

Questionnaire for Candidates for Berkeley City Council

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot: Jesse Arreguin
2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number): Berkeley City Council, District 4
3. What is your current occupation or elected office? Berkeley City Councilmember, District 4
4. Are you the incumbent? Yes
5. How long have you resided in this district and city? I have resided in District 4 for three years and in Berkeley for eight years

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name:	Jesse Arreguin for City Council 2010
Address:	P.O. Box 9153
City, State, Zip:	Berkeley, CA 94709
Name of staff contact:	Anthony Sanchez
Campaign Phone:	(650) 283-8507
Campaign Fax:	
Campaign E-mail:	jesse@jessearreguin.com
FPPC#	1309379

OUR ISSUES (18-35 year olds)

Please answer the first four questions in 250 words or less

1. Public transit is very important to students and our members. Recently, the City of Berkeley has faced numerous debates over expanding BRT. Did you support Measure KK in 2008, and did you support AC Transit's efforts to expand BRT to Berkeley? If you support BRT, what would you do to ensure BRT moves forward in Berkeley in the future? If you don't support BRT, please explain why not.

I have been a long time advocate for improving access to transit. I also don't own a car, I don't even have a drivers license. As someone who is transit dependent, I know how important it is to make transit more reliable, accessible and affordable.

I opposed Measure KK on the November 2008 ballot because I felt that it was an extreme proposal that not only unnecessarily took away power from city government, but also could have hindered efforts to improve transit, slow down traffic to improve safety or even take away lanes of traffic to create open space.

I support the idea of BRT in concept. If done the right way, it can provide real environmental benefits.

But I ultimately abstained on the motion to recommend a study of a full build BRT for AC Transit's Final EIR because I had concerns, but I was not outright opposed to it. I was concerned about the loss of local service and the impacts that could have on senior and disabled bus riders, the impacts of mid-street platforms and impacts of permanent dedicated lanes and spill over traffic.

I also felt that there were ways to make the BRT proposal a much better environmental proposal such as curbside boarding, dedicated lanes during rush hour and funding for a universal Eco Pass program.

I would ultimately consider supporting a BRT project that is modified and addresses the various issues that I talked about (loss of local service, platforms, full time dedicated lanes).

2. What is your position on the downtown plan (Measure R) on the November ballot?

I oppose Measure R, because despite what the proponents claim, it is not legally a plan. It is a plan to have a plan. I have been working for the past 5 years to develop a new plan for Downtown Berkeley. Measure R needlessly delays adoption of a Downtown Plan for several years and does not give the voters any real say in the future of the Downtown. Measure R not only throws out 5 years of community process but it also provides no real assurance that we will get the affordable housing, open space and other community benefits that it promises. What Measure R really does is get voter acquiescence on several controversial proposals, such as weakening our landmarks law and making it easier to demolish older buildings, some of which provide real affordable housing. We all want a green and vibrant Downtown, but Measure R provides no assurance that we will get that. We should move forward now with adopting one of the many plans that we have developed and work towards revitalizing Downtown Berkeley.

3. What are your positions cannabis tax (Measure S) and cannabis collectives (Measure T) on the November ballot?

I strongly support Measures S and T and voted with a unanimous Berkeley City Council to put them on the ballot. Measure S, similar to the existing cannabis tax in Oakland, will provide needed revenue to the City budget at a time when we face multi-million dollar deficits.

Measure R not only increases the number of medical marijuana dispensaries to 4 but also moves forward by recognizing collectives and allowing for a specific number of non-dispensing locations for cultivation, testing and production of medical marijuana products. While I don't think Measure T is perfect, it continues Berkeley's commitment to ensuring safe access to medical marijuana in compliance with Proposition 215 and Measure JJ, which was approved by the Berkeley voters in 2008. I strongly support providing medical marijuana to patients that need it. When I was an aide to Councilmember Kriss Worthington, we worked with medical marijuana dispensaries and advocates to craft a sanctuary ordinance, to protect our existing dispensaries from raids by the DEA. I supported Measure JJ in 2008. I also support Proposition 19, to allow for the legal recreational use of marijuana and co-sponsored the City Council item for the City of Berkeley to officially endorse the measure.

4. What are your top three priorities if you are elected to the City Council?

- Continuing my work to revitalize Downtown Berkeley
- Creating more affordable housing and expanding protections for tenants
- Providing real environmental leadership to address climate change

5. Young adults and students are facing a terrible job market. What would you do as a city councilmember to fight for sustainable and well-paying jobs for all of Berkeley's residents, but especially young people?

