

QUESTIONNAIRE

GREEN PARTY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY 2014 ENDORSEMENT DECISION

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1. Motivation -- Why did you choose to run for City office?

Oakland is a wonderful, progressive and diverse city, but city government is incompetent and lacks the creativity and will to provide the leadership we need. I will change the conversation about crime from police and arrests into one about creating the conditions for a really safe and prosperous city. This means a city focused on social and economic justice for all its people: (1) city government focused on improving education, quality pre-school for all three and four year-olds, and community schools with programs for students and their parents; (2) improve and focus job training by working with OUSD, community colleges and other providers, job creation including the development of worker coops and raising the minimum wage to \$15; (3) police reform including focus on violent crime, zero tolerance for police misconduct, community policing, and restorative justice default for non-violent crimes.

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 am running on a platform of social and economic justice. While all aspects of City Government that can be brought to bear to improve the lives of Oakland residents are of concern to me, the five top priorities of my administration, all critical, are:

- Instituting a police force that protects the lives, property and constitutional rights of all of Oakland's residents. Reorganizing the force to be far more effective without the budget-busting effects of hiring additional police; creating a community police force that has a neighborhood presence and answers 911 calls; creating a modern, effective crime lab; regaining local control from the Federal Monitor with a zero tolerance approach to police misconduct, and eliminating senseless multi-million dollar lawsuit settlements are components of my plan.
- A job which earns a living wage for all who want work in Oakland. While I support the \$12.25/hr plus paid sick leave campaign as a good first step, and my volunteers collected

some 1500 signatures for that ballot initiative, I believe \$15.00/hr is the bare minimum workers need to live on in the Bay Area. On taking office I will introduce legislation to bring Oakland up to \$15.00/hr much as San Francisco and Seattle are doing. Beyond this I have a comprehensive plan to bring living wage jobs to Oakland through renewable energy projects, new housing construction, the creation of universal ultra-high speed Internet service, worker cooperatives and small business initiatives.

- Turning Oakland 100% green (no pun intended). I want to power all of Oakland using solar power and other alternative energy sources. I believe we need a Municipal Power Authority or similar to wrest power away from PG&E and provide Oakland's citizenry with the option of 100% alternative energy. I want to see the infrastructure developed for transportation by electric vehicles and hydrogen fuel cells. The country is on the verge of a transformation in how we supply and use the energy we need, and Oakland should be leading that revolution.
- Fighting to protect Oakland's residents from eviction and foreclosure in the name of profit. Oakland's housing boom is bringing to our city needed economic vitality, but it should not be at the expense of its existing residents. Housing is a human right. Our rent control laws need strengthening, locally and state-wide, and development plans need to be based on community desires, not just developers' wishes. We must take steps to insure that another real estate downturn, inevitable as the sun rising, does not lead to thousands more Oakland residents foreclosed on and evicted unjustly as happened and is still happening because of the Great Recession. We need to build affordable housing.

Education. Nothing we can do will promote social and economic justice in the long run as much as insuring that all our children have access to a good education. I want to establish universal pre-kindergarten for three and four year old Oakland residents. I will work with the Superintendent of OUSD to keep our schools open after hours and on weekends for community-based activities and as a safe haven for our children. Adult education, which has been cut to the bone, is equally important, and I mean to have that funding restored.

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?

[My biography is here.](#) Briefly:

- Civil rights activist in New York and the South in the 1960's.
- Leader of the anti-Vietnam war movement as student body president at UC Berkeley.

- Executive Director of the Berkeley Rent Control Board.
- Civil rights attorney for 40 years and partner at Siegel & Yee.
- General Counsel for the Oakland Unified School District.
- Chair of the Oakland Housing Authority.
- Elected member and president of the Oakland School Board.
- Legal advisor to Mayor Quan before resigning in protest over police treatment of Occupy and the ensuing violence.

4. Local groups -- Are you affiliated with any of the active Oakland groups? Such as TOLA, Make Oakland Better Now, 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.

None of the above. I have been active with the National Lawyers Guild and Pacifica Radio.

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.

National Lawyer's Guild. My wife and I were honored this April with an award from the NLG as "Champions of Justice."

Justice 4 Alan Blueford Coalition. Seeking justice in the case of Alan Blueford, killed by Oakland Police in May of 2012. Similar work regarding Oscar Grant and other victims of police violence.

6. Budget -- If you were on council for the next budget in 2015 how would you act differently from the council members dealing with the budget in 2013? What do you think is the cause of the current budget crisis?

I would establish the Public Bank of Oakland to remove Oakland's dependence on Wall Street banks and the fees we now pay to them. I would look to cuts in OPD's budget, especially in the areas of overtime and militarized hardware acquisitions. I would prioritize spending on social issues and restorative justice.

