

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 6 Questionnaire

GREEN PARTY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY 2018 ENDORSEMENT DECISION

Please email your responses to GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoogroups.com. In the subject line, please include "Oakland City Council D6".

We prefer that you convert your answered questionnaire into a .pdf document, so we can post it directly to our website. Or simply include your responses in the body of an email, and we will do the conversion.

If it is not possible for you to email, please snail mail your responses so we receive them by 8/23/18, to:

Oakland City Council D6 Questionnaire
c/o Green Party of Alameda County
2022A Blake Street ~ Berkeley, CA 94704

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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 dissatisfactions and differences with him or her?

[As a 3rd generation Oaklander whose grandparents moved to Oakland from the segregated South in the 1940s, I have benefitted so much from the opportunities that were available to low-income, working class, families of color here in Oakland over the past 75 years. Unfortunately, the pathways out of poverty are much narrower now and many Oaklanders today don't have access to similar](#)

opportunities. I recognize that I have been blessed and am running for City Council so the next generation of Oaklanders—including my own two young kids—will have similar opportunities as I did, to achieve their full potential.

In District 6 the incumbent's challenges are well known given the recent judgement against her and the strained relationship with other councilmembers that inhibits her from securing enough votes to pass legislation. More importantly, we have seen a lack of progress for District 6 while the rest of the city is growing and being revitalized.

- *We have seen other districts build commercial thoroughfares while storefronts remain boarded up along MacArthur, Foothill, Bancroft, and International – The only retail bank in District 6 just announced that it is closing in December.*
- *We have seen other districts create 6% new jobs while at the same time jobs in District 6 decline by 7% jobs while our jobs*
- *We have seen our family and our neighbors priced out of their own community pushed out of the city or onto the streets*
- *We have seen other districts keep their streets clean and in good repair while we suffer with potholes and unpaved roads*

2. Program 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?

My priorities are:

- **Creating Greater Economic Opportunities for all Oaklanders**, especially for lower income residents of District 6: It is unacceptable that during the same period when jobs grew by 6% in other Oakland council districts, they declined by 7% in District 6. District 6 residents must have more opportunities to earn a living wage, start and grow their own businesses, and own/co-own their own homes. We must strengthen our city by empowering residents to financially support themselves and begin reinvesting in the community with their time, talents, and resources. I look forward to leveraging my past experiences to guide development activities in a way that prioritizes (i) local job creation, (ii) community-driven planning of the services and amenities that will be developed, and (iii) a stronger Oakland economy. I will also leverage my past experiences in partnership with the community to support incubation of new businesses and strengthen workforce development programs and increasing their long-term success rate.
- **Stopping the push-out of our Oakland neighbors:** The housing affordability and homelessness challenges we face are deeply personal to me. I have seen more than half of my extended family forced to leave Oakland because they could no longer afford to live here and have also struggled with how to best help other members of my family find long-term stable housing after becoming homeless. It is a priority for

me that we protect renters and homeowners from displacement by implementing policies and allocating funds to support them, preserving existing affordable housing stock, and building new housing at all levels of affordability (placing emphasis on no and low-cost housing which has not been a priority for current city leaders). To address homelessness, we must work collaboratively with other jurisdictions – including the county and the state to bring forth comprehensive solutions and invest in those programs that are proving effective, like the Henry Robinson Transitional Housing Facility.

- **Restore faith in the City by ensuring that it delivers for its residents:** Oakland residents place their faith, trust, and resources in the hands of City leadership to deliver basic services such as clean and safe neighborhoods, streets that are paved and free of potholes, and quality youth services – including schools. Unfortunately, the City is not fulfilling its end of the deal, and many residents have given up on help coming from the City. This is unacceptable. As the District 6 Councilmember, I believe it will not be enough for me to establish a strategy or policy to restore trust in this area, but that my office must oversee implementation—and be there, day in and day out in the community, to ensure we get the right results for our neighborhoods.

2. 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?

I specialize in tackling complex challenges that directly impact people's lives. My Oakland firm (www.customtayloredolutions.com) helps non-profit and for profit organizations improve lives in disadvantaged communities. I'll offer a collaborative approach, bringing the non-profit, business, and faith communities together to solve challenges.

3. 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.

