

Sierra Club

Questionnaire for 2010 City Council Race

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

General Approach

As a Councilmember, 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)

As a councilmember, I have brought my experience as the former chair of the Alameda County Planning Commission, and as an EBMUD water resources planning manager to address the many environmental challenges facing Alameda. The City of Alameda is an ethnically, environmentally and economically diverse community, with a population of approximately 76,000 residents. Alameda faces several environmental challenges as an island city, incorporated in 1854, related to water quality of discharges, transit-oriented development and housing, military base closure and superfund cleanup, and reliance on imported water and clean energy sources. During my tenure, some of my major environmental accomplishments include:

- Initiating one of the Bay Area's largest renewable energy projects — a landfill gas-to-energy station that will produce 12 megawatts of power at a constant rate — enough renewable energy to power some 11,900 average-sized homes in the two cities. Alameda owns and operates a municipal power company which purchases 85 percent of its power from renewable energy resources.*
- Passing a “Green Building” ordinances and bans on Styrofoam products for the City of Alameda.*
- Diverting 75 percent of all waste generated in Alameda from landfills before 2010. Alameda partners with Alameda County Industries and local businesses to exceed the goal of recycling paper and green waste products.*
- Directing aggressive policies on the clean up of Alameda Point (formerly Naval Air Station Alameda), comprising 2800 acres, 1/3 of the city's area. This conversion of a former military base is being developed as an important source of new businesses, jobs, housing, recreational facilities, community and cultural services.*
- Establishing general plans to devote a significant portion of Alameda to parks, shoreline, marinas and beaches*

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)

As the Alameda City Council's representative, I serve on the Environmental Quality Policy Committee of the League of California Cities and have advocated for regional environmental sustainability, particularly in promoting transit-oriented redevelopment of brown fields (SB 375). Reducing urban sprawl is a major component of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. One of the ways to achieve that is providing adequate and affordable housing close to job centers in the Bay Area, such as Alameda Point. That is one of the reasons that I have consistently supported a mixed use redevelopment of Alameda Point with open space and a range of public and private amenities with a compact footprint that would reduce vehicle trips. My major supporters would like to see a mixed use development at Alameda Point that provides variety of housing types with significant open space and public amenities.

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)

I am pleased to report that the City of Alameda is well on its way to diverting 75 percent of all waste generated from landfills before 2010. I have partnered with CASA, with assistance from Alameda County Industries and local businesses to exceed the goal of recycling paper and green waste products. We will need to focus on recycle programs for construction waste as redevelopment occurs, and partner with Alameda schools to enhance our recycling programs.

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)

As the past president of the Alameda League of Women Voters, both at the City and County level, I have been the consistent voice for open, transparent and honest city government for over 15 years. I have demonstrated this leadership from my days on the Alameda County Planning Commission, during my term as an elected Alameda Health Care District Board member, and during my entire term on the City Council. I have asked the tough questions, honored agreements between the City and its business partners and employees, and been responsive to constituent questions and inquiries. I initiated the formation of the City's first Sunshine Task Force, and provided a framework for its scope, despite opposition by City staff and some councilmembers. It is unfortunate that my desire for openness has made some City staff uncomfortable.

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)

It would be ideal for the USFWS to create and manage the wildlife refuge at Alameda Point, but the agency is concerned about accepting liability for the clean-up costs. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has been negotiating with the Navy for a 549-acre portion of the base in order to build medical clinics and an above-ground cemetery. That process is undergoing an environmental review process. I think responsibility should rest with the agency that has the funding resources to remediate the site of toxics. I support establishing a National Wildlife Refuge upon cleanup of toxics.

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?
- What percentage still requires remediation or is in remediation?
- Are residential standards the same as unrestricted use?

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)

- o *About half of the 2,700 acres that comprise the former naval air station (including 1,100 acres that are underwater) needed to be cleaned up. According to the Navy, 40% of the former naval base is cleaned up and has already been transferred or is ready for transfer and 35 percent is being cleaned up now. Another 25 percent is being assessed in order to determine what, if any, cleanup needs to be done.*
- o *Some \$466 million has been committed toward cleaning up the base to date, and it's anticipated another \$122 million could be spent. The Navy currently funds the clean-up from the sale of other former military sites and from Congressional appropriations.*
- o *Final cleanup efforts are expected to be complete in 2015, and as a councilmember, I have consistently insisted on cleanup standards that will protect public and environmental health and safety.*
- o *Because Alameda Point is one of last sites to be added to the Superfund list, it has benefited from cleanup experiences and new cleanup technologies employed at other closed military bases that have helped shorten the time frame for base cleanup projects to about one to five years per project.*
- o *310 acres of former Naval Air Station property has been transferred to date, including the land used to build the Bayport housing project, Coast Guard housing and land that is expected to be home to a future sports facility with the East Bay Miracle League.*

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)?

Urban planning needs to address the impacts of climate change through global warming, particularly as it becomes more imminent. Future plans for the Oakland Airport expansion would need to consider the impacts of sea level rise, including potentially relocating operations or consolidating with other Bay Area airport facilities through improved transit programs.

