

## What do you offer that the other candidates may not?

### **Kevin Blackburn:**

- As a 4<sup>th</sup> generation Oakland resident, I have gained a broad perspective of Oakland and its rich history. I know what has worked in the past and I know what will work in the future. Since 2004, I have worked at the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco, shaping national housing finance and affordable housing policy. My (day) job allows me the privilege of working closely with US Members of Congress and their staffs. With this legislative experience under my belt, I know I have what it takes to build consensus and push through crucial legislation at the Oakland City Council.
- Since I began working at the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco, the Bank has awarded over \$16 million in grants through its Affordable Housing Program. The grants awarded to developments in Oakland have helped create 1,957 rental units and 76 ownership units for families earning 80% or less of the area median income.

### **Abel Guillen:**

I am the only candidate in the race with the full range of community experience, professional finance background and leadership skills that District 2 residents need from their City Council representative. District 2 and Oakland need someone who will hit the ground running, to identify practical solutions and work with community, labor and other groups representing our city. My proven track record of being able to build consensus with my colleagues and negotiate with others will be a valuable asset to the Oakland City Council.

I am uniquely qualified to serve on the City Council. I have a master's degree in public policy from UC Berkeley (Goldman School of Public Policy), I have worked in the U.S. Treasury Department, and have worked as a Financial Advisor over the last 15 years advising school districts, community colleges and other local governments on debt-related issues. As Vice President of an East Bay public finance firm, I have helped raise more than \$2.5 billion for public schools and universities throughout California.

### **Dana King:**

I offer fresh eyes. I have reported on Oakland as a journalist for 15 years and I followed the ins and outs and ups and downs of city politics w/o the burden of having any baggage. As a City Council Member, I am not beholden to anyone but the voters. I believe I bring a successful communication skill set that includes focusing on an issue, researching, asking incisive questions, listening, and writing. I am able to make decisions under the pressure of a deadline and did so for my entire career. Those skills plus common sense and fairness are what I offer. I understand and believe in the process of collaboration. I feel it is vital to the success of the city that the voices of the community be involved in every decision that is made. I also believe that the job of building a strong Oakland doesn't rest only with city government - I want to bring business, social service organizations ...all stakeholders to the table no matter what the issue. This and much more is what I offer to the residents of District 2 and to the City of Oakland.

The job of City Council member cannot be conducted as a side job. It's a full time job and I intend to give it my full time attention.

**Andrew Park:**

A verifiable record of long-time leadership working in District 2 neighborhoods connecting City staff and services with people and community organizations, including co-chairing Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)17, creating learning and job training opportunities for youth, enhancing park and recreation options, and working to make our neighborhoods safer and healthier including organizing to bring streetscapes, street lighting, traffic lights and community development to District 2. I have also utilized City resources from the outside as a citizen, so I have specific experience with addressing D2 residents' needs.

**What are your two highest priority issues?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Environmentally and financially sustainable economic development that includes large scale retail and housing, both market rate and affordable.
- Public Safety

**Abel Guillen:**

Public Safety: Oakland's economic and cultural potential is often eclipsed by concerns about our public safety. As Councilmember, I will work to identify sustainable solutions to ensure our police department is fully staffed and residents feel safe in their homes and neighborhoods. With new development on the horizon, we need to make sure that the City's infrastructure is ready for increased calls for police and fire services.

Financial Responsibility and Economic Stability: Oakland has come a long way in the past few years – we're seeing great economic opportunities and we need to make sure we keep that momentum going. I will work to ensure that we have policies and programs in place to ensure strong local-hire practices and protecting housing for all Oaklanders while still attracting new developments through incentives and efficient business practices.

**Dana King:**

Safety and jobs.

Every resident deserves to feel safe with a Police Department that is available to respond when called. To me it's not the most we can do, it's the least we can do. National policing standards for a city our size requires that we have at least 800 officers, allowing the department to provide the services of police work as well as enforcement. Servicing communities helps build relationships without which there is a chasm between communities and police.

Oakland will see a reduction in crime when our police force is at full capacity. Quality of life crimes like tagging, dumping and other forms of blight are environmental triggers, especially in D2 that invite criminals to have their way. The reality is that these are low level priorities for the Oakland PD. Not only do such crimes invite criminals, but they send a message within the community that no one cares. And we know that this is the furthest thing from the truth.

**Andrew Park:**

I look forward to using my community leadership skills connecting District 2 residents with the City to work on public safety/community crime prevention and creating opportunities for youth, working families and small businesses.

**Would you step down if you saw a fellow candidate leading in a way that would match and even exceed your capabilities?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Without a doubt.

**Abel Guillen:**

No, I care deeply about our community and I am running because I believe I am the best person for the job. The only way to have a truly democratic process in elections is for everybody who wants to participate gets their fair shot at running. We trust the voters to make the decision as to who is best qualified to represent them.

**Dana King:**

Interesting question. It's important to note that this job isn't about me - it's about the voters. That said, I do believe I bring a skill set that makes me the best candidate for the job. That's why I'm running.

**Andrew Park:**

Many of my neighbors and fellow community leaders approached me to consider running for the open District 2 seat. I was honored to be asked to run for the Oakland City Council and after serious reflection decided to enter the race. Those who know my work in District 2 believe I am extremely well qualified to serve District 2 residents. That's why I am running.

**What is your political career trajectory?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- This is my first time running for public office. I will focus on making Oakland better for everyone as the District 2 City Council Representative

**Abel Guillen:**

My goal is always to serve my community in a way that is best aligned with my skills, knowledge and experience. For the past seven years, I have served Oakland as a Peralta Colleges Trustee. I look forward to continuing to serve the residents of District 2 and Oakland to the best of my ability.

**Dana King:**

I do not have a political career trajectory. I have volunteered my time in the communities where I have lived for more than three decades, while at the same time building a career in broadcast journalism and raising a family. I retired in 2012, my children are grown and while I continue to volunteer, I am running for this office because it is an opportunity to expand on my community service on behalf of Oakland, a city that I love. I am running for District 2 City Council and fully intend to give it all my attention. I want to laser focus on the job at hand.

**Andrew Park:**

I have never run for political office. My trajectory matches my record of work in District 2: service to D2 on the Oakland City Council and being a productive part of the City Council team. Oakland's peace and prosperity is the motivating element behind me running, not a political career track.

**How long have you lived in District 2 and do you feel that you grasp the complexity of a District that is one of the most diverse in the City?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- 47 years. Absolutely!

**Abel Guillen:**

I have lived in Oakland since 1999. As Peralta Colleges Trustee, I have represented parts of District 2 – over 10,000 residents – since 2006. I have lived in the newly configured District 2 since March 2014 and understand the complexity of District.

**Dana King:**

I moved into the San Antonio district more than two years ago. I live on a block that truly represents the rich diversity of Oakland. My neighbors are Vietnamese, Chinese, Mexican, Yemeni, African-American, Filipino, Cuban and Caucasian. When people say they love Oakland for its diversity, I recognize and appreciate that I live in the heart of that diversity by choice. Many of the neighbors on my block have lived in this area as renters for 25 to 30 years. As I usually do when I move to a new place, I get to know my neighbors. Shortly after I moved here, we had a neighborhood dispute - a new landlord wanted to raise rents in violation of leases and my neighbors came to me for help. I looked at the leases, contacted tenant's rights organizations and learned what the landlord could and could not do. The end result is that we worked it out amicably for all parties.

Also on this block we suffer from the conditions of crime all around us: tagging, dumping, blight, prostitution. There have been murders, shootings and other violence, so crime is not an abstract issue in District 2. It's all around us. Sometimes the police come when we call them and sometimes they don't. So yes, every time I step out my door, I fully understand the issues that we are facing in D 2. There is a huge disparity of services in the economically disadvantaged areas of the Flats compared to other areas of the city, e.g., lack of street lights, terrible roads, few retail opportunities, prolific tagging, blighted buildings and dumping. I have been walking this district, not just my own neighborhood. I talk to shop owners as well as residents.

In addition to living here, I covered the news in the Bay Area and Oakland for 15 years--5 days a week. Yes, I grasp the complexities of my district specifically and Oakland in general.

**Andrew Park:**

When I was four years old, my family emigrated from Korea and first settled in Oakland's Chinatown. I attended Oakland public schools and Laney College in and near District 2. I moved back to the district when I bought a home in the San Antonio neighborhood in 2007. I have served on numerous boards and organizations serving this diverse district including as the Executive Director of the youth organization Trybe Inc., as Co-Chair of NCPC 17Y, and on the boards of Friends of Bella Vista Park, Manzanita Recreation Center (Advisory Board), District 2 Community Development Block Grant, Vice-Chair (former), Central City East Project Area Committee, Board Member (former), so I feel my grasp of D2's complex diversity is rooted in current, historical, and active presence in this community

**How would you handle issues where there are vehement disagreements between groups/neighborhoods in the District?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- In my opinion, a fair compromise can only be reached through effective communication. We must respect each other if we wish to truly communicate; we must value the voices and thoughts of others just as much our own. We must respect each other to become good listeners – when we do this, we can turn our disagreements into learning experiences.

**Abel Guillen:**

I will enlist the assistance of outside restorative justice organizations to talk to each party separately, and then get each party together to help them see each other's perspective, and come to a fair compromise for all parties.

**Dana King:**

As your Council Member I would determine what the issues/disagreements are and research as much of the background as possible in order to familiarize myself with the particulars. I would invite a representative from each group/neighborhood to the table after confirming that each invitee has the authority to resolve the problem at hand. Part of this process would be to see what the parties want and need. An atmosphere of trust and confidentiality must be developed in order for everyone to feel comfortable being heard. Assumptions and judgements have to be set aside and everyone needs to feel listened to. If necessary, experts can be brought in to further facilitate the process to help all parties feel acknowledged and heard. Solution oriented decisions will hopefully help the parties come to an understanding but the largest part of the overall process is to give the groups the tools to learn to communicate in order to resolve future disputes.

