

East Bay Housing Organizations Oakland City Councilmember Candidate Questionnaire 2024

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.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to educate and inform communities on each candidate's stance on the housing issues directly impacting them, and does not indicate endorsement. All candidates for City Council have been invited to complete the questionnaire.

Candidate Name: Mindy Pechenuk

Please give a brief introduction of yourself. (50 word limit)

My grandmother told me I must “leave this world a better place than when I was born into it”. Her words, her warm and loving heart, and her common sense understanding of the world got my attention when I was a kid in Brooklyn, New York. I learned early that principles precede and define values!

Questions: (200 word limit for each response)

- 1. Everybody needs a place to call home, but for too many people, the private market is failing to meet that need. Some advocates argue that the City should focus on removing regulatory restrictions to speed up development of market-rate housing, thereby expanding supply to lower the cost of housing for everyone. Others argue that the market has produced plenty of housing for above-moderate income households, and the City should prioritize housing affordable to those with low incomes. Where do you stand on this, and what actions would you take?*

This way this question is worded poses a false dichotomy.

We can and must solve this problem for ALL PEOPLE AND FAMILIES OF ALL INCOMES. In 1970, the median sale price of a home was \$23,000. In 1980 it rose to \$163,000. By the year 2,000 it had risen to \$173,000 and by the most recent year that figures are available, 2023, the median sale value of a home is AN ASTOUNDING \$417,000!! The actions that need to be taken which

define my approach is to BRING DOWN BOTH INFLATION AND SPECULATION which are at the core of this problem.

- 2. What current sources of affordable housing funding would you increase or expand? Now that the Regional Housing Bond is no longer on this Fall's ballot, what new sources would you support? Please identify both one-time and ongoing funding streams.*

The problem posed in this question on sources of funding for affordable housing revolves around identifying the fact that we must put American families first and identify the mostly unknown facts to most people that a massive housing bubble has emerged with large Wall Street speculators like Blackstone buying up single family homes- NOT TO SELL BUT TO RENT!!! That fact can and must be addressed by combined efforts of local, state , and Federal government officials who put the people and families first ahead of GLOBALIST CORPORATE ELITES.

- 3. What is your position on Proposition 5, and why?*
- 4. In the previous Housing Element cycle (2015-2022), Oakland permitted seven units of market-rate housing for every low or moderate income unit, producing double our assigned need for market-rate but only one-third of our affordable housing need. What do you consider to be the greatest barriers to development of affordable housing in Oakland, and what strategies will you take to remove those barriers to ensure that Oakland's housing production is more balanced and at least proportional to the City's stated needs?*

The greatest barrier to development of affordable housing is the lack of a dedicated system to finance the building of more homes. The example of a dedicated system in our lifetime was/is the Savings and Loan Banking system which served the cities like Oakland very well. It was the rape and pillage of the S&L's by the "controlled disintegration" polies of Paul Volcker and the Federal Reserve promotion of the CFR "1980's PROJECT," as also promoted by the Davos World Economic Forum today, which are the root barrier to solving this problem. It can be solved! I know exactly how to do it.

- 5. Oakland has a number of policies to protect renters from unaffordable rent increases, arbitrary evictions, and other forms of displacement. Which programs do you think are*

most effective? What changes would you support? Are there new tenant protection and anti-displacement policies that you would pursue?

I was one of the initiators of a proposed Home Owners and Bank Protection Act in the period of 2007-2008 that was endorsed by 9 state legislatures and 200 City Councils which was an emergency plan to prevent evictions, keep people in their homes and systemically write down mortgages and protect sound banking. This plan, which can be re-worked and applied in the present circumstances would successfully unaffordable rent increases, arbitrary evictions, and other forms of displacement. It was the failure to enact such legislation that led to the bankruptcy of 50% of all homebuilders and a massively inflationary financial bailout of the bankrupt Wall Street and Anglo-Dutch financial system.

6. What measures will you support to prevent at-risk households from becoming unhoused, and what would you do to provide housing for those who are already experiencing homelessness? Please discuss both short-term and long-term strategies. What steps should the City take to prevent criminalizing homelessness, particularly after the Grants Pass decision and the Governor's executive order, and to focus instead on solutions for unhoused people?

