



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: John Bauters

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Phone Number: 415-999-7932

Office & District Sought: Alameda County Supervisor, 5th District

Campaign Website: bautersforsupervisor.com

Social Media Handles

- Twitter: @johnbauters
- Facebook: facebook.com/johnbauters
- Instagram: @neighbors4bauters
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/john-j-bauters-0b74434/>
- TikTok: N/A

Expected total Fundraising Amount: \$600-800K

Funds Raised To Date: \$502,440

General Questions

1. What is your background/experience in Oakland or Alameda County?

I have lived in Emeryville and Alameda County for close to 14 years. I have lived just across the border from Oakland this entire time, and although I serve on the Emeryville City Council, most of my personal and professional experience since moving to the Bay Area has been in Oakland. I have dedicated nearly a decade to working in Alameda County, with a focus on addressing homelessness and advancing public transportation and climate action. As Chair of the Alameda County Transportation Commission, I led efforts to improve transportation infrastructure and programs, including the agency’s first-ever Race and Equity Action Plan, adoption of the first Countywide Bikeways Plan, securing funding for critical projects like the East Bay Greenway, Port of Oakland improvements, and Rail Safety projects. In my role on the Bay Area Air Quality Management District board, I led the effort to enact the most stringent refinery emissions



regulations in the nation and pushed out grants to fund and pilot clean fuel technologies. In Emeryville, I championed a voter-approved affordable housing initiative that is building hundreds of new affordable homes to people experiencing homelessness, transition-aged youth, working families, and seniors on fixed incomes. We also opened a shelter to serve unhoused families from Oakland in recognition of the fact that homelessness is a regional crisis and requires a regional response. We all deserve to feel safe, have a good-paying job and a roof over our head.

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

Homelessness and crime are two of the most pressing challenges facing Oakland today. The rising number of individuals experiencing homelessness highlights the need for more effective and compassionate solutions, such as increased supportive housing and mental health services. Similarly, crime —particularly violent crime and retail theft — requires a multifaceted approach that includes community policing, more emergency dispatchers to reduce response times, investment in education, stronger economic opportunities, and disciplined, accountable leadership.

Despite these challenges, there are notable bright spots. Oakland's greatest asset is its diversity of people, culture, language, and history. People are rightfully proud to be from Oakland. Its rich history as a place that is foundational to the civil rights movement are part of the reason why people are frustrated with the current challenges facing the city - people here know the immense potential our community has and want to see it be the best version of itself. This sense of pride gives me confidence that Oaklanders are willing to band together to take on the challenges they currently face, and improve their community.

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 am running for Supervisor to bring transformative change and effective new leadership to Alameda County. I have dedicated my career to lifting families out of poverty and addressing critical issues such as homelessness, public safety, and community well-being. Our success leading a \$50 million affordable housing initiative and enacting policies and providing funding to significantly reduce homelessness by 79% since 2019 showcases my ability to bring people together and deliver real results. My work as a victims' advocate and policy expert further underscores my commitment to justice and community safety. My lived experience with housing insecurity and my professional background uniquely qualify me to tackle the county's toughest challenges and drive positive change.

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 local government for a long time. When I worked as a disaster relief worker for the American Red Cross through the AmeriCorps Program, I was deployed to close to a



dozen natural disasters around the country to help set up and coordinate disaster relief operations. In this role, I worked closely with local government leaders and other local officials to coordinate emergency assistance for people whose homes and lives were affected by a disaster, including Hurricane Katrina/Rita in 2005. When I worked in homeless outreach services, I worked closely with city and county government agencies to connect people to care and services. As an eviction defense attorney, I sued public housing authorities to protect the habitability rights of people living in public housing. As a policy advocate, I have written legislation that directly impacts local governments, working with them as stakeholders in the legislative process.

Before I ran for City Council in Emeryville, I served as Chair of the School District's Parcel Tax Oversight Committee, on the city's Housing Committee and Planning Commission, as well as the Hearing Officer in administrative appeals concerning decisions made by the city's Building Code Official.