**Andrew Park:**

I have spent the better part of my professional career and everyday life in D2 bringing people together, many of whom have divergent opinions and beliefs, to work collaboratively to make our Oakland neighborhoods better, safer and more peaceful. As a manager of a department at a public university during a time of dwindling resources, I bring disagreeing factions with diverse opinions, experiences, and priorities together for the greater good and true consensus on a daily basis. My street is no different than many streets in D2.

**Do you consider yourself a peacemaker?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Yes

**Abel Guillen:**

Yes. I have extensive experience negotiating between opposing factions and building consensus in my public work with the Peralta Community College District and its community partners, as well as my long-time professional position as a financial advisor to California public schools.

**Dana King:**

My primary objective is for there to be peace between aggrieved parties. In the course of my previous professional career I negotiated compromise between opposing parties on a regular basis. As the Union Shop Steward, I intervened on behalf of the membership to management regarding personnel matters. As the head of collective bargaining for the membership, I sat across the table from management during especially contentious contract negotiations. As a reporter, I've negotiated safe passage for my crew and myself in Kosovo between warring factions, in Afghanistan between tribal warlords and in Africa between tribal Chiefs. Although city government can be daunting, I look forward to less life threatening negotiations.

**Andrew Park:**

I've been a person of peace in my community. Ask people who know me and have worked with me and disagreed with each other; they asked me to run and know my record of connecting people to issues and organizing in the community.

**What are your ideas to keep in touch with neighborhood people and informed of what is going on in the very different neighborhoods in District 2?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- It is of the utmost importance for all City Councilmembers to stay in touch with what's going on in their District. Policy decisions affect people first and foremost, so it is crucial that Councilmembers develop and maintain a human connection to their Districts and to the City as a whole. Meeting new people, especially Oakland residents, refreshes me and brings me joy. As such, I will gladly converse with Oakland citizens as often as possible. Organizations like Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils, Merchant Associations, Business Improvement Districts, and the PTAs of district schools all work hard to serve the neighborhoods we live in. Attending the meetings of these organizations would allow me to meet concerned citizens and ask them thoughtful questions about what is going on in their respective neighborhoods.

**Abel Guillen:**

Currently, several online tools like SeeClickFix, RecordTrak and Accela are being used or in development to facilitate better communication between the city and its constituents. As Councilmember, I will support the development and implementation of these tools and work with local tech organizations to bridge the digital divide to make sure these tools are accessible to all residents and in multiple languages.

**Dana King:**

As your Council Member, I will create a committee that meets monthly with representatives from various neighborhoods. For residents who don't participate in such organized ways, I will continue to walk the district in order to learn more. I will also arrange district-wide mini town halls regularly throughout my tenure.

**Andrew Park:**

I would keep District 2 residents informed of what is going on the same way I do it now with my community service: community meetings, doorknocking, emails, social media, earned media, newsletters, neighborhood events, posting fliers, hosting events (potlucks, NNO, Splash Days, movie nights, Halloween, Easter, etc.) and other creative ways. The current City Council representative has what many consider a strong record of constituent contact and response. I plan to continue and fortify that essence. I will be present in my community and throughout the places of City bureaucracy to serve all D2.



**How are you able to set aside a personal mind set about issues in order to encourage and deal appropriately with differing citizen viewpoints?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- “If I do not answer for myself, who will answer for me? But if I answer only for myself, am I still myself?” -Talmud
- The fundamental tenant of representative democracy is representation. To accurately represent his or her constituents, a representative must be attentive to the needs and interests of the constituents they serve. Thus, my positions will be informed by the perspectives of those whom I serve. I will hear all sides before I come to a conclusion.

**Abel Guillen:**

I have a proven track record of building consensus around issues with both colleagues and constituents. For many years on the Peralta Board of Trustees, I have been able to bring differing opinions to the table and find equitable solutions. I know that I can continue this success on the Oakland City Council.

**Dana King:**

This is an important point and a skill that is absolutely necessary so that I don't inject my biases, judgments and assumptions into the process. Understanding and owning my own biases, etc. is of paramount importance to allow me to keep an open mind and listen carefully. Remaining neutral lets citizens know that I listen to each viewpoint and each person with the goal of fostering relationships and allowing parties to learn to resolve their disputes.

As a journalist for 25 years, this is a skill set I learned well and which was absolutely necessary in order to maintain objectivity and do my job.

**Andrew Park:**

I am able to set aside my personal beliefs by consistently recognizing value in the diversity I presently live and work in. My organizing work in the community not only requires me to but also verifies that I can set aside personal bias and bring people together to empower them to set goals and work collaboratively to achieve them. I would continue to do so.

**Do you have any personal beliefs that would prevent you from positively supporting the gay community?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- No

**Abel Guillen:**

As a member of Oakland's LGBTQ community, I will represent the needs of the entire spectrum of our diverse community.

**Dana King:**

NO. All people deserve equal rights. It's just that simple.

**Andrew Park:**

No. In fact, in my youth mentoring, I work with youth who have come out or are in the process of understanding their sexual and gender identities. I make sure they receive the support from their peers and mentoring adults as they discover their identities. It's critical to support youth who come out or are in process of doing so during a very vulnerable time in their lives. My campaign team includes members of the LGBT community, and I have worked to protect the rights of the LGBT community when those issues intersect with my role on various non-profit boards.

**Do you have the knowledge of how to deal with the city budget so that this is not an on-the-job-training position once in the office?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- My current employer the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco has \$85 billion in assets. As a member of three non-profit boards and a former small business owner, I have experience working with budgets. Although the City budget at approximately \$1 billion a year is larger than any I've worked with before, my skills will be a big help. There is always room for improvement. I am already seeking out the help and counsel of others who municipal finance expertise to help me get my arms around the budget.

**Abel Guillen:**

As a Peralta Colleges Trustee, I have been responsible for ensuring the timely delivery of a balanced budget. We have adopted seven annual budgets comprised of a \$130 million operating budget and a \$300 million capital budget.

**Dana King:**

I've already taken steps to learn about previous Oakland budgets. I am fiscally responsible for the non-profit boards of which I am a member.

**Andrew Park:**

As a UC Berkeley Administrator in the Physical Education Department/Bio-Sciences, I have been actively involved in budget negotiations and working to secure funding for vital programs. I am personally responsible for a multi million dollar budget in an atmosphere of growing needs in public education and an ever shrinking budget. I have learned when to fight for needed funding for specific programs but also how to work with colleagues in other departments and fields to maintain funding for big picture programs that benefit many departments. City budget negotiations have a similar approach: Fight for needed programs/services and work with Council colleagues on services that serve a greater good. I've made tough decisions on budgets and found creative solutions during my time at UC Berkeley and running the non-profit Trybe. I am ready for city budget negotiations to make sure D2 and the entire City's interests are served.

**How will you navigate interest groups?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Interest groups serve an important function in politics and in broader society; they unite people with similar interests and give them a collective voice to speak with. However, the voices of interest groups should not drown out the voice of any individual constituent. I will do my best to hear all sides and not give preferential treatment to interest groups, but not write them off either.

**Abel Guillen:**

Interest groups exist because they represent neighbors, communities, workers and organizations within our city. As long as these groups are willing to work with all constituents and come to the table, they will be given an opportunity to voice their opinions and have a stake in the outcome of these public participation processes.

**Dana King:**

First is to understand what is meant or understood by the phrase "interest groups." If you mean will I show preference to groups who believe their goals are more important than all others? The answer is "no." My goal is collaboration, listening, facilitating agreements, finding common ground and to remind us all what is important to Oakland in the short term and long term. It's vital to facilitate an understanding that the greater good of Oakland serves everyone's interests.

**Andrew Park:**

I really do not like the term "interest groups." It denotes that they only have a special interest. Many people join organizations or become involved because those groups including community based non-profits, transportation, environmental and housing organizations, NCPC groups and labor unions serve a need and fill a void. My office would not be beholden to any one organization but would bring all points of view together to not only gain a greater grasp about an issue but also make sure those who come with divergent perspectives can learn from one another.

**Are there any other issues that you, as a candidate, want to bring to the table?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Renewable Energy/Sustainable District 2
- Collaboration with Silicon Valley and Tech sector around education, curriculum development and job skills for the knowledge economy.

**Abel Guillen:**

Oakland has several good laws on the books, including the Equal Access Ordinance, which provide that the City will communicate with residents in the most appropriate language so that residents will be better informed and better able to navigate City services and fully participate in the decision-making process.

**Dana King:**

I want to provide leadership around inclusion and accountability. The city's word needs to be its bond. We need to do here in Oakland what we say we are going to do and do it in a timely fashion. It is a universal shift that is required from the top down and the bottom up. I expect to be held accountable by the voters and will be transparent in every aspect of the job. No one is entitled to the job of being your City Council Representative. It's a job that has to be earned. A candidate's merits should rise and fall on commitment, not connections. You have an opportunity to elect someone who is not steeped in the culture of city politics. Residents of District 2 deserve leaders who acknowledge and seek their opinions. I believe the process of governing should include community voices at the beginning of each step, not at the end. Oakland's diversity is both economic and ethnic, lending itself to a rich blend of ideas, dreams and desires...all of which should be on display and heard.

**Andrew Park:**

I look forward to using my proven community leadership skills connecting District 2 residents with the City to work on public safety, community crime prevention, opportunities for youth and working families, small business development, and making our neighborhoods safer and healthier. Those are herculean tasks I am ready to take on because I know my District 2 people, needs, gifts and resources. The issue I bring to the table that sets me apart the most is my direct, verifiable experience in bringing the City and its resources to the community in a way that benefits all boots on the ground. The Council seat is a powerful position and the most powerful way to steward that power is to first realize that there are already answers and (perhaps latent) resources in the community. Often, the community knows what needs to be done and how to solve complex, historical, even unsolvable problems. If a councilperson could know how to give away that power to people and communities on a consistent basis, Oakland would have massive forward movement.

