



Empower Oakland Candidate Questionnaire

Oakland mayoral special election, 2025

Empower Oakland is a movement fueled by Oakland residents who recognize that “business as usual politics” will only further perpetuate Oakland’s downward spiral. We believe in empowering Oaklanders to amplify their collective voices for greater political impact and influence.

Empower Oakland is asking candidates to complete our candidate questionnaire. These submissions will be published on empoweroakland.com to educate Oakland voters and will be unedited for spelling and grammar. Empower Oakland will also use candidate submissions to help inform their candidate endorsement process. Candidates may be asked to interview in-person with the Empower Oakland Endorsement Committee. Final endorsement decisions will be made in mid-February.

Please email the completed questionnaire as a .docx or .pdf document to info@empoweroakland.com by 5pm on Monday, January 27th. Please include a headshot (square/vertical headshot, in JPG or PNG format, 1000-1500px and <2MB, and please name the file).

Candidate name: [Loren Taylor](#)

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- X: [lorenmtaylor](#)
- Facebook: [Loren Taylor For Oakland Mayor](#)
- Instagram: [Loren.taylor](#)
- LinkedIn: [lorentaylor](#)

Expected total fundraising amount: [\\$300,000](#)

Funds raised to date: [\\$120,000](#)

Background & general questions

1. What is your background in Oakland? How have you been involved in local government? What specific experiences do you have across housing, homelessness, public safety, public infrastructure, budget, and good government?

[I'm a third-generation Oakland native, and I've dedicated my career to public service and uplifting our community. As an East Oakland Councilmember, I used my experience as an engineer and management consultant to deliver concrete results for Oaklanders by confronting complex issues head-on. I drafted Oakland's Encampment Management Policy, added 800 new affordable housing units to the](#)



development pipeline, fought drastic cuts to safety, co-created/co-led a violence prevention task force, and secured \$ 10 million for East Oakland entrepreneurship.

On Housing and Homelessness: I co-developed the Permanent Access to Housing (PATH) plan to reduce racial disparities in homelessness. This plan focuses on prevention, crisis response, transitional housing, and creating long-term supportive and affordable housing.

In addition, after extensive engagement of a diverse set of stakeholders, I developed and secured Council approval for Oakland's Encampment Management Policy to ensure health safety, and dignity in and around homeless encampments that are limited to low-sensitivity zones in the city.

Also, I facilitated the addition of more than 800 units of affordable housing into the development pipeline in District 6 by working closely with developers, community members, and city staff.

On Public Safety: While others on the council called for dramatic defunding of police and public safety services, Loren consistently fought to stop the defund effort of removing \$50M from the police budget and adequately fund police as well as violence prevention. In addition, as co-chair of the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force, I helped explore alternatives to traditional policing to enhance safety in our community through innovative approaches.

In addition, I worked with city administration and OPD leadership to add 48 officers to patrol in East Oakland.

On Public Infrastructure: I worked closely with the Black Cultural Zone to create the Akoma Outdoor Market on a city-owned lot in District 6. This project revitalized the area and boosted economic development in the community. I also helped direct capital project resources to the places of greatest need in East Oakland.

On Budget and Good Governance: Throughout my time on the council, I've fought for equitable budget allocations, ensuring that resources go to underserved areas in East Oakland. I've also developed policies to address systemic racism and sexism in Oakland's procurement processes, creating fairness and inclusivity in city contracting.

My approach to governance has always been rooted in finding innovative, progressive, and practical solutions to Oakland's challenges. It's been my privilege to serve this city and work alongside so many dedicated community members to create a better Oakland for everyone.

2. What are the top two challenges facing Oakland today? What are the bright spots?



Oakland is currently grappling with significant challenges, notably financial instability and public safety concerns.

- **Financial Instability:** The city faces a substantial budget deficit, with projections indicating a \$120 million structural shortfall annually from 2025 to 2027. This fiscal strain threatens the city's ability to maintain essential services and has led officials to consider declaring a fiscal emergency.
- **Public Safety Concerns:** Despite a decline in homicides at the end of 2024, the onset of 2025 has been marred by a surge in violence, including multiple deadly incidents. This uptick in crime has heightened community apprehension and underscores the need for effective public safety strategies.