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

Master planned communities, instead of hodge-podge or ad-hoc planning, will be needed to create major transportation hubs with housing that is affordable to the workforce. There needs to be adequate funding that comes from housing density and increased ridership in order to support such transit-oriented projects. I have advocated (and continue to support) planning principles that provides a variety of housing for the community to reduce vehicle trips. I worked to abide by these principles in the Alameda City Council's guiding policies for the redevelopment of Alameda Point and other housing opportunities in Alameda, e.g. housing for the disabled near City Hall, close to transit, the library and stores.

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

One of the biggest barriers to green job development in low-income communities is having adequate workforce development trainers. During these recessionary times, there are opportunities for partnerships with the building trades unions, the county and the City to secure federal funding under the “Pathways out of Poverty” section of the federal Green Jobs Act of 2007 and provide technical assistance and guidance to launch green-collar job training programs. The Ella Baker Center and Oakland Apollo Alliance serve as good models with the creation of the Oakland Green Jobs Corps. Alameda can follow this example and connect people who face barriers to employment with opportunities in green construction, solar installation, home weatherization, and other green fields.

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

Fiscal neutrality continues to be a key principle in business development, particularly in re-development. The funding generated by the project by increasing the tax base should sustain the development for the local community. Risks to existing taxpayers for economic re-development must be minimized.

- What roles will alternative energy sources such as hydropower, geothermal power and solar power play in Alameda’s future? What is the City doing and what more could it do to conserve energy?

Alameda owns and operates a municipal power company. During my tenure on the Alameda City Council, we have significantly reduced our carbon footprint, increasing our purchase of power from renewable energy resources to 85%. Notably, we initiated one of the Bay Area's largest renewable energy projects — a landfill gas-to-energy station that will produce 12 megawatts of power.

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.

- *Urged federal government (EPA) to insist on cleaning up toxics at Alameda Point to community-accepted levels.*
- *Support City ordinance banning Styrofoam containers and state legislation on plastic bag ban.*
- *Supported policies, plans and legislation that promotes sustainable community strategies -- reduce greenhouse gas emissions by curbing urban sprawl and cutting back the time people have to spend in their automobiles, encouraging compact development.*

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

www.lenatam.com

c. Why should the Sierra Club support your candidacy?

My public service record has consistently demonstrated the Sierra Club's mission. My support for environmentally, economically and socially just policies has been exemplary.

Candidates

Mayor

Tony Daysog
Douglas deHaan
Marie Gilmore
Kenneth Kahn
Frank Matarrese

Council (2 seats)

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Rob Bonta
Adam Gillitt
Tracy Jensen
Beverly Johnson
Jeff Mitchell
Jean Sweeney
(i) Lena Tam

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?

I am seeking endorsements from a broad-based of community activists, including advocates for good and open government and leaders in the environmental and social justice communities.

Below is a partial list of my endorsements from elected and appointed officials

John Chiang, State Controller

Betty Yee, Chair-State Board of Equalization

Don Perata, State Senate Pro Tem (retired)

Wilma Chan, Alameda County Supervisor-Elect and former Assembly Majority Leader (retired)

Sandre Swanson, Assemblymember 16th District

Mary Hayashi, Assemblymember 18th District

Paul Fong, Assemblymember 22nd District

Nancy Skinner, Assemblymember 14th District

Alice Lai-Bitker, President-Alameda County Board of Supervisors

Bill Withrow, President-Peralta Community College District

Tony Daysog, former Vice Mayor-Alameda City Councilmember

Karin Lucas, former Vice Mayor-Alameda City Councilmember

Richard Sherratt, former Alameda City Councilmember

Ron Mooney, President-Alameda Unified School District Board of Trustees

Michael McMahon, Alameda Unified School District Board of Trustees

Niel Tam, Alameda Unified School District Board of Trustees

Jordan Battani, President-Alameda Healthcare District Board of Directors

Michael McCormack, Alameda Healthcare District Board of Directors

Robert Deutsch, M.D., Alameda Healthcare District Board of Directors

Jeptha Boone, M.D. Alameda Healthcare District Board of Directors President (retired)

Laurie Harper, Alameda Healthcare District Board of Directors (retired)

John McCahan, Alameda Public Utilities Board

Mark Irons, Alameda Historical Advisory Board

Ed Kofman, President-Alameda Hospital Foundation

Doug Siden, East Bay Regional Park District

Joel Young, AC Transit Board Member

Chris Peeples, AC Transit Board Member

John A. Russo, Oakland City Attorney

Bill Quirk, Hayward City Councilmember

Otto Lee, Sunnyvale City Councilmember

Gilbert Wong, Cupertino Vice-Mayor

Pauline Cutter, San Leandro School Board member

Phil Ting, San Francisco Assessor

Patrick O'Connell, Alameda County Auditor

Doug Linney, President-East Bay Municipal Utility District Board of Directors

Frank Mellon, East Bay Municipal Utility District Board of Directors

Katy Foulkes, East Bay Municipal Utility District Board of Directors

Bill Patterson, East Bay Municipal Utility District Board of Directors

Patrick Kwok, Santa Clara Valley Water District Board of Directors

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

I have and will continue to be accessible to the community, and have devoted about 40 hours/week on City business.

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

*Tam for Council, P.O. Box 1130, Alameda, CA 94501; 510-590-0248; www.lenatam.com;
tamforcouncil.2010@gmail.com;*

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: Lena Tam

Office Sought: City Council of Alameda

Signature: _____ *Lena L. Tam*

Date August 11, 2010