I'm involved in a number of volunteer capacities as well. I've been a member of the Emeryville Community Organic Gardens for about 10 years now, and am currently the Treasurer. I volunteer regularly at the Emeryville Citizen's Assistance Program (ECAP), which serves over 200,000 meals to homeless and hungry people in Alameda County every year. I volunteer regularly at Emery USD as a judge for Senior Civics Night, National Reading Day, and other events that support students.

Alameda County Supervisor

5. The City of Oakland is often referred to as the "dead weight of Alameda County", with the highest homelessness rate, highest violent crime rates and incarceration rates, lowest educational outcomes, poorest health outcomes, and most precarious city budget compared with other Alameda County cities.

As supervisor what tangible actions will you undertake to improve the conditions in Oakland and overall quality of life for Oakland residents, businesses, and visitors?

I don't believe Oakland is "dead weight" — I believe the City and its residents have been let down by the leadership in City Hall. As Supervisor, I will focus on a multi-faceted approach to address Oakland's critical issues and improve the quality of life for all Oaklanders. To tackle homelessness, I will champion the creation and success of navigation centers with shelters, integrated mental health and substance abuse services, and streamlined service delivery through a centralized system to maximize efficiency and impact. Deploying a coordinated entry system that makes more efficient use of housing resources and matches people and their needs to funding and opportunities best-suited to help them get care will be priorities for me.

Improving public safety will involve investing in hiring more first responders and emergency dispatchers to improve response times and creating community policing initiatives to build trust between law enforcement and residents, along with supporting crime prevention programs and early intervention strategies to address the root causes of criminal activity. We need to invest in



early child education, community-based health centers, and removing language, cultural, and service accessibility barriers to people in need.

To revitalize Oakland's economy, I know that the city and county need to partner together instead of pointing fingers at one another. Making Oakland an attractive place to do business requires us to prioritize public safety, invest in unmet infrastructure needs, and provide investments that deliver results. We cannot afford to manage poverty in place - we need to deliver social, health, and economic outcomes that transform lives and in turn create safer, more prosperous, inclusive, and just communities for everyone. Through these actions, I aim to create lasting improvements and a higher quality of life for Oakland's residents, businesses, and visitors.

When Oakland succeeds, Alameda County succeeds. Pointing fingers and name calling won't solve these challenges; solutions require collaborative and accountable leadership, and that's what I'll work to deliver as Supervisor.

6. In July 2022, the three national credit rating agencies (Standard and Poor's, Moody's, and Fitch) all reaffirmed the County's current AAA rating, citing the County's prudent financial management policies and practices, consistent positive budgetary performance, and a strong stable management team. The County obtaining the highest possible rating from the 3 major agencies allows the County to finance major projects with lower interest costs, saving substantial tax payer resources over time.
 - a. Summarize the largest contributors to Alameda County's consistent positive budgetary performance and the Board of Supervisors' role in maintaining it. What specific policies, measures, and actions will you commit to that will ensure consistently strong budget performance?

Alameda County's strong budgetary performance is primarily due to its fiscal management, diversified revenue sources, and strategic investment in long-term projects. Key contributors include consistent revenue growth from economic development, rigorous financial oversight, and proactive reserve fund management. The Board of Supervisors ensures this performance through detailed budget reviews, transparent financial practices, and strategic policy decisions aimed at maintaining fiscal health and flexibility. The county relies on business development, as well as sales and property tax revenues to fund many of its services. A large percentage of these revenues are tied, directly or otherwise, to conditions in Oakland. Maintaining county revenues and services depends on cultivating an environment that welcomes residents, businesses, innovation, and opportunity countywide, but especially in Oakland.

To maintain and enhance this positive performance, I will work to optimize our current investments to ensure they deliver efficient and maximum results, continue to advocate for continued economic development to broaden our revenue base, and support comprehensive and long-term financial planning to anticipate and address future challenges. We should look for ways to invest in technology and data analytics to better improve budgeting accuracy and efficiency.



- b. Describe your understanding of why some cities in the county have consistently widening structural budget deficits while others maintain minimal (if any) budget deficits. What can/should the county do to support cities who are struggling financially?

