



Oakland Mayoral 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, I believe housing is a basic human right. All Oaklanders -- all people everywhere -- deserve access to safe, healthy, affordable, and stable housing. To achieve this I will continue to advocate for policies to improve housing security in Oakland, such as a soft-story seismic retrofit program to require owners of seismically unsafe buildings to perform structural retrofits, a proactive residential inspection program to improve the habitability of the city's housing stock while including safeguards to protect against displacement, substantially more funding to acquire and preserve affordable housing and construct new affordable housing, and strong renter protections to keep residents in their homes.

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 believe the condo conversion ordinance desperately needs to be updated. I support extending the protections to 2-4 unit buildings and including provisions to encourage existing tenants to purchase their units. I support the work that staff is currently doing to develop new permanent regulations to protect SROs that would require replacement units in the event that an SRO is demolished, converted to another use, or substantially rehabilitated, with exemptions for buildings to be preserved as affordable housing. Lastly, I support regulating short-term rentals in a way that provides an opportunity for owners occupying units to rent out spare rooms to increase financial security and only allows whole-unit rentals to be rented for limited time periods so that they remain the owner's principal residence. I am particularly excited about enacting regulations and new revenue streams at the regional level. That's why I'm playing an active role in Casa: The Committee to House the Bay Area, which is considering a host of new revenues that could together produce the \$1.6 Billion in annual funded needed to maintain the needed supply of affordable housing for our region.

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?



East Bay Housing Organizations

I believe it is important that public land be used in a way that maximizes the public benefit. I greatly respect the work that City staff and community stakeholders have done to develop a public land policy. This work was an outcome of the Housing Cabinet I convened in 2015, with EBHO's participation, to develop strategies to address the housing crisis in Oakland. I support the Cabinet's recommendation that a public land policy be developed that contains principles for the use of public land, balances the opportunity to use public land for affordable housing with other City goals, identifies properties suitable for affordable housing and mixed-income housing, establishes targets, includes a process for evaluating options, and allocates a substantial percentage of proceeds to affordable housing in the event land is sold. I believe public land is an important tool in promoting housing security and that the public benefits the most when there is flexibility in how we use the land to promote housing security -- such as developing 100% on-site affordable housing or using sales proceeds to fund affordable housing production, preservation, or tenant protections -- so that we can adjust our public land actions as circumstances and needs change in the city. Finally, I don't want to just see a policy -- I want to see it put into action with actual parcels put forward for affordable housing development as quickly as possible, in a way that leverages other construction or preservation funding sources.

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

Locally, I support the vacant property tax on the November ballot (Measure W) that would raise new funding for a variety of uses including affordable housing production, as well as the progressive real estate transfer tax that should increase general fund dollars while providing rebates for seismic and energy efficiency improvements. At the state level I support Proposition 1 which would generate revenue for affordable housing production. As a commissioner of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) I have been a strong advocate for expanding the ways transportation funding can be used to support affordable housing. Due to my advocacy efforts earlier this year MTC launched the Bay Area Preservation Pilot Fund to provide financing for acquisition and preservation of affordable housing.

I am also a member of the Steering Committee of CASA, the initiative to develop regional solutions to the housing crisis. I support CASA's efforts to develop a substantial and sustainable regional funding stream for affordable housing in the Bay Area and will be a strong advocate for the state legislation that may be necessary to enact these new funding measures. We are considering a range of taxes and fees to be imposed across the entire Bay Area region, including a parcel tax, gross receipts tax, employee tax, employee VMT tax, real estate transfer tax surcharge, and more.

Finally, I believe the corporate sector and philanthropy can play a role in funding affordable housing as well as providing low cost capital and I have engaged with major companies and foundations in the Bay Area on this issue. I'm a founding member of Mayors and CEOs for US Housing Investment -- a national bipartisan coalition of mayors and business leaders advocating for more resources from the federal government. I'm proud that the CEO I recruited as my



East Bay Housing Organizations

partner, Bernard Tyson of Kaiser Permanente, has committed providing \$200 million nationally to fund affordable housing and homelessness services.

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, would your budget proposal ensure that the Boomerang Funds are returned to their original purpose of providing permanent housing?