Amid these challenges, Oakland has much to celebrate.

- + **Culinary Excellence:** The city's vibrant food scene has garnered national attention, with several local chefs and restaurants named semifinalists in the 2025 James Beard Awards. Notable nominees include Suzette Gresham-Tognetti of Acquerello for Outstanding Chef and Spencer Horovitz of Hadeem for Emerging Chef.
- + **Technological Innovation:** Oakland's tech sector is thriving, with tech jobs growing at twice the rate of other sectors. The city has transformed into a powerhouse of tech innovation, featuring over 350 active startups—a 40% increase since 2020. Sectors like AI, fintech, and clean tech are particularly prominent while there is significant growth potential still available.
- + **Rich Cultural History:** Oakland is a hub of cultural and artistic expression. Its deep history of social justice movements, diverse music and arts scenes, and enduring legacy as the birthplace of the Black Panther Party make it a beacon of resilience and activism. Events like First Fridays and the Malcolm X Jazz Arts Festival bring the community together to celebrate this heritage.
- + **Natural Beauty and Green Spaces:** The city boasts stunning natural landscapes, including Lake Merritt, Joaquin Miller Park, and the Oakland Hills. These areas offer residents and visitors opportunities for outdoor recreation and connection with nature, serving as urban oases within a bustling metropolis.

These achievements and qualities highlight Oakland's resilience, diversity, and dynamic contributions to culture, innovation, and community well-being.

3. Why are you running for office, and why are you uniquely qualified to serve in this position?

I am running to be Oakland's next Mayor because quality of life continues to deteriorate in Oakland and we deserve leaders who are committed, connected, and capable of making Oakland safer, cleaner, and full of opportunities for all. I can't sit



back and allow our residents to continue being ignored by leaders who are out of touch, out for their own gain, or unwilling to make necessary decisions thus, making quality of life in Oakland worse. Oaklanders do not trust that City Hall will be responsive to their needs and I am running to **restore trust** and bring transparent and effective leadership that delivers results. I will bring the independent and pragmatic leadership needed to turn this city around leveraging my experience solving difficult problems inside and outside city hall.

4. This special election is for a shortened term, making it crucial that the winning candidate can be effective immediately. What concrete steps are you taking to prepare, and what will be your strategy for making an impact in this shortened time frame?

To prepare for the role of Mayor and hit the ground running on day 1 I have already been engaging city administration and frontline staff to understand what is currently in place and their thoughts on what is needed to move our city forward. In addition, I have been engaging with local and national thought leaders related to the difficult challenges we face and that continues to inform my mayoral agenda. Local thought leaders include former City of Oakland Department Directors of Police, Housing, Fire, Economic Development, Housing, and Public Works, OUSD Superintendent, Union Representatives, Small Business owners, nonprofit leaders, and various residents from across the city.

In addition, I am closely monitoring events and decisions being made at city hall and advocating for certain changes that will make things easier for me when I enter the office. of mayor. Examples include advocating for modifications of OPD's pursuit policy to lessen restrictions on holding officers accountable, bringing employees back to the office by revising the pandemic-era work-from-home policy, and more fully implementing the encampment management policy.

Public safety

*The following questions ask for your perspective on improving **public safety** in Oakland.*

5. What specific and measurable improvements in public safety will you deliver for Oaklanders over the next two years? What existing investments would you increase, reduce or eliminate to ensure adequate resources for you to meet your goal?
 - Increase to 800 OPD officers
 - Speed up 911 response times to meet state standards
 - Double violent crime solve rate
 - Cut administrative/ paperwork time for OPD Officers in half
6. Please speak to the effectiveness of Oakland's non-sworn responses to public safety issues. Which, if any, are successful and should be continued? Which, if any, are not successful and should be discontinued?



Oakland has implemented several violence prevention programs with varying degrees of effectiveness.