Cities in the county face structural budgetary challenges for a variety of reasons. These include but are not limited to job-housing imbalance, lack of a diversified economy to provide resiliency against budgetary downturns in the economy, benefits structures that are too far above or below regional norms, resulting in understaffing, low morale, unsustainable expenditure structures, other workforce satisfaction factors that can impact productivity, and ineffective policy and administrative leadership. The county should be a partner with every city, and help facilitate partnership between neighboring cities, to help create balance when possible. The county can leverage its access to state and federal grants to make investments and target aid or assistance to cities within the county that need greater assistance to ensure equitable service delivery.

- c. Describe the experience(s) from your past that will give Alameda County residents confidence you can deliver on these goals?

I have served as the Chair of Emeryville's Budget and Governance Committee for the last eight years. During that time, I pushed for — and the council adopted — a series of policies and actions that have created budget stability for our community. Examples of this include: (1) Creating a Section 115 Pension Trust to move one-time additional revenues to help pay down unfunded liabilities and keep our commitment to retirees; (2) Leading on four different revenue measures that brought funding for the city's core priorities of housing, public safety, early child education, public works/infrastructure maintenance and code enforcement, coupled with policies for the management of reserve funds on each of those funding sources, with transparency and accountability to our voters; (3) leveraging my leadership roles on various regional and countywide boards to help bring in grant funding to support projects and programs we provide to our community; and (4) maintaining an emergency reserve equal to 50% of our annual budget, we have a fully funded disaster response reserve for natural disasters, and we have reserves for each special fund that provide programs we offer a lifeline of two years to ensure no core service is dropped if there is a material change in revenues. These practices allowed us to weather economic downturns in 2017 and again during COVID without changes to staffing or services. We have refinanced debts to save millions of dollars in payments on long-term debt, secured bond issuances at extremely low interest rates by leveraging our AAA-rating, and met state policy goals that have given us priority position for discretionary funding, such as our work to be designated a Prohousing City by HCD.

I've done many of these things in other capacities as Chair of the Alameda County Transportation Commission, where I've secured a number of federal funds to support completion of infrastructure safety projects around Alameda County, and at the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, where I helped create government efficiencies and improve processes to save the agency and private sector partners time and resources.



7. Please describe the current state of the **Sheriff's budget** and the main public safety concerns in Alameda County. As part of your response, please:
- a. Propose how you will manage and allocate the Sheriff's budget to effectively address public safety concerns in Alameda County.

To effectively manage and allocate the Sheriff's budget, we need a balanced strategy that prioritizes both immediate and long-term public safety needs. This includes ensuring adequate funding for core law enforcement functions while also investing in community-based programs that address root causes of crime, such as mental health support, substance abuse treatment, and youth services. I will work to allocate funds in a way that enhances these efforts, improves emergency response capabilities, and supports preventative measures.

- b. Discuss your perspective on:
 - i. How will you ensure accountability and transparency in the use of these funds?

First, I would enhance the current internal audit processes within the Sheriff's Department to include regular, comprehensive reviews of budget allocations and expenditures. These audits would be conducted by an internal team with a focus on financial integrity and adherence to budgetary guidelines. The findings from these audits would be made available to the public through detailed reports, ensuring transparency and keeping the community informed about how funds are being utilized.

I would also strengthen oversight by integrating performance metrics into the budget management process. This would involve setting clear objectives for how funds are expected to impact public safety and regularly measuring progress against these goals. By tying budgetary decisions to specific outcomes, we can ensure that resources are allocated effectively to address public safety concerns.

- ii. How will you measure the impact of these budget allocations on public safety outcomes?

The best way to measure these outcomes is through a data-driven approach. This includes tracking key metrics such as crime rates, response times, and community satisfaction. Regular evaluations of program effectiveness will inform adjustments and ensure that investments lead to meaningful improvements in public safety. The county should work with independent evaluators and researchers as well to help provide an objective assessment on these outcomes.

- c. Summarize measures will you take to ensure that young people in the juvenile justice system receive the necessary support to prevent reoffending?