The November election contains a number of ballot measures that could increase City General Fund revenue and revenue for homeless services and affordable housing -- Measure W (vacant property tax) and Measure X (transfer tax) at the local level and Propositions 1 and 2 at the state level. Once we have an understanding of projected revenue after the election, we as a community will need to have a conversation about budget priorities. I believe that funding for permanent affordable housing is critical and must be a priority in the budget, but the other Ps -- protecting tenants and preserving existing affordable housing -- are also critical.

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

The greatest barrier to affordable housing development in Oakland is the lack of funding. I believe we need to fund affordable housing like infrastructure, with substantial and ongoing funding. We will all need to pitch in -- property owners, taxpayers, employers, and developers -- and we will need to generate funding at the local, regional, and state levels. We also need to find ways to build housing more quickly and cheaply.

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?

We need to do more as a city, region, and state to produce affordable housing. We have a critical need for more funding. See my answers to #4 and #6 above. I will continue to be a tireless advocate for affordable housing. It’s important that we focus on the numerical goal and not a percentage goal. If we’re producing a high percent of a low number, that won’t be as beneficial as a lower percent of a higher total number when that total number of new affordable units is actually higher. Our 17k/17k Plan, developed by the Oakland Housing Cabinet, which EBHO sat on, contained a strategy to produce 2200 units of protected affordable housing in Oakland by 2024. It recognized our need is 4-5,000 units. We must quickly develop new policies and funding sources -- preferably at the regional level to meet the need.



East Bay Housing Organizations

8. How will you work with the county and with MTC/ABAG to provide regional solutions to homelessness and affordable housing?

We will continue to work with Alameda County, MTC/ABAG, and the state to advance solutions to homelessness and to provide affordable housing. We are currently updating the City's Permanent Access to Housing (PATH) strategy which will provide an updated roadmap for addressing homelessness. I am in regular communication with the County around coordinating homelessness efforts. At the regional level I will continue to be a strong advocate for affordable housing as an MTC Commissioner and CASA Steering Committee Member (see answer to #4 above). At the state level, I support Propositions 1 and 2 which will raise needed revenue for homeless services and affordable housing, and have advocated passionately for all legislation supported by the NonProfit Housing Association of Northern California ("NPH"). I am endorsed by NPH's Director Amie Fishman.

9. 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?

Oakland is part of Accelerator for America, and wrote one of the first articles for the State's new Opportunity Zone website on exactly this topic -- ensuring equitable outcomes in Opportunity Zones. We will need to consider a variety of tools, including possible zoning overlays, although we would need to do careful analysis before raising impact and linkage fees. Again, we have to maximize the number of affordable units produced and preserved.

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

Yes, I support Prop 10. If passed, we as Oaklanders would need to have a thoughtful conversation about how to amend Oakland's rent control laws. I believe that expanding rent control to newer units with rolling date and to single-family homes and condos would help protect thousands of Oakland renters from large rent increases, which often cause displacement. I'm also excited about the possibility of a Bay Area wide anti rent gouging law. As your Mayor, I will continue to support this campaign in order to ensure its success.

11. 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?



East Bay Housing Organizations

In January this year I worked with the Oakland Housing Authority to launch a new first-of-its-kind program to provide incentives to property owners to participate in the Section 8 voucher program. The incentives include signing bonuses for new owners, vacancy loss payments that cover up to two months rent for vacancies between tenants, and pre-inspections. Since the launch of the program, 75 new owners have signed up for the program and the number of families successfully finding units in Oakland doubled compared to the same period before our program. I believe we should also consider legislation in the city (region or state) to prohibit source of income discrimination so that property owners can't explicitly discriminate against a potential tenant based on their source of income, such as a Section 8 voucher.

12. 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.

We'll pull in regional partnerships to bring an end to homelessness. This includes preventing homelessness in the first place, which is why I'm working to announce a new homelessness prevention fund, that will help tenants pay back rent and utilities as well as significantly increase access to free legal support. We will also build more permanent supportive and affordable housing for our lowest income residents. The solution also includes an effective and compassionate approach to street-level homelessness, including mobile outreach and sanitation services, opening more of our successful Rapid Rehousing Centers, as well as innovations like our Tuff Shed Shelter program.