

LENA TAM

Seeking Position For: Alameda City Council

www.lenatam.com

- 1. If elected, what are your top priorities during your term? What would you like to accomplish and how would you go about doing so? Please be specific.**

It is important that I improve access to city government for ALL of the community by providing bilingual resources for city services. By prioritizing the “must haves” (critical public services) vs. the “nice to haves” and implementing performance-based budgeting, I can insure adequate “reserves” or (positive fund balance) to weather economic downturns. I plan to pursue opportunities to contain costs and potential revenue opportunities (refinancing debt, grants, and taxes). I plan to work collaboratively with labor unions to evaluate equitable cost-sharing in funding retiree benefits. During my term, the budget was balanced for last 4 years, and maintained a positive fund balance of 18% to 20% of the budget to keep Alameda’s finances solvent.

I initiated the formation of Alameda’s first Sunshine Task Force to engage the community in formulating reforms to city government that would improve transparency, honesty and fairness in government. Despite efforts by the mayor and some councilmembers to disband the Sunshine Task Force, the League of Women Voters helped to revitalize the committee. As the past president of the Alameda League of Women Voters, I am committed to open, accessible government and encourage citizen participation.

- 2. How have you in the past and how will you in the future use your position to expand the presence and influence of Asian Pacific Americans in public policy and politics?**

I chair the APA Caucus for the League of California Cities, advocating for legislation and public policies that affect our community in the 488 cities throughout California. I have and will continue to mentor and groom potential API community leaders to succeed me on the Alameda City Council when I am termed out of office. I continue to actively work with the APA Caucus and the Asian Pacific Leadership Project to “fill the pipeline” in order to increase the number of API Electeds at all levels of government.

- 3. What have you done that demonstrates your commitment to and effectiveness in promoting Asian Pacific American interests in the following areas (and if you have not contributed in these areas, please discuss any area(s) in which you have made a contribution):**

- **Education** – *Supported funding measures (Measure H and E) to improve equal access for the Alameda Unified school District. Supported curriculums that*

respect cultural differences, including the anti-bullying curriculum aimed at protecting the children of gay parents.

Health Care – *Directed that Alameda Hospital provide bilingual signage in the emergency room; recruited bilingual Asian physicians to meet the needs of the growing APA population in the Bay Area; forged partnerships with Asian Health Services to improve access to health care, particularly for the immigrant population.*

- **Civil Rights** – *As part of the East Bay Asian Voter Education Consortium, I worked to increase voter participation among the APA community; protected the civil rights for people of color during the Redistricting campaigns of 2000; opposed Proposition 8 as it denies the rights of marriage to the GLBT community; fought injustice by mounting a strong defense against unjust accusations intended to silence or disenfranchise my representation of the APA community.*
- **Business** – *Facilitated meetings between city staff and Asian business owners in Alameda (e.g. Charlie's car wash and Aroma Restaurant) to insure fair and equitable processing of permits and renovation plans; worked with the Oakland Chinatown Chamber of Commerce to improve pedestrian safety for APA businesses.*