## **Public Safety**

**How would you fund additional police officers to bring us up to 900 officers, the number a city of our size is estimated to need to handle its crime problem?**

### **Kevin Blackburn:**

- Right now, OPD officers are overworked and overwhelmed. Increasing the size of the police force is monumentally important, as a more active police presence will help reduce crime. I would acquire the funds needed to hire additional officers by expanding our tax base.
- There is significant demand for housing and large-scale retail in Oakland. The rapidly rising rents and housing prices indicate that the demand for housing is exceeding the supply. It is a fact: people want to live in this great city. By increasing Oakland's housing supply, we can stabilize prices and make room for more newcomers and generate more tax revenue while we do so. It's a win-win.
- The Westfield Mall in San Francisco as an example captures a lot of revenue for the San Francisco tax coffers. It even serves as a tourist attraction for visitors from across the Bay Area. If we open our doors to large-scale retail, we will bring in much-needed tax revenue and create jobs for Oakland residents. 1% of every dollar in sales goes to Oakland's general fund. It is estimated annual retail leakage in Oakland starts at \$1.5 billion if it is no more than that, and we were able to capture it, Oakland would earn \$15 million a year. Every \$200K in new revenue is enough to pay for 1 new police officer. An additional \$15 million in sales tax revenue could support the hiring of 75 new officers. But we will also encourage our friends from neighboring cities to skip San Francisco and join us on the sunny side of the Bay, so the numbers could increase.

### **Abel Guillen:**

Increasing the size – and, ultimately, the success – of our police force will take a multi-faceted approach. As a first step, we must ensure our current sworn officers are deployed wisely, including how we manage overtime and training to ensure officer safety. At the same time, we must increase our City's revenue through impact fees, citywide economic development and the reduction of fiscal waste and mismanagement. I truly believe that Oakland has more resources for officers than we are currently allocating, and it will be my responsibility as your Councilmember to identify and implement those resources.

**Dana King:**

Minimum national policing standards require 2 officers for every 1000 residents. That means Oakland should employ at least 800 officers. The city is currently at approximately 650, leaving Oakland needing an additional 150. The mandatory overtime currently paid to OPD provides enough money to finance that amount of additional officers. Measure Y provides funding for an additional 60 officers leaving 40 to fulfill a goal of 900. Getting to a hiring level of 860 will take some time but once achieved, it would be worthwhile evaluating the department's efficiency before moving on, especially if it means finding new sources of funding. 860 officers would be more than the city has employed since the height of hiring several years ago when nearly 850 officers serviced Oakland.

**Andrew Park:**

Funding 900 officers will not be easy. It will take a combination of efforts that includes increasing revenues and cutting services. For every vital service that is cut, I will work to find resources to continue to maintain those services whether through volunteer efforts, foundation funding, or non-profits filling service gaps. For revenues, we must increase our sales tax base and business revenues. As public safety improves, so will these revenue streams. I am committed to securing the officers the city needs to increase safety and thereby increasing business revenues as a short term solution and even more excited about the long term solution to our safety challenges- increased connection of leaders and resources already in our communities doing the hard work regardless of police presence.

**Do you support community policing?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Absolutely.

**Abel Guillen:**

Yes, I strongly support community policing efforts.

**Dana King:**

It's a good question to ask but a difficult one to answer. In theory, all policing should be community policing. Service and relationships are as much a part of police work as is enforcement. I don't think there is a "one size fits all" answer to police work and the job of determining the parameters of public safety are best left to the Chief of Police to identify and disseminate. It is my hope that the newly promoted Chief will have an opportunity to craft and implement a strategy for Oakland that is thoughtful, effective and built on a foundation of prevention and trust. I'm confident there are new safeguards in place as the Settlement Agreement draws to a close that will hold the department accountable to outcomes that are successful.

**Andrew Park:**

Yes.

**If so, how would you influence skeptical citizens to understand the need to get to know and work with OPD?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Policemen and women, like members of City Council, State Assemblymembers, and the President of the United States, are valuable public servants. In order for the Oakland Police Department to best serve Oakland, it needs to build a healthy, harmonious relationship with the citizens of Oakland. We must understand that we are all in this together, and that we are all doing our best to make Oakland better, day by day. I would encourage skeptical citizens not to think of OPD as a faceless organization, but as a group of citizens like themselves – fathers, mothers, pick-up basketball players and farmers' market shoppers. When we work together, person to person, we will make Oakland better for everyone.
- In order to encourage citizen participation in community policing, I would work through organizations like churches, PTAs, and Merchant Associations to help Oakland citizens understand the benefits of building a healthy relationship with the Police Department.



**Abel Guillen:**

I will use stories from my own personal experiences with OPD officers to illuminate the care and concern that most police officers have for the community. We should remember that most police interactions occur during a time of crisis or conflict, and the public often associates that conflict with the individual cops. Establishing a personal relationship with police officers can help to establish the feeling that they are here to work for the community, not than against it. That said, we can always do better.

**Dana King:**

Trust is something that requires time to build, especially in communities that feel they have experienced an overabundance of enforcement and not enough service from the police department. The legacy of such unhealed wounds colors the relationship between the police department and communities. I think the city is on the right track by encouraging Oakland residents to become police officers. In doing so, the department can capitalize on home grown knowledge and the web of relationships built up over years. The targeted cease-fire program is achieving its goals of providing alternatives to identified criminals. Trust builds on itself and these focused efforts can be used as a beginning...a way to foster positive engagement. That said, there will always be individuals who are intractable in their desire to continue to sow seeds of discontent. Efforts to reach out to this constituency will require a deep commitment to engage in opportunities to move forward.

**Andrew Park:**

As co-chair of Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council 17, we have a well-recognized record of bringing residents together to work to make our neighborhood safer and encourage victims and friends/families of homicide victims to come forward and work to help solve crimes. I will continue this effort from the City Council seat. Earning trust takes commitment, dedication, compassion, and street credibility. Neither the community nor the OPD can do it alone, we have to work together. From holding neighborhood meetings, to organizing Peace Walks, to hosting a Thank You OPD community picnic, to encouraging neighbors to NOT call the police and instead work out problems and conflicts through mediation, I have worked with community members to address specific crime problems, to connect victims with the OPD and to encourage victims to come forward. This process works. OPD has brought charges to many perpetrators of homicides in our community.

**In view of the years of negative and costly experience from the Riders case that resulted in the Negotiated Settlement Agreement, which has burdened OPD and the City for years, and the questionable officer behavior during the Occupy situation, how would you propose to work with and influence OPD to train recruits and current officers that any such behavior is unacceptable?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- First and foremost, we need to hire more police officers with roots in Oakland. We need to hire officers who understand the City's diversity, are comfortable working closely with people of color, and who have a genuine desire to serve the City of Oakland, not just enforce rules. With great power comes great responsibility. I will do all I can to ensure that when we hire officers, we assess their character, and that we hold all our officers and officials accountable for their actions.

**Abel Guillen:**

Although I recognize that under the current administration OPD has made many improvements as required under the settlement agreement and others that came to light during Occupy, I also recognize that this is not enough. There needs to be a culture shift within OPD to one that emphasizes the needs of our community and prioritizes public safety first. As a Peralta Trustee, I spearheaded a program at our community colleges that would train and recruit Oakland residents to enter into local law enforcement. This is one way to help move our city in the right direction, making sure that our police force is from our community.

**Dana King:**

The good news is that there are many organizations and programs available to assist police departments in sensitivity-type training, working with the public, etc. Neither the City of Oakland nor the OPD has to reinvent the wheel. I would do the research necessary to find programs that have been successful. It is important that our officers are not only able to do their jobs with the goal of preventing violence, reducing crime and doing it efficiently and successfully, but it is equally important for the officers to gain the trust of the community so these goals become a reality.

**Andrew Park:**

I would use my experience co-chairing NCPC 17 where we developed close working relationships with OPD officers. This dynamic helped create a better understanding of the values and concerns of both OPD officers and neighborhood residents. I have also spoken to graduating classes of OPD recruits to give them the community perspective and the importance of community policing. Home-grown police is also a way to curb this behavior. Officers may not be able to live in Oakland for safety reasons, but the more understanding and experience officers have of the people of Oakland, the more our city will have an empathetic police force.

**How would you work towards rebuilding the relationship and trust between City Council and the OPD (not just the top brass and top management but all the way down to the officers who are on the streets) in order to work together in a respectful manner?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- I would do my best to create a collaborative culture in which the Council and the Police Department work together. All relationships need good communication.

**Abel Guillen:**

We need to recruit and hire Oakland residents first when possible. This is a first step – having a force that represents the diversity of our community. Next, we should work towards having enough officers that can walk our neighborhoods in between calls, meet with residents face to face in a positive manner rather than only showing up only when a crime is in progress. Restoring trust means creating positive experiences and knowing residents by name.

**Dana King:**

This question is similar in nature to the responses to “How would you handle issues where there are vehement disagreements between groups/neighborhoods in the District?” and “How will you navigate interest groups?” above. Rebuilding trust is key to establishing an environment where the City Council and the OPD can work together to resolve issues that move the City of Oakland forward and thereby re-establishes the trust the citizens of Oakland and District 2 deserve. Respect starts at the top and sets the example for everyone, setting the stage for zero tolerance for bad behavior and rewarding good behavior.

**Andrew Park:**

I would start with using the model of NCPC 17. We have built trust and a working relationship with City Council members, the Mayor’s office, and OPD from top brass, to district commanders to officers working their beats. Community policing is the key. Strong, consistent support given to support NCPCs and the long-time leaders that have been working for decades to make our city safer and healthier will naturally build relationships across all levels of OPD.

**If we encounter another loss of funding for public services, what would be your position on the priority of preserving public safety?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Public safety must be priority number one in any budget shortfall.

**Abel Guillen:**

Preserving public safety is my top priority, with an understanding that public safety means more than police. While I will work to strengthen our police capabilities, I will also make sure that we maintain our other essential public safety, economic development and youth services – efforts that have a valuable public-safety component.

**Dana King:**

Safety is the number one priority for any civil society. When citizens feel safe, everything flows from there.

**Andrew Park:**

Public safety is a top priority. We are already stretched to the bone. We need to find ways to do a better job with the resources we have and to find ways to increase resources. Again, the model of our work at NCPC 17 can be used as well as new, innovative thinking about budget allocations and volunteerism.

