



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 that housing is a human right. As Mayor, I commit to the following urgent measures to address the humanitarian crisis that has overtaken Oakland. We will:

- create clean & safe shelter spaces using City-owned buildings and vacant land;
- create clean & safe shelter spaces in partnership with landlords, nonprofits & churches;
- provide basic sanitation, health and hygiene services to encampments;
- provide logistical assistance to those in need to make the transition from being unhoused to being housed working with our unhoused residents;
- provide storage spaces to assist in the transition from being unhoused to becoming housed;
- improve access to safety net and emergency services for people on the verge of becoming unhoused;
- stem the flow of displacement with flexible temporary financial assistance;
- take a firm stand against illegal evictions
- set goals & deadlines & engage all of the City's resources to meet the deadlines;
- implement Measure W (taxation of vacant properties) and direct those funds to homelessness relief efforts;
- implement Measure X (increased real estate transfer tax) and direct those funds to homelessness relief efforts;
- work with our neighborhood associations to identify areas and opportunities for homelessness relief efforts;
- educate and engage our business community as partners in our relief efforts



- pursue new funding resources to create a regional home preservation fund for lower-income seniors and disabled residents.
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 work with the City Council to adopt a condo conversion ordinance for the purpose of protecting tenants from displacement similar to the one in Massachusetts, where all tenants have a right to at least a 2-year notice of conversion; and elderly, handicapped, and low- or moderate-income tenants have a right to at least 4 years' notice of conversion. For regulation and tax collection, I would establish a small team including a member of my administration and a City worker with a finance and accounting background to collect unpaid taxes and bring our local hotels and AIRBNB owners into compliance. We would establish our goals, set benchmarks and hold staff accountable to ensuring that monies allocated to meet our affordable housing goals are actually collected and directed.

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?

I would adopt and incorporate the Citywide Anti-Displacement Network's proposal to use all vacant land to build below market rate housing. We would create and enact the appropriate legislation to ensure that the City is compliant and committed to protect our public lands.

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

Potential new sources of funding for affordable housing include Measure W funds (taxation of vacant properties); Measure X Funds (the increased real estate transfer tax for residential and commercial properties selling over \$1 million), Measure HH funds (Sugar Tax); the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT), the State Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District, major banks operating locally, and



significant reduction of our over-investment in our police department, including overtime, settlements for misconduct and/or negligence and excessive salaries.

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?

Yes.

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

Greed is the greatest barrier to affordable housing development in Oakland, and it is impossible to remove that barriers or create incentives not to exploit economic opportunities in ways that are harmful to others. I would use every opportunity to bring non-profit housing advocates to the table.

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 have to balance the over-investment in market rate housing by looking to build below market rate housing on all public lands, partner with small landlords to increase available housing; invest in vacant structures across the City as possible sites for development of affordable housing; unlock vacant parcels around the City to make them available for development; purchase existing private rentals and transform units into long-term affordable house.

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

I will



- Work with the County, local service providers and healthcare advocates to improve access to health care and mental health services for seniors and focus on eliminating the racial and economic disparities in our current delivery services models
- Work in partnership with the County and our faith-based community to improve access to services and lift up the needs of seniors across our community
- Build more housing at all income levels, with a priority for below market rate housing; preserve public lands for public good
- Work to ensure that Oakland receives its fair share of the State funds from the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP)

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?

Yes, I support the innovative use of the “opportunity zones” investments to support our goals to ensure clean, safe affordable housing for all of our residents, and I would embrace strategies such as increased housing impact fees and jobs/housing linkage fees. I am fundamentally opposed to providing tax benefits to wealthy individuals and/or corporations that do not make long-term investments in developing our community based on our values and desires.

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, I would work with housing advocates, small landlords and other stakeholders to pass a progressive rent control policy engineered to stop the displacement of Black and Brown folks.

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?



I will use our anti-displacement funds to provide rent subsidies for Section 8 tenants and landlords to increase the viability of this form of rent payments in the community. I also support the strategy approved by the City Council in CCR 87129 to amend the City's business tax ordinance to waive the first \$30,000 annually in residential rental property income from tax for property rented through Section 8, and I will direct our staff to pursue and then implement the Ordinance.

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 will:

Short Term:

- create clean & safe shelter spaces using City-owned buildings and vacant land;
- create clean & safe shelter spaces in partnership with landlords, nonprofits & churches, including working to expedite the services proposed by the Interfaith Council;
- provide basic sanitation, health and hygiene services to encampments;
- provide logistical assistance to those in need to make the transition from being unhoused to being housed working with our unhoused residents;
- provide storage spaces to assist in the transition from being unhoused to becoming housed;
- improve access to safety net and emergency services for people on the verge of becoming unhoused;
- stem the flow of displacement with flexible temporary financial assistance;
- take a firm stand against illegal evictions
- set goals & deadlines & engage all of the City's resources to meet the deadlines;

Long Term:

- implement Measure W (taxation of vacant properties) and direct those funds to homelessness relief efforts;
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East Bay Housing Organizations

- work with our neighborhood associations to identify areas and opportunities for homelessness relief efforts;
- educate and engage our business community as partners in our relief efforts
- pursue new funding resources to create a regional home preservation fund for lower-income seniors and disabled residents.