

QUESTIONNAIRE

GREEN PARTY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY 2016 ENDORSEMENT DECISION

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

In the subject line, please include "Oakland City Council" and your district number. Any written correspondence for the Alameda County Green Party should be addressed to:

2022A Blake Street * Berkeley, CA 94704

Please respond by Saturday, August 27

Name: **Noel Gallo**

Phone: **(510) 289-4915**

Email: **Noel.Gallo@yahoo.com**

Website: **galloforoakland.com**

Note: You may respond to any question with a link to your website or other posted positions. For the yes/no questions, please answer yes or no and if you wish to add to your answer, feel free to do so.

1. Motivation -- Why did you choose to run for City office? If you are running against an incumbent, what are your main dis-satisfactions and differences with him or her?

I am the Incumbent Oakland City Council Member for District 5. I have served Oakland as a community volunteer, organizer, resident, for my lifetime. I am honored that I have been elected by District 5 voters to represent them as a Oakland Board of Education Member for 20 years and as the current District 5 Oakland City Council member for the past 4 years. Over that timeframe, I have built strong community

partnerships, expertise and have stayed committed to Building Community & Volunteerism; Economic Development; Better Schools & Public Safety. Based on my experience as an Elected Official, lifetime resident of the City of Oakland and having raised four children in East Oakland, and daily interaction with my constituents at the street and business levels, I am committed to action.

2. Program and Priorities -- 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? What do you believe are the main priorities for the City?

1. Public Safety

2. Affordable and Workforce Housing and providing support to Homeless

3. Equity, Job Preservation and Creation

I will support and advocate for Increasing police officers and firefighters; Establish an Independent Citizens Police Commission; Improve Pedestrian/Transportation safety by repaving our roads, installing new stop lights, crosswalks, bike lanes, and enforcing Traffic laws. Advocate for Better Schools by supporting the Rebuild of Fremont High, Glenview Elementary, and Edna Brewer Athletic Field; Advocate for the continued investment in curricula, teachers and infrastructure. Advocate for Increase in affordable, workforce, live-work units; Support programs for the Homeless. Support efforts that Attract investment for job creation and new businesses and efforts that re-invest in our neighborhoods and community shopping corridors.

Addressing the inequity of City resources to East Oakland is one of my key priorities in the upcoming four years. My record to address these inequities includes: support for the Infrastructure Bond, Affordable Housing, Renter Protection laws, Minimum Wage, the Development Impact Fee Program and job training funding for East and West Oakland.

3. Qualifications -- Please give a brief summary of your background and qualifications for the office of City. If you are a current City Government elected official, what issues can you point to in your time as an elected official that have had a positive impact?

I have served Oakland as a community volunteer, organizer, resident, for my lifetime. I am honored that I have been elected by District 5 voters to represent them as a Oakland Board of Education Member for 20 years and as the current District 5 Oakland City Council member for the past 4 years. Over that timeframe, I have built strong community partnerships, expertise and have stayed committed to Building

Community & Volunteerism; Economic Development; Better Schools & Public Safety. Based on my experience as an Elected Official, lifetime resident of the City of Oakland and having raised four children in East Oakland, and daily interaction with my constituents at the street and business levels, I am committed to action. Recently I co-sponsored legislation to place the Establishment of an Independent Citizens Police Commission on November 2016 ballot; authorized State legislation to address: Sideshows Sweepstakes Gambling Casinos, Illegal Dumping, Fireworks, Prostitution and Human Trafficking and the Elephant Bull Hooks.

Please see Noel Gallo Flyer for more information .

4. Local groups -- Are you affiliated with any of the active Oakland groups? Such as TOLA, Make Oakland Better Now, Oakland Justice Coalition, Block by Block, Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club, GO Public Schools, OCO, or any other. Describe your involvement and why you feel this group is worthy of your support.

I am big supporter of the TOLA Program – my daughter – Amanda- was a participant and I regularly speak to the TOLA Program participants. I have supported the efforts of Oakland Better Now – meetings regarding the City of Oakland budget. GO Public Schools is a key partner. I am a believer and supporter of OCO. With each of these community organizations, I have supported their efforts at Oakland schools or city council policy levels; advocated for funding, policy action and met with them for input and advice on Oakland Issues.

5. Local activities -- Other than local politics, are you involved in any other Oakland based community activities that you would like to share with us? This can range from volunteering in your school to being in your church baseball league.

I sponsor the Clean City=Safe City Program: For the past four years, every Saturday and Sunday, we have organized neighborhood clean ups for graffiti abatement, illegal dumping and beautification.

My office annually sponsors Youth Internship Program where District 5 youth intern at my office to learn about their community, visit local universities, receive mentoring and work on community development projects.

I also support and contribute to Youth sports programs in District 5.