## What would you do to promote healing for neighborhood youth?

### **Kevin Blackburn:**

- Many of Oakland's youth suffer from Post Traumatic Stress caused by the violence they experience in their neighborhoods. To promote the healing of our youth, I would support the efforts of the many nonprofits that work to enrich and support our youth.
- One example is neighborhood/community circles. Giving youth a warm, supportive space in which they can speak openly about difficult and traumatic experiences could be the first step in the healing process. Furthermore, the strengthening of community ties brought about by such a forum would deter future violence.
- In the same vein, I would encourage programs like Oakland California Youth Outreach. This program is led by older peer leaders who turned away from lives of crime and violence. Setting a positive example for our youth is crucial.
- Finally, I would leverage mental health investments from Alameda County.
- The solution to violence is right here in Oakland. We need to affirm our youth and treat them with the respect and love they deserve.

### **Abel Guillen:**

Our youth need more ways to stay engaged in positive activities in our community. I support the community organizations that are already doing great work with our youth to help expand their programs to serve more youth. I will also seek opportunities to celebrate our youth and engage them as leaders in their communities.

### **Dana King:**

There are many examples of programs in Oakland, the Bay Area and other parts of the country that have had success healing neighborhood youth. Examples of such programs include the East Bay Asian Youth Center (EBAYC), Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY) and Centerforce. Relying on programs that are successful, involving communities and reaching out to youth will promote healing as well as prevention with the hope of healing as well as keeping our youth from entering a cycle of crime and violence.

**Andrew Park:**

As the founder and Executive Director of the youth centered organization Trybe Inc., I am well positioned to use this experience to provide positive opportunities for youth. Whether it is helping youth grieve through tragic losses, holding study sessions to help youth achieve academic goals, or providing recreational opportunities, these activities cannot be successful without a partnership between the City and community residents. The key is recognizing youth for who they are and the power they have, getting them to a place where they can dream, regain their sense of wonder, creativity, and natural love of learning.

**What do you see as the root causes of crime in Oakland and what approaches would you take to address the current crime situation?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- The root cause of crime, in my opinion, is lack of hope. When young people are un-affirmed, unfulfilled, and unemployed, they often turn to crime as a means of survival. The power to heal our youth is in our hands. When we improve our school curriculum so that it is ready for today's technology-driven economy, we can give our youth hope for a better future. When we create more jobs by growing new industries and providing job training, we can give our youth hope for a better future. Crime happens when desperation and hopelessness run rampant. By giving our youth a fulfilling future to strive towards, we can solve our crime problem once and for all.

**Abel Guillen:**

Crime and violence ultimately arise from a lack of economic opportunity. Increases in crime rates are strongly correlated to economic prosperity. We have too many young people struggling to find work in a difficult market or other productive, peaceful outlets to engage them.

I will work to support the economic development currently flourishing in Oakland and make sure that our residents develop the skills and training needed to succeed in newly created jobs.

**Dana King:**

Root Causes:

Inequity in education  
Lack of opportunities  
Lack of jobs that pay a living wage  
Lack of policing  
Lack of concern in our communities for the plight of others  
Apathy  
Lack of Hope  
Despair

Approaches:

Long term: Address the root causes noted above

Short term Approach: Work with communities, youth organizations, the OPD, businesses, the Oakland schools, etc. to create a brainstorming approach. Establish, maintain and foster relationships and collaboration.

**Andrew Park:**

Families need support. Families that are holding the tension rods of struggle must be supported so that they do not break. Lack of positive opportunities for youth including adult role models, job skills training, educational advancement, mental health services (especially for PTSD)) and peer support are all ways the City could help. There are many success stories working with youth, including activities that I am intimately involved in. We need to continue and expand innovative programs and support private/public initiatives that give positive opportunities to our youth. Working with youth is just one piece of preventing crime. Other pieces include expanding innovative and effective NCPC efforts as well as community policing.

**What is your plan to reduce robberies and increase robbery investigations?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- If we continue to engage our neighbors by building community neighbor by neighbor, house by house, block by block we can reduce robberies. By keeping an eye out and frankly by being street smart we can make a dent. To increase investigations, we must take the burden off of our sworn officers. Many of the clerical functions necessary in a robbery investigation can be performed by technicians instead of sworn officers.

**Abel Guillen:**

We need to expand OPD's investigative capacity. There are currently too few investigators. Most criminals are repeat offenders, meaning that just taking one person off the streets can significantly reduce criminal activity. As Councilmember, I will look at ways to restructure the police department to put more resources into investigations.

**Dana King:**

First and foremost, we should look to the root causes of these crimes. Educating the public about avoidance techniques and learning effective eyewitness techniques can be helpful in assisting robbery investigations. A full complement of officers with the training and ability to respond to these types of crimes will further assist in investigations with a goal of solving these crimes and reducing them to a large degree.

**Andrew Park:**

In my neighborhood, our NCPC 17 has worked closely with OPD in addressing priority concerns and following up on them. Many of these priorities involve a focus on robberies from getting the police to respond rapidly, to ensuring that neighbors can make positive IDs on perpetrators, to educating neighbors to be aware of their surroundings and reduce opportunities to be a target. It takes a concerted effort between the community and the police to reduce robberies. Civilian employees who can process tech/lab evidence will also help in smarter policing, reducing racial profiling.



**What are your concerns about racial profiling and what measures would you take to address them?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Racial profiling is simply unacceptable. Government needs to do all it can to protect and encourage young people of color, not profile them. To address racial profiling, I will ensure that the Police Department is in full compliance with the Negotiated Settlement Agreement, which requires accountability and transparency. I stand behind our officers, but not blindly. With improved transparency, we will be able to hold our Police Department accountable for its actions and celebrate its successes.

**Abel Guillen:**

I am concern about the safety of all of our residents, including those residents whose safety is compromised by city staff or policies. Police officers must understand the particular culture of the neighborhood. I support community policing with beat officers walking the streets and talking to neighbors on a regular basis, sensitivity training for officers, and the recruitment and retention of homegrown officers who have a deep understanding of the Oakland community that they protect and serve.

**Dana King:**

Racial profiling exists in most facets of American life. Many people believe it only presents in police related cases when in fact it happens in the classroom as well as the boardroom. I have been tailed in retail stores and been treated dismissively in fine restaurants. I have watched as friends have been treated with disdain. I have been spoken to as if I didn't have a post graduate education ...so my level of concern is intimate. Education is the answer to racism, sexism, classism, ageism and every other ism. We are far from where we can be as a people. But I must add that Oakland is far closer to creating a space of gracious celebration of diversity than most other places in the country. Oakland goes much further than mere tolerance...we have a history of inclusion that forms the foundation for the city's strength. But it is delicate and as much care and concern as we can foster for continued development of such ideals must be supported.

**Andrew Park:**

Racial profiling is a problem that can best be addressed by connecting police with neighborhood residents—much like effective NCPC organizing does. Hiring lab technicians to clear the 2-year backlog on DNA, fingerprints, and ballistics, etc. is just one way to help police to target individuals rather than whole groups of people that 'fit the profile." I am confident that these measures will reduce the racial profiling from high 64% arrest/stop rate of African Americans in Oakland.

**How would you hold the police accountable in cases where excessive and lethal force is being used specifically against youth of color?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Police officers are also subject to the law. If they violate the law they must be held accountable like any other citizen.

**Abel Guillen:**

Police officers should be held accountable for the use of excessive and lethal force against youth of color, and any other segment of our population. If after an investigation it is found that officers used force based on race, then they should be held to appropriate penalties. But more than that, we must work together to prevent these incidents from happening in the first place. As Councilmember, I will work to prevent and minimize these occurrences with through extensive officer training, building community relationships with residents, and ensuring that OPD has effective policies and due process to remove officers with a track record of such unacceptable behavior.

**Dana King:**

The tenets of the constitution apply for all Americans, including officers of the law and I would first stand in the space of finding the truth of the matter before judging. We are all innocent until proven guilty and rushing to judgment only serves to divide people.

As a weekly volunteer in the maximum security units at the Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center, I know first hand the racial disparity of the youth in detention. We are experiencing a crisis of incarceration for young men and adults of color, which to me speaks to a deep societal problem that is just now being identified and deliberated. So, I consider that the primary excessive abuse of a system against youth of color that cannot be easily corrected. Individual cases of abuse, comparatively speaking, are more readily mitigated in a court of law.

**Andrew Park:**

By ensuring that there are fair and thorough investigations. I am supportive of the new citizens commission and other community solutions that would ensure fair and thorough investigations.

**What is your knowledge of and vision for restorative justice in Oakland and what are the models you would support for use in Oakland?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- I would start by build strengthening the current efforts of the Oakland Unified School District, <http://www.ousd.k12.ca.us/restorativejustice>.
- I would work with OUSD & youth-serving agencies to support restorative justice work that bridges school and community agencies
- Finally, I would ensure that key adult allies who work directly with our most vulnerable youth are well-trained in restorative justice techniques.

**Abel Guillen:**

Restorative justice in our schools can help get to the root of solving the recurring cycles of violence in our community. We should support organizations like Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY) in our schools and perhaps even in City government.

Restorative justice can be used to address neighborhood disputes that don't rise to the level of criminal activity. Police officers should not be devoting large portions of their time to deal with nuisance complaints when we have local organizations that can address these issues using a restorative justice model. Captain Toribio in Area 2 has already taken steps to start using a restorative justice model, and I will work with the police and other Councilmembers to expand these efforts.

**Dana King:**

I have seen restorative justice work in a place where no one expected there to be one instance of healing: Rwanda. The program I witnessed is called Gacaca, meaning: In the grass. It is a participatory process that allows survivors of genocide to confront their perpetrators and if properly monitored-- acknowledgment, forgiveness, justice and healing prevail. It is not a panacea. It is a serious alternative to traditional western justice. It is a transformative and life changing opportunity to feel truly whole for both the violated and violator.

Here in Oakland, there are several models of this justice that are proving successful: Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth, Pueblo, North Oakland Restorative Justice Council, etc. It is also an integral component of many other social change organizations. I wholeheartedly support any effort to incorporate restorative justice as a component of any and every program dealing with justice issues.

