



Oakland City Council Candidate Questionnaire

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?

Yes. As a D4 City Council Member, I would work hard to preserve tenant protections, creation of new affordable housing by prioritizing the use of public lands for this purpose, and push for inclusionary zoning versus impact fees.

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?

I would do all in my power to preserve all available units

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?

As stated before, I would advocate for the use of public land for affordable housing. As a council member, this would not only be a fight to ensure compliance with the Surplus Land Act, but to adhere to my longstanding personal values.

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

Along with seeking new sources of funding, I would look to expand the number of housing opportunities within OHA stock. A commonly quoted number for the cost of a new affordable housing unit is \$500,000-\$700,000. Even with new sources of funding, we will fall short of needed units in our city; this is where tenant protections come in.



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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?

Oaklanders are generally dissatisfied with any reallocation of purpose-specific funds, and this is no exception. My platform on how to tackle the homeless problem includes seeking revenues and resources from outside our city, specifically at the county level.

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

Most significantly is the cost of building a new unit. Further roadblocks include delays and process related issues in our building and planning department, which I propose to streamline as part of my platform. I also am strongly advocating for a look at zoning in Oakland- to look at options in terms of up-zoning to vaster swaths of development across our city. Significantly, we need a City Council that is cohesive and unified in making housing a priority. I have previously stated that Public Lands should be prioritized for affordable housing development.

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 have been consistent in expressing my dissatisfaction with impact fees being paid rather than housing units being built. This works against my values of diversity and inclusion, and over time limits the number of affordable units on the market. Oakland will continue to lose its diversity as long as housing is unaffordable- something that is singularly important to me in retaining the vibrancy and culture here.

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?

I would support the idea of the City claiming a portion of enhanced values in this type of development to benefit existing residents- with housing and jobs. The research I have done indicates that wealthy



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investors stand to benefit from these opportunities; as Oaklanders, we need to ensure that our community is also receiving a substantial benefit, through affordable units, job training, etc.

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

I have some concerns about the passage of Prop 10. There are elements that I believe surely need to be reformed, namely that rent control is completely forbidden for any unit built after 1995. I also have a hard time understanding the benefit of exempting single family homes from rent control in Oakland. I have concerns about the exemptions for duplexes and tri-plexes in our city as I feel this will have a negative, rather than a positive impact on longtime Oakland residents.

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 am aware that the City is now working with landlords with some success to promote an increase in available section 8 units. I support this effort and would seek to expand it.

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.

I am underwhelmed by our City's response to the homeless crisis. More must be done. I have toured our tough sheds, and also had a tour of San Francisco's Mission Navigation Center. I have advocated publicly for more shelter beds, more quickly and have studied what has been done in San Diego, Sacramento, and San Francisco. The reality is that the leading cause of homelessness in our city is a loss of housing. I have heard this first hand and seen the data. The extent to which the cost of housing and homelessness are intertwined can be seen are the result of a dramatic increase in rents. In 2012, Oakland's median rent was \$1952, and in 2017, that was \$2950. A 51% increase. No wonder our homeless population has exploded as a result. There are those that believe Oakland's homeless problem is more solvable than places like San Francisco and Berkeley as we did not have the same level of chronic homelessness here before 2012.

My legislative priority if elected would be to get our community off the streets and rehoused as quickly as possible.