

Oakland City Council candidate questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to complete The Oaklandside's 2020 election questionnaire. We understand we're asking a lot of you and your time, but we feel that Oakland voters deserve to know as much as possible about each candidate's views on major issues like housing affordability, homelessness, public safety, and more. We will be posting your answers to these questions on our website for our readers to see, and noting whether candidates chose not to respond. We are not endorsing anyone for office.

We'd like to receive your answers by August 28. Please briefly answer each question below using no more than 200 words. Please be as specific as possible when discussing policy ideas or positions you've taken, or would take, on different issues. Our reporters will also follow up with you for a phone or Zoom interview at some point.

Your name: Robert "Bob" Jackson

City Council district seat you are running for: District 7

We want to know more about you and the reasons you're running for council:

1. Please list your age, education, any professional licenses or other relevant credentials, your current occupation, and your neighborhood of residence.

I am 74 years old, I have a Masters Degree. I am a licensed Chaplain for the Probation Department. I am an ordained Bishop in the Church Of God in Christ and the Pastor of the Acts Full Gospel Church. I reside in the Sequoyah Neighborhood of East Oakland.

2. Before running for City Council, how were you involved in local government? Have you served on any local boards or commissions?

I served on the Police Foundation Board. I presently serve as Chairman Emeritus of the Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce.

3. What's your favorite restaurant or small business in your district—or somewhere you spend a lot of time? What's your favorite local park?

JJ's Fish and Chicken restaurant, Hilton and Holiday Inn airport Hotels and Martin Luther King Shoreline Park.

Jackson

4. Where can voters get more information about your campaign?
Jacksonforeastoakland.com

Homelessness and housing affordability are issues that many Oaklanders rank high on their list of concerns, regardless of what district they live in.

5. Tell us what you think the root causes of Oakland's homelessness crisis are.

The dismantling of the Redevelopment Agency, the greed of developers only wanting to build market rate housing. Lending institutions that have redlined certain areas in the city.

6. What specific policies will you advance to address the homelessness crisis?

Making affordable housing available to low and moderate income residents. Making workforce housing available to residents who are employed but do not make enough to purchase a home.

7. When you think of the city's existing homelessness policies, what's working and what isn't?

Nothing seems to be working. The homeless population is growing larger. Most policies in effect are only band-aids, not solutions.

8. What are the root causes of Oakland's housing affordability crisis?

The price of homes are much too high forcing residents out of the city. Especially those of color. Redlining the residents in certain areas. Residents not earning prevailing wages on their jobs.

9. What specific policies would you advance to address the affordable housing crisis?

Raise the minimum wages to prevailing wages. Secure Financial Institutions, Philanthropists, FHA and Veteran Administration to supplement income shortages. Re-establish the Redevelopment Agency.

If elected, you'll likely have to balance the city's next budget, which has been negatively impacted by the pandemic.

10. What will you cut? Where will you find savings in the next budget?

I will begin by cutting nonessential departments to form city government. Eliminating departments whose time has come and gone.

Jackson

11. How might you find new sources of revenue to help the city make it through tough times and grow in the future?

To reduce the budget by eliminating departments that are not priority at this time to tighten the belt and a moratorium on spending.

12. What will your budget priorities be? What services or projects will you ensure receive a growing share of the city budget?

Police and Fire Services would be priorities. Senior Citizen, Children Programs and Homelessness would receive a growing share of the budget sheet. Maintenance, illegal dumping and towing abandoned cars would also receive from the budget

There are three measures specific to Oakland on the ballot this year. Tell us briefly why you support or oppose each.

13. Strengthening the Oakland Police Commission and making it more independent.

I support strengthening the Police Commission - They need to be more independent rather than being controlled by the mayor.

14. Allowing anyone 16 and older to vote for Oakland Unified School District directors.

I oppose 16 year old voting for school districts... 18 years old would be a little more mature.

15. Removing the \$1,000 cap on fines for ordinance violations.

I oppose removing the \$1,000 cap on fines.

The City Council voted on some controversial and major policies over the past six months. Please tell us how you would have voted on the following, and what you think the next steps should be:

16. The council adopted the goal of reducing the Police Department's share of the general fund budget by 50% in the 2021-2023 budget.

I think 50% may be a bit much... There are areas in the budget that can be cut and those duties and responsibility can be given to others more suited for the job.

17. The council approved a moratorium on residential evictions until the end of the COVID-19 emergency.

Jackson

I agree. It's tough on a lot of people during these times of Covid-19. I think there needs to be checks and balances to make sure landlords are protected from mortgages on those properties.

18. The council strengthened rent control and Just Cause eviction protections and Oakland's Tenant Protection Ordinance.

I agree. It is not a good time to evict anyone until we get through the pandemic.

19. The council rejected a plan to reform Oakland's business tax by changing it from flat tax rates to a progressive tax in which bigger companies with higher gross receipts would pay more.

I agree that the larger businesses with the higher gross receipts ought to pay more taxes because of their sizable income.

20. The council voted to create a pilot program to send unarmed civilians to respond to nonviolent mental health crises, instead of the police.

I agree to unarmed trained civilians in handling mental health crises.

City Councilmembers reps will need to make big decisions on more hot-button issues in the coming year. How would you handle the following?

21. Should the city permit the A's to build a new ballpark at Howard Terminal in D3 or keep the ballpark in D7 near the Coliseum?

I would vote to keep the A's in District 7 at the Coliseum.

22. Should the city keep fighting the proposed coal terminal in West Oakland, or permit the developer to build it?

The city should keep fighting the coal terminal. The health of the community should be priority.

Tell us about how you'll improve public safety.

23. What's your approach to reducing gun violence? What specific policies or tools will you advance that will save lives? More police? More non-police services? Please be specific.

My approach to reducing gun violence would be jobs for previously incarcerated people. I would move to build skill centers where residents can get the skills needed to get jobs. The lack of money is the root cause of gun violence.

Jackson

24. Too many of Oakland's streets are dangerous for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. What policies will you advance that will improve transportation safety?

Request California Highway Patrol to help patrol our streets. Have citizens be able to report bad drivers. Increase motorcycle patrol in District 6 and 7.

How will you help Oakland workers and businesses thrive?

25. What specific policies will you advance to help Oakland workers who struggle with low wages, exploitative employers, and the uncertainties of the gig economy?

Direct them to resources to supplement their income. Work to increase prevailing wages. Pass legislation to better protect workers in the workplace.

26. How will you help small and local businesses succeed, especially with the recession caused by the pandemic?

By encouraging businesses to work together. Taking advantage of programs offered by the Chamber of Commerce. Advertising on the internet (facebook, twitter, youtube and other social media platforms)