

Sierra Club

Questionnaire for 2010 Alameda Mayoral Race

Return to William Smith smith324@gmail.com or 2822 Bayview Drive by Friday, August 20th

General Approach

As Mayor, we would be working with you to help Alameda develop environmentally, equitably, and economically. As long as economic growth equates to material growth requiring materials from outside of the local area, such as large homes and automobiles and other possessions, there will be a tension between economic development and environmental stewardship. What will you do to promote sustainable and equitable economic development for Alameda and the surrounding region? (Provide details of examples of your commitment to the environment in the general information section below)

My approach as mayor will be to implement policies that demand conscious efforts by Alameda decision makers, business owners and residents to work together on alternative transportation, recycling and sustainable economic development. I also want to support more microenterprise and locally owned businesses to provide goods and services to Alameda residents over proposals by international retailers.

Regional Development

1. Do you think it is important that Alameda consider regional issues when developing Alameda Point, such as regional jobs housing balance, housing for those who cannot afford to pay market rate rents, water supply and regional transportation systems? What would you or your major supporters like to see developed at Alameda Point? (Bill Smith)

Absolutely. We are an island with other built in difficulties for reaching housing densities. But that doesn't mean we can't plan regionally. Alameda must focus on bringing in more high paying sustainable employers that make or produce things, and that includes Alameda Point. Having a jobs housing balance will not only help the region, but it will help mitigate the traffic impacts of development at Alameda Point. Given the reality that the voters of Alameda are not going to amend Measure A any time soon, we are going to have to create residential benchmarks consistent with Measure A that residential developers at Alameda Point must meet before we move forward. While I know this is difficult financially, that is the reality. But if we focus the commercial use of Alameda Point on cutting edge industry, we can give the residential part of the equation a better chance.

2. Alameda has an outstanding solid waste recycling program and has worked well with CASA to implement it. What do you think can be done to improve our solid waste recycling program and do you think the City will meet the County's landfill waste reduction goal (Ruth Abbe)

CASA and the City have worked extremely well together during CASA's relatively short existence. The City of Alameda is at or near the top of all cities in the county in terms of the amount of material diverted from the landfill. Therefore, I am confident that we will meet the County's landfill waste reduction goal. The key to achieving this goal is continued education of our residents of the importance of this and

meaningful ways to incorporate these habits into their daily lives. I will continue to work with CASA to increase their visibility at Earth Day, to sponsor workshops and forums and explore what other cities are doing and bring those ideas back for consideration.

3. A number of citizens and civic groups, most notably the League of Women Voters, are concerned about a number of actions taken or proposed very recently either by the City staff alone, or by Council members. Do you share some of these concerns, and whether or not you share them, how do you think they could be best addressed? (Jon Spangler)

I do share these concerns. I believe some of the actions of staff and others at City Hall has been needlessly secretive. The disagreements have become too personal and the situation needs to change. The business of the city needs to become more transparent and open to the public. We need to have more public discussion or workshops on important matters like Charter revisions. We need to get back to following the principles of good government as espoused by the California League of Cities and the League of Women Voters.

4. The US Fish and Wildlife Service refused to accept the runway area from the Navy to create a Wildlife Refuge. The Veterans Administration has, however, at least preliminarily, expressed a willingness to accept responsibility for this land, including remediation of the toxics. Do you have a preference as to which federal agency accepts the runway area and an adjacent dump site from the Navy? Do you support the establishment of a National Wildlife Refuge for the runway area and dump site? (Arthur Feinstein)

I will support whichever federal agency that is willing to remediate the toxics on the land. However, since the Navy is intent on doing a federal to federal transfer, Alameda will have no direct say in the matter of transfer. The Veterans Administration may also be underestimating the complexities and costs of cleanup. Establishing a wildlife refuge is a good idea and should be pursued.

5. Alameda Point Environmental Restoration (Dale Smith)

Alameda Point is a Superfund site and the Navy plans to leave some contaminated materials in place and impose deed restrictions, some in perpetuity, on the land when it is transferred. Based on what you've heard:

- What percentage of the base has been transferred or is ready for transfer?

According to the Navy, approximately 75% of the base has undergone remediation and is ready for transfer.

- What percentage still requires remediation or is in remediation?

Approximately 25% of the base requires remediation or is in remediation.

- Are residential standards the same as unrestricted use?

Unrestricted use is not the same as residential standards. Even with the property cleaned to residential standards, you would be unable to plant vegetables or fruit trees directly in the ground.

Planter boxes would need to be used. Unrestricted use means that these precautions would not be necessary.

The toxics at Alameda Point pose potential hazards to both people and other living things. Do you think existing cleanup standards are adequate? Do they protect other living things as well as humans? (Dale Smith)

At the end of the day, the Navy is not returning the land to Alameda in the same condition in which they received it. Precautions will be necessary (see above) when using the land. Also, the Navy cleanup only addresses what's in the ground. Many of the old buildings are not fit for use and must be demolished. They contain lead, asbestos and a host of other toxics that must be addressed as part of the reuse or development process.

6. Alameda energy policy (Al Weinrub)

What would be your plan for dealing with the impact of Oakland Airport being under water in a few decades, as shown in San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission maps (http://www.bcdc.ca.gov/planning/climate_change/maps/16/cbay_east.pdf)?