I would look to ballot initiatives to put the issue of fairer, progressive taxation to the voters. (Changes in tax structure must be approved by voters, and are subject to the limitations of California law).

There is no current budget crisis. The City Council recently allocated a surplus of \$30 million due to increased tax revenue, mostly from the real estate boom.

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?

Our youth are in trouble. Low graduation rates in general, and even lower ones for African American and Hispanic males, are deeply problematic. Girls are being forced into prostitution and young men and women face the prospect of a bleak economic future.

See my discussion of pre-school education above. In addition, I am proposing a system of Restorative Justice for most all youthful offenders in Oakland. These programs will be paid for through progressive taxation initiatives, revenues flowing from the housing boom, savings in other areas such as police overtime and reduced lawsuit settlements, and private, State and Federal grants.

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.

Community Policing is no more than a buzzword under the current Administration and in the mouths of the other candidates. I have [a real plan for community policing](#), not lip service to the concept.

The relationship between residents and OPD is multifaceted, depending on where you live, what you look like and how old you are. OPD needs to treat everyone in the same manner – with respect. As Sir Robert Peel said, and I have quoted many times

The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon the public approval of police actions...

Until the police can be trusted by all of Oakland's diverse communities we will continue to have problems. Community policing can help in this regard.

I have a policy paper specifically devoted to Restorative Justice in Oakland. I support it completely and believe the city should be intimately involved in creating and nurturing Restorative Justice programs.

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?

Generally I believe that Oakland defers far too much to developers who want to make money here and does not demand enough in return. We need to demand real, significant employment and housing benefits in exchange for approving projects. Two examples: (1)

Not enough Oakland residents are being hired at the Army Base because the project language is too general. I would demand specific numbers including having the developer pay to recruit and train Oakland if he is unable to do so himself; (2) Developers of housing projects should be required to transfer part of the real estate into an urban land trust which will build and sell affordable housing to working class Oakland residents.

10. Police Misconduct. What are your thoughts and how do you feel Oakland should deal with it? How would they get the Oakland Police past the current oversight under Judge Henderson?

I have stated and continue to state that I will impose a zero-tolerance policy regard police misconduct, and hope to instill in the force a respect for the Constitution, particularly the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment.

Establishing - and maintaining - constitutional policing is a key requirement of removing OPD from Judge Henderson's oversight. The police must be de-militarized and ultimately mirror Oakland's population.

11. 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?

I have a [policy paper](#) on tenant protection on my website. I also have policy papers soon to be released discussing gentrification in more general terms (I have [a synopsis here](#)), and protection of homeowners from foreclosure.

In terms of tenant protection, in short:

- Establish an Office of Tenant Advocacy.
- Ellis Act Mitigation Legislation (as exists in San Francisco).
- Updated condominium conversion regulations.
- Limiting multiple credit card charges for credit checks when searching for rental housing.
- Penalties for landlords who attempt to illegally pressure tenants to move out.
- Scrutiny of all evictions, and administrative and if necessary legal support when warranted.
- Further reductions in capital improvements pass-throughs.

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

Setting a goal of a 100% solar and alternative energy Oakland is the most important thing Oakland can do for the environment and future generations. The City government can do much in this regard, see my answer above and I will soon be releasing a policy paper on this topic.

The Oakland City government can do more to conserve water and provide sticks and carrots to promote alternative energy individual transportation, and it can effectively lobby our State and Federal legislators for more eco-friendly laws, forbidding bomb-trains through Oakland, and ending fracking.

We must continue efforts to make Oakland a bike-friendly city and improve public transportation.

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

A recent poll showed that most Oakland residents do not believe the City is going in the right direction. As for City Government, I would think most people are as stupefied as I am over the incompetence of the City over such things as dog parks, the Oakland A's, the garbage disposal contracts, and ending federal oversight of the police department, to name just a few recent fiascos.

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

(1) City Hall will be completely open to Oakland residents; (2) I will spend a substantial amount of my time in the community; (3) Media will have complete access to my activities and able to sit in on all meetings and other business; and (4) I will *always* tell the truth.

15. Do we need an Oakland Progressive Alliance akin to the one in Richmond, and if so, who should be members?

Yes! Oakland is sorely in need of a united progressive left to effect real change. A Mayor can only do so much without the votes of a majority of the City Council and the support of the people for a progressive agenda.

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?

I will work very hard for unity with all council members to have agreement on how to move the City forward. By January 2015 there will be five new members seated over the previous two years. I already have good, professional working relationships with all the current members who

will be there in 2015, so that we can work together even with policy differences. I will attend and participate in all Council meetings, and will work closely with the school board as well.

