

Green Party Questionnaire

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Note: You may respond to any question with a link to your website or other posted positions. For the yes/no questions, please answer yes or no and if you wish to add to your answer, feel free to do so.

1. Motivation -- Why did you choose to run for City office? If you are running against an incumbent, what are your main dis-satisfactions and differences with him or her?

My opponent has been an elected official since 2008. I believe in term limits for Oakland City Council and bringing new faces to the body to get change moving again. We are stuck in some old patterns and need to confront the realities of our situation in a new, bolder way.

I believe I am the best candidate for the change that Oakland needs.

2. Program and Priorities -- Elected office provides the opportunity to proactively lead by placing new ideas on the agenda for consideration and development. What are some specific ideas you intend to pursue if elected? What do you believe are the main priorities for the City?

I believe Oakland needs real reforms in order to move forward. My main goal will be to get Oakland healthier: 1) healthy city hall; 2) healthy finances; 3) healthy streets.

The number one issue we currently face is the affordability crunch that has seen thousands of Oaklanders leave our city. I have called for an additional 5,000 new affordable housing units to come online within the next decade.

Our city stands as a proud leader in the social justice movement and I believe we need to continue to adopt policies that support inclusion of our diverse residents. That's why I will work to address citywide issues to protect tenants and our most vulnerable populations from displacement, increase police training and accountability through balanced, fair and objective reformations, and provide universal pre-kindergarten for all our children and college accounts for our high school youth so that they can attend community college for free.

3. Qualifications -- Please give a brief summary of your background and qualifications for the office of City. If you are a current City Government elected official, what issues can you point to in your time as an elected official that have had a positive impact?

For forty years, I have been a civil rights attorney representing the unrepresented on issues such as small business, labor, immigration, civil and human rights, international and nonprofit law.

Utilizing my forty years of mediation and consensus building in various public and private sector positions, I am eager to forge sensible compromise that respects our residents and their important contributions to our city.

If elected as an at-large councilmember, I am committed to building consensus among our diverse constituencies.

4. Local groups -- Are you affiliated with any of the active Oakland groups? Such as TOLA, Make Oakland Better Now, Oakland Justice Coalition, Block by Block, Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club, GO Public Schools, OCO, or any other. Describe your involvement and why you feel this group is worthy of your support.

Oakland Community Organizations (OCO) Operation Ceasefire- OCO is concerned with tenant displacement, criminal justice, youth leadership, and mass incarceration. Those issues are some of the problems in Oakland, and OCO is actively addressing those issues. I am part of the leadership council. My particular focus is on stopping gun violence through Operation Ceasefire.

Chinatown Coalition- As a voting member, who is concerned with the quality of life issues in Chinatown, I have been most involved with the proposed downtown plan and its impact on housing, traffic, education, open space, and health of Chinatown residents.

The 200 Project- I am one of six members of the leadership group that organizes conferences and strategic plans for addressing the barriers to homeownership for workforce and low-income families.

Four Family Association- I am a legal adviser for the local chapter of family surnames: Lew, Quan, Jung, and Chew.

If the Green Party is concerned about the health of an urban community, the balance between the environment and the impact of human occupancy (like I have been for the past fifty years), then the Green Party should endorse my candidacy.

5. Local activities -- Other than local politics, are you involved in any other Oakland

based community activities that you would like to share with us? This can range from volunteering in your school to being in your church baseball league.

I continue to counsel when requested, young college and law students regarding opportunities in public service.

6. Budget -- If you were on council for the next budget in 2017 how would you act differently from the council members dealing with the budget in 2015? How much additional revenue should the City aim to take in, and how would you generate it?

The city is currently experiencing a robust revenue, yet reports indicate that the city will run a budget deficit for each of the next five years. This means there is an indication that the fiscal priorities of the current council are not in tune with the needs of the city. One only needs to look at the current state of the infrastructure to understand this.

I have municipal experience as a city attorney. In that capacity, I advised the city of Alameda on the impact of the passage of Prop 13. Alameda was able to successfully prioritize the services it provided without cutting back on vital services.

