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Current occupation: research geologist

1. Please briefly summarize your background, qualifications, and reasons for seeking to serve on the Albany City Council.

Please see the home page of my campaign site for my official statement of qualifications along with additional background. Please see the service pages of my site for a listing of roles and a description of some of my service in each.

I desire to serve on the City Council to accelerate progress on a number of issues upon which I have been working, and learn about others I might facilitate through serving on Council.

The current Council has been timid with regard to progress. It almost balked at putting an innovative measure to collectivize sidewalk repair on the ballot that I developed and made the case for six years. I started my effort on this issue in 2010. Based on data collection efforts I led and subsequent communicating the results, by 2015 it was generally understood that the current system of requiring adjacent property owners both resulted in dangerous sidewalks and was also unfair. No other public infrastructure is maintained in this manner.

However a majority of the Council, including the two incumbents against which I am running, were inclined against proceeding with a measure in the Council's deliberation on the matter in December 2015. I subsequently started a petition that gathered almost 150 signatures asking the Council to put the measure on the ballot. After receiving this the Council commenced heading in that direction in February 2016.

I expect the other candidates will seek to claim substantial responsibility for this measure, which is the first of its kind in the state. However they were inclined against it before they were for it, and started working on it only in the last months of my six year effort.

A civic colleague and I were almost the sole campaigners for the measure. It passed with more votes than any measure in Albany's history. There is a lengthier explanation of the advance in Albany's sidewalk repair approach that I fomented here.

My work on this issue demonstrates I have the observational and listening capability to identify problems government might be able to solve, the data collection and analysis skills to validate the problem and gain insight, the creativity to think up or find viable policy solutions, and the ability to convince others to support those solutions. If I were on Council, I could increase the number of issues I could advance by shortening the time to convince others. It is much more

difficult to work an issue up from the advisory body level as an outside advocate than it would be to do so from on the Council.

This is particularly so as I would form a majority for progress with Councilmembers Pilch and Maass, who have often been outvoted by the other three Councilmembers, including my two opponents in this race. Please see the answer to question 3 below for two examples.

2. What is your vision for future development in Albany? Do you have any specific ideas towards creating affordable housing and/or emergency housing?

I have not worked on housing in Albany to date. However I have been pursuing an effort to make the City itself equitable in a manner that would make living in Albany more affordable. While Albany seems to cherish its liberal to progressive orientation, its tax structure is abominably inequitable. Low-income households pay multiple times a percent of their income to Albany in taxes as do other households. You can read about my efforts to rectify this starting in 2011 here. The current Council's performance on this issue has been apathetic.

I am aware Albany is in negotiation with a nonprofit affordable housing developer to build such housing on land it owns at Washington and Cleveland. While doing so suffers from environmental injustice because the site is right next to the freeway, I support the project because it is better than nothing, which is what Albany has been doing on affordable housing at least since I moved here in 1994.

In talking to various people so far in my campaign, the idea of upzoning the area north of Brighton Avenue has emerged. This area is already zoned for multi residence buildings, and is predominated by such. However the height limit restricts buildings to three storied over a garage. Increasing the height limit to allow for the generally tallest economically viable wood frame buildings (five stories of wood frame over two stories of concrete frame) would maximize housing in the one portion of Albany in closest proximity to a BART station. This is a nascent idea, so requires considerably more study, but it represents the type of opportunities I will investigate as I continue to learn more and discuss the issue with various people.

3. Are you familiar with Albany's Climate Action Plan? Citywide our goal for the year 2020 is a 25% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions - how will we achieve this during your tenure on the City Council?

Albany's 2020 goal will almost certainly be met as a result of one action already taken by the Council. The Council voted to default all accounts in Albany into EBCE's Brilliant 100 product, which is ostensibly free of carbon pollution. Ostensibly free because while this product is designed to have a higher renewable energy content than PG&E's base product, the remainder consists of large hydropower. At the outset, more than half of the power delivered is projected to be from that type of source.

This raises the question of additionality. Albany's vote will likely simply result in shuffling around large hydro contracts on the market rather than construction of new clean sources. To the extent this is the case, it will not result in a reduction in greenhouse pollution.

This is akin to City staff repeatedly including the greenhouse pollution reduction from commercial sector natural gas use that resulted from Western Forge and Flange leaving Albany in Albany's greenhouse pollution inventory. As implied by the name, this company had forges, and they operated on natural gas. It takes an enormous amount of energy to melt metal. The sudden decline in emissions from this sector had been a mystery for years. I finally solved it by connecting it to the departure of Western Forge and Flange. I validated this hypothesis by contacting the company with the result it provided the dollar amount of natural gas it used while in Albany.

After this discovery, the Sustainability Committee voted that Albany could not take credit for the departure of this company in its greenhouse pollution accounting. Yet staff did just that in the latest presentation of the inventory.

