

# 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:**

Marchon Tatmon

**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'm 35, graduated from Oakland Public Schools- Castlemont, have a BA from the University of Tulsa in Political Science- Minor in Psychology, Masters in Public Administration and currently working on my Doctorate Degree(21) in Public Administration with a focus on sustainable communities and policy. I have a professional licence(07) in Life and Health Insurance through the State of California Department of Insurance. I'm a Government Affairs Manager and reside in the Elmhurst District.

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

I interned for Councilman Reid back in High School (03), and in my profession I worked closely with Alameda, San Leandro, Oakland, SF Board of Supervisors, and Marin BOS on issues related to housing, homeless and food insecurity on the local, county, State and Federal level. I currently serve on the City of Oakland Budget Commission.

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?

Tatmon

This is the problem, D7 don't have a lot of restaurants like other districts in the city but if I had to pick one of our limited eateries in D7 it will be the one my idea helped bring to Oakland which is In and Out. Historically, D7 has been underserved for many years, I plan on fixing this by supporting small business growth, new businesses and entrepreneurship and the Hegenberger Tourist Zone (HTZ). The park I spend a lot of time at and volunteer at is Brookfield Recreation Center. My father worked here for over 20+ years and my brother worked here for 3 years.

4. Where can voters get more information about your campaign?  
VoteMarchon.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.  
In my opinion the root causes of homelessness in Oakland is the lack of political will to fix it, the lack of affordable housing, limited housing subsidies, and lack of support services and resources needed to move people forward in life.
6. What specific policies will you advance to address the homelessness crisis?

This is three parts:

1. We must create a path to homeownership. This means having financial resources available, keeping corporate investors out and making sure prices remain affordable. We also must continue to stop the practice of redlining.
2. In regards to renting, getting people housed and keeping them housed- prices must be affordable, more affordable housing needs to be a priority, more subsidies must be allocated and the city should have preventive resources and wrap around services available for those who might be one miss rent away from being homeless and for those with mental health issues, drug issues and financial struggles. .
3. As far as bringing people back who have been displaced and price out due to gentrification, we must create a priority rental ordinance..

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

The program I worked for during my tenure at Building Futures with Women and Children- the Oakland Family Front Door program, is a prime example of what works. What's not working is the limited amount of resources available to have an impactful impact.

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

Greed and the lack of having a heart to keep people housed.

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

I will mandate we build at least 500- 1000 affordable housing units per year with community and investors buy-in.

**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 cut the police budget by 50% and won't allow for unbudgeted overtime. This will save 20 million alone in overtime hours being paid.

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

The HTZ and the creation of green jobs within the city so Oakland could have a GDP

12. What will your budget priorities be?

Funding for homelessness and affordable housing; equitable and sustainable economic development investments; and Violent Crime prevention.

What services or projects will you ensure receive a growing share of the city budget?

Homelessness and violent crime prevention by far.

**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 this measure because the commission needs their independence, a budget and power to hold officers detrimental to the community accountable.

14. Allowing anyone 16 and older to vote for Oakland Unified School District directors.  
I support this for two reasons. 1. We need our young to have a voice in the political process and 2. We need our youth to understand the importance of getting involved politically early.

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

I will only support this if language is put in place that won't fine you for being homeless, living below the 200% poverty level and making it more difficult to pay for fines if you're already struggling financially.

**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 this 100% and now we need to look at what programs we should fund in the city with the dollars we will be reallocating.

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

Support but should be expanded and money should be set aside to help with back rent..

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

I support this and feel more should be done.

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 support this move, we should make big companies pay their fair share.

Tatmon

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

Reimagining OPD. I love it, sometimes a badge and gun is not needed when dealing with someone going through a mental ordeal.

**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 support the building of a new ballpark at the current site, coupled with my HTZ plan.

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

Fight, fight and fight, no coal through Oakland, period.

**Tell us about how you'll improve public safety.**

23. What's your approach to reducing gun violence?

Studies show that the lack of opportunity increases the likelihood of violence.

What specific policies or tools will you advance that will save lives?

The tools will be an increase in economic opportunity that provides livable wages. Violent Crime is a problem in Oakland. Oakland is top ten for violent crime ranked cities in America and number 3 according to Forbes list. This simply has to stop. Oakland cannot be a sustainable city and top in violent crime every year. I want to place cameras alongside the shotspotter technology in order to catch shooters and end the cycle of violence in Oakland.

More police? More non-police services? Please be specific.

I will work with organizations like CeaseFire that mediates violent situations to de-escalate. Most importantly, I will work with companies in Oakland to provide internships, externships, and apprenticeships that give our young people hope, and the opportunity to be successful. It's hard for many young people to see their own future. I will give them hope as one of them who "made it out" and came back to rebuild the city.

Tatmon

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

As a person who lost a good friend to a hit and run accident, I feel more roundabouts are needed to slow down drives.

**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 will support livable wages, the creation of more high paying jobs and solicit companies to relocate to Oakland so we could create jobs for our residents.

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

I will pause taxes and create low interest loans, grants and micro-grants to help businesses out that's struggling. That's why the creation of the HTZ is crucial in generating a sustainable stream of income.