the needs of Emeryville parents. The City continues to spend resources to attract people from outside, instead of finding ways to make what we have sustainable.***

LOCAL HIRE: The City can encourage local hire by offering a small business license tax credit for each Emeryville resident employed by an Emeryville business. The city could provide annual recognition to the top three companies with the most per capita number of Emeryville employees.

To combat low wage jobs, the city should adopt a minimum wage law. The local ordinance could include an exemption process for existing businesses. Creating the exemption is not meant to circumvent the intent of the law. It provides a mechanism to put the new policy in place, with some level of sensitivity to existing that are not in compliance. The exemption allows a period of time for the city to look at individual circumstances, and make the appropriate determination. It is also about the way the situation is approached. We are a small city, we can try to work with the affected parties to achieve better results. The goal is to increase wages and benefits, but not to put the lowest paid workers out of work.

On the enforcement side, Emeryville, and other cities, should pursue the potential expansion of the existing state labor department, to enforce the local minimum wage laws. The State labor department has a staff which is trained to enforce the existing state minimum wage law. It doesn't make sense for every individual jurisdiction to duplicate what the State already does. IA new state law could modify the duties of the State Labor Dept to simply factor in the locally adopted minimum wage. Most smaller cities, and especially Emeryville are not set up for this kind of enforcement.

3) Maintain the Emery Go Round beyond 2016, when the existing funding mechanism expires. My work at the Alameda County Transportation Commission has created the ability of the Alameda County Transportation Commission to provide funding for the Emery Go Round, and other shuttles in Alameda County..

The existing funding formula for the Emery Go Round expires in 2016. Solving the funding problem for this essential need is a high priority. The existing assessment district is NOT likely to be renewed without substantial changes to existing funding formulas, governance structure, and better control of future funding obligations.

A small group of Emeryville Property Owners EPOA recognized the inequity of the County half-cent sales tax, and the prospect that inequity would double if the revised Measure BB is approved. Seeking a solution to the problem EPOA decided to create a local ballot measure to collect a local half-cent sales tax for the Emery Go Round. The City contributes roughly \$3.5 million each year, under the existing tax, and only receives about \$500,000 annually in return, A lion's share of the money is used for costly projects in Southern Alameda County, which provide only minimal benefit to Emeryville. Our most important transportation was not even considered. The attorney hired to create the local tax measure discovered there is a one cent maximum state limit on the amount of local tax which can be collected. That means if a local sales tax measure was on the same ballot as the county tax measure only one of the measures could become operative.

The county tax measure unfair for Emeryville and northern Alameda County Cities. It lacks a minimum return to source requirement. It fails to consider local impacts and costs associated with the tax money generated. Traffic control, traffic congestion, parking, and the cost of the Emery Go Round which brings shoppers in and out of the city.. A certain portion of the money collected should be returned to source. We have a funding crisis for Emeryville's most important transportation need. while substantial local taxes are paying for needs in other areas. There was no ability to fund the Emery Go Round.

Emeryville property owners EPOA decided the city's best interests would be better served if the city voters would adopt a local half cent sales tax . If the local tax measure is used for general purpose, it would only require 50% voter approval. Approval of the local measure would provide full \$3.5 million funding direct to city. It would provide more than enough money for the Emery Go Round, and other needs such as affordable housing, with little impact to Emeryville taxpayers.

The EPOA made the chair of the Alameda County Transportation Commission aware of the intent to create a competing measure. He is a big fan of extending BART to Livermore, the most expensive project in the expenditure Plan. The EPOA asked the attorney creating the ballot measure to appear before the Expenditure Plan Committee to make them aware of the potential conflicting measure. They quickly recognized the local measure could jeopardize their measure throughout the county.. The threat of the measure promptly forced an immediate adjustment.

The Transportation Expenditure Plan now provides \$300 million to fund shuttles, such as the Emery Go Round, Broadway, and other shuttles. It was a political victory for Emeryville. Following that action assurance of funding provided by individual board members the EPOA dropped the proposed competing local tax measure, in favor of the county proposed measure. One reason for dropping the local measure was the city council's refusal to support it. It baffles me how the council could otherwise support the county tax measure, and be satisfied with so

little return. The measure is still inequitable, but funding for the Emery Go Round is too important to oppose it.