Still, on paper Albany will get a passing grade in 2020 as a result of the Council's one vote for Brilliant 100. On a number of actually local actions recommended by the City's Sustainability Committee, the other candidates joined the majority in voting them down. Albany staff brought Berkeley's Building Energy Saving Ordinance to the Sustainability Committee for consideration and recommendation to the Albany Council, portraying it as a likely quick slam dunk. The Committee renamed the ordinance for what it actually does - Building Energy Assessment and Disclosure Ordinance (the name of Berkeley's ordinance is a prime example of doublespeak because it does not in fact require any building energy savings). The Committee also recommended that even single family homes had to be assessed by a date certain, unlike the Berkeley ordinance, which gives owners of these least efficient buildings a pass until point of sale.

The Albany City Council turned down the date certain recommendation, and in fact has failed to take action to put any form of this ordinance in place for years now since the Sustainability Committee recommended it.

At my impetus, the Sustainability Committee has also repeatedly recommended the Council place a utility user tax increase on electricity and gas on the ballot to pay for greenhouse pollution reduction measures. The tax itself would be such a measure by making energy conservation a bit more economic. The Council ignored the Committee's recommendation the first time years ago, discussed it but never voted the next time, and the last time a couple years ago voted it down.

If I am on the Council, I might be able to rectify some of this damage to greenhouse pollution reduction efforts and the reputational risk to those efforts. I will also be able to set a firmer and actually meaningful course toward Albany's 2035 goal. This goal, to which the Council committed by adopting the General Plan update in which it is included, is to reduce annual greenhouse pollution by 60% relative to the 2004 baseline. This will require massive reductions in the two main source left: natural gas combustion in Albany buildings and transportation. I have been working on the first for eight years. It involves restructuring utility user taxes on electricity and natural gas to reflect the relative greenhouse pollution resulting from using a dollar of each. You can read about that effort [here](#). Restructuring these taxes in such a manner

would boost the price signal supporting building electrification, which is generally recognized to be a necessity if California is to continue to meet its goals.

In addition, if I am on Council I will be able to participate in guiding the development of Albany Climate Action Plan update. The City has just contracted for this work. I would seek to assure it provides the City a narrow list of meaningful actions as opposed to the smorgasborg provided by the current Climate Action Plan that left plenty of scope for pursuing the implementation of measures without emphasis on their effectiveness with regard to the bottom line: greenhouse pollution reduction. The consulting contract for this work was just let in the last month or so.

4. 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:

1) Ecological wisdom

As demonstrated by some of the above as well as various information on my campaign site, I have been fighting to protect the climate for decades. Part of that work was co-founding Albany Strollers & Rollers in 2004. You can read more about that service and some of the results to date here. You can read more about the organization at [albanystrollroll.org](http://albanystrollroll.org).

In 2006 the Sierra Club and Citizens for Eastshore Parks gathered enough signatures to qualify and initiation changing Albany's General Plan regarding the waterfront. If passed, the initiative would have prohibited development within 600 of the shoreline. While this sounds desirable, it would have pushed development into the area that was former wetland. The highest ecological use of the waterfront if the horse racing track were to cease operation would be taking out the track and restoring this wetland estuary system at the junction between Codornices Creek and the Bay. You can read more about this issue here.

2) Social Justice

During my ongoing tenure on the Charter Review Committee I have led the effort to switch Albany from plurality at large (AKA bloc voting, vote for N) to ranked choice at large (AKA choice voting, single transferable vote). This resulted in the Charter Review Committee unanimously voting to recommend ranked choice at large as the best method for Albany. After eight years of work, this recommendation motivated Albany's Board of Education unanimously asking the Council twice to put an amendment to shift its method of election to ranked choice at large on this November's ballot. A Council majority of three, including the two other candidates, voted down the Committee's recommendation for the Council to put an amendment on the ballot changing the method by which it is elected to ranked choice, and in a separate vote the same bare majority on the Council voted down the Board's request. Instead the Council took the first step on a path that could result in Albany having to be carved into five single-member districts due to the California Voting Rights Act.

While the goal of this law is laudable, it is flawed because it provides for single-member districts as the only remedy cities can implement to avoid being sued. Cities are motivated to do so because the law also provides that a city that loses a suit has to pay plaintiffs' legal costs. No city so far that has fought a case has won and so all have had to pay not only their own legal costs, but those of plaintiffs as well. In one case, the latter cost was \$4.5 million.

However Albany has the opportunity to proact. No plaintiff has sent the required law suit threat letter that starts the clock for a city to either go to single-member districts or be open to a law suit. Among the various problems with single-member districts though are that for small cities like Albany analysis of data for the last twenty years of elections available from the Secretary of State indicate switching from at large to by district will substantially and significantly increase the portion of elections that are not contested. This is not surprising because the pool of candidates is so much smaller. It is akin to habitat fragmentation increasing the likelihood of extinction.

Yet one of the other candidates voted to take the first step toward single-member districts in part based on the theory she invented on the spot with no data that going to single-member districts might result in fewer uncontested elections.