**Andrew Park:**

I am regularly called into restorative justice meetings to be a support to local youth at their respective schools. Restorative justice is a proven model to bring more healing to a community after a crime, rather than more pain, division, disconnection and sense of hopelessness. For instance, when the new Bella Vista garden was vandalized by local youth, EBAYC partnered with Friends of the Park and the NCPC to engage the youth, rather than punish and incarcerate the youth. At the end of the summer, park stewards and parents were able to hear apologies from these youth, who worked all summer to restore the garden. This is a beautiful example of the potential of restorative justice and how a 'crime' can miraculously be used to bring the community together, rather than destroy it.

**What is your position on the trend towards privatized neighborhood policing and security forces?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- We are well below the 900 police officers we need to effectively manage the City's crime. Private security forces can help fill the gap. It's hard to imagine a world without private security; from jewelry stores to grocery stores to banks, private guards help deter crime. However, I am wary of privatized police forces, as they may not come from our community and may not share our values. Before the trend gets out of hand, we need to lay down concrete policy around private police, determining what arrest powers (if any) we will allow them and what relationship they will have with OPD.

**Abel Guillen:**

Privatized policing is a short-sighted solution to a long-term problem. I understand why some neighborhoods might resort to this tactic: We need to hire and deploy sufficient police officers to make Oakland – all of Oakland – safe.

Neighborhoods that have hired private security have seen a drop in crime – at least incidents of it in their immediate area, for how long we don't yet know. What this proves is that having more eyes on the street deters crime, which is something we already know. However, private patrols only benefit the community that can afford them, pushing crime out into less affluent neighborhoods where resources are more scarce. I support expanding our police force to the point that private security becomes unnecessary.

**Dana King:**

My goal is to obtain a city that is safe for all its citizens. I certainly understand wanting to feel safe in your home and neighborhood but what is the intangible cost of segregating for safety...allowing only a select few to enjoy what may be only an illusion of invulnerability, jeopardizing true safety for all when there is no accountability mechanism in place to evaluate and monitor private security firms.

While people of means are not prohibited from hiring private security, there is an unanswered question of liability should the actions of the private security guards/company be found in violation of any laws.

**Andrew Park:**

When neighborhoods feel they need to hire their own private security force, it is a reaction to a greater problem. Our OPD is overstretched and understaffed. We need to ensure that our OPD can meet the safety needs of all neighborhoods. Additionally, any resident who does the math will find that the alternative funding of increased officers and support against blight is more affordable than privatized public services and privatized security.

**Would you support making Oakland a private policing free zone?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Not necessarily. I would prefer to craft a sound policy for private police instead of banning them outright.

**Abel Guillen:**

There shouldn't be a need to privatize policing in our city. Oakland should be able to provide for the public safety of all its residents. Private patrols do not have the training, community connections and accountability designed for our police force. This can lead to accidents and other issues that might actually endanger residents. As Councilmember, I will support a serious conversation and examination of what options are available and how to best work in the interests of all residents.

**Dana King:**

While I am uncomfortable with a situation where residents feel the need to hire private security as a community, the goal is to establish and maintain an OPD that is responsive to the needs of Oakland and its citizens. Doing so would negate the need for private policing.

**Andrew Park:**

No, different communities need to maintain the right to determine their own destinies.

**Strategies to improve public safety are often viewed as liberal or conservative, depending on whether you support or contest gang injunctions, stop-and-frisk policies, community policing. What might you do to bridge this divide?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Crime is not a liberal problem or a conservative problem. It is not the City Council's problem and it is not the Police Department's problem. It is Oakland's problem. If we come to the table ready to hear all sides and do what is best for the City of Oakland, the partisan lines will fade away.

**Abel Guillen:**

As Councilmember, I will look at evidence-based solutions before jumping to a potential solution that may or may not address the public safety issues at hand. Concerns about public safety are not in and of themselves particularly "liberal" or "conservative" – but we all share a collective, civic obligation to make sure that public-safety practices are legal, fairly applied, and provide the best strategies for solving the real problems.

**Dana King:**

As your City Council Member, my support of the Police Department will focus on measures that serve to uphold constitutional protections for all.

**Andrew Park:**

By having as many one-on-one conversations with different people as possible; by putting in consistent results-orientated work. Everyone ultimately wants peace. There are some that would never call the police or 'snitch' and there are those that call the police regularly. I have a proven track record of bringing people together in neighborhoods by starting with the common goal of wanting to live in peace. More can be accomplished through finding common shared values and dreams, than by our shared struggles. We have learned many lessons at NCPC 17 on improving public safety by engaging the community and connecting neighborhood residents with the OPD, Oakland Housing Authority, City Council members, Neighborhood Law Corps, and City staff. I would use these lessons of engagement and connecting people with their city government when issues such as gang injunctions, stop and frisk policies and community policing are debated and decided. It is critically important to engage the community on public safety issues. This engagement can never be underestimated.

## **Oakland Institutions:**

**The Kaiser Convention Center is a classic building near Lake Merritt BART, the Oakland Museum and Lake Merritt**

- **What should be done with this building?**
- **How would you make this happen?**

### **Kevin Blackburn:**

- I would first like to see a comprehensive master plan for the west end of Lake Merritt that would include the parcel at E12th and 2nd Ave, the OUSD Administration Building and the Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center. I believe development of this area would be a perfect opportunity to provide market rate housing, affordable housing. The Rumford Fair Housing Act allows housing properties located within a school district to preferentially give space to teachers from that district. A multi-story project on that site could be developed with units available for schoolteachers and affordable units for low- to moderate-income families. Specifically for the HJ Kaiser Convention Center, I would like to see commercial and retail use which would include restaurants, shops and entertainment venues or a multistory residential tower preserving the facade that included the aforementioned components. The Calvin Simmons Theater is a beautiful space and could be converted into a state of the art theater and a home for the Oakland Symphony. Furthermore, a technical training center could be incorporated to be used by Peralta CCD and/or the Oakland Unified School District for education and training purposes
- Because the area is in close proximity to the Lake Merritt BART station the project could benefit from several federal programs to help with the financing: New Market Tax Credits, Historic Tax Credits, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Transit Oriented Development Funds from HUD and Community Development Financial Institution loans. Additionally, Cap and Trade funds will be available for affordable housing development from the State of California, thanks to the work of Senator Darrell Steinberg. This kind of broad public support makes a project of this scope very attractive for private capital as well.

### **Abel Guillen:**

Over the years, there have been many ideas floated about the convention center. At one point, the Peralta Community College District looked at acquiring the facility to provide performing arts and classes for students. Unfortunately, we learned that if we were to use the facility for educational purposes, the facility would have to be brought up to Field Act Standards. That requirement made renovation and re-use cost-prohibitive for Peralta Colleges.

Currently, there are other proposals that the City could consider. The City of Oakland and Oakland Unified should come to the table to figure out how this facility might be used as an economic incubator for the entire area. As Councilmember, I will convene community stakeholders and relevant parties, including private entities to discuss best uses of the facility.



**Dana King:**

The Kaiser Convention Center is the bow that ties the south end of Lake Merritt now that Measure DD renovations are almost complete. To see the Convention Center sitting empty is wasteful in so many ways. It prohibits commerce for the city and jobs for its residents. Every day it sits, it costs the city money.

I have spoken with several developers who have created comprehensive designs for reopening the KCC. As your Council Member, I would request the city put forward an RFP and open the bidding for the site, investigating the best possible option for Oakland.

**Andrew Park:**

I've heard great ideas from the community: a community gathering space with fitness/gym space, convention activities, and art shows; a bustling education hub used by various non-profit and public education groups; all of these ideas are geared towards serving the community and building a more thriving Oakland. Proximity to current educational institutions and infrastructure should be considered. At the end of the day though, these vibrant ideas that have come from the community should be considered by the community and my leadership will respect the process that brings the community together to determine the future of the HJK Convention Center.

By empowering those with vision, passion, and deep Oakland experience, to come together and come up with viable ideas for the HJK. By being transparent about the execution of every part of the process. From planning to hiring.

**So many neighbors want the Parkway operating again. It was such a tremendously positive, community-building space. A huge light went out in our district when the Parkway closed down and so, SO many people (and large movements) have tried to get this reopened.**

**Are you aware of the history of this place...of why it closed and what are the obstacles to its reopening? What level of importance is this to you and what efforts would you make to give this vital component back to our community?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- The Parkway was an Oakland icon and it is no wonder that its unique brand of entertainment found a home right here in Oakland's most diverse District. The Parkway did more than just provide entertainment, which is what made it great. The Parkway was a community space that brought people from different walks of life together in a way that makes Oakland what it is.
- From what I understand, the Parkway closed due to a dispute between the theater's owners and the landlord. After the theater owners' lease expired, the owners and the landlord sat down to negotiate a new lease. The landlord refused to repair damages to the building as part of the new lease agreement, so the Parkway's owners walked away from negotiations.
- The Parkway is a community asset. However, the building itself is private property, so government would have to be creative in assisting the Parkway owners' group to reopen. Perhaps the City could work with the owner to negotiate an acceptable lease.

**Abel Guillen:**

Yes, it is a community institution that opened in 1926 and most recently provided a great affordable venue for residents and their families. While the New Parkway is operating in the Uptown neighborhood, I hope that we will find investors to help restore this neighborhood gem. I place high importance on this project, given that the Parkway is vital to the livelihood of the East Lake Park Blvd. area. We will need to work with the owners to see how the facility can be reopened to a suitable facility to meet the needs of the community.

**Dana King:**

Yes, I am quite familiar with the story of the Parkway Theater. I understand its value to the community but this is not about me. It's about something that is important to the community and because of that, it's worth fighting for. Let's get this resolved!!!

**Andrew Park:**

Yes. That is why I spent considerable time and effort meeting with the owners of the Parkway to gain their confidence and approval to sign a lease and open my campaign headquarters at the Parkway. I believe opening my campaign office at the Parkway could be the first step in working with the owners and stakeholders to open up the Parkway to a non-profit that provides positive experiences to our youth during the day and operating as a theater in the evening. Getting our Campaign office there was the first step. Next is bringing together a large group of people to get involved in dreaming for the Original Parkway's opening. From here, there are options such as social impact funding or private investment/developer. I know all of the invested parties to the Parkway want to see it thriving and I've worked to take this desire to the next level.