- 100 Black Men of the Bay Area (Boardmember) – *Black Professional Men stepping up to help address the unmet needs in the Black Community.*
- East Oakland Collective (Member) – *Diverse group of people dedicated to ensuring that East Oakland gets the resources, support, and prioritization that they deserve to address the disparities between East Oakland and what has been in place to date.*
- BWOPA/ Black Women Organized for Political Action – (Brother/Associate Member) – Important to increase the activity level of minority women in the

political process and increase the collective political power of the Black Community

4. 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.

My track record of leading on issues of social, racial, and economic justice includes the following leadership roles I have served in:

- PTA President at Joaquin Miller Elementary School – *Establishing a VP of Equity role on PTA, Advocating for and securing more equitable distribution of resources to minority and special needs students.*
- Founding Board member of 100 Black Men Community School – *Working for over 6 years on designing and implementing a school for Black Boys to address the Black male achievement gap head-on.*
- Co-Founder of Boy Scout Troop 100 in partnership with Beebe Memorial Church and the 100 Black Men to support Black Boys in developing valuable life skills – *Serving as Scoutmaster for 2 years*
- Board Member for the West Oakland Health Council – *Advising Executive Director on health center operations, and helping to train other board members on being more effective.*
- Co-chair of capital campaign for At The Crossroads a SF nonprofit that serves homeless youth ensuring they don't grow up or grow old on the streets – *Raising more than \$4M through the campaign.*
- Leadership Advisory Council Member for Center for Youth Wellness, a Federally Qualified Health Center in San Francisco's Bay View that addresses the impact of childhood trauma and adversity – *Advising the Leadership team on how to more quickly advance the movement increasing National Awareness*

5. 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?

In the next budget process I will bring stronger community engagement to the process, ensuring that community members have input before it is too late to influence the outcome.

In meeting the long revenue needs of our City, it is imperative that the new revenue sources be equitably applied to all Oaklanders. An example of that, which I support, is the proposal by CM Kalb now before the Council to increase the Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT). It creates additional revenues by increasing rates for the highest value properties while protecting lower end sales. Similarly, the proposal by CM Kaplan to tax certain vacant properties will produce added revenue while encouraging sound land use policies.

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

Youth Summer Jobs must be fully funded as well as jobs throughout the school year. We must also partner more closely with OUSD Schoolboard to ensure we move forward

7. 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=201720180AB931)

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)

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?

It is critical that we restore the public's trust in OPD and law enforcement and that is impossible to do if we do not have the transparency and accountability for police over-reach including excessive use of force and inequitable treatment of Black and Brown people. As city councilmember, I will ensure the Police Commission has the necessary autonomy and authority to fulfill its purpose and oversee CPRA and its investigations of misconduct. In addition, I will work with other councilmembers in ensuring that taxpayer money is not spent on egregious actions of police misconduct, requiring the department and individual officers be more accountable for the lawsuits and judgements that result.

Yes, I support diversion from prosecution with participation in and completion of restorative justice programs.

Yes I support Assembly bill 931 and Senate Bill 1421. I am also pleased to have the endorsement of Senator Nancy Skinner who is the author of SB 1421

Yes the police commission has the right to fire a police officer for misconduct as part of its role in making final decisions when the Police chief disagrees with CPRA's findings/recommendation. We need to stem police misconduct by creating greater transparency and holding officers and their teams accountable for these occurrences.

8. 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?
- We must have effective community benefit agreements in place for all development projects to ensure that the benefits of the increased investment and revitalization are shared amongst all members of the community. A successful community benefits agreement ensures that Oakland development projects are the tide that lifts all boats in Oakland – providing local job opportunities beyond the duration of the project, creating business opportunities for union and minority-owned businesses, and creating enough affordable housing units to not only house those who are displaced by the project, but also support the targeted increase in affordability as well. It is also critical that the development projects fund the infrastructure improvements needed to support the increase in business/ traffic that is expected.
 - I favor density bonuses that allow for higher levels of density in exchange for greater percentage of affordable housing. In addition, I will champion stronger inclusionary housing/ zoning requirements for each project and allocation affordable housing impact fees to projects that help tenants build accessible dwelling units (ADUs) on their property in exchange for a guarantee to maintain affordability of that unit.
 - It is also critical that we pass a public lands policy that clearly state the prioritized use of public lands to house our “housing insecure” neighbors and/or catalyze the economic engine that will help those neighbors increases the amount they can afford to pay in rent.
9. 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?
- It is imperative that we protect renters and homeowners from being displaced by funding stronger renter protection measures, including guaranteed right to counsel (provision of legal representation for tenants under threat of eviction) to ensure they exhaust all options for staying in their home. Demonstration in other cities have shown between 75% and 90% reduction in evictions when access was given to legal representation. Despite the investment into legal services, studies also show a net cost savings to the city due to the reduction in need to provide homeless services.
 - Beyond merely being able to stay in one's home, we want our neighbors to stay in a home that is well maintained/ updated. To incentivize the improving the condition of Oakland we should pass a policy that waives permit fees for tenant improvements of affordable housing units to