6. Budget -- If you were on council for the next budget in 2017 how would you act differently from the council members dealing with the budget in 2015? How much additional revenue should the City aim to take in, and how would you generate it?

I was involved in the FY 2015-2017 City of Oakland Budget. I sought the advice of Labor Unions, community organizations, youth organizations and residents. I will do the same in 2017.

The FY 2017 – 2019 Budget will be determined by the Infrastructure Bond vote; the Development Impact Fee Program will be in affect; the Soda Tax Revenues; and the City’s share of the Alameda County Bond Measures as well as new revenue through the Cannabis permits. I supported all of these measures.

7. Youth -- Describe the condition of youth in Oakland? What would your priorities for youth be for Oakland government and how would they get implemented and paid for?

Oakland youth need better schools, safe communities and workforce opportunities. I will continue to fight for better schools by rebuilding Fremont High, Glenview Elementary and the Edna Brew Athletic Field; I will work with OUSD and Charter School Associations to promote continued investment in curricula, teachers and infrastructure.

8. Police -- How do you think our community policing is going and what are the next steps? Describe the current relationship between the residents and the Oakland Police. Do you suggest any changes? Do you support Restorative Justice programs and how should the city be involved, if at all. What are your thoughts about police misconduct and how do you feel Oakland should deal with it?

I feel very strongly about accountability at all levels. I authored the establishment of the Independent Citizens Police Commission to provide community oversight over police misconduct.

9. Development Projects -- What are your thoughts and views about the West Oakland Army Base, The upper Broadway-Valdez Triangle, Oak to 9th and other projects?

Each of these developments have provided the City of Oakland the ability to respond to a major mixed use development opportunity to create jobs, housing, business opportunities.

10. Housing & Gentrification -- Increasing rents, dislocation, and gentrification have been in the news. What policies do you advocate to assure that Oakland tenants are protected and that Oakland remains an economically and racially diverse city? Do you favor rent control?

I strongly believe in quality Housing for all. I have been involved in the following:

- Led initiative to establish a Rent Control Measure for Voter Approval.
- Leading efforts to serve Homelessness: Increased funding for supportive services and additional temporary housing.
- Advocate for removal of Nuisance Properties: Increased funding for Code Enforcement.
- Advocating for District 5 Infill and major housing development opportunities: supported the construction of 187 units; facilitating 1,230 new units and advocating for major new market and affordable housing development in District 5.

11. Environment -- What do you think the Oakland City government should be doing about the environment?

As an older industrial city, Oakland has a number of contaminated properties that should be remediated. In District 5 – the GE Plant (23-acres) has been a long term issue and GE Electric Company should be held responsible for its accelerated remediation and viable reuses for the Oakland community. Another District 5 property is the older Miller Library facility, Cryer Boatworks facility and other blighted and environmentally challenged properties – that the City should ensure timely remediation and responsibility by responsible private and public entities. I have supported the City of Oakland’s Climate Action Plan; voted No to ban the handling and storage of coal in Oakland; supporting the Oakland Infrastructure Bond to repair streets, systems and facilities for Oakland residents; support energy efficiency programs for residents and business and continue to advocate for public transportation improvements, TOD development and other smart urban developments.

12. Public Banking -- Will you introduce, co-sponsor and/or support an ordinance or charter amendment to create a Public Bank of Oakland, inspired by the Bank of North Dakota [\[1\]](#) (BND), a 100 year old public institution? The Public Bank of Oakland would hold the city's deposits - in contrast to having them held by Wall Street Banks as currently done. It would make fiscally responsible loans in the best interest of the residents of Oakland - in contrast to Wall Street banks' record of risk and ruin. Profits made by the Public Bank of Oakland would be returned to the General Fund of the City of Oakland, or used to further buttress the loan capabilities of the bank, much as the BND does (the BND has returned over \$400,000,000 to the General Fund of the

State of North Dakota over the last 21 years,^[i] while substantially increasing its capitalization and its loan outreach)

^[i] <https://bnd.nd.gov/>

^[ii] <https://ilsr.org/rule/bank-of-north-dakota-2/>

I am interested in learning more about the opportunity to create a Public Bank .

13. Local Payday Lenders -- Oakland is awash with for-profit Check Cashing and PayDay Loan emporiums (a simple Google query^[i] shows 20). These outfits provide emergency cash and other financial products to those who cannot obtain it otherwise - at outrageously high interest rates and/or extremely high fees. Professor Mehrsa Baradaran, in her book *How the Other Half Banks*,^[ii] quotes the astounding statistic that those who use these services spend on average over \$2000 per household per year.

It is not widely known but Oakland is home to the only non-profit check Cashing^[iii] (CCC) in Fruitvale Plaza. It provides the same services for-profit operators do at 33% - 50% of the cost, while paying its employees a living wage. Will you support build-out and capitalization loans by the City of Oakland to expand CCC to other storefronts around Oakland (much as the City Council gave a 50-year, \$3,300,000 interest-free loan to the E 12th St. developers^[iv])?