This video clip shows you how the last minute change was accomplished
<http://youtu.be/n-3Nqnks6A>

It was one of my first recordings of a regional meeting with my new camera. There were a few glitches, but the most important part of the decision was captured. The EPOA is seeking a minimum of \$2 million each year for 30 years, a total of \$60 million over the 30-year period for the Emery Go Round. Only \$60 million out of the \$210 million collected from Emeryville over 30 years. The service is essential to eliminate traffic congestion, and generating a portion of the tax money collected. . It carries about 5,500 each day.

The adoption of a renewed assessment for the Emery Go Round is essential. This is one example of how experience can be used to bring regional money to Emeryville.

2. Who has endorsed you so far (groups and individuals of note)?

Stuart Flashman
(other endorsements pending)

3. How much money do you currently have for this race? How much money do you plan to raise? Where will the money come from?

I have no money on hand.. I seek to raise \$15,000 from local property owners and community members who have no pending plans to improve their land or anticipated development in Emeryville.

4. Why did you choose to run for this office? What strength/ skills would you bring to the Council?

I'm running for this office because I recognize how prior city managers created a circumstance of community disengagement and full control of the City.

The Staff altered reports prepared by outside consultants. to influence council decisions. These two short video clips are examples of that story

<http://youtu.be/8V5-cAjiays>

<http://youtu.be/r5YLoR-RgWg>

Observing the injustice has prompted me to seek solutions. Emeryville is small enough to become organized. Many attempts were made to organize the city for common benefit.

When the city began posting agendas on the web, the former city manager eliminated mailing out full agenda packets to about 40 paid subscribers, without telling the council. That group of concerned community members who were interested in the details were just cut off. Putting the agenda information on the web is admirable, but not a reason to cut off interested parties.

The city manager hijacked the Chamber of commerce. The city provides the Emeryville Chamber with a free office. The City also has an annual contract with the Chamber for services, not to exceed \$25,000 each year. The city does not hand over the money. Instead, the Chamber director must constantly submit invoices to collect the money for each service performed, which have to be approved by Staff.

This short video clip of their contract consideration by the council shows the relationship.

As a result, the Chamber cannot provide the kind of independent oversight most business people would expect. Complaints about the city are absorbed like a sponge. The Chamber does not provide news and information to all its members. At one time the Chamber had a local newspaper, but the entire content had to first be approved by the Staff, and the city paid for the distribution.

The business people in Emeryville have been seriously disengaged. I created a "Public Notice & Accountability ballot measure" to restore mailing out agenda packets, increased notice requirements and etc. It did not go forward, yet. But it's creation caused the city to move to adopt a 10 day notice provision.

I'm running for this office because I strongly recognize the problems, and the serious need to establish community engagement and I know the real benefits which can be achieved if we can organize a city of only 10,000 residents and business people. The organized effort seeks to have the city identify ways to bring economic benefit to the community. Things like community choice aggregation, free wireless internet. A organized effort could bring discounts on the purchase of goods and services both inside and outside of Emeryville.

The suggested effort could allow the city to identify its inhabitants. We could create a profile for individual members, and one for every business. That information allows us to determine the skills of the people and their connections. We could identify existing resources, help locals connect with each other. A great way to meet your neighbors.

I've spent too many years thinking of ways to make things better. Those efforts brought considerable resistance from Staff, in ways too extreme to believe. The Staff control created problems for city employees and others in the community.

I make mistakes, learn from them and move forward. The possibility of achieving these benefits for the community keeps me actively interested. It is the reason I volunteer to provide the videos for the community. The work has made me more informed than ever before. My work at the regional agencies provides on-going presence for the city, and it brings regional accountability. If

you believe strongly in something, if you stick with it, it will eventually happen. The folks in power have thrown every potential roadblock in the way, and I still keep trying. .

5. What major Emeryville development of the last 10 years do you least respect and why?

The Emeryville Transit Center Project is the worst investment the city is making. This is a project created by the former city manager, which confers unnecessary public benefit to Wareham Development. (Staff favored developer)

The parking lot for the Amtrak Station is the subject property. Below the ground is a serious collection of toxic waste. The site was the subject of a federal EPA mandate where toxins in the area were collected and buried behind slurry walls with 24 hr monitoring. The EPA determined the site could not be used for anything but a parking lot.

However the zeal of the former city manager to develop this site, led to Wareham agreeing to take on the task with substantial unwarranted city subsidy and investment. The City Staff put together a deal to provide \$3 million to help cleanup the site. The City used money granted from the EPA for this cleanup which could have been used for other sites, less contaminated. Perhaps, the worst part of the deal, the City has agreed to release Westinghouse from any future liability for something the city should never assume responsibility for.. That is an insane risk to assume.

