

**Napa County Latinx Democratic Club
Candidate Questionnaire
DEADLINE FOR RETURN: September 4, 2020**

Candidates Name: Gerardo Martin **Area/District:** City of Napa

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Candidate Specific Questions

1. What qualifications do you have for the office you're running for and why do you deserve the Napa County Latinx Democratic Club's endorsement?

I am a financial planner by trade but I'm also the former President of the Napa County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce & the Napa Valley College Foundation, and I'm a founding member of the Latinx Leaders Luncheon. As the leader of a community deeply rooted in a Latinx heritage and community, our mayor ought to be someone who brings experience in Latinx spaces and the ability to communicate in Spanish. Not only do I bring those two qualifications but I have also trained my entire career to meet the economic challenges our city faces in light of COVID-19, which disproportionately affect the Latinx community.

2. Please include an example of your leadership on Latinx issues? Also, what will you do as an elected official to ensure that POC and our Latinx communities are represented?

Much like when I helped establish the Latinx Leaders Luncheon, I recognize that the only way Latinx voices will be heard are if we organize ourselves and demand political inclusion. That's why we brought as many Latinx leaders as possible. Yet, despite these and other efforts, our city's administrators and employees are unrepresentative of our strong and vibrant Latinx community. While composing over 40% of Napa's population, the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) community has no representation. I hoped to correct that but also to make city government a more inclusive space for Latinx leaders for years to come.

3. What are your top three priorities, and how will you ensure that you accomplish those?

Response and recovery from COVID-19 will no doubt be the first thing that will land on my desk as mayor. However, COVID-19 has highlighted many systemic issues that have gone without proper attention. With COVID-19 as the enveloping theme of our

response and recovery, I believe economic diversification, housing affordability and expansion, and environmental protection are all the key issues in the upcoming election. While I also believe inclusivity must be an issue of importance in the upcoming election, every issue should be an inclusivity issues—economic, housing, and environment. Particularly, this means addressing the historical representation disparity that the Latinx community has faced for decades. What distinguishes my candidacy, however, is that I can bring my diverse work ethic, blue and white collar, and my identity as a Latino to the office of mayor to produce tangible change. As a community leader who doesn't accept corporate contributions, I am uniquely situated to lead this city out of its financial crisis with integrity—always working for the people. Facing the issues head on is what my years of financial planning has taught me, and its what I plan to do on day one.

Issues

4. Latinx community members are often deemed essential workers, what will you do to mitigate the effects essential workers suffer during this pandemic, including your employees?

As a Member of the Small Business Recovery Task Force, I have been working at this issue diligently. We need to reopen our economy all while reimagining the way we do business. Socially distancing and tracing will be needed, but we need to also recognize that the Latinx community is disproportionately affected (as essential workers). City government and Napa businesses need to work in tandem to make sure PPE and related relief is directly delivered to our essential workers. It is disappointing that some of our most essential workers are some of the least compensated in our city. We need to bring our small business community together to work for a living way and ensure our essential workers are respected as such.

5. How will you tackle the next upcoming natural and public health disaster and how will this plan actively engage the Latinx Community? What is your plan to ensure that disaster planning is culturally competent and provides language access?

As a Spanish-speaking Latino, this could not be more important for me. Our first responders and related support teams must be able to communicate to our city in Spanish if we want to be inclusive in disaster planning, response, and relief. That's why I believe Spanish fluency ought to be a qualification to be the Mayor of the City of Napa.

6. What is your stance on Black Lives Matter? How do you link this movement to the needs of the Latinx community?

I am supportive of the Black Lives Matter movement, particular the #8CantWait policies. It's a testament to the leadership of our youth and their powerful voices. However, many members of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Queer communities in Napa have come to me with their deep concerns over the next 4 to 8 years of our city. While we live through this important period in our nation's history, let us all recognize our duty to ensure all people are created equal, that no one should be discriminated on the basis of their sex, gender identity, color, ability, or religion. While Napa is making strong progress, I will never

give up on the important work that is inclusivity, diversity, equity, and accessibility. Part of this work includes hiring more people of color in our city. Of the 37 city administrators, only 3 are Latinx (that's 8%); 20% of the overall city employees are Latinx—but the Latinx community constitutes 41% of the City of Napa. This disparity needs to come to an end, and I believe I can champion it. The justice that Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta lived for was the same that MLK fought for. Our common justice is closely linked from very early on, and it could not be more true today.

7. What is your stance on re-appropriating police funding? What does this mean to you in your role and what policies will you pursue to address this call to action?

I won't give you a politician's response—Yes. We need to reimagine the way we invest in community safety. Crime prevention shouldn't start with a gun. In addition to this, data shows that 9 of 10 calls for service are non-violent. We need to explore employing crisis response teams specialized in not only public safety but mental health and developing safe social spaces too.

