

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: **DAN KALB**

City Council district seat you are running for: One

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.

61 y.o.

University of San Francisco

Master of Public Administration\Nonprofit Organization Management, 1988

University of California, Berkeley

Baccalaureate of Science\Conservation of Natural Resources, 1982

Oakland City Councilmember

Rockridge (bordering Temescal)

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

Served on the Youth Leadership and Community Safety Strategic Planning Task Force for the Oakland Fund for Children & Youth (OFCY); past Vice-president, MGO

Dan Kalb

Democratic Club. I provided public comment on a number of local matters (e.g. inclusionary housing; green jobs) years before I ran for Council.

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?

Lois the Pie Queen, Chocolate Dragon Bittersweet Café, Uzen, Doña, Aunt Mary's Café, Cafe Colucci, Cassave Taqueria, MLK Café and so many more. We have a diverse plethora of great restaurants in North Oakland. I urge residents to order takeout frequently to help our restaurant businesses survive while enjoying good food.

It's Your Move; shops along Temescal Alley; wonderful shopping districts along Piedmont Avenue, College Ave., and Telegraph Ave.

Bushrod is a wonderful park with an awesome rec center. I also love the new Charles Porter Golden Gate Rec Center as well as Studio One. My wife frequents the Temescal Pool.

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

www.dankalb.net

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.
 1. Poverty exacerbated by unemployment and high cost of living in the Bay Area.
 2. Lack of an adequate number of jobs and lack of adequate job training/preparation for those looking for work. This is particularly a problem during a recession.
 3. The lack of adequate funding available to get us to the amount of below market rate housing we need.
 4. Opioid abuse and other drug dependency issues, and mental health challenges are contributing factors.
- 6 What specific policies will you advance to address the homelessness crisis?

Prevention: Expand our Keep Oakland Housed services emphasizing the service which has been shown to be most effective. Once on the streets, it's a lot harder for someone to get rehoused, so housing-first is especially important.

Encampment Management: Allocate resources to ensure that encampments and their immediate surroundings receive frequent trash collection, sufficient porta-potty servicing, and regular deep cleanings. Work with County to make sure outreach workers go to every encampment.

Housing for Homeless Residents: Identify existing buildings that can be re-purposed for housing for our unhoused residents. Prioritize extremely low income housing for use of our affordable housing trust fund dollars. Look to increase impact fees by moving zone 2 into zone 1. See additional funding from the state.

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

By and large, much of what we are doing is helping many individual people move from the streets to a place with a roof over their head. But it is not to the scale that is needed to significantly reduce the number of people living unhoused.

The [Keep Oakland Housed](#) services are working to some extent. We need to up this effort; we have been successful in preventing hundreds of people from falling into homelessness. Our residential navigation centers help hundreds of people each year find long-term housing with services for those in need.

The management of encampments is not working well. We have too many of them, most are not well-maintained, and we do not invest enough resources in keeping them clean and well-functioning. This is not good for the people living in the encampments nor for the housed neighbors nearby. I recently got more money in the city's budget to do more trash collection, porta-potty servicing and deep cleanings. But still more is needed.

I will continue to lobby for more county, state and federal resources develop solutions to this problem, especially for shelter and permanent housing.

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

Insufficient production of new below market units. Jobs-housing imbalance in parts of the Bay Area (including Northern Alameda County), which means that some jurisdictions need to increase their overall supply of housing. Lack of

adequate safeguards to protect renters in other parts of the Bay Area, leading to displacement in those communities, which leads to more people looking to move to Oakland. Some jurisdictions saying No to most new housing or No to new below market housing. Decades-long federal disinvestment in affordable housing; speculation and flipping, and too many homes being used as hotels.

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

I support allowing triplexes and fourplexes to be built in many parts of the city that are currently zoned for single-family homes (note: I would not change to this more permissive zoning in the high wildfire risk area). Whenever possible, I would adhere to the goal of trying to build below market housing on available city owned land. I support adjusting our affordable housing impact fees to move Zone 2 into Zone 1, and increase the fee a bit along with the inclusionary % option. We need affordable housing and affordable by design housing near major transit corridors. I would give preference to below market housing in the city's entitlement planning process. Ultimately, we need more funding from city, county, regional, state and federal sources.

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?

