

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 4 Questionnaire

**GREEN PARTY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY
2018 ENDORSEMENT DECISION**

Please email your responses to GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoo.com. In the subject line, please include "Oakland City Council D4".

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 snailmail your responses so we receive them by 8/23/18, to:

Oakland City Council D4 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?

I am running to be of service—and because I believe in Oakland as a progressive, multiracial, vibrant city where social justice for all is not yet a reality but is possible and must be fought for. Oakland is a beacon of progressive values and a bulwark against the

rising tides of injustice nationwide, but that promise does not yet hold true for everyone. Displacement and inequity threaten many communities, and there is a lot of work to be done. I want to work for the people of Oakland to ensure safety, dignity, and prosperity, not just for some, but for all – including low-income families, immigrants, people of color, youth, seniors, LGBTQ people, and the homeless, to name a few. I would like my own children (ages 6 and 9) to be able to feel proud of their city as they grow, to know it as a welcoming place where all people can live and thrive. For these reasons, I have shaped a platform around the values of equity, dignity, and compassion, and would be honored to serve, not only my district, but all of Oakland.

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?

Oakland is experiencing explosive growth and change. My goal is to work toward:

- ***A city where everyone who wants to live here can afford to be here.***
- ***A civic climate in which leaders work together to build solutions for all.***
- ***A values-based budget that invests in clean neighborhoods, infrastructure, and equitable public safety.***
- ***A city where all are safe, welcome, and know that they matter.***
- ***A living wage, union jobs, and economic opportunities for all.***
- ***An Oakland that values all voices.***
- ***Shelter and basic services for all who need them.***
- ***Care for our communities, our natural spaces, and the planet.***
- ***An Oakland that stays true to its roots by proudly celebrating difference and embracing families from all walks of life.***

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?

I am a Fulbright alumna and an Ivy League educated woman, who holds a masters degree from the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism. That said, these degrees are not what make me uniquely qualified to be Oakland's next D4 council member. My dedication to community and service is what qualifies me to contribute to the Oakland City Council. When I graduated from Vassar College—the first in my family to graduate from college—and my classmates went to work for Wall Street, I went to work with people living with physical and developmental disabilities. I've served in the non-profit and philanthropic sectors, with increasing levels of leadership. I've worked in the areas of healthcare, affordable housing, and the arts. I currently work as a consultant with non-profit organizations to provide support in financial management including budget development, budget oversight, and fiscal planning.

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.

I am a California Democratic Party Delegate from the 18th Assembly District. I am also a former board member of the East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club, where I continue to have an active membership. Through my work in the non-profit sector, I'm the volunteer executive director of Iris Films, a non-profit media production company. In addition, I do financial work – accounting and bookkeeping – as a consultant for non-profit organizations. I have one current active client, Black Lives Matter, and recently completed contracts with Rockwood Leadership Academy, Thousand Currents, and Causa Justa | Just Cause. These non-profit organizations have not endorsed my candidacy, and I began working with them prior to declaring my intent to run for elected office.

Although my current professional circumstances do not grant me the option of joining a union, my wife is a professor at San Francisco State University, and a card-carrying member of the California Faculty Association (CFA). She is also a former board member of Mujeres Unidas y Activas.

- 5. Local activities -- Other than local politics, are you involved in any other Oakland based community activities that you would like to share with us? This can range from volunteering in your school to being in your church baseball league.
- I enjoy swimming and spending time with my family. I am active in my childrens' public school doing fundraising and other support. Last summer, I co-organized and administered a martial arts and social justice summer camp for 100 youth from kindergarten to high school. The camp was open to families on a sliding scale basis, from \$0 to whatever they wished to contribute. We served a nutritious free lunch every day.

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?

Our budget is a direct reflection of our values. As a financial services provider for non-profits and community-based organizations, I am intimately familiar with what it means to incorporate values into budgets. We are all fighting for a small piece of the pie. My first priorities will include looking at how we spend our dollars, where they can be better utilized, and where we might find new revenue sources.

Our officers are running up large amounts of overtime responding to issues of homelessness and to unemployed youth on corners. If we invested in youth services and social workers instead, we would save money, as well as provide more appropriate responses. Maintenance and preventative measures must be prioritized so we stop

kicking the can down the road. We need to recognize the value, not just the cost, of the community services in which our city invests.

