

QUESTIONNAIRE

GREEN PARTY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY 2014 ENDORSEMENT DECISION

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

I am running for Mayor of Oakland because I want to unite all of Oakland's divided communities and disparate groups, leading our city in to become the secure, stable, and powerful economic and political center of northern California and the world that we all know Oakland can be. Oakland has major assets and strong capabilities to leverage in provide a safe and secure environment for all of its residents, in helping to build and expand local businesses and industries for job creation and sustained economic growth, and in helping to provide social and economic resources to support advancement for all of Oakland's residents. I have the desire, the experience, and the ability to manage and coordinate the business, government, social, and even political assets, talents, and resources of our great city to work for the benefit of all who live here in achieving that vision.

I am also running because I realized that none of the other major candidates, not even the current mayor, have the experience or the backgrounds to meet the challenge of leading and growing this city. Some are excellent politicians, some are experienced in limited areas of community service, government, and public service, but none of them brings the depth or breadth of experience, or even the comprehensive vision, to this role that I offer the people of Oakland.

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?

My basic platform is simple.

A. Public Service Focused, Safety & Security Policing Is Priority One For Oakland. I will coordinate with Chief Sean Whent, Barry Donelan & the OPOA leadership, the Community Policing Advisory Board, and Oakland grassroots program leaders to promote mutually supportive partnerships of intervention, open exchange, and positive engagement between Oakland's Public Service Officers and Oakland's diverse communities. We will not just run and hire a host of new police officers. We will build partnerships with surrounding cities, the county, state, and the federal CPOA leadership (Ron Davis), in developing an integrated law enforcement partnership that targets regional and local crime and criminal activity reduction, even elimination in some cases. At the same time, we relieve pressure on our local police staff and officers so that we may add a training focus for current and incoming officers on community service-oriented police, restorative justice, and public engagement. In order for our police to be public service officers, we have to train them and provide them with space and opportunity to act in those roles. A comprehensive unified public safety strategy is the key – not simply selling every asset to hire more police. We will promote a positive public presence and active community relations practices, rather than excessive force projection and questionable oversight. I am also a strong proponent of crime victims support service, which I plan to share with community agencies in coordinating and supporting. To date, no other candidate has even raised this critical component of public safety and security as an issue.

B. "Oakland First!" Integrated Job Creation, Business Growth, & Expansion.

1. I will direct all City agencies and offices to partner with Oakland based businesses that are committed to hiring locally a well. Oakland-Friendly businesses will have first priority in doing business with The City, obtaining and negotiating contracts and services with The City, and in getting consultative support to open, to grow, and expand in Oakland. Businesses and companies that work with the city will provide sourcing and hiring metrics in support of Oakland First!.

2. I will aggressively expand the City's partnership with Oakland Unified School District's Linked Learning program. We will also engage in partnerships with business leaders from many industries, including components of technology & manufacturing, commercial service professions, government, public works, and emergency services agencies. We will engage Oakland's advanced educational and training institutes as partners to help develop roadmaps from school and training to work, to business ownership, or to advanced education. I will also work to help restore credibility and stability to the Workforce Investment Board.

C. Public Engagement and Business Development Leadership Representing Oakland. As The East Bay Technology & Business Hub. I will expand the city's relationships with regional and national government, business, and non-profit entities as well as local organizations to market and celebrate Oakland as the cost-effective, high value business investment, business start-up, and technology enterprise development center of Northern California. I will directly work with minority and small business groups and chambers of commerce organizations to develop and implement strategies for growing and sustaining our diverse Oakland economy. Oakland has the better combination of warmer and more accessible coastal areas, more parks, and more diverse community and cultural assets than any other bay area city. Visitors are surprised to see all of this city's vibrant sites and activities when they come here. They should not be. We should be sharing and advertising our very diverse cultural and social events, as well as our comparative low-business and community development environment relative to both San Francisco Silicon Valley. I will be the city's culture, tourism, and business representative as Mayor.