Effective Programs:

- **Ceasefire:** Initiated in 2012, Ceasefire is a focused deterrence strategy targeting individuals at high risk of involvement in gun violence. A 2019 study by Northeastern University found that Ceasefire was associated with an estimated 31.5% reduction in gun homicides in Oakland.
- **The Our Kids “OK” Program:** The OK (Our Kids) Program is a mentoring and leadership development initiative focused on African American males aged 12 to 18. It is carried out in partnership with Black OPD Officers and the 100 Black Men of the Bay Area, aiming to reduce high incarceration and homicide rates among young Black men by fostering critical thinking, leadership, and positive relationships with law enforcement and community members. The OK Program of Oakland has seen a 93% graduation rate and a less than 2% incarceration rate which is far better than the OK students’ peer group
- **Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs (HVIPs):** Early intervention using the hospital-based violence intervention program model has been shown to reduce retaliation and a return to violence among shooting victims. The Youth Alive program has been effective at delivering this service in Oakland using their teams of community-based violence interrupters.

Programs Requiring Further Evaluation:

- **MACRO:** The MACRO program was initially intended to be an alternative response program that diverts 911 calls from OPD and allows non-sworn officers to respond - freeing up sworn officers to respond to those calls requiring a gun and badge. The program has had implementation challenges and has yet to deliver on the promise of 911 call diversion. I believe that the MACRO program should be given a timeline by which performance must be demonstrated if the program is to maintain funding
- **Town Nights:** The Town Nights program has been in place for 3 years and has seen mixed results. Some implementations (e.g., Verdese Carter Park with Adimika Village) have been wildly successful at giving at-risk young people a diversion from street life during peak times of violent crime while other implementations have simply been having a block party for youth and adults who are much less at risk for being involved with violent crime. Funding should be limited to those programs demonstrating that they are attracting and robustly engaging the target demographic. Other funding should be freed up for programs delivering better results.



Overall, while programs like Ceasefire and the DVP have demonstrated effectiveness in reducing violence, other initiatives require further evaluation and should potentially be cut.

7. What is the appropriate staffing level of sworn police officers for the City of Oakland?

We must have adequate staffing of both sworn officers and civilians to address the problem of slow emergency response times, high unsolved crime rates, and a general sense of lawlessness, and must right-size our response to each unique situation.

Oakland residents deserve to be safe in their city, yet most do not feel that way. This is backed up by data from the FBI which ranks Oakland the 11th most violent city in the US and 2nd most violent city in California based on violent crime per capita. OPD has been operating from a staffing deficit. Ten years ago, in 2014, Oakland had less than 400,000 residents. Since then our population has grown by 10% to 440,000. I believe the increase in population justifies a higher minimum staffing level and a higher target staffing level.

8. What strategies would you prioritize to address crimes like gun violence, retail robbery, sex trafficking, bipping, residential burglary, traffic violence, and any others?

- Increase to 800 OPD officers
 - Increase academies by adequately budgeting for more of them, and improve graduation rates by improving recruitment strategies to reach higher-quality cadets
 - Increase lateral hires from other police departments
 - Establish a pathway for retired officers (annuitants) to come back and work for the department in critical non-patrol functions
- Speed up 911 response times
 - Continue aggressive recruitment efforts of 911 dispatchers and expedite dispatch training to ensure new hires can answer calls as quickly as possible
 - Refocus the MACRO program on its original purpose of offloading 911 calls from OPD's queue
 - Invest more heavily in 911 operator support, including mental health resources to minimize attrition
- Double violent crime solve rate
 - Increase CID's capacity by prioritizing the filling of Investigation staff vacancies and augmenting sworn staff with non-sworn staff



