



Empower Oakland 2024 Candidate Questionnaire

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.

All 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 by early September.

Please email the completed questionnaire as a .docx or .pdf document to info@empoweroakland.com. Due by Friday, August 16th by 6PM.

Candidate Name:

Email:

Phone Number:

Office & District Sought:

Campaign Website:

Social Media Handles

- Twitter:
- Facebook:
- Instagram: @TostadoForOakland
- LinkedIn:
- TikTok:

Expected total Fundraising Amount: \$75,000-\$100,000

Funds Raised To Date: \$7,823

General Questions

1. What is your background/experience in Oakland? I am a community volunteer. Oakland Library Commissioner, mentor for Life Goes On, Reading Partners Young Professionals board member, Oakland Ed Fund Advisory board member. Former volunteer Liaison for Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf and former board member for Oakland Latino Chamber of Commerce.
2. What are the top two challenges facing Oakland today? What are the bright spots? Mental Health & Wellness and Safety. Vibrant community activism and strong grassroots movements. Residents and organizations are actively involved in advocating for social justice, environmental sustainability, and local economic development.
3. Why are you running for office and why are you uniquely qualified to fulfill the office you are running for at this time? I want to put myself in a position of power to address local



issues and make positive changes for Oakland. I want to advocate for policies that improve the quality of life for Oaklanders. Also, I want to inspire people to chase their dreams and go after them! I have a stellar track record of collaboration with Government, business and community stakeholders. A range of skills in Leadership, Community engagement and problem solving. Costco has given me the experience of managing teams, ensuring productivity, and fostering a positive work environment. Deeply rooted passion for community revitalization and economic growth in Oakland.

4. Prior to running for office, how were you involved in local government and/or your community? What were your biggest accomplishments? Before running for office, I was deeply involved in my community as a dedicated volunteer. I served as a volunteer liaison for Mayor Libby Schaaf, gaining valuable insights into the behind-the-scenes work of local government. My efforts have all been in a volunteer capacity. One of my greatest accomplishments has been strengthening community connections and facilitating collaboration among diverse groups, which has resulted in meaningful improvements that better meet the needs of Oakland residents.

Oakland City Council

5. **What specific and measurable improvements in public safety will you deliver for Oaklanders in 2 years? 4 years? Please describe how you plan to deliver these public safety improvements.** As part of your response, please:
 - a. Summarize what existing public safety investments you might increase, reduce or eliminate to ensure adequate resources for you to meet your goal. Implement targeted initiatives to reduce violent crime rates, including gun violence and aggravated assault. This will involve increased patrols in high-crime areas and enhanced community policing strategies. Introduce more robust traffic enforcement measures and safety campaigns to reduce traffic accidents and violations. Enhance and improve emergency response times through better coordination and resource allocation. Implement comprehensive strategies, including gun buyback programs, focused deterrence, and community engagement efforts aimed at reducing gun violence.
 - b. Discuss your perspectives on:
 - i. The effectiveness of Oakland's non-sworn responses to public safety issues. Which ones (if any) are successful and should be continued? Which ones (if any) are not successful and should be discontinued? Crisis Intervention Teams, Homeless Outreach Programs, and Community Mediation Programs are effective and should be expanded to enhance their impact on public safety. Assess non-specific or redundant outreach programs for their effectiveness. Discontinue or reform those that do not meet their goals or that overlap significantly with other services.
 - ii. The appropriate staffing level of sworn police officers for the city of Oakland (provide a specific number of officers you would like to see in place by December 2028). With a population of over 450,000, Oakland



needs at least 850 police force to ensure adequate coverage across its diverse neighborhoods.

- iii. Your prioritized strategies for addressing various types of crime, including gun violence, retail robbery, bipping, residential burglary, traffic violence, and any others. For gun violence we need to use utilize data-driven approaches to target hotspots for gun violence to identify and apprehend individuals. Support and expand community-based violence interruption programs, Implement and promote gun buyback events and support for individuals affected by gun violence. We need to enhance surveillance, work with local businesses to detect patterns, increase patrols, specialized units to investigate and strengthen community watch programs.
- c. Describe the experience(s) from your past that should give Oaklanders confidence you can deliver on these goals? My involvement with various community groups has allowed me to build strong relationships with residents and stakeholders. I have organized and facilitated workshops and public meetings focused on safety and crime prevention.

6. What specific and measurable improvements in Oakland's homelessness and housing affordability crisis will you deliver for Oaklanders in 2 years? 4 years? How do you plan to deliver these homelessness and housing affordability wins for Oakland? As part of your response, please:

- a. Describe the biggest problems our city faces that keep us from solving the housing crisis. Shortage in affordable housing, high construction costs, slow zoning laws, community opposition, delays/cancellation in housing projects, shortage in homeless/emergency shelters and insufficient funds.
- b. Summarize what homelessness/housing investments you might advance, reduce, or eliminate to ensure adequate resources are available to meet the goals you stated above. What trade-offs might need to be considered in distributing resources between different solutions? Simplify and expedite zoning and approval processes to facilitate new housing development. Secure additional funding and resources from various sources to support affordable housing initiatives. Community outreach and education to build support for new housing projects. Implement policies to support low-income families and mitigate the impact of gentrification. Explore creative housing solutions such as modular housing, adaptive reuse of existing structures, and partnerships with private developers.
- c. Discuss your perspectives on:
 - i. The respective roles of affordable (below-market-rate) housing and market-rate housing- housing are both critical in addressing a city's housing needs. By recognizing and leveraging the respective roles of affordable and market-rate housing, cities can develop comprehensive strategies that meet the diverse needs of their residents, support economic growth, and foster community stability.



- ii. The City's Housing Element and proposed zoning reforms-By aligning the City's Housing Element with proposed zoning reforms, Oakland can create a more effective and comprehensive strategy to address its housing challenges, increase supply, and promote affordability while balancing the needs and concerns of the community.
 - iii. Oakland's Encampment Management Policy, implementation of it to date, and improvements needed moving forward- Improve Sanitation and Health Services, increase funding, expanded Housing and Service Options, Advocate for increased state and federal support for homelessness initiatives and housing development. Engage with community organizations, local businesses, and other stakeholders to build support for encampment management efforts and address community concerns.
 - iv. The City/County's approach to mental health and substance abuse treatment- Access allocated funding through Alameda County (\$206M) Oakland needs to use a combination of existing programs and services aimed at providing comprehensive care. Emphasizing prevention and early intervention, addressing systemic barriers, and utilizing data-driven decision-making will be crucial.
- d. Describe the experience(s) from your past that should give Oaklanders confidence you can deliver on these goals? I have organized mental health awareness campaigns, spearheaded initiatives to expand access to treatment, and collaborated with local organizations to enhance services. I have worked with non-profit organizations, government agencies and healthcare providers on projects related to mental health and substance abuse treatment.