

Green Party Questionnaire

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.

PREAMBLE

I am not looking for any endorsements. I am sharing my experiences and thoughts accomplishments. I am running a "true" grass roots campaign raising no money.

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

ANSWER:

The problems of Oakland are unique and need a unique person to address them. I believe I am that person. As a third generation Oaklander, I have seen all the changes in Oakland, and many of the ills present today are horrific issues that I was never subjected to as a youth or a young adult. We didn't have these plaguing issues of growing homelessness, illegal dumping, graffiti vandalism, economic disparity, separation of classes. I have watched our leaders make so many decisions that were not in the best of the interests of the people but in the best interests of career politicians. I decided to run for mayor because I feel obligated to the City and its people.

The incumbent mayor is reactive, and not proactive. My dissatisfaction with Libby Schaaf is she knew about many of these issues before they got to this uncontrollable condition. She knew about them when she was a councilmember and when she became the mayor. I personally told her about them. I presented ideas how to resolve them, but she ignored them, demonstrating that her actions are not in the best interests of the people. As a direct result of the mayor's ignorance and unwillingness to hear her constituents, including myself, this City faces a public health and safety crisis. Libby Schaaf has held an elected office for the past eight years, and the issues I brought to her attention have only become worse. How would four more years be different?

It takes a special skillset to run this City, to bridge the gap between the hills and the flatlands, for all Oaklanders to enjoy a quality of life that they deserve. Libby Schaaf does not have the skillsets to run a City as large and complex as Oakland. As a result, we have massive illegal dumping, side shows, graffiti vandalism, deterioration in addition to all the robberies, home invasions, and more. The mayor doesn't understand construction in a City that is undergoing the largest construction boom in Alameda County. She doesn't understand the people living in communities that are different from hers. She doesn't understand where the lack of respect comes from both, and she doesn't understand the homeless situation. As a result, the mayor has been reactive in a number of debacles, including the police sex trafficking scandal, the Ghost Ship tragedy, and ICE raids. As a third generation Oaklander, I understand the needs of the City and have the unique skillset to bring about positive change.

2. Programs and Priorities -- Elected office provides the opportunity to 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?

ANSWER:

The main priorities for the city are public health and safety, local jobs, and community policing.

One of my many ideas is more funding for code enforcement so that we don't have so many negligent properties that cause public safety issues, such as the Ghost Ship tragedy, and bring down the value of their property. Public Works and Code Enforcement are complaint-driven; we need our inspectors to see dangerous issues before they're ever reported, to prevent catastrophes from occurring. I have been engaged with mayors, city administration, and councilmembers over the past 10 years, and have observed how there is no protocol for proactive responses. From this experience I would fund a Department for Proactive Approaches. I would put on the agenda more funding for housing, deterrence of blight, and code enforcement. Lastly, you need to understand the permitting process so that local participation can be implemented on both public and private construction projects and create more inclusion.

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?

ANSWER:

I am running for Mayor of Oakland because as a community advocate, I'm "on the ground" and "in the rooms," so I understand the challenges that face our city. As a project manager, I can make difficult decisions that will effectively bring about change for Oakland residents. I've engaged with children in all neighborhoods. I've served on committees and the Budget Commission. I've created Best Practices for combatting illegal dumping and graffiti vandalism. I've engaged with unsheltered residents to understand their many needs. For jobs, I was instrumental in passing the 50% local participation policy in the City and OUSD. From serving on commissions to reform city departments, to training and creating jobs, exposing our youth to life changing experiences, living with the homeless, undertaking city responsibilities through community advocacy, I possess the leadership skills to change Oakland and ensure that everyone enjoys the quality of life which they deserve.

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.

ANSWER:

I have presented at Block by Block and NCP. I've attended OCO events, participated with ACCE, and others. I have engaged with dozens of community organizations throughout the City. While I feel worthy of their support, I am not seeking endorsements in the race, as I am running a grass roots campaign.

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.

ANSWER:

I've coached soccer for the Alameda County Deputy Sheriff's Activities League (DSAL), brought students from OUSD on civics field trips, held events featuring Chip the Bay Bridge Chicken at schools, churches, Oracle Arena, and Oakland Coliseum. I brought attention to an unsafe intersection by volunteering as a crossing guard, I attended the Citizen's Police Academy, spoke with the Youth at the West Oakland Youth Center. Presented at high school assemblies to talk to students about career decisions. I co-authored a textbook for small contractors which is presently being taught at Laney College and the Construction Resource Center. I co-authored a book to uplift the children and encourage traffic safety in *The Adventures of Chip the Bay Bridge Chicken: Look Both Ways*, and I designed lunchboxes for giveaways with the motto of "Eat Healthy Stay Healthy." I've done public service announcements for children ("*Pick it uP*") to encourage accountability for trash and cleanliness. I have served on the Budget Advisory Commission, I serve on a Community Advisory Board. I brought 40 high school students to see Michele Obama. I've participated in job training programs. and shadowing programs, and many other activities over the past 20 years.