- Dedicate additional resources to supporting OPD in closing out investigations of serious crimes over the next 3 months
 - Swiftly clear all hurdles to implementing enhanced video surveillance along high-traffic commercial corridors throughout the city
 - Partner with CrimeStoppers of Oakland to increase rewards for those who provide information leading to conviction for serious crimes in Oakland
 - Increasing efficiency of existing officers"
 - Modify burdensome policies to eliminate unnecessary paperwork while still maintaining critical oversight and evaluation
 - Deploy technology to reduce time out of the field (e.g., AI, voice recognition, improved database systems)
 - Better use Police Service Technicians and other non-sworn staff to offload less sensitive activities
9. Taking into account Oakland's governance structure, what specific steps would you take to align OPD, the City Administrator's office, the city council, the community, and other stakeholders around your public safety priorities?
- My administration will treat public safety like the emergency that it is. We will have weekly in-person meetings with all public safety officials to review the most recent updates on safety and crime in Oakland and discuss opportunities to collaborate more effectively and expand our individual and collective impact on safety in Oakland.
 - In addition, I will work with the city administrator to publish externally a biweekly dashboard of how we are performing against key priorities and goals.
 - We will then have regular briefings for the public on our efforts to address public safety in Oakland

The steps all address the need for increased transparency and goal clarity to ensure everyone is on the same page. The increased visibility and focus on my public safety priorities and how we are performing against them will become a rallying cry for the public as well which will increase the pressure on our entire system to perform better.

Homelessness and housing affordability

*The following questions ask for your perspective on **reducing homelessness** and **improving housing affordability** in Oakland.*

10. What specific and measurable improvements in Oakland's homelessness and housing affordability crisis will you deliver for Oaklanders over the next two years? How do you plan to deliver these homelessness and housing affordability wins for



Oakland? What investments might you advance, reduce, or eliminate to ensure adequate resources are available to meet your housing and homelessness goals?

Within two years my administration will:

- Reduce the number of unsheltered on Oakland's streets by improving support systems for unhoused neighbors
- Speed up the housing development/ permitting/ approvals process
- Accelerate the production of both affordable and market rate housing to meet regional goals
- Increasing the percentage of encampments in Oakland streets that are compliant with the Encampment Management Policy versus those that are non-compliant

I expect to deliver these wins by doing the following:

- Reduce the number of unsheltered on Oakland's streets by improving support systems for unhoused neighbors
 - i. Invest in data quality and measurement capacity within the Human Services Division
 - ii. Improve contract monitoring of homeless service providers
 - iii. Implement an Oakland First Policy for the distribution of support and services
- Speed up the housing development/ permitting/ approvals process
 - i. Fully deliver on the Reimagining Planning & Permitting initiative
 - ii. Reduce fees on affordable housing projects with deed restriction for at least 55 years
 - iii. Allow for earlier allocation of fees to projects as an incentive to get homes built faster
- Increase the production of both affordable and market rate housing to meet regional goals
 - i. Establish an Affordable Housing Social Impact Investment Fund
 - ii. Refine the affordable housing impact fee program to optimize the mix of onsite affordable units versus impact fee payments
 - iii. Require greater transparency into decision-making and justification when the council votes against the decision rendered by the Planning Commission to reduce unjustified decision-making delays in housing production.
- Increasing the percentage of encampments in Oakland streets that are compliant with the Encampment Management Policy versus those that are non-compliant
 - i. Adequately resource the teams responsible for implementing the Encampment Management Policy and monitoring compliance with it.
 - ii. Publish Monthly Encampment Management policy progress reports



- iii. Establish a legal and administrative solution to stopping re-encampments of high sensitive areas where an encampment has been recently closed.

11. Please discuss your perspective on the following topics:

- The respective roles of affordable (below-market-rate) housing and market-rate housing:
We must build both market rate and affordable (below-market-rate) housing in order to address the housing affordability problem because ultimately we need to correct the supply-demand imbalance. Building exclusively market rate housing will always leave some folks left out, but building exclusively affordable housing won't ultimately ease the pricing pressure and will instead continue to drive prices up for all other housing.
- The City's Housing Element and proposed zoning reforms
Oakland has many areas, including commercial corridors and areas near transit, that are underdeveloped and underutilized. These areas have the potential for taller buildings, which could provide more housing and attract more customers to local businesses. Also, more attention needs to be paid to the needs of lower-income historically underserved neighborhoods because the cost of transitioning to our desired future state is likely more costly - e.g., the costs of not having a car are much higher when living in East Oakland versus living in a downtown transit village.
- Oakland's Encampment Management Policy, implementation of it to date, and improvements needed moving forward
As a co-author of the Encampment Management Policy and the councilmember who guided it to approval in 2020, I am disappointed that it has never been fully implemented. I am a strong advocate of fully implementing the policy along with making our outreach, social services, and mental health support for the unhoused more robust and focused on transitioning the unhoused to stable housing. I will ensure we finally implement the policy fully when I become Mayor and do so in a compassionate way that continues to live into our shared values.
- The City/County's approach to mental health and substance abuse treatment
Mental health and substance abuse treatment falls squarely on the responsibility of the county as they are funded for providing these services across the county (except for Berkeley as they have their own Public Health Department). The County's activities, however, are falling far short of what is needed to address the existing population of those needing mental health support. There is a roadmap for improving the county's mental health services that were provided by the Dept of Justice in their report admonishing the county for violating civil rights by how they administer Mental Health.



