



Oakland City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Nikki Fortunato Bas, Oakland City Council, District 2

EBHO is a member-driven organization working to preserve, protect, and create affordable housing opportunities for low-income communities in the East Bay by educating, advocating, organizing, and building coalitions.

1. Do you believe that housing is a human right? If not, why not? If so, what are you going to do ensure every one of your constituents has a safe, quality place to call home?

I firmly believe that housing is, in fact, a human right, and that it is the duty of government officials at every level to ensure their constituents have fair and equitable access to necessities as basic as food, water, and shelter. If elected to Oakland City Council, I would prioritize combatting the ongoing displacement of neighbors throughout our community, standing up for renters rights, and prioritizing Oakland's people over profit.

2. EBHO has put forward a proposal for a package of measures to preserve existing rental housing resources and protect tenants from displacement. What would you do to strengthen the condo conversion ordinance, prevent conversion of single room occupancy (SRO) residential hotels, and regulate short-term rentals such as Airbnb and dedicate transient occupancy taxes from short-term rentals to support affordable housing?

During the months of April and May, together with my team of volunteers, we talked with hundreds of voters to listen to their needs and concerns in order to build my platform. You can find my full platform here: <http://www.nikki4oakland.com/platform>, and below are two relevant points which I am committed to.

- Preserve existing affordable housing by updating policies on condo conversions and single room occupancy buildings (SROs) and adopting a policy on short-term rentals.
- Advance longer-term housing policies that support ownership, including community land trusts, tenant ownership, and low-interest loans for repairs and maintenance.

I support EBHO's "preservation package." As a councilmember, I will collaborate with EBHO and other housing advocates to develop policy solutions that preserve SROs which serve vulnerable residents and prevent displacement. I would also work proactively to avoid delays. It's unfortunate that SRO policy is not further along given the December expiration of the moratorium.

I would also champion dedicating the TOT to housing and homelessness priorities. The City Council failed to support the allocation of \$2.4 M of TOT toward affordable housing during the last budget cycle.



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3. What do you think are the critical elements of a public land policy for Oakland? Would you prioritize the use of public land for development of affordable housing? How would you ensure that at a minimum the City fully complies with the Surplus Land Act?

One of my priorities is to ensure our public lands are used for public good by supporting a public lands policy that prioritizes affordable housing and permanent supportive housing projects, and designating city-owned parcels for sanctioned camps that move homeless neighbors off streets with services and support.

I support the People's Proposal for Public Land, and as a Councilmember will work with EBHO and others to support the Proposal. To ensure the City complies with the Surplus Land Act, I would push for transparency and accountability in all the City's dealings with its surplus lands. I also support a moratorium on the sale of public lands in the absence of a policy.

4. What new sources of funding would you consider to create an ongoing stream of dedicated funding for affordable housing production?

First, I would ensure that the City's development "Impact Fees" adequately serve our communities by updating the existing rules to make sure they are properly and equitably utilized. I would collaborate with housing advocates and stakeholders to assess whether the impact fees are set at the appropriate level, knowing that they are lower than neighboring cities. And, I would seek input and ideas from stakeholders about creative ways to generate new funding, looking at models in other cities.

5. In 2016, the City Council reallocated "Boomerang Funds" (the city's share of property tax increment that used to fund redevelopment) from affordable housing development to homeless services. Measure W would create a vacant property tax to fund homeless services and deal with illegal dumping. If this measure passes, what would you do to ensure that the Boomerang Funds are returned to their original purpose of providing permanent housing?

Despite other sources of funding for housing like Measure KK, the City is still underfunding housing development. With the 2019 budget cycle, I would advocate that the Boomerang Funds serve their original purpose of providing permanent housing, and also ensure greater transparency and accountability in our budgeting process.

6. What do you feel are the greatest barriers to affordable housing development in Oakland, and how would you remove those barriers?