**Would you keep the A's and the Warriors in Oakland?  
If yes to either team, how would you keep that team from leaving?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Yes.
- I would leave it up to voters. Though the Warriors are on their way out, there is still hope for the A's. In order to keep the A's in Oakland, we must offer a financing plan for a baseball-specific stadium in Oakland. The terms of the financing would need to be competitive, given that other cities in the Bay Area will surely court the A's owners.
- In a book published by the Brookings Institution called Sports, Jobs, and Taxes: The Economic Impact of Sports Teams and Stadiums, the authors found the cost of taxpayer-funded subsidies for stadiums is not recouped by the economic impact of the stadium (construction jobs, vendor jobs, tax revenues from ticket sales and concessions) Essentially, investing in a new sports facility does not generate an economic return.
- However, sports teams are a great source of city pride; I grew up watching the A's and I would hate to see them leave. As a City Councilman, I feel that my duty would be to provide voters with the best information possible so that they could make an informed decision.

**Abel Guillen:**

Yes, I want to keep the A's in Oakland – as a longtime fan and for the economic and cultural benefits the team provides. My company has a season suite for the Warriors, and I'd love for them to stay on this side of the Bay. Clearly, however, it seems like the Warriors owners have other concrete plans to build a new arena elsewhere.

I am excited about the possibility of a ten-year lease extension for the Oakland Athletics. I think Coliseum City as well as a new facility in Jack London Square provide options for the Athletics. As Councilmember, I will work with the Alameda County Oakland Joint Powers Authority to bring the parties to the table for meaningful discussions and a positive outcome.

**Dana King:**

I think having the teams in Oakland is important and I would fight to keep them here but only to a point. I do not believe we can afford nor should we put public money toward such an effort. I have met with members of the group working to build a ballpark on the waterfront at Howard Terminal. Their commitment to create a new home for the A's is ambitious and I applaud them. Oakland is fortunate to have two visions for investment properties for the A's and Raiders. I would support the plan that is best for Oakland.

**Andrew Park:**

Yes, as long as any future ballpark for the A's and arena for the Warriors are built without risk and exposure to Alameda County taxpayers.

The more Oakland is focused and determined in getting our city safe and prosperous for more people, the better the chance we have of keeping professional teams. We need to negotiate aggressively yet not give away our future. I would not do it at the expense of taxpayers, but would focus on connecting the city, Oakland residents and business leaders with the sports franchises. Communication and the using the bully pulpit can go a long way to warm up relations with these teams. Due to the fact that the Warriors bought land in San Francisco, it may be more realistic to focus on the A's. Oakland is simply not San Francisco. Oakland is Oakland and that is more than enough to attract and keep professional sports teams.

**What are your priorities for Oakland public schools and how do you plan to implement them?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- My first priority is updating our curriculum so that it prepares students for jobs in the technology-driven economy. We are only an hour away from Silicon Valley, the epicenter of this new economic energy. I would collaborate with the OUSD and tech-oriented nonprofits to draw up new programs for our kids.

**Abel Guillen:**

Although, the Oakland City Council does not have direct control over our public schools, I would work to create working partnerships and relationships with OUSD and the Peralta Community College District. There are three clear actions we can take to improve public education in Oakland:

1. Ensure every Oakland child can read by the third grade- by using City funds to invest in our library programs and boost our students.
2. Increase graduation rates- through a variety of efforts including mentorship programs, City sponsored after school programs and working with our Neighborhood Services Coordinators to help problem solve local issues.
3. Make sure every child has the opportunities for training after graduating wither in a four-year college or through career technical education at our local community colleges.

I have pursued these goals as a Peralta Colleges Trustee and member of the Oakland Education Cabinet, and I will continue to focus on these priorities – and enlist the support of other groups to assist the School District in its efforts.

**Dana King:**

As your City Council Member, my priority for Oakland Public Schools is to make sure the city is safe for our children. Children deserve to feel safe getting to and from school as well as in the classroom. Too many of our children suffer from anxiety and depression based on fear. That is unacceptable to me. I have written and spoken about the need to add police to our understaffed department. Staffing as well as all the other measures including accountability, communication and outreach apply most significantly on behalf of the youngest among us.

I could use this space to highlight the recorded failure of our schools to close the educational equity gap and rant about the graduation rate/aging condition of some of the schools/teachers' salaries/tenure etc...but the truth of the matter is that there is a school board of elected officials, whose responsibilities are those listed above. As your City Council Member, my responsibility for our children is to put them first and support any and all positive efforts on their behalf.

**Andrew Park:**

Inspire hundreds of volunteers to get into the schools for 2 hours a week. The City Council seat is not directly associated with education decisions, but a healthy thriving Oakland absolutely includes a deeper connection to the education institutions in our city. I have already met with dozens of educational leaders, staff, and electeds. One of my main priorities would be to encourage them, put wind in their sails as they are the ones working out the long-term solutions to Oakland, through educating future generations. I plan to maintain good working relationships with OUSD, from children to parents to staff/elected/teachers. It will be natural since I will have 4 children in OUSD schools in 4 years. I am already organizing dozens of parents from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, many brand new to the country, around creating a bi-lingual/bi-literate K-12 pathway. We need to engage all households, including those that are leaving public schools for private and charter schools.

## **Affordability and Business Interests**

### **What is your position on strengthening rent control in Oakland?**

#### **Kevin Blackburn:**

- I am in favor of strengthening rent control. An effective policy will ensure sure housing is affordable for all Oakland residents.
- To make sure that rent control benefits low- to moderate-income citizens, safeguards are crucial.
- In addition to a rent control policy, increasing the housing stock would help stabilize rising rents and housing prices.

#### **Abel Guillen:**

The best thing we can do is to enforce laws that are already on the books to protect tenant rights. Renters want to make sure these protections are actually enforced. As Councilmember, I will seek to ensure that renters know their rights under Measure EE.

#### **Dana King:**

As your City Council Member, I would support measures to strengthen rent control in Oakland. There are major loopholes in the law that need to be closed. It is important during this wave of real estate development that renters and specifically low and fixed income tenants enjoy heightened protections that solidify their position and protect them from eviction.

#### **Andrew Park:**

This is a complex issue. Protecting tenant rights and health is a critical element in a thriving Oakland. So is supporting property owners who seek to thrive in that capacity. Rent control should be strengthened as much as it is necessary to ensure renters' rights to prosper and avoid being gouged or forced out. Landlords should also be supported in their ability to keep up safety, security, and modernization issues regarding their properties, but I am strongly opposed to the abuse of capital improvement pass through. Current options include stretching pass-through payments over a longer time and continuing to depend on the complaint driven system currently in place as long as it works.

## What are your plans to support affordable housing in Oakland?

### **Kevin Blackburn:**

- With my experience supporting Affordable Housing development, I know it is one of the most challenging areas of the housing business. Over the last 10 years the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco has helped to fund 31 affordable housing projects in Oakland, awarding over \$16 million in grants, helping to create 2,033 units of quality affordable housing. As a result of this work, I am familiar with the multitude of federal and state subsidies for affordable housing development. I pledge to support affordable housing to the utmost, using all available resources and sources of support.

### **Abel Guillen:**

To support affordable housing in Oakland, we must increase the housing supply. We should emulate transit-oriented development, such as the development at the MacArthur Transit Village, and strategic, mixed-use infill in other areas along transit lines and targeted commercial corridors.

### **Dana King:**

Oakland is home to more than 50% of the affordable housing stock in Alameda County. The problem I see regarding affordable housing is not the amount of it, but rather the quality. I have come across 2 apartment buildings in our district, not 10 blocks apart, located in the flatlands, that are owned by The Oakland Housing Authority...they are blight in their neighborhoods. Both buildings are boarded up and have been for several years. They entice all kinds of illegal activity: drugs, dumping, prostitution. Between the two, there are 20 units of affordable housing that are going to waste. How many more buildings like the two in our district are located in Oakland and owned by the City of Oakland? We don't have a shortage of affordable housing, we are poorly managing the stock we have. The low income housing owned by OHA that people live in is also in disrepair, at least those in District 2 that I've come across. They need paint, plants, flowers and maintenance, none of which costs a lot compared to the property value as an investment for the city.

As your City Council Member, I will thoroughly investigate the properties owned and/or managed by the city to assess their worth in the city's portfolio.

### **Andrew Park:**

Affordable housing can be strengthened through community benefits agreements combined with human development of communities rather than just focusing on policies. Development, however should be checked for policy compliance.

## Are you willing to raise taxes for affordable housing?

### **Kevin Blackburn:**

- Raising taxes is not necessary to fund the affordable housing Oakland needs. Opening our doors to more business, retail, and market-rate housing will increase our tax revenues, which we can funnel into projects we want and deserve, like affordable housing.

### **Abel Guillen:**

I am in favor of an inclusionary housing ordinance but not raising sales taxes – the latter is a regressive tax and hurts the people who can least afford an increase.

Currently, newly constructed units receiving a certificate of occupancy after January 1, 1983, are exempt from the rent adjustment ordinance. This encourages destruction of old units and invites developers to build newer more expensive units where they can raise rent however much they want.

### **Dana King:**

Before any discussion of further burdening Oakland residents with additional taxes, a complete analysis should be undertaken of the city's portfolio of properties. More to the point, any conversation regarding raising taxes should be part of larger conversation that includes setting short and long term priorities.

### **Andrew Park:**

Not directly. That decision should be made by voters through a ballot measure.



**Currently newly constructed units receiving a certificate of occupancy after 1/1/83 are exempt from the rent adjustment ordinance. This encourages destruction of old units and invites developers to build newer more expensive units where they can raise rent however much they want. Would you support reforming the rent adjustment ordinance to cover all rental units in Oakland?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Not necessarily. Doing so could create a huge strain on the Rent Adjustment Board's staff. However, if I was confident the Rent Board could handle the increased number of tenant and owner petitions (after removing the exemption), I would support reforming the ordinance.