Public infrastructure

The following questions ask for your perspective on improving Oakland's **public infrastructure**.

12. What specific and measurable improvements will you deliver with respect to Oakland's public infrastructure over the next two years? How do you plan to deliver these improvements?

Since additional revenue will be limited given the reduced resources at local and state levels, we will focus on improved execution and maximum value from our existing funding streams. We will:

- Reaffirm the timeline for all existing Capital Improvement Projects and deliver them on time by relentlessly focusing on execution and improved coordination between stakeholders
- Apply for and secure at least \$20M in additional Capital infrastructure improvement grants

13. What are the biggest problem(s) Oakland faces when it comes to public infrastructure? How might we address these challenges, and what trade-offs, if any, might we need to consider?

Oakland faces significant challenges with its aging public infrastructure, impacting various facets of city life.

Specific Examples of Aging Infrastructure:

- **Public Facilities:** Many of Oakland's public buildings, including police and fire stations, recreation centers, libraries, and parks, are outdated and in need of rehabilitation or replacement.
- **Roadways:** The city's streets have been the subject of numerous complaints due to their deteriorating conditions. Over a decade, Oakland has paid approximately \$35 million to individuals injured on its roads, highlighting the severity of the issue.
- **Oakland Coliseum:** The Coliseum has experienced multiple infrastructure failures, including severe sewage backups affecting locker rooms and other facilities. These incidents underscore the stadium's outdated plumbing and overall infrastructure issues.
- **Port of Oakland:** As a critical hub for goods movement, the Port has aging infrastructure that requires modernization. Projects are underway to update facilities, implement advanced technology, and improve air quality in neighboring communities.

Strategies for Addressing These Challenges:



- Capital Improvement Program (CIP): Oakland's CIP guides long-term decisions regarding the construction, repair, and replacement of city assets, including transportation and street improvements.
- Measure KK: Approved by voters in 2016, this \$600 million bond measure allocates funds for affordable housing and infrastructure projects, targeting the rehabilitation of public facilities and transportation systems.
- State Support: In March 2024, Governor Newsom announced a 10-point action plan to improve Oakland's streets, focusing on maintenance, litter abatement, and beautification projects.

Trade-offs and Considerations:

- Budget Allocation: Prioritizing infrastructure projects may require reallocating funds from other essential services, potentially impacting areas like public safety or social services.
- Community Impact: Infrastructure improvements can lead to temporary disruptions for residents and businesses. Effective communication and planning are essential to minimize these impacts.
- Equity Considerations: Ensuring that infrastructure investments benefit all communities, especially historically underserved areas, is crucial for equitable development.

Addressing Oakland's aging infrastructure necessitates a balanced approach that weighs financial constraints, community needs, and long-term sustainability.

14. Please discuss any specific improvements you expect to make during your 4-year term related to:
- Blight, litter and dumping
 - Road repair & repaving
 - Bike/pedestrian safety and public transportation
 - Streetscape improvements (trees, parklets, etc)
 - Stormwater management

During my term, we will renegotiate the Waste Management and Recycling contract to ensure the eBay possible terms for Oakland residents while ensuring optimal pick up of trash and dumping. I will work with DOT and other partners to fully deliver on our roadway improvement and transportation/ paving plans. Our goal will be to make Oakland one of the most pedestrian-friendly cities and get to consistent years of zero traffic fatalities.