The prioritization of profit over people and the mistaken belief that developers will not build in Oakland unless we "give away the store". I would champion win-win development that also meets community needs. The City needs to set reasonable across-the-board minimums for



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inclusionary housing, community benefit agreements and fees no lower than those in neighboring Bay Area cities.

We must also dispel the false notion that continuing to build more market rate housing will trickle down and lower housing costs of working people, seniors, and our current unhoused population in Oakland.

7. Oakland is in the middle of an unprecedented building boom, with building permits issued for over 7,000 units between 2015 and 2017, and thousands more in the pipeline. This is far more housing that was created under the “10K” Program in the early 2000s. However, 93% of the housing being built is market rate for above moderate income households, while only 7% is affordable to very low, low and moderate income households. Oakland’s Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) incorporated in the adopted Housing Element states that 50% of new housing should be for very low, low and moderate income. What will you do to ensure that Oakland’s housing production is at least proportional to the City’s stated needs?

I would prioritize a public lands policy so the City can move forward with developing affordable housing on public land. I would also prioritize development of 100% affordable housing first and foremost. And, I would champion and negotiate the highest levels of affordability for projects, with residents leading the effort and setting requirements. Oakland has no requirements for affordable housing unlike neighboring cities. I believe 25% should be the floor. No new housing developments should be permitted until a significant effort has been put into re-adjusting this disparity.

8. Large sections of Oakland, particularly in the North and East Oakland flatlands, have been recently designated “Opportunity Zones” where investors are entitled to significant federal tax benefits. How will you ensure that those investments benefit existing residents rather than exacerbate displacement in transitioning neighborhoods? Would you support the City reclaiming a portion of the enhanced value for affordable housing, for example by creating an Opportunity Zone overlay where housing impact fees and jobs/housing linkage fees would be higher than in other areas of the City?

Yes, I would support that, and I would support a process for residents to have meaningful engagement in how these investments are made so they truly benefit the community without causing more displacement.

9. Do you support Prop 10, and if it passes, what would you do to strengthen Oakland’s rent control?

I support Prop 10 and assuming it passes, I will work with stakeholders and the city council to close the loopholes and exceptions that leave many Oaklanders vulnerable, starting with expanding renter protections to single family homes. Currently tenants have the least amount of resources available to them while State and Federal level policies already exist to ensure



landlords aren't prevented from making "fair returns" on their properties from rent control measures.

10. The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program only serves a fraction of the people who qualify. Those who are fortunate enough to receive such assistance often discover that they cannot find landlords willing to accept their vouchers. What would you do to ensure that Section 8 vouchers are accepted throughout the City so that all who receive them can actually use them?

I would lead efforts to destigmatize Section 8 applicants, incentivize landlords and streamline Oakland Housing Authority's process on both ends (renter and landlord).

11. What measures will you support to prevent at risk households from becoming homeless, and what would you do to provide housing for those who are already homeless? Please discuss both short-term and long-term strategies.
 - Strengthen and enforce tenant protections to put a stop to unjust evictions and illegal rent hikes.
 - Support the state Affordable Housing Act to repeal Costa-Hawkins, allowing Oakland and other California cities the flexibility to create smart renter protections that work for us.
 - Ensure our public lands are used for public good by supporting a public lands policy that prioritizes affordable housing and permanent supportive housing projects, and designating city-owned parcels for sanctioned camps that move homeless neighbors off dangerous streets.
 - Increase resources to provide our homeless neighbors with rapid measures that move people into stable temporary housing while we work toward permanent housing solutions, as well as provide increased health services and sanitation to our homeless community.
 - Bring developers, community members, labor leaders, and other stakeholders to the table to negotiate community benefits for any development deals.
 - Ensure that development "Impact Fees" which are meant to generate funds for affordable housing adequately serve our communities by updating the existing rules to make sure they are properly and equitably utilized.
 - Preserve existing affordable housing by updating policies on condo conversions and single room occupancy buildings (SROs) and adopting a policy on short-term rentals.
 - Advance longer-term housing policies that support ownership, including community land trusts, tenant ownership, and low-interest loans for repairs and maintenance.