What I can do as mayor is to be a forceful advocate for advancing the planning for this reality. The Bay Conservation and Development Commission seems to understand that real planning now with full funding and resources is the key. State and federal decision makers have yet to realize this.

How would you create major transportation hubs with high-density housing, especially low-income housing?

The voters of Alameda will not be amending Measure A anytime soon. Given that reality, we have to be creative. Achieving certain densities to force behavior can't be our only solution. We have to work in neighborhoods and business districts to create self-sustaining alternative transportation plans, similar to Transportation Management Agencies. This will have to be a conscious effort and I will lead it.

What are the biggest barriers to green job development in low-income communities and how would you overcome these barriers?

Capital is the most significant factor. Large employers and local residents seeking to become self employed alike have difficulties generating the capital to fund innovative ventures in these communities. As mayor, I will fight at the state and federal levels to expand access to more sources of funding for sustainable economic development in lower income communities.

What characteristics must a business development project have for you to consider it sustainable economic development that would benefit the local community?

Proposed projects must be LEED certified. Also, projects must encourage our residents, and future residents, to get out of their cars and use public transportation. In cooperation with local transit agencies, developers and employers must help our efforts to expand ferry service, develop bus rapid transit, add more bike lanes and encourage car pooling. The City of Alameda has a policy of fiscal neutrality regarding Alameda Point, so any development at Alameda Point will have to fund these improvements. This should be the policy on all new developments in Alameda.

What roles will alternative energy sources such as hydropower, geothermal power and solar power play in Alameda's future? What is the City doing, especially the City's Alameda Municipal Power company, and what more could the City do to conserve energy?

Alameda Municipal Power (AMP) is already the greenest utility in California. Over 70% of its power comes from renewable resources and AMP is continuously looking to increase its green portfolio in a cost effective manner. AMP also provides free energy audits of homes and businesses to help consumers cut energy costs. In addition, AMP provides rebates for its customers who are willing to install solar panels. As mayor, I would like to explore the feasibility of a solar farm at Alameda Point. The City of Alameda is also using electric cars in some departments and exploring the use of biodiesel in our cars.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

a. Please identify pro-environmental actions you have taken either as a private individual and/or public official in your career and any environmental or civic organizations active on environmental or environmental justice matters in which you have been active.

I helped create the Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda (CASA), a citizens' group sponsored by the city to catalog, monitor and reduce our carbon footprint. I'm exploring ways to save paper and reduce our printing costs through use of technology by using an ipad for council packets. I hope to convince my colleagues and city staff to utilize this or similar technology as other cities have done.

b. Please attach any written environmental campaign material or platform plank.

c. Why should the Sierra Club support your candidacy?

I appreciate the ongoing mission of the Sierra Club and hope to earn your endorsement. I first became involved in city government to make parks more beautiful for my children. I want to help make an Alameda that has the cleaner air and water than ever before.

CANDIDATE AND CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

a. Briefly describe the major bases of support you hope to gather for your campaign. What other endorsements have you received so far? From whom else (individuals, groups) will you be seeking endorsements?

Supervisor Alice Lai-Bitker, Supervisor-Elect Wilma Chan and Alameda Firefighters have endorsed. I hope to earn the support of the Democratic and Green Parties as well as the Alameda Central Labor Council.

b. What level of time commitment do you expect to devote to Alameda city business?

I am very thankful and lucky that my husband's business allows me to devote my full attention to City of Alameda business, while keeping track of my college student son and soon-to-be college student daughter.

c. Please provide electronic, telephone, and physical addresses for the campaign.

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The Sierra Club can:

1. Endorse.
2. Engage in actions short of endorsement, which can allow a candidate to identify supporters by their Club titles or use Club mailing lists for mailings. The Club may describe the candidates' records in newsletter articles or in campaign materials mailed to the nearly 600 Alameda Sierra Club members.

3. Oppose.
4. Remain neutral. The Club may describe the candidates' records in newsletter articles.

SIERRA CLUB ENDORSEMENT PLEDGE (REQUIRED FOR INTERVIEW)

A few candidates have misrepresented action short of endorsement in their literature or statements to the press as a Sierra Club endorsement. Others, while not endorsed, have quoted selectively from Sierra Club articles to suggest Club support for them or opposition to their opponent. To protect the validity and credibility of the Sierra Club endorsement, we ask each candidate seeking our endorsement to sign the following pledge:

- (1) I understand that a Sierra Club endorsement requires a two-thirds vote by two or more volunteer leader committees, and that Sierra Club rules prohibit reporting on individual committee votes to prevent misrepresentations of a Sierra Club endorsement prior to completing the full endorsement process.

- (2) I will not misrepresent a Sierra Club endorsement for my campaign or any other campaign or issue.

- (3) I will not quote the Sierra Club, Sierra Club leaders, or Sierra Club publications, nor will I identify supporters of my campaign by their Sierra Club affiliation, without first obtaining written permission by an authorized Sierra Club representative.

- (4) This pledge covers all employees, campaign consultants, and others representing or retained by my campaign, and I will take all necessary actions to insure that others acting on my behalf will not violate this pledge.

Name: Marie Gilmore

Office Sought: City Mayor of Alameda

Signature: _____

Date: August 20, 2010