4. Transparent & Accountable Leadership As Mayor. I will lead by example in building and enhancing Oakland's role and presence relative to regional issues, challenges, and goals. I will work actively with the Port Of Oakland, the Oakland Unified School District, the sports teams owners, large corporate employers, and our northern California unions. We will team as invested partners supporting programs that foster mutual growth and success. And I will make the city's budget truly open for public review and analysis. I will drive actively promote sustainable, green, conservation programs, not with just popular social ideas. We will actually work with businesses, community leaders, and research organizations to develop and promote water, land, air, industrial, residential, and general waste management measures that are economically and functionally viable.

Those are my priorities and those are what I offer the people of Oakland as the most qualified candidate for the office of Mayor of Oakland.

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 Qualifications:

A. 28 years in community services working with non-profits and community organizations, including homeless and social services programs, churches, performing arts organizations, and cultural organizations representing every continent but Australia. I have been a founder, director, manager, staff trainer, and public relations representative, having built and managed non-profits from the ground up. I am currently Manager, director, consultant and adviser for several non-profits in northern California.

B. 30 Years in Public Service as a registered clinical therapist and counselor, as well as a professional and social services counselor, trainer, and agency administrator for children & youth, adults, senior citizens, career and professional services, and life coaching.

C. 10 Years in Volunteer Law Enforcement support, DHS Critical Incident Coordinator, and Chaplain for Contra Costa County Sheriff

D. 25+ Years in Commercial Business Development, Management, Solutions and Service Delivery Consulting for large, complex, and international business and technology programs and projects. I have helped successfully delivery multi-billion dollar programs and projects as stable operations and entities for large companies and the federal government. I have managed delivery of complex technical, business, and financial programs for state and local agencies as well as for small and medium size companies. I am currently Senior Consultant for Global Cyber-Security Access Management at Kaiser Permanente and am also executive consultant for ITSource Technology, MT-Technology, and Apperture Media Group.

I have never served in elected office.

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.

I am not involved actively with any of these groups although I am a support of 'MOBN', Block By Block, The Mentoring Center and other groups. I don't think that they are 'worthy' of my support as much as I support their efforts at improving social engagement and positive change in Oakland. I support organizations that get people engaged actively in government, public affairs, and in discussions that lead to action in improving the life, health, and social conditions of people at a community level, at a local level, regionally, nationally, and globally. Every little bit helps. I like the phrase 'Think Globally – Act Locally'. It sets a strong and clear perspective for everyone's efforts.

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.

Historically, I have been involved actively with Bantaba (Senegalese performing arts), Fua Dia Congo, The Black Choreographers Festival, and many teaching programs at Malonga Casquelorde Center For The Performing Arts, and I have actively shared with a number of churches primarily in East and West Oakland.

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?

If I were on the Oakland City Council, my first agenda item would be to publish a clearly comprehensible list of the prior year's budget expenditures and financial receipts from all in 2013 and 2014 by department, detailing the programs and projects for which money was distributed and the programs, projects, and agencies from which money was received. I would follow up by working with the City Auditor to publish a list of the critical budget items – Must Be Funded - in 2015 and 2016. After accounting for those items and outlays, we would determine funding and revenue source projections using prior records as models. I would go back to the Mayor and Council and present that information, also making it available to the public. I would then ask that we discuss and prioritize all 'other' projects and programs to discuss methods and means for either raising/generating funds to support other projects or reducing/eliminating funding for projects. I would solicit public and community discussion, comment, and ideas on determining priorities and in generating revenue to support those upcoming projects.

The cause of the current budget crisis is rooted in the failure of both the Mayor and the City Council to provide a transparent budget, to engage the public in a transparent discussion of budget planning, and to be clear and open in explaining/justifying expenditures in many areas of the budget. Critical 'must fund' bills are not paid, while pet projects and political agenda oriented programs are over-funded. These activities may have their place, but the public needs to know that and understand that clearly – especially when the city is operating in the red as Oakland is and will be for at least the next budget period.

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?

Oakland has a very high dropout rate, high unemployment rate, and high drug use among our youth. That is not a good triangle. The general problem has roots which cannot easily be corrected from the position of government. That said, my plan is to work with programs such as Youth Uprising, the department of Parks and Recreation, local non-profits, churches, and county community services agencies to engage in more direct outreach on the streets of Oakland, in malls, in clubs, and other places where you gather and congregate to promote programs and services that encourage completion of education, that offer job training WITH employment prospects, and that connect youth with self-help programs to provide them with tools to pursue higher education, employment, and even business startup prospects.