17. Endorsements -- Who has endorsed you so far? Who do you expect to endorse you? Who do you endorse in the other City races? Include your #2 and 3 choices for your own race and note that this year the City races are Mayor, Council seats, School Board seats and City Auditor.

National Union of Healthcare Workers; SEIU Local 1021; SEIU Local 87; California Nurses Association; League of Conservation Voters; Oakland Education Association; Harvey Milk Democratic Club; Hon. Wilson Riles Jr.; Hon. Gus Newport; Hon. Dennis Kucinich; Hon. Matt Gonzalez; Hon. Jane Brunner; Hon. Nate Miley; Walter Riley, Esq.; Cat Brooks; Anne Weills, Esq.; John Burris, Esq.; Tolbert Small, M.D.; Hon. Toni Cook; Hon. Angela Alioto; Hon. Tony Hall; Hon. John Avalos; Hon. Bill Monning; Favianna Rodriguez; Paul L. Cobb; Millie Cleveland; Paul Brekke-Miesner; James Hurd Nixon; George Galvis; Alyssa Chen; Katrina Brekke-Miesner; Napoleon Khalilnaji; Bishop Frank Pinkard Jr.; Sonya Mehta; Pastor. Rev. Harold A. Mayberry; Douglas H. Appel; Stephen Bingham; Keith Brown; Jack Bryson; Rev. Vernon Burroughs; Ignacio Chapela; Carroll Fife; ISO; Joe Keffer; Rev. Phil Lawson; Bobbi Lopez; Rev. Jasper Lowery; Al Marshall; J.P. Massar; Olga Miranda; Rev. E. Teresa Nelson; Betty Olson-Jones; Rosalinda Palacios; Dean Preston; Earl Marty Price; Isaac Taggart; Carol Tolbert; Alan Yee; Alan Young; hundreds of others

I am not making endorsements for mayor or for other city races except that I endorsed Shanthi Gonzalez for school board district 6 and Sokkom Mao for city council district 2. (He withdrew from that race.)

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).

We have raised \$175,000 and will raise \$100,000 more. Additionally, union endorsers will make independent expenditures. We have a major fundraiser with Dennis Kucinich in the fall. My money comes from progressive residents of Oakland, friends, family members, school mates. I have not solicited money from developers and will not take it if offered.

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?

Relationships are poor because the Mayor does not work well with others. She does not collaborate and is often not candid. I will work openly and constructively with others and expect that City officials will unite with my campaign's vision for progressive change in

Oakland. I do not currently have plans to modify the charter but am open to ideas in this regard.

20. Money in elections. -- Does Oakland need campaign finance reform? If so, what kind?

Oakland has fairly strong campaign financing laws, but as illustrated by the recent scandal involving Kaplan's and Parker's ballot initiative PACs, those laws need further strengthening. I want the Ethics Commission to develop a greater and more aggressive role in enforcing these laws.

Further, I believe in and I will advocate for Oakland to look at public financing of Mayoral and other Citywide campaigns.

21. Anything Else? -- Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?

The *East Bay Express* selected me as 'Oakland's most progressive Mayoral candidate.'

I support the Green Party's Ten Key Values and generally agree with the Green Party's platform. Our campaign is developing strong momentum. We can win this race. I respectfully request the support of the Green Party and promise to work collaboratively with you.

Yes or No questions (follow with an explanation if you want to add one)

-- Do you support the renewal of Measure Y?

Yes. It is better than not having the funds available. However, I generally oppose parcel taxes and special assessments, and there should be a more progressive means of funding. Once thing I will demand in implementing its provisions is that its funds for crime reduction be better managed, used effectively and not be used to target people by race, ethnicity or other categories having nothing to do with criminal acts.

-- Do you support the minimum wage proposal?

Yes. (But see above. [I strongly support going to \\$15/hr](#))

-- Are you in favor of a police commission?

Yes.

-- Do you support Dan Kalb's proposal on oversight and transparency?

Yes.

-- Are you in favor of receiving public complaints against police officers at the Civilian Police Review Board?

Yes.

-- Would you vote for using eminent domain to abate foreclosure crisis?

Yes. (As in something similar to the Richmond CARES proposal)

-- Do you support Ranked Choice Voting?

Yes.

-- Would you support Proportional Representation?

Yes.

-- Do you support diverting people from prosecution if they participate in a restorative justice program?

ABSOLUTELY. I have a policy paper devoted entirely to the prospects for Restorative Justice in Oakland.

-- Do you support Community Choice Aggregation?

Yes! (as in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_Choice_Aggregation)

-- Would you vote to allow more grey water systems?

Yes.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.