Ensuring that young people in the juvenile justice system receive the necessary support involves an all-encompassing approach. I will push for increased funding for rehabilitation and educational programs within the system, focusing on counseling, mentorship opportunities, and job training. Collaborating with community organizations that specialize in youth services



will help provide holistic support and prevent reoffending. Implementing diversion programs and restorative justice practices will also play an important role in reducing recidivism and supporting successful reintegration into the community.

8. What specific and measurable improvements will you implement towards **mental health services**? As part of your response, please:
- a. Summarize the current challenges and landscape of mental health services under the purview of Alameda County.

Alameda County faces significant challenges in mental health services, including inadequate funding, limited access to care, and a fragmented system that struggles to meet the diverse needs of its residents. The county's mental health infrastructure needs improvement to provide timely, effective, and accessible care. Many people in Alameda County live undiagnosed or untreated for a chronic mental health issue. A large percentage of these people are also unhoused. Having worked for more than 20 years in nonprofit services, with the majority of that time providing direct services to people experiencing homelessness, I understand that many of the social and human services investments we make today lack efficacy and do not deliver results because they are not linked to shelter. To improve the efficacy of behavioral health services, we must bring people indoors, connect them with care, and help them navigate to housing solutions that match their needs. Shelter and housing are positive indicators of the likelihood that mental health care will be effective. In the absence of coordination on these services, our investments do not yield social or health outcomes for people.

- b. Discuss your perspectives on the current strengths and weaknesses in the county's **mental health services** and what service systems and funding opportunities will you advance and advocate for as a county Supervisor to improve Mental Health across:
 - i. Unhoused populations/ those with inadequate housing:

The current system offers fragmented mental health support tailored to the needs of the unhoused, often resulting in unmet needs and exacerbated health issues. To address this, I will fight for expanding access to integrated mental health and housing services, including supportive housing programs that provide on-site mental health care. I will also work to increase funding for outreach teams that connect individuals with mental health services and housing stability programs.

- ii. Youth (Age 0-18):

The county's mental health services for youth are often under-resourced and face challenges related to early intervention and accessibility. Strengths include existing school-based mental health programs, but weaknesses remain in reaching underserved communities, communities where English is not the primary spoken language, and providing comprehensive support. I propose expanding school mental health services, increasing funding for youth mental health clinics, and implementing early intervention programs. I believe that we need to expand screenings within the MediCal system to identify ACEs and other issues earlier in the lives of



young people so we can intervene with specialty mental health services earlier, which is a proven means for obtaining better outcomes.

iii. Youth we are trying to divert from Juvenile Hall:

While there are programs aimed at diverting youth from the juvenile justice system, there is a need for more robust and comprehensive mental health support. The Board of Supervisors should look into the expansion of diversion programs that include mental health assessments and treatment as alternatives to detention. Strengthening partnerships with community organizations that offer counseling, mentorship, and education will provide the support needed to prevent reoffending and promote positive development. There are more youth experiencing a mental health crisis today than ever before. National discourse on politics, the climate emergency, and social media are all contributing factors to the decline of mental wellness with young people. We need to meaningfully invest in youth programs as a prevention investment to keep them from entering the criminal legal system.

iv. Adults we are trying to divert and transition from the criminal justice system:

The mental health needs of adults transitioning from the criminal justice system are often inadequately addressed, leading to high rates of recidivism. For better outcomes, I will support the development of reentry programs that integrate mental health services with job training, substance abuse treatment, and case management. Advocating for increased funding for these programs and strengthening partnerships with local service providers will be key to ensuring successful reintegration and reducing recidivism.

c. Describe the experience(s) from your past that will give Alameda County residents confidence you can deliver on these goals?

In my professional career, I have worked extensively with mental health issues. I have represented clients in Speciality Mental Health Courts and assisted others in seeking social security disability benefits. As a policy director, I worked with state legislators to design pilot diversion programs including LEAD, which worked to remove low-level, non-violent offenders and people engaged in minor drug crimes from the criminal legal process and divert them to community-based care programs. For the past ten years I've helped victims of violent crime break the cycle of violence by advocating for policies and funding for Trauma Recovery Centers to assist people who are experiencing mental health crises after a traumatic event of experience, especially as victims of a crime.