Because of commitments by the Staff, and with the end of redevelopment money, the former city manager created an alternative funding mechanism, approved by the city council, to use future general fund money to pay for this toxic cleanup.

Most respect?

In terms of what is best for the community. I think Bay Street. If you look at the transformation of the property, and the fact the project provides the city with about 25% of our sales tax money, it was a wise investment. It puts Emeryville on the map and it offers a quality place to go. It became the regional shopping center it was intended to be. The project also includes housing, which an improvement over the project as originally proposed.

However the politics of the way the approvals were granted were unacceptable, but that is not part of the question.

6. How can we attract more families into Emeryville?

The question assumes that to be a priority. A better question might be what can we do to retain existing families..? It is disturbing how we keep making investments to attract people from outside and do little for existing families. Current requirements of developers to create larger bedroom units is not working. It will not work unless the city finds a way to subsidize and make affordable units. The capacity and quality of the school district plays, and affordable child care play a major role. Many existing families are not sending their kids to Emeryville Schools. In

addition, as the city continues to make driving less desirable, that has a direct impact on families. Most families have cars for safety and many other reasons. The city's new parking policies to discourage autos is a disincentive for families.

7. Traffic is a major problem in Emeryville and with all the development in the pipeline it seems likely to get worse. How would you work to lessen this?

The above answer of continuing the Emery Go Round. in addition, bringing the city together and technology can provide new ways to identify ways people in the community traveling to the same places can come together.

8. The Emeryville Center for Community Life is now under construction. Are you in agreement with the present vision for its use?

The approval of this project has been a rough road. And although I don't agree with some of the process for approval, it's time to focus on what we have decided, and move forward with the current vision. I think the project can be one component to bring the community together, and to encourage more Emeryville families to send their kids to the school. The project will bring services, such as wellness center, and a library which will be a real benefit. Not sure if the planned k-12 model is the best way to go.

Anna Yates is working, and potentially the district could delay moving the elementary school to the new site. that is really a school board decision, outside the purview of the city council.

What new ideas or changes would you suggest or support? How do you feel about its present sources and level of funding?

The construction contract has been approved and is moving forward with the money in the bank. If voters do not approve the renewal of the school parcel tax in November, it may create an economic hardship?

9. What is your opinion about developers signing community benefit agreements in Emeryville? Please include in your answer specific reference to the (former) Sherwin-Williams property.

A community benefit agreement is unnecessary for a small city like Emeryville. Community benefit agreements usually occur in larger cities and they become necessary when residents can't trust the legislative body to provide those benefits. It is a commitment for political support. A legal and binding agreement would require RULE to become a duly established non-profit membership group. RULE does not have a city license to operate. It may not have standing in a court to enforce such an agreement. .

RULE is only inclusive of one segment of the community, and does not have the right to assume they are negotiating for other residents in the city. It appears they are engaging in back door

politics, making agreements outside of the public eye. And without the opportunity of the broader community to be aware and participate. RULE is making the advanced assumption, based on prior years of staff control telling developers to ignore the community. A community benefit agreement undermines the role of the city council, at a time when RULE should simply focus on the successful outcome of the city council to achieve its objectives.

10. Without the re-development agency, how can small business be encouraged to come to Emeryville?

The city should first outreach to existing small businesses to encourage retention. Our first obligation should be to access and assist exiting small business to make them feel welcome. Getting them here is only doing half the job. The city should explore creative ways to encourage the creation affordable retail condominiums to promote locally serving stores. The high cost of commercial rent, and the associated personal guarantees to pay it, is the single largest reason we have chain stores. public money used to subsidize local retail returns greater benefit to the community than subsidizing residential units, where only a single family benefits. the promotion of local retail provides the community with available goods and services, and increased quality of life. Can affordable housing money be used for this idea?

11. Do you believe that transparency in city decisions has improved in the past five years? Does this still need improvement? What changes would you suggest or support?

Already answered above.

12. How do you see the role of the city manager in Emeryville with regard to both connection to the city council and the public? Can you comment on changes in this with our new city manager and your opinion.

The new city manager is just continuing the prior practice of minimal community involvement.

13. Anything Else? -- Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?

I am vested in Emeryville, and will continue to look out for the best interests of the city. I am hopeful to one day accomplish the stated goals and objectives