This is not an easy challenge to say the least. If our revenue actuals continue to slide, most departments will have to take some level of cut. This can generally be done through attrition and freezing of certain vacant positions. I will strive to avoid cuts to programs that serve those most in need. We're also examining ways the public safety budget can be reimagined to more efficiently serve the community by expanding the role of social workers, mental health counselors, and administrators.

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

I support instituting a progressive business gross receipts tax that could bring in net \$20-25M more into the city's general purpose budget.

I authored the successful 2018 ballot measure to increase the Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT) for properties sold for \$2M or more. This has already brought millions of dollars more into the city's general purpose fund.

During some years, we can find some savings through de-prioritization and consolidation, but that is generally a modest savings in comparison to the magnitude of the financial challenge.

Ultimately, the City needs to be doing everything it can to keep small business afloat during the pandemic, which helps support workers and bring in revenue to the City. Our work around outdoor dining and the budget item I successfully pushed for to help small businesses renegotiate their rent is an important start. I continue to listen to the community on ways we can proactively protect the businesses we have, which will help us bounce back faster during the recovery.

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

We need to identify more funding for creating more affordable housing and providing adequate services for our unhoused population. I also want to see more dollars go to fund violence prevention strategies and other public safety measures throughout our city. People want services, and we should fund vital services the best we can. I'd like to see us start implementing our new equitable climate action plan (ECAP) using the equity tool adopted by the city.

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.

YES – Proud to be the author (w/ Council President Kaplan) of this measure S1 to improve the Police Commission Charter and ensure the hiring of an independent civilian inspector general. The Commission has a lot of important work ahead and having a professional Office of Inspector General will provide tremendous help.

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

YES – This measure QQ allows 16 and 17 y.o. citizens to vote for Oakland school board directors. While I wholeheartedly support this

measure that will meaningfully engage high school students in the political process, I have already begun working on a follow-up measure that would allow all non-citizen parents of school age children to vote in OUSD school board elections.

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

YES – I am the author of this measure RR. We need to have updated tools in our tool box to enforce egregious code violations by businesses and repeat illegal dumpers. Allowing for higher fines will help deter problematic behavior. The vast majority of businesses already do the right thing. This measure will help facilitate that no one business gets a competitive advantage for violating the law.

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 support the goal of meaningfully reducing police spending in a manner that enhances public safety for everyone. It must be done in parallel with ramping up a robust civilian alternate first responder authority to ensure that calls for service are addressed. I voted in support of the creation of the Reimaging Public Safety Task Force and am looking forward to its blueprint and recommendations next year.

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

I am and have been a co-author of this eviction moratorium throughout the Shelter-in-Place emergency. This will stay in effect for the life of our local emergency. The challenge we will face is how will the people who are out of work and unable to pay rent eventually pay their back rent. We must ensure that no one will be evicted due to loss of income stemming from the COVID Shelter-in-Place emergency.

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

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I am proud to have been one of the authors (with City Attorney Parker taking the lead) of this year's ordinance to update and strengthen our tenant protection laws. I've been a consistent and steadfast leader in putting forth laws, measures and budget items to protect renters. We must make sure we do our part to enforce these local laws. I am also fighting for a new law at the state level to give local jurisdictions the authority to enforce the 2019 state law (AB 1482 that created some protections for units not already covered by our local ordinances.

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 was a co-author of this progressive business tax proposal. It is now scheduled to be on the 2022 ballot, with a blue-ribbon task force to be created that will analyze and review the measure and recommend adjustments prior to the 2022 election. I want to put to the voters a proposal that will reduce business taxes for our smaller businesses and progressively increase them for our largest businesses. San Francisco and San Jose have already done this, and so should Oakland.

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 wholeheartedly support the pilot program (aka MACRO) to create a civilian first responder authority to respond to most mental health calls for service. It is generally modeled after programs that work well in other cities, most notably in Eugene, OR. But this is just a start. I put forward the motion to require the City Administration to analyze all 911 calls and non-emergency calls for service over the past few years, categorize them and determine the volume of calls in each category. We must grow the civilian first responder authority beyond mental health calls to other non-violent calls for service where a sworn officer with a gun is not needed. If we do this right, we can actually improve public safety and response times while saving money in the long run.

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?