Stormwater management will also be critically important as we are still under a consent decree for our stormwater and sewer systems.



As far as Illegal dumping, I intend to put greater emphasis than previously has been placed on the education side of the equation to help shift to a healthier culture that counters litter and blight that has plagued certain parts of our city.

Fiscal issues & budget

*The following questions ask for your perspective on **addressing Oakland's immediate fiscal crisis and long-term structural budget deficit.***

15. How do you plan to address Oakland's immediate fiscal crisis AND long-term structural budget deficit? What specific and measurable improvements will you deliver over the next two years? Please discuss your specific perspective on:
- How you might increase general fund revenues
 - How you might reduce expenses (specifying any cuts you might make)
 - How you might better manage unfunded liabilities, including pensions and deferred maintenance

Immediate Action Plan:

- Audit city finances using a third-party firm
- Require concessions from budget stakeholders
- Aggressively pursue external funding
- Stop non-essential spending
- Decouple the Coliseum deal from the city budget

Longer-Term Action Plan:

- Implement recommendations from 3rd party financial audit
- Reconfigure city budget with zero-based budgeting process to right-size budget with available revenues and improved prioritization
- Activate revenue potential of stagnant City of Oakland assets (e.g., vacant buildings, under-utilized parcels, naming rights for some assets)

16. What are the largest contributors to Oakland's budget challenges? In your opinion, why have previous Councils/Mayoral administrations failed to address these challenges?

Councils and Mayoral administrations have failed to address the budget challenges because they have been unwilling to make the hard and necessary choices to put the city on solid financial footing. It has been easier to make a short-term decision that improves one's political prospects than to tell a hard truth and make a hard choice that puts Oakland on a more positive trajectory. As Mayor I am prepared to make the hard, necessary, and potentially unpopular choices that preserve the City of Oakland



and its bright future.

17. How will you maintain objectivity on fiscal matters in the face of pressure and specific budget asks by groups and organizations that endorse you?

I have already taken the first and most critical step of maintaining independence and objectivity by setting the expectation with my supporters that they are not getting special treatment simply because they supported me. That is how I have operated ever since entering public service as a political outsider 6 years ago. What Oakland needs is someone, like me, who is a political outsider with the right experiences both inside and outside of city hall, but not entrenched in the “politics as usual” that continues to hold Oakland back. I will consistently make decisions that prioritize Oaklanders over political allegiance, personal gain, or an ideological agenda.

18. Given the mayor's role in proposing but not controlling the final budget, how would you build consensus around your fiscal priorities? How would you work with the City Administrator to ensure effective implementation?

Building consensus regarding my fiscal priorities requires the building of trust, which will be my priority. I may not do what someone wants of me all of the time, but I will engage in open and honest communication when issues/ differences arise. Part of building trust is being inclusive. I will include the councilmembers and key stakeholders in the budget-setting process early so that they have an opportunity to provide input and be included. I will be firm with respect to my priorities, but also build in some flexibility for them to help influence the final outcome. Going into those discussions, I will be clear about my negotiables and non-negotiables which will make the alignment process easier. I will also incorporate community members into the discourse so that the true voice of everyday Oaklanders is present and not just that of political operators/insiders - using the mayor's “bully pulpit” when needed. and can help to influence the discussion and the ultimate decision.

I am glad that you asked the question regarding effective implementation because I have come to understand after serving in City Hall that Oakland doesn't have an idea problem, but instead an implementation problem. I will be very clear about my expectations wrt implementation and ensure that there is transparency on what those implementation priorities and goals are and we will review them on regular basis so that I have visibility and that the rest of the organization has accountability. working with the City Administrator to ensure effective execution should be a high priority for every Mayoral candidate. We can not have a hands-off Mayor who simply delegates without taking a more active role in monitoring implementation progress and outcomes.

19. Oakland businesses are an important contributor to the local and regional economy, and — directly and indirectly — to the city's financial resources. What are the major challenges faced by Oakland businesses? What specific steps will you take to ensure



that Oakland businesses can thrive, create more jobs, and improve the Oakland economy?