If I can beat one of the incumbents, I can form a majority of three with the two Council members that voted for putting ranked choice at large on the ballot to get that done. Those two member are termed out in two years, and so this is the moment to bring this long term goal of the Green Party to fruition. No city has adopted ranked choice at large since 1941. You have the opportunity to contribute to changing that by endorsing me, and only me. No incumbent has failed re election since I moved to Albany in 1994, so the odds are long of my winning. The best means to boost those odds is for your endorsement to recommend a bullet vote for me.

I am relaying this under social justice because diversifying representation, as ranked choice at large has been shown to do both in theory and in historic use, is social justice, which in turn will lead to more social justice when more diverse leaders have the opportunity to speak and make different policy choices.

You can read more about my service on the Charter Review Committee [here](#).

### 3) Non violence

I have not worked on this issue substantively. I am learning about policing in Albany starting tomorrow. I attended a talk by the new Police Chief last Tuesday and have asked him to direct me to information about the department. In reading this information I will generate questions for the Chief that will take me further into understanding. This is how the various ideas for improvement I have pursued usually develop, by learning and discussing.

### 4) Grassroots democracy

Ranked choice at large would cause the roots to deepen and the blades to thicken. As has been demonstrated repeatedly by ranked choice by district (AKA instant runoff) in the Bay Area cities

that use, a candidate with more grassroots support by less funding can win more readily than under previous the previous method (two-round runoff).

#### 5) Decentralization

Ranked choice at large provides for this as well. It reduces the likelihood of candidate slates to win all the available seats and thereby concentrate power in the hands of a few.

#### 6) Community based economics

I have not worked substantively on this issue. My closest engagement is through Albany Strollers & Rollers, which I co-founded. This organization has created a bike rack cost share program wherein it partners with businesses to pay for bike-shaped bike racks, handles the ordering and installation layout, and the City performs the installation. This has resulted in the addition of approximately 250 bike parking spaces in Albany, primarily on Solano and San Pablo. For the most part these streets have local businesses, which the additional bike parking helps to support. Numerous studies show people that ride bikes are better for most types of local business, as described at the bottom of this Bike East Bay page that includes references. Strollers & Rollers garners annual grants from Grizzly Peak Cyclists for this purpose as well as getting paid by the Solano Avenue Association to operate bike valet parking at the Solano Stroll. The Association had not paid for the service previously, but became willing to do upon understanding the money would be invested back into the local business community.

#### 7) Feminism

I served as the Action Director on the Board of the League of Women Voters of Berkeley, Albany, and Emeryville for over two years. The second year I served in enthusiastic support of the youngest President in that League's history who is also the first from south Berkeley and the first non-white. She won the Presidency in a contested election, with the result that supporting her in any number of ways was helpful as well as being an honor. Although I am in my 50s and she in her 20s, I enjoyed being mentored by her on various topics. I encourage you to contact her at [president@lwvbae.org](mailto:president@lwvbae.org) if you like to verify what I have written. You can read more about my service with the League here.

Four of the five students I have mentored in my professional capacity are women. The first two nominated me for Best Mentor of the Year, which I subsequently won. Based on the experience, one of these two went on to a master's program. She was subsequently hired by one of the three largest oil producers in California and become the head geologist for one of their largest assets (my work with her regarding geologic carbon sequestration, the end component of carbon capture and storage).

My wife and I both worked 60% time before our children entered school so we could co-parent them.

My wife was diagnosed with MS in 2001. She has become disabled to the point of needing assistance for basic activities of living. When not working, I care for her, unlike the example set

by some of our elected male leaders (Newt Gingrich leaving his wife when she had cancer being a particularly repulsive example).

#### 8) Respect for diversity

Ranked choice again. It is the best non-partisan election method for assuring a diversity of representation that matches the diversity of the electorate.

In addition, I serve on the Diversity Advisory Board at my workplace (Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory). I was asked to serve based on my record of mentoring students from a disadvantaged college as well as working constructively with anyone at the lab, which has quite diverse employees in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, language, and country of origin. We all believe in science of course.

My service to the first non-white President of the local League of Women Voters mentioned above.

#### 9) Personal and global responsibility

My care for my wife and children described above perhaps best conveys the responsibility I take in my personal life. My work on climate protection demonstrated my commitment to global responsibility.

#### 10) Sustainability

Besides what has been mentioned above, I have been the lead advocate for sustainable transportation in Albany. As one example, I filed a lawsuit against Albany and the University of California as a result of the former approving a change in the climate change mitigation for a development project at University Village. This change was first requested by staff at 1 am in the morning at the Council meeting regarding certification of the EIR for the project. This request was made to the Council after the close of public comment. The Council then approved the request.

Having personally filed the suit, Albany Strollers & Rollers and Carbon Neutral Albany took over the suit. The suit resulted in a settlement with the City and UC that strengthened the climate change mitigation. This in turn resulted in the first active transportation-specific traffic signal in the East Bay north of Hayward, and more significantly the first cycletrack along a state highway in the Bay Area and perhaps the state.

I undertook this effort even though I work for UC, demonstrating my commitment holding any entity to account for sustainability.

#### 5. What endorsements have you received thus far?

Please see here for a current endorsement list.