I have already done that through my negotiation of the Brooklyn Basin Project. From those additional units will flow tax dollars to help increase revenues for the city.

7. Youth -- Describe the condition of youth in Oakland? What would your priorities for youth be for Oakland government and how would they get implemented and paid for?

I believe we need to acknowledge the opportunity gap that exists for too many of our young people. We must invest in educational opportunities so that every child in Oakland has the same chance at climbing the ladder of success. To do this, I propose we establish a universal pre-kindergarten program and provide individual college savings accounts to make community college free for those graduating seniors who wish to attend. Finally, I would create more opportunities for small business owners as well as invest in adult and youth employment training programs.

I would reallocate public funds to support these vital services. As I mentioned in the previous question, there is considerable mismanagement of the funds under the current city leadership.

8. Police -- How do you think our community policing is going and what are the next steps? Describe the current relationship between the residents and the Oakland Police. Do you suggest any changes? Do you support Restorative Justice programs and how should the city be involved, if at all. What are your thoughts about police misconduct

and how do you feel Oakland should deal with it?

I became involved with OCO "Stop the Gun violence" because it provided a rational way of addressing crime in Oakland. The procedural justice training program for officers, which brought the community and the police to a better understanding of each other, was severely undermined by the recent news about policemen conduct. In particular, the most recent report on racial profiling of black and latino men by the University of California, shows the gap that still exists between residents and the Oakland Police and how the community sees the police.

I would separate police reform from criminal justice and seek to find, in both areas, common ground for balanced, fair and just training and accountability tools to which both the police and the community can agree on. I favor a community policing model that seeks to rebuild trust between officers and community, and provides stability in leadership for our police department.

9. Development Projects -- What are your thoughts and views about the West Oakland Army Base, The upper Broadway-Valdez Triangle, Oak to 9th and other projects?

In order for Oakland to adequately serve all of its residents, I believe there needs to be economic development. The projects mentioned, and other projects under consideration, for example in District 7 will help stabilize the neighborhoods through bringing in small businesses and families to serve the residents.

10. Housing & Gentrification -- Increasing rents, dislocation, and gentrification have been in the news. What policies do you advocate to assure that Oakland tenants are protected and that Oakland remains an economically and racially diverse city? Do you favor rent control?

At this point, I am in favor of rent control.

The problem of affordability is not a new one. There was a report that showed that 325,000 new jobs were created and during that same period only 55,000 new units were built. The impact of the lack of housing should have indicated to numbers of the governing board of a city that competition for housing units would increase and those with the most money would pay out. My point is that tenant protection should have implemented many years ago. Tenant protection at this point of the most affected, is no longer effective in protecting those people.

Only by creating enough housing can we ensure that diversity of both communities of color and of economic class can we remain in Oakland.

11. Environment -- What do you think the Oakland City government should be doing about the environment?

Oakland City government should follow those policies and regulations implemented by the previous mayor that led Oakland to be called the greenest city in America.

12. Public Banking -- Will you introduce, co-sponsor and/or support an ordinance or charter amendment to create a Public Bank of Oakland, inspired by the Bank of North Dakota^[i] (BND), a 100 year old public institution? The Public Bank of Oakland would hold the city's deposits - in contrast to having them held by Wall Street Banks as currently done. It would make fiscally responsible loans in the best interest of the residents of Oakland - in contrast to Wall Street banks' record of risk and ruin. Profits made by the Public Bank of Oakland would be returned to the General Fund of the City of Oakland, or used to further buttress the loan capabilities of the bank, much as the BND does (the BND has returned over \$400,000,000 to the General Fund of the State of North Dakota over the last 21 years,^[ii] while substantially increasing its capitalization and its loan outreach)

No. I would offer as an alternative Beneficial State Bank which currently is providing the kind of services that are contemplated by the bank that is suggested by this question. I would work with the Beneficial State Bank to serve that role in the city of Oakland.

