

QUESTIONNAIRE

GREEN PARTY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY 2014 ENDORSEMENT DECISION

Please email your responses to: GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoogleroups.com.

In the subject line, please include "AC Transit" and your ward number.

If it is not possible for you to email, please mail your responses to:
AC Transit Board Questionnaire
c/o Green Party of Alameda County,
2022A Blake Street * Berkeley, CA 94704

Please respond by Saturday, August 23, 2014.

Name: Murphy McCalley

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1. Why do you want to serve (or continue to serve) on the AC Transit Board?

My interest to serve on the AC Transit Board is based on my desire to help my community in an area I believe I have the professional expertise and personal interest. I have spent my over 30 year professional career in the public transit industry. I have worked for and with transit agencies just like AC Transit in a number of roles, staff, consultant, advisor, and banker. I hope to bring this depth of experience to help to improve AC Transit. On a personal level growing up in the east bay, AC

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Transit was my family's primary mode of transportation. You could say we were "green" before it was cool. We did not own and automobile and used AC Transit for all of our transportation needs. I currently use the extensive public transit network in the bay area. I believe in public transit and it has been important to me both professionally and personally. In 2013, I retired and reduced my consulting practice. I now wish to offer my skills and commitment to public transit to help make AC Transit a model system that it once was.

2. (For incumbents:) What actions of yours during your term are you proudest of? What have you accomplished during your time on the board?

(For non--incumbents:) Which of your past experiences are valuable for serving on the board? Have you been following AC Transit's actions the last 5 years? If so, what changes have you noted?

Serving in the role of Chief Financial Officer for two California transportation agencies (Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, now LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority) and the San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board, now the Metropolitan Transit System MTS), and working in the public transit industry as a financial consultant/advisor, gives me a unique understanding of the issues public transit agencies face. I have been involved at the State level (California Transit Association) and Nationally (American Public Transit Association). I was award the Federal Transit Administrators Innovative Finance award for developing a creative way to finance the acquisition of buses. I used this experience to help develop the California Transit Finance Corporation (CTFC) that was used to help other systems with rolling stock acquisition. I also, served as the Chair of the APTA Financial Management Committee. More importantly, my consulting experience exposed me to other transit systems across the country. This hands on experience gives me a unique prospective on "best industry practices" that I would hope to share with AC Transit.

Like most systems, AC Transit was impacted by the great recession. As a result AC Transit has taken a number of critical actions, not the

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least of which has been the reduction in service, staff layoff, and closure of maintenance divisions. Additionally, AC Transit, recently elected to eliminate the issuance of passenger transfers, and reached a labor agreement with the ATU. On the capital projects front, AC Transit is seeking to implement a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line and to rehabilitate their four bus garages, with the reopening of the Richmond Division scheduled for this year.

Some of the changes I have noticed to the system are the overall cleanliness of the buses, the use of technology such as NexBus, and apps, and the implementation of the Clipper fare card. With the recent improvement in funding, there has also been a move to restore some services that had been cut.

3. Do you ride AC Transit and, if so, how frequently?

I am an active user of the public transit network in bay area. Historically, I have used AC Transit extensively. Unfortunately, AC Transit does not provide direct service to my neighborhood in Castro Valley and the service that is provided is limited.

4. People *without* access to cars are AC Transit's captive audience. What are your ideas for increasing ridership of those *with* cars, sometimes referred to as "choice riders?"

This continues to be a challenge for U.S. transit systems. Transit historically captures a small, but growing slice of the transportation modal split (auto, bus, trains, bikes). This is due to a number of factors, dependence on the auto, land use planning, auto/parking/highway subsidies, to name a few. Simply put, experience has shown that choice riders can be attracted though service that takes them where they need to go, is timely, safe and priced appropriately. In fact, studies suggest that frequency of service may be the strongest attractor. Additionally, technology needs to be employed, such as wifi, and mobile apps, and bus locator systems which would make the bus commute interesting for those younger generation choice rider, who are more inclined to use public transit. This generation is more environmentally sensitive, and are not as wedded to the auto. While it is important for public transit to

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expand its ridership, it is important that this not be done at the expense of its core rider base (transit dependent).

5. What are your thoughts on AC Transit's current TransBay service?

On the surface, AC Transit Transbay service appears somewhat duplicative, with BART services and is costly for AC Transit to provide compared to other service. However, BART is currently at capacity during peak-hour and there may be instances where access to BART is not as convenient, and a direct AC Transit route is appropriate for that neighborhood. But as travel patterns and neighborhoods change each of these routes should be periodically evaluated. Also, this service can be viewed as “premium” service and as such be priced accordingly. Lastly, I believe there is a need to have a level of redundancy in the public transit network, in the event of a disruption to one or more of the other operators.

6. AC Transit made the decision to use the diesel. Are you satisfied with that? Why or why not?

From an environmental standpoint I would prefer alternative fuel buses. The industry has spent years experimenting with alternative fuels, and now seem to have focused on natural gas or electric. A large number of transit systems throughout the country have switched, with good results. If funding permits, I am in favor alternative fuels.

7. Would a pre-paid or free bus system be financially feasible? (Seattle has this in downtown areas, Portland for seniors.) It is worth a study.

Every jurisdiction is different. What works in Seattle may not work in the East Bay. As you are aware, transit is a subsidized enterprise. In fact, farebox recovery is an important metric. Any decision to provide free service needs to be evaluated on the basis of increased ridership versus loss revenues, and additional subsidy requirement. I am not opposed to reviewing the concept, but it would need to be carefully studied. A key ingredient would be identifying where the additional subsidy would come from. You should note that Portland eliminated its Fareless Square program due to costs. That is why I

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support the passage of Measure BB, this would give AC Transit additional funding flexibility.

8. Are you concerned about buses for youth, seniors, disabled, and low-income riders?

Yes, growing up the Oakland AC Transit was my family's primary mode of transportation. Our family used AC Transit to get to work, school and recreation. I understand and appreciate how important transit is for these user groups. These groups also serve as the backbone of the transit system ridership. Also, ADA services are an important component of the public transit delivery system. The ADA community have been a strong advocate for public transit and deserve the freedom of mobility that ADA services provide.

Are you aware of the disproportionate cuts in services impacting communities of color?

As a result of services cuts and the allocation of transportation services in Los Angeles and the consent decree that followed, the Federal Transit Administration implemented strong Title VI protections for low-income communities. I believe it is important to provide transit services equably based on demand/needs, which is often highest in low-income communities of color. I believe it is not a good business practice or public policy to alienate your core customers.

9. What endorsements have you received thus far?

Mr. Gordon Litton, Former Administrator, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has endorsed my candidacy.

10. Please add anything more you wish to tell us so we can make a good decision.

I am excited about having the opportunity to serve on the AC Transit Board. I bring real world experience and a passion for public transit. *I am not looking at the AC Transit position as a steppingstone to higher political office.* I can bring a unique perspective to the AC Transit Board as a transit user, former transit employee, and as an

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industry consultant/advisor. I am at a point in my life where I would like to give back and help to make things better for our community.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Greg Jan
Green Party of Alameda County

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