We need to increase the income we see from community benefit agreements and ensure that we are doing all we can to attract and keep retail businesses that are a source of tax revenue for the city and its residents.

I find the idea of progressive fines extremely promising and am interested in learning more about how they've worked and what side effects they may have had in other communities.

We cannot live in a bubble; other cities are doing innovative thinking to bring in additional revenue. I'd look to other cities for models. For example, San Francisco just passed a sales tax increase that will fund salary increases for teachers, as well as work force housing for school employees.

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

We also need to ensure young people in our city have access to opportunity. This means working to expand afterschool programs, summer jobs, paid internships, and pathways to become trade unionists.

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.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.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?

I believe in a future Oakland where violence against our residents is rare, and is met with compassion, not apathy. This means taking a holistic look at public safety. Whether by car or gun, violent deaths are preventable tragedies. Whether the aggressor is a stranger, spouse, or officer of the law, violence damages our community. We need to seriously evaluate all the ways our neighbors' lives are irreparably damaged or cut short and take tested, proven measures to prevent these tragedies.

As a resident of Oakland, I want to be able to call the police when my car is broken into

or if a neighbor is robbed. But as a person a color living in my community, there is a fear each day that a new neighbor might call the police on me while I'm gardening or doing some DIY repair on my own house. We need to ensure that our police department reflects the diversity of our city, not just racially but with respect to gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, and background. We also must work with OPD to ensure we are recruiting Oaklanders for the force, and to ensure that officers receive training from the many fantastic local organizations with expertise on the broad range of identities, cultures, and needs in our city.

In the past, I worked as a rape crisis counselor, and saw first-hand the value of community organizations' partnerships with police. Addressing intimate partner violence and sexual assault are high priorities for me. We need to continue to promote and create models of community response that recognize the complexities, and work to support those who have suffered domestic violence and other forms of trauma

Yes, I believe deadly force should be a last resort and the name of officers involved in deadly force should be implemented here in Oakland as it is in San Francisco.

9. 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 streamline the permitting process and create a standard for what it takes to do business in Oakland. Community Benefit and Project Labor Agreements in our city are currently a piecemeal process. I would like to work with community groups across the city, labor unions, and other stakeholders to create a basic Community Benefit and Project Labor Agreement that must be met to build in the City of Oakland. If a developer wants to expedite, use city land, not include affordable units there would then be additional conversations and benefits that would kick in. To me, a successful community benefits agreement looks like a transparent agreement where all parts of the community; life-long residents, renters, works, the environment, and others; get to fairly take part in the success and growth of Oakland which has benefitted too few for too long. It is an agreement that doesn't take an expert to understand and one that makes the process more just.

10. Housing & Gentrification -- Increasing rents, dislocation, and gentrification have been in the news. What policies do you advocate to assure that Oakland tenants are protected and that Oakland remains an economically and racially diverse city? Do you support State Proposition #10 that would repeal the Costa-Hawkins Act, a 1990s law that barred rent control expansion?

Housing is a human right. The crisis we are in is one that's been decades in the making and now we are seeing the results of a perfect storm. High unemployment rates for African Americans in our city, the rent being "too damn high", NIMBYism, and a long standing ill will by our elected officials toward our neighbors who are now forced to live on underpasses and in parking lots is the crisis of the day. I got into this race because I

saw the body of a dead homeless man on my way to work. We must do better. We must set straightforward standards and streamline the processes to allow business and developers to thrive and our community to benefit from development. We need to expedite building across a spectrum of affordability to relieve the tension on the market.

For preserving deeply affordable housing we need to super charge the efforts to grow community land trusts and housing cooperatives in Oakland and other mechanisms to ensure that currently affordable housing remains affordable into the future. We also need to recognize that housing takes many forms, from temporary to transitional to permanent, from SROs to RVs to single-family homes. We need to preserve and create more housing options across the spectrum.

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"The rent is too damn high!" This is the rallying cry of the supporters of Prop 10, the ballot initiative that seeks to repeal Costa-Hawkins. I strongly support the initiative and have worked to get my fellow delegates and leaders within the California Democratic Party to cast their vote endorsing the measure. I have and will continue to lift up the initiative as I'm talking to voters and throughout my campaign.