I am very proud that the Community Development Finance organization is located in Oakland's Fruitvale District. I believe in the organization's mission to provide access to capital for low income individuals and neighborhoods. I voted against the 12th Street Reminder Development Project and have advocated to utilize public land for public good.

^[i] Type 'Oakland Payday lenders' into Google Search and click on the resulting map.

^[ii] NALC.org "Author makes the case for postal banking" <http://tinyurl.com/h9e6a2p>

Baradaran noted that the average unbanked family with an income of around \$25,000 spends about \$2,400 per year on financial transactions like these, even more than it spends on food.

^[iii] <http://communitycheckcashing.org/>

^[iv] Oakland City Council agenda, June 15th, 2016 <http://tinyurl.com/jzy398p>

14. Satisfaction of Residents -- How do you think the average resident feels about city government? How would you rate the satisfaction level?

In my daily interactions with Oakland residents and businesses, many are dissatisfied with City government – potholes, illegal dumping, graffiti, limited policing services especially in flatland areas, numerous code violations and incompliance with traffic laws by drivers is angering and frustrating to many Oakland citizens and businesses.

15. Accountability -- How do you propose making yourself accountable and accessible to the citizens of Oakland?

I have always had an Open Door Policy; I make myself available to meet with constituents, advocacy groups, Labor Unions, and many organizations such as PUEBLO, OCO, EBASE, EBAYDC, Sierra Club and many others.

16. Governance -- What kind of relationship could you have with other office holders? Who do you see as a working majority on council and who can you work with?

I communicate and reach out to my City Council colleagues even when in disagreement on a policy. I will continue to build relationships with others.

17. Endorsements -- Who has endorsed you so far? Who do you expect to endorse you? Who are you endorsing, from President all the way down ballot to local races? Include your #2 and 3 choices (if applicable) for your own race and note that this year the City races are Council seats, School Board seats and City Attorney.

Alameda County Building Trades Council, Wellstone Democratic Club, Block By Block Organization-Oakland, Council members' Dan Kalb and Rebecca Kaplan, Alan Yee (Affiliation- Oakland Port Commission), Bill Phua – Oakland Builder, Kathy Chao Rothberg (Affiliation – Executive Director, Lao Family Community Development Organization; Han-Sin Thomas (Affiliation –CEO, Education for Change); Jean Quan (Former Oakland Mayor); Dr. Floyd Huen (Affiliation – Block By Block Organization); PTA presidents of Glenview, Edna Brewer, Fremont High School, Oakland Charter Academy and EPIC Charter School and many other residents and business owners in District 5.

Presidential – Hillary Clinton; Oakland City Council: Dan Kalb- Oakland District 1 and Rebecca Kaplan – At Large Oakland City Council.

18. Campaign Funding -- How much money do you currently have for this race? How much money do you plan to raise? Where will the money come from? Describe

sources of financial contributions for your campaign that you would refuse to accept (if any).

The maximum campaign contribution limit is \$128,000 for City Council District campaigns. I have \$10,000 in hand at this time. I will be participating in the Oakland Public Financing Program. I do intend to take financial contributions from coal companies or affiliated investors.

19. Checks and balances -- How do you view current the relationship between the Council and Mayor? Any comments on the same question for the Auditor and City Attorney? Are there any changes they would propose to the city charter?

I recommend that the Mayor needs to establish stronger working relationships with all City Council members.

20. Money in elections. -- Does Oakland need campaign finance reform? If so, what kind? Do you support amending the Constitution to end corporate Constitutional rights and getting money out of politics? Have you [Taken the Pledge to Amend](https://movetoamend.org/take-pledge-amend)? (<https://movetoamend.org/take-pledge-amend>)

We have established a Public Ethics Commission and Department to monitor Elections and Campaigns. I am committed to following the voters vote to fully fund a stronger Public Ethics Department.

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

I have included my Resume and a Summary of my Priorities and Accomplishments.

Yes or No questions (follow with an explanation if you want to add one)

- Do you support raising the minimum wage to a living wage?

I am supportive of the Oakland Minimum Wage legislation and will continue to look for ways to achieve economic prosperity for all.

- Are you in favor of a police commission?

Yes – Over many years, I have worked on this issue and in 2016; I authored the City of Oakland legislation.

- Would you vote for using eminent domain to abate foreclosure crisis? **YES**
- Do you support Ranked Choice Voting? **YES**
- Would you support Proportional Representation? **YES**
- Do you support diverting people from prosecution if they participate in a restorative justice program? **YES**
- Do you support Community Choice Aggregation? **YES**
- Would you vote to allow more grey water systems? **YES**