encourage improved living conditions and longer-term affordability of affordable units. This would incentivize landlords to act quickly while also improving the living situation for the tenant.

- We must focus on not just the policies, but also the implementation of those policies. It is not enough to allocate \$2.2M in funding the protect residents from displacement if we lose track of the money and therefore don't spend it for more than a year – at the same time many residents are being displaced.
- I am also in favor of supporting efforts to permanently remove land from the speculative market through community, non-profit, and/or government land trusts.

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

Oakland should be working hard to protect the environment and encourage our residents to do the same.

12. 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? YES

13. 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: "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>)? YES

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

In District 6 the average resident is at best apathetic toward city government because it hasn't worked for them in the recent past and they see a lot of talk without the results from current district and city leadership.

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

Accountability to my constituents starts and ends with a community driven approach, listening to fully understand the challenges/ opportunities, collaboratively developing the solutions, policies, and budget priorities. It will not be enough for me to stop there, but instead work with community members to ensure our policies and budget allocations are being effectively delivered.

It is also fundamental to me that all residents deserve the same level of services. I am committed to ensuring that all District 6 residents are served well, and that it isn't just the "squeaky wheel" that gets greased. I will work to empower residents in less affluent areas who may not have the agency or the advocacy of those in the more affluent areas of the district. I will have monthly office hours in off-hours in the community so that residents can come discuss their concerns. This will help to build and strengthening community partnerships activating residents who might otherwise be unengaged. Lastly, I will ensure that my staff is reflective of the breadth of my district with geographic and demographic representation so that everyone has a voice at the table who understand their needs and can effectively represent them.

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?

17. 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 Board seats and City Attorney.

My full endorsements list is available here: <https://www.lorentaylor.org/endorsements>. I am proud to have the support of hundreds of District 6 neighbors, and leaders in the social justice, civil rights, faith, education, and health communities including Tyrone "Baybe Champ" Stevenson, Dr. Arnold Perkins, Dr. Mark Alexander, Pastor J. Alfred Smith, Bishop Bob Jackson, Pastor Javier Ramos, Vice-Mayor Annie Campbell Washington, former Mayor Jean Quan, and Mayor Libby Schaaf.

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 \$122,000 to date and expect to raise the max spend amount \$136,000 for this race. Contributions have come primarily from friends and family who have known me, worked with me, and are excited about the leadership I will be able to bring to Oakland. Other contributions have come from District 6 residents and a broader set of Oakland residents/ Oakland-based employees. My contributors represent a diversity of cultures, geographies, and socio-economic backgrounds similar to what we have in Oakland.

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?

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>)?

Yes, Oakland needs campaign finance reform because there is significant advantage to those with resources. funding gap between. All measures of campaign finance reform will require additional investment because to limit the advantages will require more public financing, and more publicly funded messaging platforms that allow all candidates to get their message out to district residents. I believe that it is worth the investment to increase greater access to the political system.

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

22. 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? YES, and doing so in a way that encourages businesses to participate versus driving them across the border to San Leandro or Emeryville.
- b. Do you support the California Peace Officers Bill of Rights? No. The Bill of Rights as currently written should be revised. I support a revised version of the peace officer's Bill of Rights that creates greater accountability and transparency in the case of police investigations while still supporting fairness for peace officers. I support SB1421 to refine the California POBR.
- c. Would you vote for using eminent domain to abate foreclosure crisis? It Depends. I would certainly consider using it, but need to study the specific of each situation.
- d. Do you support Ranked Choice Voting? YES
- e. Would you support Proportional Representation? N/A - City Council Elections are nonpartisan in Oakland
- f. Do you support Community Choice Aggregation? YES
- g. Would you vote to allow more grey water systems? YES