8. Families of all ranges continue leaving our community because it is too expensive for them to live here. Many families are doing long commutes in order to work here, therefore increasing their carbon footprint, missing on important family time, and much more. What is your commitment and plan to increase workforce housing so families that work here are able to live here? And what will you do to help keep families that are living here to remain here (e.g. increase the quality of life, health and wellness, youth and children activities, etc...)

The first step to any meaningful plan for affordable housing is increasing the housing stock and building it in higher density. The city can also invest in studying what amount is off-loaded to the local community by tourism (that includes living, commuting, and environmental costs). We then can bind together each new hotel development with a minimum affordable housing commitment. I am open to exploring a Napa Community Land Trust to alleviate the commodity costs associated with cost of housing; donated land can be developed into affordable housing units or redeveloped into high density housing with the promise of affordability.

9. Do you believe it is the role of elected officials to take policy steps to assure adequate affordable housing? Yes No

9a. Specifically, what suggestions do you have to make housing more affordable? And would you support requiring new developments to set aside a certain percentage of affordable housing?

The increase in Accessory Dwelling Units is a good first step, but I think that any meaningful policy must mandate setting aside affordable housing units. Specifically, I believe any new tourism developments ought to be met with an equitable contribution on affordable housing developments.

10. According to a report from July 28th, 2020, homelessness has continued to increase for the last several years in Napa County. In 2016, 317 people were reported to be homeless. In 2020, it reported 464 people. What can you do in the role you're running for to address this important and growing issue?

Working with private, charitable partners is a first step in expanding our temporary sheltering, but we need to partner directly with state and federal leaders to address this issue by providing long-term living solutions through workforce housing programs. Every time the City of Napa addresses the need for housing, those who go without homes are left out far too frequently. However, workforce housing is a short-term solution as it can inequitably bind someone to unsatisfactory employment; the people of our city and their well-being must be central in our policies.

11. In the role you're running for, what can you do to help ensure that transportation meets the needs of youth, working people, families, and seniors?

I support regional light transit. And while we should invest into strengthening our bus system, we should also invest into shuttles that transport workers from parking hotspots to workplaces. Public biking and micro-mobility (like scooters) are also new and revolutionary alternatives that do not pollute our environment the same way other methods of transportation.

12. What action steps will you take to diversify the local workforce in your city or town? Additionally, what hiring processes will you pursue to increase the diversity of your City/Town's staff, and boards and commissions?

12a. Do you support a policy where aspiring citizens can serve on boards and commissions? Yes No

I believe that far too large a portion of our city budget depends on an unreliable source of income—the transient occupancy tax (TOT). Although tourism has brought us the international recognition we have today, its growth has been unsustainable for our local community. Investing into Napa's healthcare industry is a good paying way to allow our community to build wealth. By working with our health care workers' unions, we can make for an honest and effective transition too. With regard to Napa's hiring practices, we need to make city government more accessible and safe space for Latinx folks to join. This starts with effective messaging into Latinx cultural media outlets and direct bi- and mono- lingual outreach.

13. Racial Gaps In Maternal Mortality Persist. Black mothers die at a rate that's 3.3 times greater than whites, and Native American or Alaskan Native women die at a rate 2.5 times greater than whites, according to a report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Would you work to decrease maternal mortality among women of color, protect reproductive rights and a women's right to choose? Yes No

A woman's right to choose is a human right. As Mayor, I will be a staunch defender of this human right.

14. What is at least one specific thing you can do as an elected official to address the needs of LGBTQIA+ people?

Many members of LGBTQIA+ community have come to me with their deep concerns over the next 4 to 8 years of our city. While we live through this important period in our nation's history, let us all recognize our duty to ensure all people are created equal, that no one should be discriminated on the basis of their sex, gender identity, color, ability, or religion. While Napa is making strong progress, I will never give up on the important work that is inclusivity, diversity, equity, and accessibility. We must start by addressing queer homelessness as a real issue in our city. As Mayor, I will fight to ensure temporary & transition housing opportunities for our LGBTQIA+ community and equitable mental health support service. These resources are critical in ensuring that our queer community feels seen and heard.

15. What specific things will you do to defend immigration and the economy in our your jurisdiction? And would you consider making the jurisdiction you're running for a Sanctuary Jurisdiction?

Napa is the heart of Californian viticulture, and we must not forge that the Latinx experience is closely woven with the field workers' experience. As a city, we must reject ICE invasion and protect our immigrant community from predatory practices from our federal government. I vow to work with state, county, and city partners to coordinate this effort.

16. What will you do combat climate change in your area and promote the green economy?

Solars panels and wind farms are not enough. Not only should we strive for carbon neutrality, but we should strive for energy consumption reduction and anti-waste policies. Additionally, and most critically for Napa, we need to work with our county government to protect our invaluable water sources and established a Emergency Contingent Water Plan so that the City of Napa does not have to live in fear of losing its water source in the case of a natural disaster.