9. What specific and measurable improvements will you deliver for **children's services** in Alameda County? As part of your response, please:

a. Discuss your perspectives on:

i. Current state of behavioral health services for children and youth including how effectively integrated children services are with behavioral health services:



Behavioral health services for children and youth in Alameda County have made strides but still face significant challenges. Integration between children’s services and behavioral health services can be improved to ensure more comprehensive care. Currently, many children and families face fragmented services, leading to gaps in care and unmet needs. Too many kids who need to be screened into speciality mental health care as part of EPSDT and other state and federally-funded programs are not screened into care. Because of this, many children, especially those in foster care, go without access to mental health services they need during one of the most formative periods of their life.

- ii. What improvements need to be made? What are the key metrics you will use to measure your/ the Board of Supervisors’ success?

We must first establish a more cohesive system that bridges gaps between behavioral health and general children’s services. This includes expanding access to mental health professionals in schools and community centers, developing integrated care teams, and implementing a unified case management system. As mentioned, screening children into care is an important step that is overlooked and is a primary reason why many low-income and Medicaid-involved children in need never get the care they’re entitled to receive. Key metrics for measuring success will include reductions in wait times for behavioral health services, improved rates of follow-up care, and increased access to services as measured by the number of children served and the reduction in unmet needs. Additionally, we will track improvements in behavioral health outcomes, such as reduced incidences of crises and improved school performance.

- iii. How will you ensure these services are equitably distributed across all communities within Alameda County?

The county should undertake a thorough needs assessment to identify underserved areas and populations. Based on these findings, we should allocate resources to target these gaps, prioritizing communities that have historically faced barriers to accessing care. My approach will also include outreach and education efforts tailored to diverse communities, ensuring that all families are aware of and can access the services available to them.

- iv. What partnerships will you leverage to improve this integration?

I will work with local organizations, schools, and healthcare providers. Collaborating with schools will help us embed behavioral health professionals directly into educational settings, facilitating early intervention and support. I will also work closely with community health organizations to provide wraparound services and ensure comprehensive care. Additionally, partnerships with county departments and non-profit organizations focused on mental health will enable us to share resources, best practices, and data, fostering a more integrated and responsive system of care. Through these collaborations, we can build a more robust and unified approach to supporting the behavioral health needs of our children and youth.



- b. Describe the experience(s) from your past that will give Alameda County residents confidence you can deliver on these goals?

The County Welfare Directors Association of California awarded me their Advocate Award in 2015 for my work to create the CalWORKs Housing Support program, which provided housing assistance to low-income families with children in the employment training and placement program who were facing homelessness. Housing is a key predictor of success in young people. In 2016, I partnered with the Corporation for Supportive Housing to successfully win state legislature support for a pilot program called Bringing Families Home. This \$10 million program created housing opportunities for parents who had lost child custody and were homeless, preventing reunification. Children who are separated from biological parents develop toxic stress in their brains, which is a key indicator of mental health problems later in adolescence. By providing a housing intervention to serve as a platform for reuniting children with their parents to end foster placement, we provided a housing and mental health solution. I've worked on dozens of other programs targeted at juvenile mental health.

10. What specific and measurable improvements will you implement for **housing development and housing affordability** in Alameda County? As part of your response, please:

- a. Summarize current budget allocations for housing in Alameda County:

Currently, Alameda County allocates significant resources to housing through various channels, including the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and state and federal grants. However, despite these allocations, there is a pressing need to better target these funds to address the most critical areas. The county quickly expended the Measure A1 bond proceeds voters previously approved, demonstrating the demand for affordable housing assistance and investment in our county. With the passage of Proposition 1 in the March 2024 Primary Election, Alameda County needs to make meaningful investments in affordable housing with a portion of the county's Mental Health Services Act funding, which should be targeted to those most critically in need of services.

- b. Discuss your perspectives on:

- i. Where do you see the greatest needs or successes in housing allocations?