I believe we need a regional approach to the housing crisis and this includes rent control reform. I will work with my colleagues in other cities to create a regional reform to rent control so that we can together stem the tide of displacement.

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

I have been a community activist since childhood, and I see environmentalism as a critical element in an intersectional social justice framework. I remember helping to organize and be a part of protests and demonstrations to save the whales as a kid in the 70's. We rallied under "no nukes" banners to call attention to nuclear proliferation in the 80's. As a working class African American woman, I view climate as an issue that impacts the health and wellbeing of marginalized people. In the 90's I was active in the fight against globalization and the negative environmental impacts that it was to bring to developing nations.

I am a supporter of a public lands policy here in Oakland. I believe that our public lands must be utilized for public benefit as outlined in Oakland's Roadmap Toward Equity. However, we can't live in a bubble and think we have all the solutions. I believe one of the powers of the City Council is to convene. We must bring together developers, renters, homeless, labor and many others to recommend to the city a plan that works for all impacted. In addition, we should look to other cities like San Francisco, Seattle, and Pittsburgh (PA) for best practices.

The next Councilmember from District 4 needs to be someone who will fight for all Oaklanders, this includes standing up against the proposal for a crematorium in East Oakland, which seems to pop up every few years. They also must ensure action by the state on implementation of the Sustainable Freight Action Plan and work regionally to reduce car usage and traffic congestion through BRT, bike lanes and walkable streets. I will stand up to big interests in our city to reduce asthma rates and make "West Oakland cough" a thing of the past.

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?

Absolutely. We must ensure that local jurisdictions can create their own economic infrastructure that is not encumbered by regressive tax and social policies. We in California need to be free to be able to create local banks that can handle cannabis money and invest in local communities.

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. These services could also be provided at a reduced cost by a city run bank.

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

I believe our city has done a horrible job of communicating with our residents, businesses, and partners. As a graduate of the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, I know the importance of getting your message out to the public. I believe residents and small business owners are stressed and feeling the crunch of paying their taxes and not seeing the results. As a Councilmember I would work with my colleagues and city staff to better explain the challenges we face and the results we've achieved.

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

I am committed to listening deeply to communities and fighting tirelessly on their behalf. Progressive organizations are crucial conduits for community voices and organizing, and I will be thrilled to partner with them to listen and shape my legislative priorities based on constituents' needs.

You can't have accountability without conversation. I see this role as a full time listening position. I look forward to hosting office hours, coffee hours, walk & talks, and all sorts of other events to invite conversation; I recognize that too often folks aren't heard because they're busy. They're busy working, busy taking care of their family, and busy with their lives. That's why, if I'm honored with an election victory, I'll keep walking the neighborhoods, keep meeting folks where they are, keep being deeply engaged and a part of our community so that a constituent doesn't have to take time from their busy schedule to come all the way down to City Hall for us to chat. I plan on being held accountable through continuous engagement with the whole community and not just the people with the resources to speak up at City Hall.

16. Governance -- What kind of relationship could you have with other office holders? Who do you see as a working majority on council and who can you work with?

Right now, gridlock and conflict hamper the Oakland City Council's capacity to achieve results. Camps and factions create divides and make forward motion difficult. I am not a city hall insider and am not a part of that history. I plan to work from a deep moral compass, rather than out of allegiance to any faction, so as to always put the people of Oakland and social justice values first. I also plan to work closely with community groups, labor and constituents to help amplify their voices, understand their concerns, and take action on their behalf in every channel I can.

I am not a City Hall insider, nor am I a career politician, nor do I hail from the tech sector. I come from the ground up. I have dedicated my life to working for community wellbeing, on issues including racial justice, immigrant rights, youth development, and economic equity. That is the commitment and practice I would bring to this seat.

Creating partnerships to break through that gridlock is a skill. It requires a deep dedication to what you want to achieve, the confidence and humility to listen to a potential ally who might agree with you on one point while disagreeing with you on everything else, and the ability to focus on moving the work forward on the thing you do agree on. Too often, people refuse to listen to someone else's ideas because of who is doing the suggesting—the lack of trust leads to gridlock and a defensive “us vs. them” mentality. As a City Councilmember, I will eagerly listen for opportunities to collaborate with allies of all sorts to achieve the vision of an Oakland that lives up to its promise as a progressive beacon.