6. Budget -- If you were on the Council for the next budget in 2018, how would you act differently from the council members dealing with the budget in 2016? How much additional revenue should the City aim to take in, and how would you generate it?

ANSWER:

OPD presently takes up most of the budget. While I support the police, the overtime needs to be cut so that more funds should to go to community-based redevelopment, housing, and public safety, including illegal dumping, street repairs, and training for job preparation in the current construction boom. If you are more proactive in permitting, Public Works, Parks and Rec, and research programs, it would prevent lawsuits, such as the Ghost Ship fire, lawsuits against the police department.

7. Youth -- What would your priorities for youth be for Oakland government and how would they be implemented and paid for?

ANSWER:

The City should fund more internships. The City should work with OUSD to assist the youth in building an understanding about the importance of community engagement and civics. There should be more shadowing programs, and city officials should be invited to classrooms at multiple grade levels to create a more civically engaged student body.

8. Police -- Describe the current relationship between Oakland residents and the OPD? Do you suggest any changes? Do you support diverting people from prosecution if they participate in a restorative justice program? Do you support a change in the use of force policy of the Oakland Police Department? Do you support Assembly Bill 931 that would require that police use deadly force only when there are no alternatives?

(See https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=2017201y80AB931)

ANSWER:

The current relationship between the residents and OPD differ in each district so this question is too broad. However, if you are referring to the relationship between Oakland residents and the police in underserved communities, the relationship is poor.

One of my suggestions to address the misunderstandings that are prevalent is to require cadets, while in police training, to live in the district they will be serving upon completion of the Academy. That way they can become familiar with and can effectively engage with the residents and businesses in those communities. I do support restorative justice programs, and presently support a diversion program designed for youth charged with graffiti vandalism offenses. Yes, there should be a change in the use of force policy, and yes, I support Assembly Bill 931. Community policing in neighborhoods where it is needed would, in time, naturally decrease the use of deadly force.

9. Do you support Senate Bill 1421 that would honor the public's right to know about confirmed officer misconduct and serious uses of force?(See https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB1421)

ANSWER: **Yes.**

10. Does the current police commission have the right to fire a police officer for misconduct? What are your thoughts about police misconduct and how do you feel Oakland should deal with it?

ANSWER:

The police commission has the right to investigate police misconduct and go through a vetted process before any firing. However, the police need to know there are repercussions for police misconduct and cover ups.

11. Development Projects - Financial and real estate interests currently play a controlling role in shaping Oakland development projects. What are your thoughts and views about holding the developers accountable to the city's zoning, code, and permit regulations?

ANSWER:

I am very familiar with the process of zoning, code, and permit regulations. I believe that all development – public or private –planning to build in Oakland needs an inclusive community piece.

12. 12. 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 support State Proposition #10 that would repeal the Costa-Hawkins Act, a 1990s law that barred rent control expansion?

ANSWER:

Also supporting revitalization in areas that are in deterioration would assist long-term residents by increasing their home values so if they sell they get fair value for their property. Housing and jobs are related, inclusiveness is needed in the local job industry, especially in construction during the boom presently occurring in Oakland. Construction includes many fields of work, and if there were more local jobs in the construction trade, more residents would be able to afford housing. I support the repeal of the Costa-Hawkins Act as rent control would alleviate some of the problems of our housing crisis and serve to slow down gentrification and dislocation.

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

ANSWER:

Starting with catching illegal dumpers, graffiti vandals, cleaning up homeless encampments, and working with Quality Air Control. The contaminants that are going into the storm drains into the bay, the people living in trailers, their feces are going into storm drains. Education is needed to inform people where to dispose of hazardous materials, as they are getting dumped on the roads.

14. Public Banking - Inspired by the Bank of North Dakota (BND) <https://bnd.nd.gov/>, a feasibility statement to create a Public Bank of Oakland is currently before the Oakland City Council. 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 \$400M to the General Fund of the State of North Dakota over the last 21 years <https://ilsr.org/rule/bank-of-north-dakota-2/>, while substantially increasing its capitalization and its loan outreach.)