The solution to the question posed here must begin with a recognition that we here in Oakland as well as we as part of the nation, the United States of America NEED MORE PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE. Estimates are that 94 percent of all the land in California is unused. To build whole new areas of cities and housing on even a small percent of the 94% unused areas requires leadership. That is why I support a BUILDER FOR PRESIDENT, Donald J. Trump and NOT A LAWYER like Kamala Harris. My estimate is we can turn this disaster around in a period of one to two years, and begin longer term projects that people will be talking about decades from now. They will thank us for being the visionaries who were not just concerned about "getting mine," but creative loving souls who sought to make the world a better place for future generations that we will never meet but will thank us for making their productive and happy lives possible.

7. Local jurisdictions have a legal obligation to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing in all their housing and community development policies. What does this mean to you? What specific policies would you pursue to address the disparate impacts our housing system has on Oakland residents of color, particularly Black, Brown and Indigenous people? What should the City do to ensure a more equitable distribution of affordable housing across all parts of the City rather than concentrating it in low income neighborhoods and communities of color?

The problem addressed in this question is that the problem can only be solved for ALL PEOPLE! Starter homes that fit within the budget of a young family SIMPLY DO NOT EXIST whether you are black, brown, green, yellow, purple or white.

The answer is to BUILD MORE HOMES and CREATE MILLIONS OF PRODUCTIVE JOBS. Over the past 40 years, the construction of entry level homes has declined by more than 80percent. In the 1970's as many as 480,000 new homes were built per year, in the year 2021, only 65,000 were built. We need 4-5 millions new homes built in the immediate future with an appropriate share in the Bay Area to seriously address this problem, not try to sugar coat it or put a band-aid on a cancerous speculative bubble. That will not work.

8. *Oakland has been considering adoption of a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act, which would give tenants the opportunity to purchase their rental units if their buildings are offered for sale. Do you support giving tenants (and nonprofit community organizations) a right of first offer and a right of first refusal? Why or why not? Are there particular provisions or exemptions that you would seek?*

Yes, I support a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act. Someone who owns a building will definitely want to make sure that it is kept in the best of conditions for themselves and future generations. As far as the question of "non-profit community organizations," I would want to take it on a case by case basis, because my experience suggests that many nonprofits are merely front groups for billionaire speculators who seek to manipulate people to their advantage by using such phony front groups.

9. *In December 2018, the City Council adopted a Land Disposition Policy to prioritize the use of surplus public land for affordable housing. Staff was directed to bring back an implementing ordinance within 6 months, but that hasn't happened. What will you do to ensure that a Public Land Ordinance is drafted, enacted and implemented consistent with the adopted policy? What do you think are the most critical elements of a public land policy for Oakland? What role should the community play in the disposition and use of public land?*

Our City of Oakland is dilapidated and needs to be rebuilt. Investing in creating a beautiful, safe and productive city as Oakland once was is my greatest desire and hope of my campaign. A few ground rules to make that happen include: 1. Outlaw financial derivatives speculation in the housing market related to both new construction and rebuilding pre-existing housing units. 2. Restore Glass Steagall banking separation to reward productive lending by banks and halt wild speculation by commercial banks which has been such a large cause of the collapse and degeneration of Oakland. Public discussion and involvement of citizens in this process is crucial to make it succeed. The people come first, the speculators can stand at the back on the line.

10. For large projects such the Coliseum area, what community benefits should the City seek and at what levels? Would you require inclusion of affordable housing, and if so, what percentage should be affordable and what income levels should be targeted? Who should pay for that development?

I believe that the Coliseum area could be a crucial area for bringing back industries to Oakland that would be associated with my stated goal of bringing manufacturing of all kinds and feeded industries for that manufacturing. This will be a major theme of my campaign in the weeks to come. By bringing industry back to Oakland we can accomplish two of my major goals. One is to restore a stable tax revenue base for essential city services such as police, fire, hospital, ambulance etc.. Second, is to help rebuild the family structure so that a family of four or five can live from the income of one bread earner, and by the employment of that breadwinner being right in Oakland, we can restore the "full family" at the dinner table seven days a week to give our children the best upbringing that will make their future a happy and secure one, which will in turn make for some very happy mothers and fathers for all OF THE people of OAKLAND