The major challenges facing Oakland businesses are:

1. Public Safety/Crime - That which directly impacts them when they become the victims and that which indirectly impacts them when potential customers are afraid to come into town and patronize their businesses
2. Untenable bureaucracy and cost-prohibitive fees imposed by the city making it harder to operate in Oakland versus other cities/ jurisdictions

My plan to support businesses in Oakland is to:

- Establish a dedicated OPD unit for retail crime and property crimes
- Invest in a more robust ALPR and surveillance camera network as well as the staffing to operate and monitor it
- Create a small business concierge service to help businesses navigate City Hall
- Implement an Oakland version of SF's vacant-to-vibrant program
- Increase funding for festivals and concerts and eliminate permits and fee

Governance

*The following questions ask for your perspective on **improving governance** in Oakland.*

20. To what extent is the City of Oakland meeting or not meeting your definition of good government? As mayor, what changes would you make to improve government effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency in Oakland?

Oaklanders entrust elected officials to make smart, efficient investments with their hard-earned tax dollars. That's a responsibility I take seriously. During my time in city hall as a councilmember, I worked to ensure greater transparency and data-driven accountability regarding city priorities and performance against them. As mayor, I will ensure the city fully implements a department-level performance management system to provide public visibility into performance and steps being taken to address the performance.

In addition, the city has failed at fiscal stewardship and management, often making the budget process more confusing instead of simplifying the story and being honest even in the face of bad news. That is why as mayor I will push forward a charter amendment to create an office of the controller - in line with the recommendation from SPUR

And lastly, given the special "Weak Strong mayor" form of governance, there is no single point of accountability for decision-making, and that creates additional chaos, confusion, and lack of accountability. That is why I support moving to a true "Strong Mayor" form of government where the mayor has line item veto authority over the council's budget.



21. More specifically, how might the city provide greater oversight and public accountability in contracting, grant-making, and outcomes/performance management?

Oakland must adopt a Contract Management System/ Database. Until that is done and all contracts can be reviewed, evaluated, and managed in a more robust way, there will always be opportunity for manipulation or neglect.

22. Oakland has a unique hybrid governance structure where power is shared between the mayor, council, and city administrator. How would you provide effective executive leadership within this structure? Please give specific examples of how you would:

- Set and drive citywide priorities by aligning the council, staff, and community around shared priorities
- Build productive working relationships with city council
- Manage and empower the city administrator
- Ensure accountability across departments

I will regularly meet with City Administrator and Councilmembers to ensure a constant line of communication to identify and create opportunities for greater alignment and partnership. This will require a full understanding of what their desires and motivations are and also being able to help identify and deliver win-wins.

I will use community forums and regular bidirectional communication with residents and other city stakeholders to help inform a shared set of goals and priorities - focusing our collective energy on those things that matter most to the people we represent and serve. At times, I will use the mayor's "bully pulpit" when needed if elected representatives are not focusing on what matters most to residents.

Partnering with the city administrator will be key and I will set the tone that even though I am the City Administrator's boss, I will welcome him/her to be direct and candid with me behind closed doors, not simply a "yes person", but that we present a unified front when in public.

And as far as ensuring accountability, I will implement the department-level performance management system I described in the earlier question.

23. As Oakland's mayor, you would be the city's most visible leader but would need to work through others to implement many initiatives. How would you do the following (and please provide examples from your experience that demonstrate these capabilities):

- Use the platform of the mayor's office to advance city priorities?
- Build and maintain coalitions to achieve your goals?
- Represent Oakland effectively in regional discussions?



I intend to be the ambassador to the city within the city, across the state, across the country, and globally. This will require leveraging all of our resources and partnering with others interested and willing to do the same like Visit Oakland, Oakland Chamber, and a host of other Oakland-based organizations and individuals.

Oakland is an amazing place and often we underplay our hand. I will ensure to bring the best of Oakland with me as I build and maintain coalitions at all levels to advance our goals - knowing our worth and value while also understanding the art of deal-making and mutual benefit.