One of the greatest needs is to enhance our support for the homeless population and to increase the supply of affordable housing. For example, while Emeryville has seen substantial progress—such as a 79% reduction in homelessness since 2019 and a 6.4% increase in housing supply over the past year—similar efforts need to be scaled county-wide. The success of our recent 90-unit supportive housing project, aimed at transitioning and formerly homeless individuals, underscores the potential of dedicated, compassionate approaches to addressing the crisis. We need additional housing for transition-aged youth aging out of care/services, and housing for vulnerable populations, including those living with disabilities.

- ii. How will you coordinate these efforts with local cities and municipalities to ensure a unified approach?



To ensure a unified approach across Alameda County, I will foster collaboration between cities and municipalities through the existing regional collaborative and housing task force. This task force will facilitate the sharing of best practices, align strategies, and streamline development processes. The county's coordinated entry system needs to ensure that we leverage our collective resources to provide the best housing matches to those in need, as opposed to a hyper-local approach to housing navigation. By working together, we can ensure consistent and equitable implementation of housing policies, prioritize areas with the greatest need, and leverage collective resources to address homelessness and affordability issues effectively.

- iii. What legislative policies should be modified or created to deliver these measurable improvements?

Legislative policies must be adapted to support increased density and affordable housing development. This includes streamlining the permitting process, providing incentives for mixed-use and transit-oriented developments, infill housing approvals, and expanding funding for supportive services. Additionally, I advocate for the expedited implementation of California's CARE Courts in Alameda County, which will provide critical mental health and substance abuse support for those experiencing homelessness.

- c. Describe the experience(s) from your past that will give Alameda County residents confidence you can deliver on these goals?

My track record in Emeryville demonstrates my capability to deliver on these goals. In 2018, I championed Emeryville Measure C, a \$50 million affordable housing bond that has leveraged hundreds of millions in additional funding to produce affordable housing across our community. During my time serving on Emeryville City Council, I led efforts that reduced homelessness by 79% and oversaw a 6.4% increase in housing supply, more than double the growth rate of other Bay Area cities. The recent groundbreaking of a 90-unit supportive housing project reflects my commitment to addressing homelessness with both immediate and long-term solutions. These experiences highlight my ability to implement impactful housing policies and will guide my approach to improving housing affordability and addressing homelessness in Alameda County.

- 11. What specific and measurable improvements will you implement for emergency response services for the unhoused population in Alameda County?

The county is in the process of finalizing its implementation plan for CARE Courts, which is due by December 1st. Depending on how the county designs the processes and structure for the new program, this could be a vital tool in providing emergency response services to people within the unhoused population, especially those with severe mental health issues who need care and are decompensating in the absence of proactive intervention on their behalf.

We need to increase staffing in important county social, mental health, and supportive services programs. A recent review of the budget showed vacancy rates of 25-30% across these



important departments, which suggests that the county lacks the resources necessary to meaningfully address the growing issue of homelessness.

I would prioritize funding for the people who currently are our highest consumers of social services. The county collects data on unhoused residents, and knows how often people ride in an ambulance, have an ER visit, a police encounter, etc. We should be prioritizing high-efficacy interventions like permanent supportive housing for people with the highest use of existing services to reduce their ongoing demand for those emergency-related services by giving them intensive care interventions. This makes additional human capital, resources, and time available to provide services to people who have lower barriers to care.

- a. Summarize strategies for coordinating emergency response services for unhoused populations in Alameda County.

I will focus on strengthening existing communication channels and enhancing collaboration among emergency responders, mental health professionals, and housing service providers. Implementing a unified response protocol will standardize procedures and improve consistency in addressing emergencies. Regular inter-agency meetings will ensure ongoing coordination, allowing for timely updates and joint strategies. This approach will streamline operations and foster effective collaboration without adding new layers of bureaucracy.

- b. Discuss your perspectives on:
 - i. How will you work with mental health providers and housing services to improve the utilization of existing housing stock?

The county utilizes a coordinated entry system that works to match people to the most appropriate housing intervention. This is a best practice programmatically, but due to the insufficient availability of housing, often means that a large number of people engaged in the homeless or mental health systems sit in a bottleneck waiting for housing availability to come online. The county needs to leverage it's excellent credit rating, along with empty or underutilized properties, and actively engage in the production of supportive housing. The housing system needs to offer adequate shelter, temporary housing and permanent housing options throughout the system to bring people off the streets, improve the efficacy of mental health services, and navigate them to housing solutions that allow them to stabilize with care. I will work collaboratively with providers and housing services to ensure these pathways are robust and accessible.

