

A Better Alameda

Candidate Questionnaire – 2018 Mayoral and Council Election

Campaign Finance

1. Alameda's past councils have failed to work on campaign finance reform. California law allows local campaign reform so long that it is more restrictive than State law and constitutional. What campaign finance reforms, if any, would you propose?

Good Governance

2. The council has recently made rules that limit the public's access to good governance. The rule to require two council signatures for a Council Referral from a Planning Board decision, limiting time for public comments, and ignoring recommendations from the Sunshine Committee are examples. Can you explain how you would support the public's right to address issues before the Council?

3. The Mayor has the right to appoint commission members and historically the Council would approve the mayor's selection. Three members of the present council refused to accept 8 very qualified public volunteers to serve on the Planning Board. This council's action makes it difficult for qualified people to step up and volunteer for commission positions. Do you have any proposals to remedy this situation?

Donations

4. Are you going to accept donations from people who regularly contract business with the City, such as public employee unions and developers?

5. If you do accept such donations or if PACs funded by such people make donations to your campaign how will you avoid bias or the appearance of bias when you vote on matters concerning them?

6. What do you plan to do when PAC's that support you publish untrue and derogatory information regarding your opponents?

Interactions with Staff

7. If you are not a current member of City Council, have you been regularly reviewing Council agendas including staff reports pertinent to the same, researching the issues and attending Council meetings? Please give examples of meetings and issues you have been watching. If so, what are your thoughts about how to improve Council's activity? Be specific.

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8. If you are a current member of City Council, have you challenged staff reports and requested additional information and recommendations for action? If so, please provide examples. If not, why not?

9. What is your view of the current process by which staff usually makes a single recommendation for Council action? What is your concept of the role of a Council member in comparison to the role of the City Manager and staff?

Knowledge of City Government and laws

10. Are you fully familiar with the City Charter and do you have any thoughts concerning amendments to the same?

11. The Brown Act and the City Sunshine Ordinance have provisions regarding the conduct of a Councilmember. Can you explain how those provisions would pertain to you as a councilmember?

Budget

12. What do you think is a prudent solution to our looming future budget deficits and our unfunded retirement benefits, especially medical benefits?

Housing

13. Are you fully familiar with our current Housing Element and what is and is not required under the law? What problems, if any, do you see with the current Housing Element?

14. The 2022 Housing Element will be approved by the new City Council. What changes would you make to the current Element to address the future?

15. Our current inclusionary affordable housing ordinance sets the minimum affordable housing percentage at 15%. Do you think this ordinance adequately addresses our affordable housing needs, and if not, what additional City action should be considered?

16. Currently, development proposals do not look at the city-wide impact of the development on health, safety, traffic, infrastructure, schools, open space, public services, etc. Do you believe that this is an appropriate policy and, if not, how would you address this issue?

17. What is your opinion of the current progress in meeting the goals of our Housing Element, especially in the category of affordable housing?

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18. It was recently revealed that the housing numbers are actually set by developers working with ABAG. Is this appropriate? If not, how would you suggest remedying it?
Note: "Question 18 was much too strongly worded. We do have concerns about possible developer influence on ABAG and believe the entire process of the determination of RHNA housing goals needs to be fully explored by Council and Staff."

19. Will it be of concern to you if the ABAG housing numbers do not consider the excessive market rate units we have already authorized or if the numbers did not take into consideration the ingress and egress issues of our unique island environment? If so, how would you respond to the same?

20. State law mandates that only objective standards contained in land use ordinances are enforceable. Thus subjective standards are of no legal import. Our land use ordinances contain a lot of subjective language. An example is our Mixed Use (MX) Zoning Ordinances which leaves the issue of the proper proportion of residential, commercial and public uses to Council discretion. This unenforceable subjective standard leaves the City with very little leverage on a developer who wants to maximize residential use and minimize commercial and public use. How would you propose to remedy this situation?

21. Alameda staff says they are using traffic models used by all of Alameda County, not a model specific to an island. Do you think this is appropriate, and if not, how would you remedy this?

22. CA Public Resources Code Sec. 21099 amended environmental law to eliminate traffic congestion as a factor in determining greenhouse gas emissions. This amendment minimizes this as an environmental issue. However, subsection (b)(4) thereof provides that this "does not preclude the application of local general plan policies, zoning codes, conditions of approval, thresholds, or any other planning requirements pursuant to the police power or any other authority." Would you suggest any new City criteria for development proposals that insert the element of traffic congestion into the approval process?

Rent Control

23. What is your view of our current rent stabilization ordinance? Do you see any current need to amend it? If not, what general criteria would you apply to evaluate the need for future amendments when you receive the annual monitoring report from the Housing Authority?

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24. Are you familiar with the ballot changes proposed to both Alameda's ordinance and the state-wide initiative to eliminate the Costa-Hawkins law? If Costa-Hawkins is repealed what changes in our rent stabilization ordinance would you support?

Commitment to spend the necessary time

25. What is your occupation and how much of your time does it require of you on a weekly basis?

26. How much time do you have to devote to all of the responsibilities as a Councilmember?

Traffic

27. We have recently had two city wide traffic jams when the tube was shut down, one for a sink hole and one for a major accident. Planned projects will add approximately 10,000 additional cars to the northern waterfront and Alameda Point. What are your plans to address the traffic problems that will result from the added traffic to come from the new developments?

Jobs

28. What City action would you support to create better-paying jobs in Alameda?

Vision

29. What is your vision for the city of Alameda? How will we get there?

Please provide your typed signature above-Hand signature not required.