**Abel Guillen:**

It isn't realistic to have new market-rate rental units come under rent control, as this would provide a disincentive to development which Oakland needs. However, I would look at amending the ordinance to see how adjusting the current law might achieve the objective.

**Dana King:**

I would have to thoroughly investigate the impact of the Costa-Hawkins Act. I would begin by seeing how many of the approximately 60,000 rental units in the city were built before and after that date. I would also want to see an assessment of the quality of the buildings built before 1983. This is not a decision that can be made in a vacuum and I cannot begin to make a judgment on this until fully understanding the decisions that went into the exemption at the time.

**Andrew Park:**

Yes. But, I would also listen to developers and property owners to see if there are good reasons why this should not be done.

**Would you support limiting landlords' ability to charge tenants for capital improvements and landlords transferring renovation costs to tenants?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- City council just approved a compromise agreement on this matter, allowing landlords to pass along only 70% of capital improvement costs to tenants. The compromise also requires landlords to seek approval for capital improvement pass-throughs from the Rent Board.

**Abel Guillen:**

Yes. Landlords should be able to recover some of their capital-improvement costs, but this claim is often used as a tool to force long-term residents out of their apartments. As Councilmember, I will support provisions that protect tenants and limit the percentage that landlords can pass through to their tenants.

**Dana King:**

The City Council recently passed a resolution and an ordinance amending the Rent Adjustment regulations limiting landlords' ability to pass through all costs of capital improvements. The changes were the result of bringing the stakeholders into the discussion and coming to an agreement that takes into consideration both renters and property owners. (See Resolution No. 84936 and Ordinance No. 13226)

**Andrew Park:**

This is not a cut and dried issue. There already are limitations in place as to how much and how quickly a landlord can pass through these costs. As a landlord in Oakland, I understand the challenges owners have in maintaining and making necessary improvements. If these improvements are not made, properties can sometimes fall into disrepair, become unsafe and turn into blights to the neighborhood. Many landlords are mom and pop operations owning one or two properties. We need to make sure there is an incentive for small business landlords to make these improvements and maintain their properties while at the same time ensuring that tenants are not getting gouged.

**How would you work with developers, especially developers like Satellite Affordable Housing Associates (SAHA) and East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC)?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Closely, to identify opportunities for senior housing, affordable multi-family and transitional housing. See previous answer on affordable housing.

**Abel Guillen:**

As Councilmember, I will meet with these agencies on a regular basis to identify needs, develop a long-term strategy for affordable housing in the district, and research and solicit funding opportunities for affordable housing.

**Dana King:**

I took advantage of Affordable Housing week and walked with SAHA representatives who led a tour of interested individuals, organizations, neighbors, etc., through the new development of 92 units being constructed at 2nd Avenue and 15th Street called Lakeside Senior Apartments. It's a beautiful building, created to take advantage of open spaces, sunlight, views and most importantly, the needs of the people who will be living there. The developer plans for the building to achieve LEED Platinum Status. When there are successful projects and developments, rather than reinvent the wheel, I will look to the examples others have set. It's very important, in working with developers, or any other group on a project, that all voices are heard at the beginning of the project, not at the end. I have a collaborative work style – it's important to listen carefully and ensure that voices are heard.

**Andrew Park:**

I have experience working with such developers as a former board member of the Central City East Project Area committee. Site visits, review of past developments, track records, and inquiring of City staff are all effective methods to get a real feel for how these developers operate.

## **How would you mitigate the impact on businesses with the construction of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)?**

### **Kevin Blackburn:**

- Work with AC Transit to minimize the construction time on each block. I would also like to see the merchants benefit from the fiber optic lines will be laid down as a part of the project.

### **Abel Guillen:**

I will work with local businesses along the BRT corridor to ensure that they get the fairest deal from AC Transit as they negotiate the business-impact mitigation requirements. I will also meet with AC Transit regularly to monitor their adherence to these requirements and hold them accountable to the local businesses. Finally, I will work with business owners who have been affected by BRT construction to make sure that the original agreement reflects their changing needs as the project progresses.

### **Dana King:**

The overarching theme of my leadership style is communication. The only way to understand the impact of BRT is to invite businesses along International Blvd. to be part of the process from the beginning. Only the business owners can identify their needs throughout the course of this development. I have been in touch with the Oakland Merchants Association which represents the 900 shop owners who will be impacted by BRT. While they understand and want to support BRT, there will be some stores that will be unable to continue once the loss of parking and access negatively alters delivery schedules and customer pickup or drop offs. The merchants are asking for 6 million dollars in funding to be set aside for mitigation that may include, but not be limited to, relocation fees, damages, temporary closures, changes in customer traffic patterns, etc. Much of the potential impact may not even be realized until well into the construction/completion phase. Therefore, ongoing communication is crucial.

### **Andrew Park:**

I have been working on the Bus Rapid Transit issue and have attended meetings on this subject and met with small businesses and organizations to minimize the impact during construction of the BRT. Many small businesses are operating without any margin for error and are at great risk of going out of business during the construction phase. Ensuring the customers can park and have access to these businesses is key, along with loading zones and relocation funds. We have been focused on this and I will continue to do so as your city council member.

**How would you work with the small and large businesses to increase jobs and Oakland's economic power?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- I would make it easier for them to work with the City of Oakland. San Francisco just announced a web portal that will streamline the permitting and approval process for new businesses. We need a web portal for the City of Oakland that gives prospective businesses a checklist of required permits they need to open their doors here. We could also work collaboratively with large business, and perhaps provide short-term (6 months max) tax relief to give them incentive to locate in Oakland.

**Abel Guillen:**

The most pressing issue coming down the line for both small and large businesses is the upcoming vote to increase the minimum wage. As Councilmember, I will work with businesses, employees and labor groups to implement the minimum wage increases and find ways to soften the impacts, while also searching for ways to capitalize on the increased spending power of Oakland's residents. We know that consumers with more money to spend ultimately helps businesses; and lifting families out of poverty has benefits beyond their own households.

**Dana King:**

Increasing work opportunities is very important to Oakland on so many levels. The city cannot be pro-jobs and anti-business. Oakland should encourage interaction with existing businesses, both small and large, to understand their needs, what problems they encounter, their ideas, their plans for growth... Finding common ground, exploring workable possibilities, and getting creative are all necessary to building long lasting relationships that benefit the city and its residents.

**Andrew Park:**

My parents brought my family to America with little resources but great hope of living the American Dream. My parents worked hard and their efforts led to each of them opening their own small business. I understand the value and importance of ensuring Oakland's small businesses thrive. It is personal and I have been working on helping small businesses thrive through my various community service roles.

Oakland is uniquely situated to attract medium to large businesses, technology hubs, green energy businesses and service industry, non-profits/education, and health care. We are a bargain for businesses looking to start, grow or relocate to the Bay Area. We have a talented workforce able to meet the needs. But any effort or incentive offered by the City must include opportunities for Oakland youth and working families to land jobs and contribute to making Oakland an economic power.

The City, and its departments and staff, must change its image of being unfriendly to the needs of businesses. There are D2 residents and business owners who have found the City to be uncooperative at best and were unable to relocate or expand to Oakland. I will use my organizing and leadership skills to change the culture of the City and work to make Oakland an economic power that includes opportunities for our youth and working families. This is one of my top priorities.

**What would you do to provide opportunities for the unemployed and the underemployed?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- First and foremost, I would collaborate with the Council and community members to generate a comprehensive job-training program. When underemployed and unemployed citizens gain new skills, they are ready for new jobs.

**Abel Guillen:**

A two-pronged approach, implemented simultaneously, is needed. As Councilmember, I will work to attract and retain businesses. Oakland needs to be a center for many of the new industries – bio-tech and the medical field, for example – and for that we must invest in our workforce. I will continue to work with OUSD and Peralta Community Colleges to make sure our residents are prepared for these new jobs through job-training and job-readiness programs and pathways to work.

**Dana King:**

Providing opportunities is a key issue, because it ties into root causes for crime, lifting people up, inclusion, etc. As I've noted before, let's look to successful programs, here in Oakland and other Bay Area cities and counties, and around the country. We have some successful training programs, but we need more. Not everyone is college bound and many people don't have the skills for even entry level jobs. Working with businesses, schools, other programs, and involving people in the community who have a proven track record is key to success.

**Andrew Park:**

I have answered most of this in the question above. The City must be viewed as a government willing to work with businesses to grow the economy and the job base. It doesn't mean that the City becomes a pushover for businesses with lots of incentives and few opportunities for working families and families struggling to find work.

My work at Trybe has in part focused on finding economic and job training opportunities for neighborhood youth. Trybe has also focused on educational advancement to increase such opportunities. We work in partnership with other non-profits to provide our youth and young adults with economic opportunities. There are many locally based non-profit organizations dedicated to helping Oakland residents enter and re-enter the workforce and the City should partner with these organizations.

This issue is a priority for me. I have the community and non-profit connections to hit the ground running and connect the City with organizations that can make a difference.

**How would you prioritize this issue?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Economic development is one of my top three priorities. Without a well-trained workforce, economic development is not possible. Programs designed to help Oakland reach full employment are high up on my priority list. This is an important step in limiting displacement; as workers gain new skills, their incomes rise in conjunction with their costs (e.g. rent).

**Abel Guillen:**

This is a big issue for me, and one that is very connected to our city's crime rate. The education and employment of our workforce is directly tied to crime; and if we work to increase educational achievement and employment opportunities, we will see crime fall dramatically. This will, in turn, open Oakland to new opportunities with businesses and development – which further generates jobs for our residents.

**Dana King:**

Jobs and opportunities for jobs are vital to the success of Oakland.

**Andrew Park:**

See answers above. This is a priority for me and I have dedicated a good part of my professional and community service career working on this very issue. Engagement is the key, getting out into the community, communicating that the City cares and understands, and that there are federal, state, county, and private resources to help. It will be one of the most rewarding parts of the job for me to be doing this type of connection work, seeing single moms, young men of color, and ex-felons with living wage jobs, and changing their communities from the bottom up.