^[i] <https://bnd.nd.gov/>

^[ii] <https://ilsr.org/rule/bank-of-north-dakota-2/>

13. Local Payday Lenders -- Oakland is awash with for-profit Check Cashing and PayDay Loan emporiums (a simple Google query^[i] shows 20). These outfits provide emergency cash and other financial products to those who cannot obtain it otherwise - at outrageously high interest rates and/or extremely high fees. Professor Mehrsa Baradaran, in her book *How the Other Half Banks*,^[ii] quotes the astounding statistic that those who use these services spend on average over \$2000 per household per year.

It is not widely known but Oakland is home to the only non-profit check cashing and payday lending storefront in the country - Community Check Cashing^[iii] (CCC) in Fruitvale Plaza. It provides the same services for-profit operators do at 33% - 50% of the cost, while paying its employees a living wage. Will you support build-out and capitalization loans by the City of Oakland to expand CCC to other storefronts around Oakland (much as the City Council gave a 50-year, \$3,300,000 interest-free loan to the E 12th St. developers^[iv])?

I would support an analysis of the issue. And based upon that analysis, if beneficial to be residents of Oakland, I would develop policy to encourage the residents to use the service first. Then, as the need expands, the service will expand.

[i] Type 'Oakland Payday lenders' into Google Search and click on the resulting map.

[ii] NALC.org "Author makes the case for postal banking" <http://tinyurl.com/h9e6a2p>

Baradaran noted that the average unbanked family with an income of around \$25,000 spends about \$2,400 per year on financial transactions like these, even more than it spends on food.

[iii] <http://communitycheckcashing.org/>

[iv] Oakland City Council agenda, June 15th, 2016 <http://tinyurl.com/jzy398p>

14. Satisfaction of Residents -- How do you think the average resident feels about city government? How would you rate the satisfaction level?

Based upon my door-knocking experience with residents, they have very low opinions about their elected representative whom they have never met.

15. Accountability -- How do you propose making yourself accountable and accessible to the citizens of Oakland?

In my legal career, I established the prosecutorial arm of the U.S. Office of the Special Counsel (OSC), western region. The Office of the Special Counsel was charged with the responsibility of prosecuting perpetrators of fraud, waste and mismanagement in government contracts. With this experience and an open door policy, I will address the root cause of corruption in city hall.

16. Governance -- What kind of relationship could you have with other office holders? Who do you see as a working majority on council and who can you work with? With my experience, I would hope to be able to work with every councilmember.

17. Endorsements -- Who has endorsed you so far? Who do you expect to endorse you? Who are you endorsing, from President all the way down ballot to local races? Include your #2 and 3 choices (if applicable) for your own race and note that this year the City races are Council seats, School Board seats and City Attorney.

At this time, I have received the endorsement of BBBON.

President- Bernie Sanders

State Senator- Sandre Swanson

School Board seats- Rosie Torres and Chris Jackson

City Attorney- no endorsement

18. Campaign Funding -- How much money do you currently have for this race? How much money do you plan to raise? Where will the money come from? Describe sources of financial contributions for your campaign that you would refuse to accept (if any).

I am on target of reaching my fundraising goal. View FPPC reports to see the list of my contributors.

19. Checks and balances -- How do you view current the relationship between the Council and Mayor? Any comments on the same question for the Auditor and City Attorney? Are there any changes they would propose to the city charter?

Frosty. I have no opinion about the relationship between the Auditor and the City Attorney, not the city charter.

20. 20. Money in elections. -- Does Oakland need campaign finance reform? If so, what kind? Do you support amending the Constitution to end corporate Constitutional rights and getting money out of politics? Have you [Taken the Pledge to Amend](https://movetoamend.org/take-pledge-amend)? (<https://movetoamend.org/take-pledge-amend>)

I am in favor of campaign finance reform. However, ever since I drafted campaign finance reform for chief counsel of the Watergate Committee, I would defer answering this question until I have the opportunity to critically analyze the problem as I did in 1974.

21. Anything Else? -- Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?
No, thank you for your thought-provoking questions.