- ii. What are the main challenges in coordinating these services, and how do you plan to address them?

The main challenges include coordinating among multiple agencies with different priorities and securing sufficient funding for comprehensive services. People experiencing homelessness utilize many services, but their funding is often siloed and coordination can be lacking. The county has several hundred contracts for various forms of services it provides to the unhoused population. This means that reporting, data sharing, and other critical care data points are not



always seamlessly integrated, reported, or shared between providers. Historically, there have also been leadership challenges with decision-makers understanding homeless services systems, investments, or programs. I will address these challenges by implementing clear communication channels, setting shared goals, educating stakeholders, and actively seeking additional funding sources through grants and partnerships.

iii. How will you measure the effectiveness of these coordinated efforts?

The effectiveness of these efforts should be measured through key performance indicators such as the rate of successful housing placement, including the percentage of people placed in housing who remain housed 3, 6, and 12 months after the intervention. Additional metrics should be the number of emergency interventions including ER trips, police contacts, public works responses, and days of incarceration or commitment experienced after an emergency response intervention compared to the baseline conditions.

c. Describe the experience(s) from your past that will give Alameda County residents confidence you can deliver on these goals?

My professional career is built around helping people with mental health needs and/or those experiencing homelessness navigate housing systems, access care, and achieve solutions. I estimate that I have personally represented more than 3,000 people in my career who needed some combination of housing and mental health services, and I have achieved countless results helping connect people to both. Since being elected in Emeryville, I pursued housing investments and interventions like those I recommended above, increased and improved the delivery of local outreach services, and prioritized the construction of permanent supportive housing opportunities for vulnerable and high-need populations. We have decreased homelessness by 79% in 5 years as a result of these strategies.

12. As a current legislator at the city level, 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.

I am most proud of our vote to put Emeryville Measure C (Housing Bond) before the voters. I campaigned for City Council on a commitment to delivering housing solutions, being a regional leader in addressing homelessness, and making our city a more just and equitable place to live. Many people felt a \$50 million bond for a city of 12,000 people was far too much, but I knew that this investment level was necessary to prevent displacement of at-risk community members, stimulate our economy through development, and fulfill the social and moral objectives we had as a community. Voters overwhelmingly approved it and today our community is one of the only communities to see an increase in its Black population with decreased disparities among residents. To this day it remains the legislative initiative I am most proud of.

It is hard to point to a vote I've taken in recent years that I feel regret for

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. I did not vote for her in 2022, but when she won the election, for the sake of Alameda County and our communities' safety, I hoped she would succeed as she grew into the role. But over the last two years, I have seen her consistently fail to uphold the duties of her office and fulfill her most basic responsibility to the people of Alameda County — safety. As a victims advocate, an elected official, and a voter, I feel a responsibility to hold the District Attorney accountable, and unfortunately, this is the best option we have to do so.

- b. Would you vote to Recall Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao?

I am not an Oakland resident, so this is not on my ballot and not my decision to make. But as I've spoken to voters across Oakland, they have made clear that they feel the Mayor has failed to address the City's most urgent challenges — public safety, homelessness, and the city's financial crisis. The FBI raid and allegations of corruption are now a distraction at a time when Oakland's leaders ought to be laser focused on reducing crime and homelessness and balancing the city's budget.

- c. Would you vote to pass California Prop 36 (makes changes to Prop 47)?

I understand the goals of the measure and why people are rightfully frustrated with the status quo, but I have serious concerns about unintended consequences of Proposition 36. I believe that the Legislature's targeted approach of addressing organized retail crime, holding repeat offenders accountable, and cracking down on fentanyl dealers and traffickers is a more effective way to improve public safety. I have supported these bills and hope the governor will sign them. Because Proposition 36 would reduce state funding for mental health, addiction, education and victims services, I am concerned that passage of the measure as opposed to the legislative package would directly harm communities like Oakland that rely on those state funds to provide important services we currently need.