To some degree all of this is in place in Oakland City government now. It is simply not an area of focus of The Mayor or the City Council. Latest reports suggest that some of these City sponsored programs are simply being used as campaign outreach operations rather than youth/community service projects. I am not surprised. Again, the infrastructure is there but commitment to our youth and focus on them is not the real purpose of many of these programs. I plan to change that by being directly involved and engaged as Mayor, and by bringing my own experience and vision to these programs. That includes hiring leaders and coordinating the hiring of committed staff with track records and goals of providing actual service and delivery. I will make sure we hire people committed to helping youth and young people to set goals, and achieve their life and career objectives.

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.

In this election year, Oakland has seen some improvement in community policing and public engagement, but we have neither a long-term viable plan, nor a long term program for developing a department-wide program. The Public Safety and Security Platform I propose provides that strategy and process, including providing training and policies regarding a restorative justice platform within the Oakland 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?

A. We must adopt, enforce, and monitor an Oakland-First policy relative to hiring of contractors, consultants, workers, and vendors on all of these projects.

B. We must provide clear statement of projected/expected short-term and long term benefits to be achieved within the local communities affected by these projects, and the benefits to be realized by the city as a whole. To date, no such statement exists.

C. We must make sure that these projects are engaged in usage of green. Sustainable practices and technologies where applicable, from property cleanup and land reclamation, to construction and operation of facilities, businesses, and agencies benefiting from these projects.

D. We must adopt, enforce, and promote an Oakland-First policy with businesses and agencies that will be domiciled and operating on these City-funded business enterprise locations.

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?

As I have shared with OPOA members, the last sticking point of the Consent Decree is a Police Commission that is empowered to provide oversight and review of serious complaints, charges, and negative claims regarding police activities and operations. My vision for such a commission is to simply provide oversight and management of internal investigations of misconduct or questionable behavior by members or leaders within the Oakland Police Department. The police department has a chief and that person needs to manage the operation of the department. At the same time, no department should be allowed to investigate itself. The commission will exist and act ONLY to manage claims and charges that require internal investigation of inappropriate or illegal police department practices or of police misconduct. The commission will have no charter to conduct unsolicited or independent investigations, unauthorized internal research, or 'fishing expeditions'.

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?

The issue at hand is the right's of property owners and their appointed managers as opposed to the rights of tenants, businesses and residents. What can be done is for the city to develop a comprehensive document which spells out both. This is augmented with both a reporting and enforcement mechanism that levels fines and penalties. Tenants would have responsibilities as long term partners in property upkeep, safety, and security reporting – and even management in some cases through a tenants council or similar organization. Property owners would have partnering responsibilities relative to rent control agreements and notifications of renovation plans, changes of ownership, etc. Plans or schedules to raise tenant rents 10% or more would require a 6 month to 1 year notification process. This does not prevent property owners and managers from taking these actions but it does give tenants options for longer term planning for their housing interests. There are other options, but this is a start in my view.

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

Oakland has a fairly stable greening program internally within the city. Some areas we can improve include:

A. Public and community engagement in both advertising GREEN initiatives through fliers, badges, buttons, social media, and presentations in local forums.

B. soliciting ideas from businesses and community leaders regarding opportunities to improve and expand environmentally responsible practices, pollution and waste reduction, and reducing urban blight and dumping in areas of the city.

C. Rewarding and recognizing city-employees and community groups which take initiative in pursuing practical conservation practices and policies, including volunteering to clean-up neighborhood streets, parks, vacant lots, alleys, and other areas.

D. Working with public schools and social/religious to develop active volunteer programs in support of conservation and Green Neighborhood activities.

