



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: Michelle D. Hailey

Email: Davettem1@gmail.com

Phone Number: 510-735-6494

Office & District Sought: Council District 3

Campaign Website: TBD

Social Media Handles All-In Progress

- Twitter:
- Facebook:
- Instagram:
- LinkedIn:
- TikTok:

Expected total Fundraising Amount: 35-40k

Funds Raised To Date: 3k promised

General Questions

1. What is your background/experience in Oakland? –**Oakland resident over 50 plus years, small housing provider, and community advocate.**
2. What are the top two challenges facing Oakland today? What are the bright spots?

Devisive leadership and Crime/ Weather and location

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 decided to run for office out of a spiritual calling. I've been in the background in other campaigns but felt the current field was not representative of voices like mine that has held Oakland down through it's good and bad times for 50 plus years. I have had a multitude of jobs, and personal experience with so many Oaklanders that gives me a full perspective on the needs and desires of this once great city.

What makes me qualified is I'm running to serve Oakland, not to build my political resume which leaves me free to make the tough decisions necessary to turn the city around. Unfortunatly it appears that the health and welfare of Oakland is incongruent with the special interest and ruling class. One must not be afraid to potentially be a one term candidate if that means doing whats right for the residents of this city.

4. Prior to running for office, how were you involved in local government and/or your community? What were your biggest accomplishments?

I've been involved in the small property owners advocacy and foreclosure prevention in the black community. Small owners have been under attack for the last 10 years. I have dedicated myself to being a voice to stand up for those of us who provide housing in most cases to people who otherwise would be difficult to place. My greatest accomplishment was being a part of ending eviction moritorium which decimated most owners on fixed income and changed the landscape of D3 for generations to come.

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.
 - 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?
 - 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).
 - iii. Your prioritized strategies for addressing various types of crime, including gun violence, retail robbery, bipping, residential burglary, traffic violence, and any others.



- c. Describe the experience(s) from your past that should give Oaklanders confidence you can deliver on these goals?

I had the honor on meeting recently with OPOA. That meeting was not only enlightening but provided a sober look at what lies beneath the surface at OPD that lends itself to the outcomes we see now playing out in all areas of crime. Oakland has been under receivership for over 20 years when the receivership started after the Rider's case the badge numbers being handed out were in the three hundreds today the numbers being handed out are in the three thousands. OPD currently employs 600+ officers which means that Oakland has trained and lost over 2000 officers to other cities and other states. This case happened a decade ago why should young officers who were probably not even born continue to pay for the sins of the past. I would concentrate a big portion of my effort to get OPD out of receivership. Under this plan which is cloaked in secrecy OPD hands are tied, they are still operating under archaic rules put forth by the Administrator.

Not all of Oakland actually looks at crime and public safety the same but one thing that is a consensus; as long as OPD are under receivership most residents feel their corrupt. We can't recruit and maintain officers that are maligned and burdened by something that they had nothing to do with. I would also bring back policing by district. Many years ago police were assisgend by districts so the same officers would work the neighborhoods which made for better outcomes.

If in November the rollback of prop 47 is passed if good leaders are elected and actually honors the law a lot of the other above issues will be resolved. In closing my 2 year priority would be removing the receivership and bringing back district mandated policing.

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:**
- Describe the biggest problems our city faces that keep us from solving the housing crisis.
 - 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?



- c. Discuss your perspectives on:
 - i. The respective roles of affordable (below-market-rate) housing and market-rate housing
 - ii. The City's Housing Element and proposed zoning reforms
 - iii. Oakland's Encampment Management Policy, implementation of it to date, and improvements needed moving forward
 - iv. The City/County's approach to mental health and substance abuse treatment
- d. Describe the experience(s) from your past that should give Oaklanders confidence you can deliver on these goals?

Oaklands homeless problem is layered and complex. Due to permissive policy from leadership and a confluence of non-profits that have come to depend on the tragedy of our streets there hasn't been a will or interest to even enforce the existing encampment policy.

There are many factors that excaserbated the problem we see today. I participated in the roll out of prop 47 repeal. There was a lot of work and studies that went into looking at the outcome of this measure. One of which was the removal of drug courts which would offer treatment as a alternative to prison for offenses such as theft and robbery. There is sufficient correlation that when you look at the passage of this measure you will find the exposition of homeless and encampment activity. I note this as a hint of the root cause of the conditions of many streets in cities in California.

One thing we should takeaway is housing first is a idealogical panacea that many leaders put forward to blunt the failure of many years and billions of dollars spent with no meaningful results. The millions of dollars spent to house homeless in COVID and the damage and lawsuits that followed shows that this is a issue that has to first be dealt with clinically meaning the absence of continued drug use and help for mental illness.

This is a tough issue and there are no easy answers but there are organizations that are doing amazing work in clearing homeless encampments permanently and gaining the trust of those who are suffering to come out of the shadows and reconnect with family. We don't have to reinvent the wheel this organization <https://www.themorewelove.org/> Has had incredible results and the most sucessful outcome to getting people permanently off the streets is "Family First" not housing first.