**Is development without displacement possible?  
If so, how would you approach achieving this?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Absolutely.
- There are 900 empty lots in Oakland. New housing developments should be built in these lots first.
- Additionally, there are policy choices we can make to minimize displacement, which I discuss in a later question.

**Abel Guillen:**

Of course, it is. However, we must all work together to ensure that our community members are not displaced. To make this work, there must be an effort to ensure residents are not displaced while we encourage development. As Councilmember, I will work to achieve this balance.

Land-use policies from mixed-income and mixed-use development to inclusionary zoning have been used effectively in other cities to provide new development and growth opportunities while protecting vulnerable communities. Understanding the needs of all of our communities is essential when seeking to create new development opportunities. As Councilmember, I will foster opportunities to expand the existing housing stock, support transit-oriented development projects, and take steps to implement workforce housing for our service employers. I will also work to connect residents with legal services, so they know their rights to ensure that they have and understand the tools at their disposal to fight displacement.



**Dana King:**

Yes, I think it is and I've said as much. Development is good, healthy and important. However, too much of a good thing can be problematic. We see examples of this around the Bay Area. If Oakland truly has a commitment to diversity, inclusion and bringing new economic opportunities to Oakland, we must move in a very thoughtful manner by harnessing development and by having a long term vision.

Moving in a thoughtful manner means that we understand who are the stakeholders, who is affected and include these voices in the conversation at the beginning and bring everyone to the table for candid conversations on a project-by-project basis. We must keep our eye on the long term vision for Oakland and don't sell out for short term gain. If Oakland's commitment is truly to remain an affordable and diverse city, that goal/mission must remain a priority.

**Andrew Park:**

Yes, through human development where communities are respected and resourced and enabled to find their own voice and power. Organized communities such as housing co-ops in Temescal and West Oakland are good examples of how long time residents benefitted from the development without getting displaced. Inclusionary zoning is also something that Oakland needs to take a good long look at.

Additionally, social impact funding is a capital resource that needs to be developed with non-profit organizations that have deep roots in communities. Much of development is a block by block issue and I will be there to support each block, along with supporting policies such as community benefits agreements that enable the community to participate in the development and prosperity.

**How would you redevelop the 18th Street/Park Blvd business district that would both involve local businesses and prevent displacing residents?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- Multi-story development
- Ground floor retail with guaranteed spots for existing businesses.
- Guaranteed affordable units in housing development, with first choice granted to current residents of the area.

**Abel Guillen:**

A multi-pronged approach to development is required. First, we must provide support to businesses that are already in our community. Then, we must support homegrown entrepreneurs to help them create businesses that put local dollars into the hands of residents, which they in turn will then put back into our local economy. Finally, we must attract new businesses that are willing to hire locally and fit with Oakland's unique culture.

The good news is Oakland has become a beacon to people and investors from around the world. Our job is to remind them that it is the local culture that attracted them here in the first place and that it must be preserved.

**Dana King:**

I would begin by researching what, if any plan is in place for the community beyond the traffic calming project that reduces the driving lanes on Park Blvd. to add bicycle lanes. Next, current and potential business owners and residents must be invited into the process to solicit their opinions and quell any rumors/fears they may have. From those conversations, ideas would emerge that could either stand alone or be woven into any plans on the table. I believe the process can be made to feel as organic as possible by facilitating community voices into the mix.

**Andrew Park:**

The Parkway is the answer. It is the most significant property in the area. If it can be developed to be a non-profit hub by day, and picture-pub-pizza by night, providing job-training for youth and living wage jobs for working families in the neighborhood.

**What is your plan to stop the displacement of low-income people of color who have been long-term residents of Oakland?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- The solution starts by first acknowledging there is a problem. We must also recognize that the current availability of housing stock is not sufficient to meet the demand.
- We can start by passing legislation to improve how Oakland protects its existing residents. We must strengthen rent controls and ensuring tenants are not evicted without just cause.
- Additionally, we can increase our affordable housing stock by crafting an inclusionary zoning policy. This would require all new housing developments to include affordable units in their development. For example, if Oakland had a 25% inclusionary zoning policy, a new 100-unit development would be required by law to make 25 of the 100 units affordable. This would maintain an appropriate mix of affordable and market-rate housing, and protect longtime residents from displacement.

**Abel Guillen:**

As Councilmember, I will look to expand existing programs that assist residents in keeping their housing and avoiding evictions and foreclosures. I will seek support and financing programs that expand housing opportunities, such as the Community Land Trust, and affordable housing providers like EBALDC.

I will also seek opportunities to include all residents in the decision-making process so that all residents – both long-term and recent arrivals – have opportunities to engage in the process. I will also work with non-profits to help overcome digital divide issues that keep many residents from successfully interacting with their government.

**Dana King:**

The most recent steep drop in African American residency in Oakland began with the downturn in the economy in 2007-08 and the community specific foreclosure disaster that ensued. The majority of homes lost to foreclosure here in Oakland were owned by African Americans. The significant increase in unemployment in communities of color only made things worse. The short term answer to this is quality employment. To that end, Oakland's efforts to bring business to the city must be made a priority. The long term answer is equity in education beginning with pre-k for all. When a child starts out in pre-k, s/he is 18 months ahead of his/her counterpart. Children who don't attend pre-k never catch up.

**Andrew Park:**

To organize, educate, empower, and stand by people of color who are being displaced. I will listen to the stakeholders and organizations and people already working with those getting displaced and support them whenever/wherever I can. I personally have seen the negative effects of displacement of long-term residents on my block: the loss of cultural history and knowledge, diversity, and losing the natural resources of long-term residents, who made the block feel like "there was a there there", which makes Oakland so much of what it is. I look forward to working with and supporting organizations holding the tension of displacement and development and finding answers that other urban metros can replicate.

**In the “Lake Merritt Station Area Plan” what protections for existing residents would you implement to prevent and/or mitigate displacement?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- The current iteration of the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan does not project to demolish any existing housing. However, the economic energy generated by housing development could raise rents and housing prices in the area. One way to prevent displacement would be to mandate the inclusion of affordable housing units in the new real estate development, with residents living within 1.5 miles of the BART Station getting priority vouchers.

**Abel Guillen:**

We need to protect the existing housing stock. We also need to look at the range of housing types that our community wants. For example, many families in the Lake Merritt Station Area want more family housing available. By providing a mix of units that can cater to the various types of local households and their diverse preferences, we can ensure that displacement is minimized.

**Dana King:**

I have met with Asian Health Services, APEN and EBALDC to discuss the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) that is being put forward as the Lake Merritt Station Area Plan. The concern that was shared with me deals with the lack of voices around the table. I have also scheduled a meeting with BART officials to better understand the plan in its current stage. While there is community agreement on the need for such a TOD to move forward, the question remains as to how best serve the needs of the area residents. I am in the initial stages of researching the information and talking with stakeholders, which is the style I will bring to the City Council. I am unable to formulate a thoughtful response at this time until after I have had more conversations. Suffice it to say, I want to see consensus around the importance of finding an intersection of agreement that community needs be included in the discussion.

**Andrew Park:**

We need a community benefits agreement in place before the development, which can be funded by cap and trade funds. We must support those in the fight like EBALDC, while at the same time listening to the concerns of landowners and the Chinatown Chamber of Commerce.

**What legal services would you support to community residents who feel they need them?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- I would strive to create an easy-to-use, multilingual online directory for general litigators. The web portal would also include plain English summaries of laws that are most commonly litigated on, such as landlord-tenant disputes, personal injury, and immigration.

**Abel Guillen:**

I will work with the City Attorney's Office and organizations like La Raza Centro Legal and the Asian Law Caucus to provide workshops on DACA, immigration and housing rights, and civil rights in a culturally appropriate manner for District 2 residents. Eviction defense, foreclosure protections, consumer protections, and small business training and development.

**Dana King:**

The first thing required would be an assessment of current legal services that would provide information about where there is overlap, what populations are under/over served and where more support might be needed.

**Andrew Park:**

With a strong understanding of the residents' needs in this area, I support delivering access and understanding of resources to those who desire legal counseling services. I would begin by offering the catalogues of existing legal aid for this issue and helping to connect residents with those resources. The NCPC is a great place to start with these resources, starting with the Neighborhood Law Corps and non-profit legal services.

**How would you plan to engage non-profit organizations and their resources to work with the City?**

**Kevin Blackburn:**

- The non-profit community provides valuable services to Oakland, I believe it is important to support their efforts to serve the community. However, just like government, nonprofits work best when they are held accountable to their goals and objectives.
- Additionally, I would like to see a roundtable for various sectors of the nonprofit community: one for environmental causes, one for youth empowerment, etc. Building a collaborative environment will ensure that we learn from each other's mistakes and successes. Our nonprofits already do incredible work serving our community, but imagine how much more they could do with more coordination between groups.

**Abel Guillen:**

As Councilmember, I will be my responsibility to reach out to non-profit organizations that work within the district. I will meet with them regularly to discuss policy proposals and ways they can help our community. A lot of important policy in Oakland is created, developed and passed through the work of non-profits, and I will continue to look to these great organizations to help me move policy and programs at City Hall and throughout Oakland's neighborhoods.

**Dana King:**

As your City Council Member, it's vital that there be a depth of communication between my office and all available non-profit organizations in and around Oakland. Moving policy on behalf of city residents that require assistance will take the combined efforts of social service organizations, business and the city. It's imperative that my office be in a position to do just that, by building relationships on all levels.

**Andrew Park:**

Referring to information in the previous questions in short, I would bring my experience working with non-profit organizations and the interactions we have had with the City to my role as a City Council member.

I have focused on working from the outside— bringing community concerns to the City through Trybe, NCPC 17Y, Friends of Bella Vista Park, Manzanita Recreation Center, D2 Community Development Block Grant and the Central City East Project Area Committee.

As your City Council Member, I would work from the inside—connecting the community to decisions, meeting with stakeholders to hear their views and organizing residents, community organizations, small businesses and stakeholders to ensure their voices are heard when decisions are made to make Oakland work for all.