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

I believe the average Oakland resident no longer trusts government and believes that leaders have no real interest in the concerns or welfare of Oakland residents. I believe that many feel that fighting/working for real change at 'City Hall' is a futile effort. Many believe that most of the politicians, in office and running for office, are bought and paid for and that their policy decisions and government actions are settled whether or not the public is engaged. We have seen this again and again most recently with regard to major business developments in the city and with regard to city planning in West Oakland, The Oakland Army Base, China Basin, and other city projects. Public discussion is encouraged, but press reports make clear that decisions were made long before the discussions took place. These actions and reports of corrupt handling of Measure Y Funds, mismanagement of Measure B funds, and misuse of City resources and services all for political interests of the Mayor and Council, support the public's overall view of Oakland government and Oakland's political leadership.

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

Under OaklandFirst!, all Mayor's office staff will be Oakland residents, and I will propose legislation that require all Council-members have staff that are the same.

I will make the budget fully open to the public for review and discussion. I will conduct weekend public forums at least once in each district every six months to answer questions and discuss ideas for programs, policies, practices, and initiatives to continue growth and improvement in Oakland as a city and as a government.

I will produce monthly reports to the voters: "ideas, Initiatives, and Issues" that inform as to what's going on in Oakland, major issues of concern to the public, answering questions & concerns raised by the public, and highlighting new plans and objectives undertaken by Oakland government – not just my office.

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

I don't think that a 'Progressive Alliance' is necessary. There are so many groups and organizations in Oakland. What Oakland needs is people who are committed to action in 'doing' more than meeting and talking. We have so many organizations meeting, marching, protesting, and pontificating. We need organizations whose members actually get out and 'do' the things they talk about. We need organizations who promote and present leaders who have track records of action regarding changing lives and making progress as business leaders, as community leaders, as educators, as public servants. This is why I am running for office. I am one of those leaders who acts regarding the interest of people more than talking in the interest of people.

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?

As people, I like all of the members of the City Council, and I plan to aggressively pursue working relationships with all of them. I hope to understand what they want to achieve for the residents and voters of their districts and all of Oakland as well. That requires us to spend time sharing and talking socially, apart from formal public meetings and discussions, keeping in mind the restrictions of The Brown Act. I like the City Auditor, and I believe the Police and Fire Chiefs and union heads are nice people who mean well for the most part. I hope to share my vision of unified and mutually beneficial support for all of us as leaders, but more importantly, for the City of Oakland.

I plan to immediately reach out to leaders of Oakland neighboring cities and engage them with regard to partnering in safety and security initiatives, in business and social policy development and practices.

I plan to engage with both the OUSD board, the County Office Of Education, and County officials and agencies directly, including The Board of Supervisors to build relations and begin discussions about how to work better together in the larger interest of our residents of all ages, and to advance growth for the region.

In all cases I have some active relationships. In some I'm starting from scratch. That said, I am self-atomized and self-motivated. I love people, I love meeting people, and I love sharing new ideas and driving initiatives that make for life and growth.

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.

I have received no endorsements from any major public organization to date. I would endorse Jason (Shake) Anderson and would support him as Mayor because he is also change driven and visionary in his love and desire for Oakland. He lacks formal public administration, management, and operations experience, but in supporting him were he elected, I would be happy to be serve in his administration in that role.

I also like Mayor Quan, in having shared with her personally on several occasions to this point. I have not said so to the present, but I can see possibility of supporting her as mayor in presenting a more clear and focused vision for the City and People of Oakland as Mayor, and in actually delivering unifying plans and programs for the people of Oakland. Her tenure as Mayor and her re-election campaign both have the appearance of constant fire-fighting, unstable and uncertain responsiveness to critical matters, lack of initiative, absence of operational focus, grabbing at straws, and simply haphazardly tossing of ideas and concepts in every direction hoping for a victory or a success any of them. I would be happy to assist in adding structure and human engagement to an administration and a campaign in obvious need of both in my view.

Bryan Parker, Joe Tuman, and Courtney Ruby also present viable capabilities and offerings, but none has actively engaged with me although I have reached out to share with them. While I appreciate Rebecca Kaplan being the first to share with me regarding my campaign. We have not talked since she announced her own candidacy. No engagement at all with other candidates.

For City Council I like a number of the candidates, Michael Brown in particular presents a very strong offering in terms of his vision and plans as Council-member for District 6. He engaged me directly from the start of his campaign. I am sure the others are good people, but I don't know enough regarding them to support them.