It would be premature and even irresponsible for a councilmember to have a formal position on the A's Howard Terminal development proposal. There are a multitude of agreements and documents that must be negotiated, finalized and brought to the Council for consideration first. The City certainly would lose leverage, including around affordable housing and transit accessibility and other community benefits, if councilmembers stake out a definitive position prematurely.

Obviously, I want the A's to stay in Oakland. IF the A's were to build a new ballpark at the Coliseum site (which is a viable location for a new ballpark), then I and most everyone would support them being the master developer and lease-holder of the property contingent on an overall plan that includes affordable housing. We should keep our options open and not rush into any sale of that property just yet.

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

I authored the law that stopped the coal export terminal from being built. It is important for the health of our residents, our workers, and our planet. We must keep fighting it using all legal means at our disposal. The two Ninth Circuit judges who ruled against us are very conservative judges. We now must consider a new public hearing and public health study that will allow us to adopt a new Resolution to apply our ban on coal to the Army Base project. This will likely land us back in federal district court where the district judge effectively invited us to make a new case. We would be fine with an export terminal that does not transload or handle Coal or Pet Coke.

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.

I supported Oakland's gun buy back efforts, a small but helpful effort in addressing the gun violence epidemic our City faces.

I support our civilian Department of Violence Prevention and the suite of strategies that they are working on. Importantly, when we talk about reimagining public safety, I'm also trying to prioritize police resources to solve violent crimes and support more resources going to violent crimes investigative units. The reality is much of the violent crime in Oakland is caused by repeat offenders who need to be identified and brought to justice.

Violent crimes are often the end result of years of societal failures. When we fail to give our youth the education they deserve, desperation can seep in, and opportunistic criminals can fill the void. Anything we do to keep Oakland youth in school and on the path to a rewarding career will do more than a crackdown ever could to reduce violent crime. It's one reason I created a partnership between OUSD and the City of Oakland to reduced chronic absenteeism in our schools.

When we talk about violent crime, we're also often talking about domestic abuse. I have sponsored resolutions to bring the often-buried issue of domestic violence to the forefront, and have supported the efforts of the County D.A. to have an effective Family Justice Center.

I very much support violence interrupters as an effective strategy that we need to grow. I am also a supporter of Ceasefire which can be expanded when sufficient funding is identified.

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

I am and will continue to be a strong supporter of pedestrian/bicyclist safety. I support engaging in appropriate traffic engineering to slow down traffic. For example, I am very supportive of road diets, speed bumps on residential streets, and other traffic calming mechanisms. I also have been a steadfast supporter of comprehensive safe routes to schools. I have consistently supported bike lanes and want to make sure they are designed for maximize safety. Furthermore, I support giving tickets to speeders as a way to deter speeding that is all too prevalent in our city.

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?

I was an early supporter of the ballot measure creating Oakland's path to a \$15 minimum wage and paid sick/paternity leave. Certainly, if employees are exploiting workers, the City needs to know about it, and I support code enforcement that prioritizes worker's rights and workplace safety. I supported the ballot measure creating our Department of Workplace and Employment Standards to enforce these laws. That's especially a concern for undocumented immigrants and workers with English language barriers who might not know their rights under City law and are fearful of authorities at any level.

While there may be aspects of it that should be tightened, I supported the goals of AB 5 and oppose Prop 22. I think gig employees should consider unionization, and that is an effort I would lend my support to and to the extent Oakland can intervene, prevent retaliation.

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

I supported the City's relaxing of regulations around outdoor spaces and think outdoor dining, shopping, and services are critical to helping our businesses get through the pandemic intact. Since Oakland winters are more temperate than most of the country, we need to think about these programs as year-round, at least until the vaccine is widely distributed. The City needs to work with business associations and merchants to encourage participation in outdoor commerce that follows appropriate guidelines around mask enforcement, social distancing, and other hygiene requirements.

I put forth the budget item to identify funding for small businesses and nonprofits use mediation to renegotiate their commercial rents, and we need to make sure that Oakland's new vacancy tax, which I supported, is enforced to discourage landlords from using this opportunity to kick out longstanding local businesses.

If small businesses in District 1 are having difficulty navigating the City bureaucracy, for any reason, I want to hear about it. My office's inquiries to the appropriate office can sometimes lead a speedier resolution.