



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 unedited for spelling, grammar, and format and published on { HYPERLINK "http://empoweroakland.com" \h } to educate Oakland voters. 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 .doc or .pdf document to { HYPERLINK "mailto:info@empoweroakland.com" \h }. Due by Friday, August 16th by 6PM.

Candidate Name: Susan Gonzales

Email: gonzalesEBRPDbd@gmail.com

Phone Number: 510-483-6975

Office & District Sought: East Bay Regional Park District Board, Ward 4

Campaign Website: N/A

Social Media Handles

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

Expected total Fundraising Amount:

Funds Raised To Date: N/A

General Questions

1. What is your background/experience in Oakland? I worked for the East Bay Regional Park District, which is headquartered in Oakland, and covers Alameda and Contra Costa County. I also served as Interim Human Resources Manager for the City of Oakland for approximately six months.
2. What are the top two challenges facing Oakland today? What are the bright spots? Oakland has the same problems most large cities have: the need to provide services and limited resources. It’s bright spots are its diversity of culture, great food, and



location in the SF Bay Area, which includes parks run by the East Bay Regional Park District

3. Why are you running for office and why are you uniquely qualified to fulfill the office you are running for at this time? As mentioned, I worked for the East Bay Regional Park District for a total of 16 years. As a former executive I understand the mission of the organization and have expertise that is unique. I really care about the future of the organization and want to help it stay a quality organization.
4. Prior to running for office, how were you involved in local government and/or your community? What were your biggest accomplishments? As the former Human Resources Manager I was able to help grow the organization and put it in a situation that has allowed greater fiscal stability.

I was appointed by former Supervisor Wilma Chan to the Alameda Commission on the Status of Women and served one term. I am an active member of the League of Women Voters Alameda. I have twice served on the City of San Leandro Bike and Pedestrian Ad Hoc Advisory Committee.

East Bay Regional Parks

5. What are the top needs of East Bay Regional Parks? What is your vision for the agency in 10 years? Top priorities include maintain and improve the infrastructure, with an eye on funding; review and improve staffing levels as parks open and demand for parks increases; examine and address issues related to climate change; and support regional planning.
6. What specific and measurable accomplishments will you deliver to address those needs? In 2 years? In 4 years? I hope to have an agreement with a variety of public agencies within four years concerning improvements to the Oakland, San Leandro, Alameda shoreline, as a result of climate change.
7. What is your perspective of the **fiscal budget** of the East Bay Regional Parks? How will you think about budget priorities? I think the organization is in a better position than most public agencies. Having said that, there are many projects that need to be addressed and this requires funding. Measure WW has a sunset clause and will need to be looked at for possible extension.
8. Please describe how you plan to address **service quality** if elected (or re-elected). Summarize the problem(s) East Bay Regional Parks faces, how we can address them, and what trade-offs might need to be considered (if applicable). I think that the public is sometimes limited in discussions with staff and staff might consider more work with user groups to allow engagement and buy in.



9. Please describe how you plan to address **equity and expanding access** to East Bay Regional parklands, recreational and cultural resources if elected (or re-elected). I am not aware of any issues in this area.

10. Please describe how you plan to address **climate change and the threat of wildfires** in your East Bay Regional Park district if elected (or re-elected). EBRPD continues to work with the State and identifies work in the fuel break. Continued coordination is essential. The Oakland Alameda Shoreline Adaption (OAAC) seems like a logical partner to protect communities and habitat from shoreline flooding.