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.

Oakland Rising Action (#3)

Block By Block Organizing Network (#3)

East Bay Young Democrats (#2)

Hon. Dave Jones — California Insurance Commissioner

Hon. Rob Bonta — Assemblymember, California State Assembly, District 18*

Hon. Libby Schaaf — Mayor of Oakland (#2)

Hon. Amber Childress — Trustee, Alameda County Board of Education

Hon. Lori Droste — Councilmember, City of Berkeley

Hon. Jim Oddie — Councilmember, City of Alameda*

Hon. Linda Handy -- Trustee, Peralta Community College Board

Nick Resnick -- President, Stonewall Democratic Club

Brendalynn Goodall -- Past President, Stonewall Democratic Club

Susie Shannon — President/Commissioner, City of Los Angeles Health Commission & Member, DNC

Sean Dugar — California Democratic Party Delegate/Executive Board Member, Assembly District 18

Margarita Lacabe — Member, Alameda County Democratic Central Committee

Mike Katz-Lacabe — San Leandro School Board Trustee (retired)/California Democratic Party Delegate, Assembly District 18

Ellie Casson — California Democratic Party Delegate, Assembly District 18

Mara Schechter — California Democratic Party Delegate, Assembly District 18

Carter Lavin — California Democratic Party Delegate, Assembly District 18

Mike Lee — California Democratic Party Delegate, Assembly District 18

Dr. Janet L. Holmgren — President Emerita, Mills College

Luan Stauss — Owner, Laurel Bookstore

Kathleen Caldwell — Owner, A Great Good Place for Books

Isela and Richard Santana — Owners, Cafe Santana Roasting Company

Glen Li — Owner, Blu Moon Lounge

Jeff Perlstein — Owner, SoleSpace

Kathleen Archambeau — Author

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 ended the last filing period with just over \$21,000. Since then, we've significantly ramped up our fundraising operations. Our overall fundraising goal and projected campaign budget is \$109,000.

I believe large corporations are a threat to our political system. I do not take "dark money" nor dollars from large corporations. However, I have received contributions from incorporated businesses such as my friend who owns a tree trimming service, or the family run café whois excited about engaging in local politics for the first time.

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?

I am proud that after just a brief conversation I earned the endorsement of Mayor Libby Schaaf. I believe this opens the door to being able to work with her or anyone else in that role. I'm adept at listening to multiple points of view and synthesizing them. At the same time, I am grounded in a moral framework that puts people at the center. I strive to be approachable to a broad range of people. City leaders have an obligation to listen deeply to constituents, but all too often, leaders fail to hear and respond to the most vulnerable. To me, leadership at its best is fundamentally about service—about listening to communities and working tirelessly on their behalf.

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>)?

Absolutely. I support us looking at the campaign finance models of other neighboring cities including San Francisco, Berkeley, and Richmond. We must do everything possible to limit the influence of big interests in our political process.

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

Oakland is a beacon of progressive values, but we have a lot of work to do to make that a reality for everyone. Earlier this year I came across the body of a man who died cold and unsheltered on our streets. I was shaken to my core and searched for a way to redouble my efforts at service and activism. I'm running for City Council because I'm committed to dignity, equity, and compassion for all Oaklanders. As your councilmember, I'll use my decades of nonprofit fiscal management experience to tackle our financial problems and ensure that our city budget reflects our shared values. I'm not a City Hall insider or beholden to any faction, I'll never forget who I work for: YOU. Together, let's build an Oakland that's accountable to the people and works for everyone. I'd be honored to have your endorsement. www.pamharris4oakland.com

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**
- b. Do you support the California Peace Officers Bill of Rights? **No**
- c. Would you vote for using eminent domain to abate foreclosure crisis? **Yes**
- d. Do you support Ranked Choice Voting? **Yes**
- e. Would you support Proportional Representation? **Yes**
- f. Do you support Community Choice Aggregation? **Yes**
- g. Would you vote to allow more grey water systems? **Yes**