Are you in favor of making Oakland one of the first cities in the nation to create a municipal bank?

ANSWER: **Yes.**

15. Local Payday Lenders -- Oakland is awash with for-profit Check Cashing and PayDay Loan emporiums (a simple Google query on "Oakland Payday lenders" 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*, quotes the astounding statistic that unbanked families who must use these services spend on average over \$2000 per household per year -- more than it spends on food. [NALC.org](http://nal.org/): "Author makes the case for postal banking" <http://tinyurl.com/h9e6a2p>.

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 <http://communitycheckcashing.org/> 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 non-profit check cashing to other storefronts around Oakland -- much as the City Council gave a 50-year, \$3,300,000 interest-free loan to the East 12th Street developers (see Oakland City Council agenda, June 15th, 2016 <http://tinyurl.com/jzy398p>)?

ANSWER: **Yes.**

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

ANSWER:

This is difficult to answer because there is no “average resident” in Oakland. In the spirit of responding to the question, because Oakland is increasingly losing its middle-class residents, on a socioeconomic level. Oakland is now three cities – the “rich Oakland,” “poor Oakland,” and the homeless. For the residents in the more affluent areas, I would say the “average resident” feels pretty good about city government. However, most Oaklanders do not live in these communities, and for those “average residents,” I would say that the overall satisfaction of our city government is extremely poor. I would say most Oaklanders would say that city government does not stand up to their promises after elected. I would say that 25% of Oakland residents feel satisfied with city government, with 75% feeling dissatisfied.

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

ANSWER:

I am already accountable as a community advocate and currently accessible to the citizens of Oakland and will continue to be. This involves being out of the office and out with the people. A true leader never considers political gain when leading the city. You can determine the state of mind of that politician simply by looking up how much was spent on her election campaign.

18. 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?

ANSWER:

I already have the relationships with city councilmembers, Alameda County supervisors, and state elected officials to make change and get things done. . I will reserve my response on who I see as a “working majority” on council until after the November 2018 election since three of the councilmembers are up for election, and we won’t know who they will be until after November. However, I can tell you that I personally know each councilmember and have a good working relationship with most of them. I expect that will not change when new members are inaugurated in January 2019.

19. Endorsements -- Who has endorsed you so far? Who do you expect to endorse you? Who are you endorsing, from statewide races 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 Boards

ANSWER:

I am not looking for any endorsements. I am only looking for the approval of citizens of Oakland. I am running a "true" grass roots campaign asking for no money and no endorsements.

20. 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)

ANSWER:

Money should not be the decision factor to run a city--it should be based on qualifications, experience, and commitment and what the person has accomplished, and not what the person is going to do. So the answer is zero money, zero to raise. That is a true grassroots campaign.

21. 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?

ANSWER:

The current relationship between Council and Mayor is dysfunctional as is the relationship between the Auditor and the City Attorney. . Yes, there are changes that should be proposed to the City Charter, specifically, the mayor's duty and the city administrator's to be clear from the current revision.

22. 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>)?

ANSWER:

I have not yet taken that pledge but certainly willing to do that as I believe money should be out of politics. That is exactly why I am running a People's Campaign.

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

Yes.

Please answer "Yes" or "No" to these questions, and follow with an explanation if you want to add one:

a. Do you support raising the minimum wage to a living wage?

ANSWER:

Yes

b. Do you support the California Peace Officers Bill of Rights?

California has one of the most stringent laws in the nation to protect the privacy of police officers. The Peace Officers' Bill of Rights was first passed in 1976 and signed into law by Gov. Jerry Brown during his first term. The statute makes it challenging for the public to find out which officers have engaged in misconduct. It also presents challenges when a law enforcement agency wants to alert local prosecutors to which individual officers have a history of discipline and dishonesty, like last year when the Los Angeles County sheriff was blocked from sharing a list of 300 problem deputies with the district attorney. Professor Erwin Chemerinsky is a constitutional law scholar and the dean of the UC Berkeley School of Law. He recently wrote an op-ed in The Sacramento Bee on the statutes and court cases that make it rare for police misconduct to result in criminal prosecution.

ANSWER:

I support parts of it, but feel it should be revised so that it balances the privacy of the police with the rights of victims of police brutality.

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

ANSWER:

No.

e. Do you support Ranked Choice Voting?

ANSWER:

Yes.

f. Would you support Proportional Representation?

ANSWER:

Yes

g. Do you support Community Choice Aggregation?

ANSWER:

Yes.

h. Would you vote to allow more grey water systems?

ANSWER:

Yes.