

Green Party Questionnaire
2016
For the office of City Council, Albany Ca.

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Occupation: General Contractor (Retired)
Campaign Chair: Peter Maass
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1. I'm a East Bay native and grew up in San Leandro. I graduated from UC Berkeley in 1970 with a degree in Political Science, and received a Teaching Credential from San Francisco State University several years later. After a variety of life adventures, activism and various jobs, I turned my carpentry/electrical/plumbing skills into a General Contracting career. I met my wife Lauren (a LEED certified architect, who has been working primarily on K-12 Public School projects) in the late 90s and moved from my long term base in Berkeley to Albany, approximately 18 years ago. In 2006 a very large, and to my mind inappropriate, shopping mall development was proposed for the north parking lot at Golden Gate Fields. I attended a community meeting and spoke up, saying essentially that this was a bad idea for Albany and the environment. I ended up working on a Council Race that was fought over the issue, the anti-mall side won and when my candidates took office I was appointed to the Albany Planning and Zoning Commission. After six years of service on the Albany Planning and Zoning Commission (2006-2012), I decided to run for a seat on the Albany City Council in 2012. With a lot of door to door walking and many endorsements from multiple former mayors, Loni Hancock, the Sierra Club, Citizens of the East Shore Park, and the Green Party, I was able to win a seat in a hotly contested contest (seven candidates, including an incumbent, were running for three seats). With my life experiences of teaching and running construction projects, my communal living experiences, Buddhist oriented philosophy, and my time on the Planning and Zoning Commission, I was well prepared to take on the challenges that Albany has faced over the last four years. Two years ago my fellow Council Members chose me to be the Mayor and for the last couple of years I have also served on the Alameda County Transportation Commission, and the County Waste Management Board. I joined the Housing Authority of Alameda County two months ago.
2. Albany's Budget is basically in good shape. Our revenues in FY14/15 were above expectations and we were able to add funds to our budget stabilization fund. Revenues in FY15/16 were once again strong, and the City was able to refill several vacancies in the Police Department and in Community Services. The bulk of our revenues come from Property Taxes, Sales Taxes and Property Transfer Taxes, which are highly dependent on the General Economy. Fortunately the Bay Area economy has remained strong, Albany home prices continue to climb

and general prediction is that the economy in the Bay Area will continue to grow. On a longer term horizon, there are needed Capital Improvement Projects such as the renovation of the Veteran's Building, completion of the Pierce St. Park and replacement of the Senior Center, as well as the growing CalPers liabilities, for which the City will need to find new revenue streams. One big picture idea that I believe should be explored is regional income sharing. Some cities are receiving a lions share of the tax revenue from the expanding tech industry, but refuse any meaningful expansion of their housing stock. Many neighboring communities end up providing the housing, and ensuing costs, but have no access to the revenues.

3. Both Solano Ave and San Pablo Ave have been the mercantile heart of Albany since the end of the 19th century. Both are zoned for commercial use and allow mixed use residential as well. Both streets were established pre automobile and at one time used street cars as the main mode of transportation. The last of the Key Route system was removed nearly sixty years ago, but both have regular bus service and are classified as transit corridors. The majority of residents in Albany are in a walkable/ bike able range of either, or in many cases both Avenues. With both the right layout and their proximity to most of the town, they represent the best place to find space for additional housing. My vision of a future Solano Avenue is one that has minimal to no private car traffic. It's primarily a walking and biking promenade with buses (and eventually railed transit). Businesses have been rebuild to allow two or three stories of housing above them. Street layouts in Amsterdam and Copenhagen, as well as La Rambla in Barcelona, provide much of my inspiration for Solano Ave. I can imagine San Pablo Ave being similar, but given it's width and State Highway designation it is likely to have some car traffic. The street width could allow buildings to rise 4 to 5 stories yet still not seem overwhelming to our residents. Although we share the street with Berkeley, Albany has more control over street design on Solano then it does on San Pablo and given our small city limitation of resources presents the best opportunities going forward.

The UC development at San Pablo and Monroe first came before the city while I was on the Planning and Zoning Commission. It has morphed many times in response to comments from the Commission, Biking advocates, open space supporters, farm advocates, UC village residents and many others in the community. After many transformations I am supportive of the project, which while not perfect (to my mind it's greatest short coming is that it was a missed opportunity to address our growing housing needs) does bring some positive things to Albany. It will provide added tax revenues (both property and sales) to our city coffers. It provides a walkable and bike able grocery store to residents in UC Village as well as many other residents in west Albany. The bike access along San Pablo Ave is of cutting edge design and will provide a good blueprint for the future of the rest of the street. And the project will help to fill some of the need for assisted living services for our growing senior population.

4. It will become increasingly difficult to reach our GHG goals by 2020. Both our population and economy are likely to continue to grow. Much of our GHG production is related to automobiles so we will be somewhat dependent on developments outside of the City's control. I will continue to encourage things such as charging stations in public places in order to promote electric cars, car and bike sharing, public transit (the long term goal is to have a BART stop here in Albany), and services such as Uber. Our Active Transportation Plan will also help, once fully implemented. I have also been supportive of state legislation that will allow us to separate electricity and gas on the utility bills, which in turn will allow us to charge more for gas usage. I'm also supportive of Albany joining the County's Community Choice Energy program, once it is

up and running. This CCA has the opportunity to provide 100% locally produced clean renewable energy to all of Alameda County.

5. I've endorsed both our sidewalk parcel tax and Measure N, the effort to reform our draconian parking requirements for new housing. I do plan to actively campaign for Measure N. Our arcane parking requirements are a major roadblock in any attempt to provide more housing. The lack of housing is perhaps the most immediate "big" issue facing the Bay Area at this time. Without increasing our housing stock, prices and rental rates will inevitably continue to spiral out of control. Increasing housing density along our transit corridors can also help lower our per capita GHG production and help our commercial areas thrive. The Albany Strollers and Rollers have stepped up to do the heavy lifting on the the sidewalk tax.

6. It's early in the endorsing process, but so far I've been endorsed by the Sierra Club. I expect to have many more in the next week or so. I've officially endorsed Nancy Skinner for State Senate and Rebecca Saltzman for the BART Board. At this point I would endorse and vote for Hillary Clinton for President, Kamala Harris for the US Senate, Barbara Lee for our Congressional Representative, and Tony Thurmond for State Assembly. I do like most of the positions that Jill Stein has taken, but it's a factor of risk aversion for me. I will do my best to ensure that the next President is not named Trump.

7. Yes to ending Corporate Constitutional Rights and YES to getting money out of politics (and instituting public funded campaigns). I have not read the Pledge to Amend as yet, but will.

8. For me, the 10 Key Values of the Green Party are interrelated and represent a philosophy/world view that I've tried to emulate in one way or another since sometime in my late teens. Coming of age in the sixties and early seventies in the Bay Area and my early exposure to and involvement in various Buddhist practices, and time spent wandering in the High Sierra has given me a life of experience and choices that helped form my identity. My distilled view of it all is perhaps Mahayana in perspective. There's no individual enlightenment until every sentient being is able to get in the Boat.