I will work to pursue federal funds for job creation. I will push for requirements for new construction to require the hiring of local residents and participation in apprenticeship programs. I strongly support Project Labor Agreements as a way to ensure fair wages and benefits for workers. I support the City's efforts through the East Bay Green Corridor to partner with UC Berkeley, the Lab and major employers to provide job training and job placement programs for young people in the green tech industry. We need to do more to not only prepare young people for future careers but to also at the same time meet our goals of developing more renewable sources of energy and helping our community meet its climate action goals. If re-elected I will also advocate for the adoption of a city-wide minimum wage law (similar to San Francisco's law) to ensure fair wages for workers throughout the city.

6. Have you collaborated with young adults in your community work in the past (list specific examples)? How are young adults involved in your campaign? How will you continue to involve young activists in your work after you are elected? Please be specific.

I am a young Dem myself, I am actually a member of the East Bay Young Dems (EBYD). Thanks to the support of EBYD, I was elected to the City Council in 2008 becoming the youngest person ever elected to the Council in Berkeley's history. I am also the first Latino to ever serve on the Council. As a young person (I just turned 26), I am strongly committed to not only representing the interests of students and young people but engaging them in the political process. When I was a student at UC Berkeley, I was actively involved in getting students engaged in city government and appointed to City boards and commissions. As a City Councilmember, I have continued my commitment to making sure that students and young people have a voice in the decision making process and out of all of the commission appointments that I have made during my year and half in office, a significant number of them have been students and young people. I have been a strong advocate for the needs of the student community on the City Council and I am working actively with student groups in working on issues important to students such as affordable housing and safety and we are working to get greater diversity and representation of students on city commissions.

Young adults are actively involved in my campaign. My campaign manager is 25 and many of my volunteers are young activists. If I am re-elected, I will continue my efforts to represent the needs of students and young people and make sure that they have a seat at the table.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Please describe in detail at least three of your accomplishments that have improved the lives of young adults. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities that apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

- Supporting several young Democratic candidates for office (including Jennifer Pae for Oakland City Council)
- Making sure that students and young people make up a significant number of my appointments to Berkeley boards and commissions, so that they have a seat at the table and can influence and introduce policy to improve their lives and the lives of their peers.
- Strong advocate for creating more affordable housing, expanding tenant protections and educating and empowering people about their housing rights

EXPERIENCE

Please list or describe your current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life. Please explain how your experience would make you an effective advocate for young adults as an office holder. You may attach a resume and/or a list of endorsers here.

GOVERNMENT SERVICE

- Councilmember, City of Berkeley, District 4 (December 2008-Present)
- Berkeley/Albany Mental Health Commission (January 2009-Present)
- Joint 4x4 Rent Board/City Council Housing Committee (2005-2008 (Rent Board representative); January 2009-Present (City Council representative))
- Joint 3x3 City Council/Housing Authority Committee (January 2009-Present)
- Legislative Assistant to Berkeley City Councilmember Kriss Worthington (May 2007-November 2008)
- Elected Commissioner, Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board (December 2004-November 2008, Board Chair for two years 2006-2008)
- Member, Berkeley Zoning Adjustments Board (September 2006-November 2008)
- Member, Berkeley Planning Commission (various meetings in 2008)
- Member and Chair, Berkeley Housing Advisory Commission (June 2004-November 2008)
- Downtown Area Plan Advisory Committee (DAPAC) (November 2005-November 2007)
- DAPAC Land Use Subcommittee (July 2007-November 2007)
- Joint LPC-DAPAC Subcommittee on Historic Resources (April 2007-November 2007)
- Joint Density Bonus Subcommittee (September 2005-March 2007)
- Housing Advisory Commission Condo Conversion Subcommittee (February 2005-November 2008)
- Housing Advisory Commission Ad-Hoc Committee on Inclusionary Housing (February 2005-November 2008)
- Housing Advisory Commission Housing Trust Fund Subcommittee (June 2004-November 2008)
- Commissioner, San Francisco Youth Commission (July 1999-June 2002)

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Board Member, East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club (March 2009-Present)
- Member, Board of Directors, Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (April 2008-November 2008)
- Executive Committee member, Sierra Club Northern Alameda County Group (February 2008-December 2008)
- City Affairs Director, Associated Students of the University of California (March 2003-September 2005)
- Undergraduate Representative, UC Berkeley Chancellor's Joint Oversight Committee on Parking and Transportation, October 2003-February 2006)
- Board Member, Telegraph Area Association (October 2003-January 2005)

Extensive experience as a community activist, city official, city council aide, elected official.
Progressive leader on environmental issues, affordable housing, transportation, civil rights issues

Endorsement list attached