- **All city right of way, sidewalks, and near School property has to be eradicated of encampments full stop. All current encampment policy must be followed.**
- **Priority is to put resources in a family reunification program.**
- **Provide emergency housing to the most vulnerable first. Seniors, Families with Children and the high at risk LBGTQ community also making sure that what shelters we have available are specific to these categories. We can't risk putting those at risk further by having them in enviroments that could be harmful.**

7. **What specific and measurable improvements will you deliver with respect to Oakland's public infrastructure in 2 years? 4 years? How do you plan to deliver these improvements?** As part of your response, please:
- a. Summarize the biggest problem(s) Oakland faces, how we can address them, and what trade-offs might need to be considered (if applicable).
 - b. Discuss any specific improvements you expect to make during your 4-year term related to:
 - i. Blight, Litter and Dumping
 - ii. Road repair & repaving
 - iii. Bike/pedestrian safety and public transportation
 - iv. Streetscape improvements (trees, parklets, etc)
 - v. Stormwater management
 - c. Describe the experience(s) from your past that should give Oaklanders confidence you can deliver on these goals?

2-4 year plan

Roads and Streets have to continue to repaved and thought given to how to maintain them as time goes by. The main issues that are not only causing Oaklanders harm and the city dollars due to lawsuits is the safety and condition of the roads.

Expand the Department of Public Works – Stormwater and Fire Prevention Management

Oakland needs a specialty department that deals with preventive measures to address the Flooding and Fire hazards that exist. While they can still collaborate with the fire department the fire hazard prevention/Forestry maintenance should



be combined with a lead by a specialty team of experts in those subject matters using the newest technology and innovation to assist with creating a infrastructure that can finally abet the known issues we have experienced as a city for the past decades.

There is nothing but net benefits to adding a dedicated year round department to public works it can also be seen as a step in the right direction for many insurers leaving Oakland and the State of California.

8. **Please describe how you plan to address Oakland’s immediate fiscal budget crisis AND long-term structural budget deficit. What specific and measurable improvements will you deliver in 2 years? 4 years?** As part of your response, please:
- a. Summarize the largest contributors to Oakland’s budget challenges and your understanding of why previous Councils/Mayoral administrations have not solved the issue(s).
 - b. Describe how you will reduce expenses (including cuts you would make to specific programs) that will free up resources that can be allocated toward addressing other budget priorities.
 - c. Describe how you will increase revenues to fund much-needed services, avoid painful cuts, invest in the city’s future growth, and address the structural deficit.
 - d. Discuss your perspectives on:
 - i. Major sources of general fund revenues, and any recent trends or changes
 - ii. Major general fund expenditures, and any recent trends or changes
 - iii. Unfunded liabilities, including pensions and deferred maintenance, and any recent trends or changes
 - e. Describe how you will maintain objectivity despite pressure and specific budget asks by the groups and organizations that have endorsed you.
 - f. Describe the experience(s) from your past that should give Oaklanders confidence you can deliver on these goals?

Oaklands biggest budget challenges are long term pension obligations

- ***Bloated administrative costs***
- ***No accountability to how funded programs, non-profits or contractors are performing with no measurable outcomes.***

We currently have a City Hall that has been closed for 3+ years. Our city is not functioning and what we are experiencing now is paying for a municipality that is virtually still for the most part working remotely. The



only consistently open offices are those that collect revenue. This is abhorrent and needs to stop.

I would be in full support of a forensic audit of all city departments and a actuary to study where we have duplicative departments and look to automate and upgrade the system to improve response times and concentrate on delivering a good customer experience for residents and anyone doing business with the city of Oakland.

You can't move forward properly until you correct the mistakes of the past.

9. **Please describe what you plan to do differently from business-as-usual in city hall to ensure effective, efficient, transparent, and accountable governance in Oakland.**

As part of your response, please:

- a. Describe in what ways the City of Oakland is meeting and/or not meeting your definition of good government.
- b. Summarize what changes you would make in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of city governance and increase transparency.
- c. Answer how Oakland City Council can provide greater oversight and public accountability in contracting, grant-making, and outcomes/performance management.

The main thing I plan to do differently is to be 100% transparent. If elected my only loyalty is to the residents of Oakland. We would give weekly updates through social media and other methods of any and all meetings, and conversations. If whether it was through X spaces we would do a weekly Q&A. If elected the idea of "meeting behind closed doors" will not exist. We will implement a method to communicate with residents and get their personal input and votes on issues before the council. it is time to put the people back in charge and hear the opinions and voices of the tax payers and citizens of this city. The "my and I" type of leadership has only lead itself to poor outcomes.

10. **For incumbents:** What is a vote you're MOST and LEAST proud of in the last four years. Briefly describe the issue, why you voted the way you did, and what you think now about that vote. **N/A**



11. **For new candidates:** What was the most impactful Council vote in the past four years? Briefly describe the issue, what you think of the Council's decision, and what you would have done had you been on the Council.

Budget option 2, to sell the coliseum to patch a budget shortfall. One of the worst representations of incompetency and selfishness ever displayed by civic leaders. I would have held the line and made the mayor come and defend this travesty and tell the public why and how this will solve nothing as the same problem still exists. We are broke as a city.

12. **What are the major challenges faced by Oakland businesses? What specific steps will you take to ensure that Oakland businesses can thrive and are able to create more jobs and improve the Oakland economy? Crime**

13. **There are important ballot measures that are up for vote in November. How would you vote on the following and why?**

- a. Would you vote to Recall District Attorney Pamela Price? (YES/NO) **Undecided**
- b. Would you vote to Recall Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao? (YES/NO) **Yes**
- c. Would you vote to pass the Oakland Measure Z renewal? (YES/NO) **No**
- d. Would you vote to pass California Prop 36 (makes changes to Prop 47) (YES/NO) **Yes.**