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).

My campaign to this point is principally self-funded. I am running less of a campaign of talking and more of a campaign of ideas and action. We can certainly discuss that, but I don't simply openly reveal that short of publication to the FPPC. I would accept donations from anyone, short of anti-social, anti-American, [pro-segregation, or pro-separatist organizations and individuals.

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?

As stated earlier, I am engaged with all of the City Officials to one degree or another. I look forward to directly engaging and working with them as Mayor. I believe that adding another level of political practice and election management processes above and beyond the Office Of The City Clerk is a mistake. I believe we need to simply increase the authority of that office, including candidate and political practice oversight, reporting, and campaign auditing as necessary. We don't need more government commissions and boards. The city can't afford it. The only exception is oversight of Oakland's Police Department. Given the history and concern regarding this organization, we can only benefit from adding a direct level of focused- while limited – oversight to our principal office of public safety and security. Adding these structures and additions to the City Charter are necessary and helpful.

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

I know of no serious reforms that are necessary. Oakland's current Campaign Finance platform is fairly advanced. There could be more campaign and candidate activity oversight, but not finance reform.

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

I am running as a Write-In Candidate against Ranked Choice Voting. I believe that it robs the citizens and voters of clarity and practical understanding of the election and voting process. Very few people even understand it. Ranked-Choice was sold to the public under the claim/argument moniker of 'Fair Voting'. It has turned out to be a public and social quagmire with everyone trying to explain how it works and nobody clearly providing an understanding that is unifying or comforting for the voters of Oakland. I am simply asking people to write the name 'SAM' on their ballot rather than trying to pick from one group of three candidates.

In addition I have said, and continue to affirm, that I am the most qualified candidate for the Office Of Mayor Of Oakland. I say this without fear of challenge or contradiction. I am non-partisan and have been so for nearly 20 years. That said, I would appreciate the public and financial support of The Green Party.

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

-- Do you support the renewal of Measure Y?

No – not without substantial corrections that better direct and clarify funding for First Responder Services (OPD and Fire), and better clarify that funds are given to Direct Action Youth and Community organizations, rather than meeting groups and political partners masked as social organizations.

-- Do you support the minimum wage proposal?

No – not in it's current form. I support a progressive minimum wage that has business impact milestones so that we analyze as a City the impact of each step increase on the business community and on the Oakland economy as a whole. We cannot have a 12.25 wage and runaway unemployment and business exodus because of it. Oakland does not currently have a strong industrial/economic base to support the actions of cities like Seattle and San Francisco. We need leadership to actually build that into our cities infrastructure so that jobs and growth are stable and consistent. Currently, we are a bedroom support plantation for Silicon Valley and San Francisco. For us to be able to support a stable minimum wage increase, we need to have our own business growth infrastructure. Until that happens, we need to move in progressive steps with metrics and milestones which show clear economic benefits derived from each step. Otherwise this will be a nail in the coffin of a city already struggling with economic and financial instability.

-- Are you in favor of a police commission?

Yes.

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

No. I addressed that previously. We don't need more commissions in Oakland except in the case of the OPD. We need to strengthen the office of The City Clerk. It's simple and less politically complicated.

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

Yes. I believe there should be a difference between this board and the Police Commission. The CPRB should research complaints and report serious complaints up to the Police Commission for further investigation and action.

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

No. I believe we have other middle ground options in negotiating with banks on behalf of homeowners in Oakland. We ought to be doing that and monitoring and tracking that process. The City should ask distressed homeowners to participate in that city-sponsored program to work with banks first. We can always go to that if we need to.

-- Do you support Ranked Choice Voting?

No.

-- Would you support Proportional Representation?

Uncertain. I am willing to discuss that and review as an option to improve the engagement of the Oakland representative public.

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

Yes – and I support other Restorative Justice Measures As Well.

-- Do you support Community Choice Aggregation?

No.

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

Uncertain. I need to know the processes, locations, and financial/operational practicality of implementing that program in Oakland.

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

Sincerely,

Greg Jan
Green Party of Alameda County

(Please reply to: GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoo.com by Saturday, August 23).