

Questionnaire for Candidates for Oakland Mayor

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot: **Joe Tuman**
2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number) **Mayor of Oakland, California**
3. What is your current occupation or elected office? **Professor of Legal and Political Communications, San Francisco State University; Political Journalist/Broadcaster, KPIX/CBS5 and KCBS (resigned to run for office); author/editor of 16 books**
4. Are you the incumbent? **No**
5. How long have you resided in this district and city? **25 years**

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name:	Joe Tuman for Mayor of Oakland, 2010
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OUR ISSUES (18-35 year olds)

Please answer the first six questions in 250 words or less

1. Oakland is facing a tremendous budget crisis. This July the City Council voted to lay off some police officers to address the budget crisis. What was or would have been your position on this issue as Mayor, and what other measures do you think the city can and should take to deal with the massive budget deficit?

I would have continued to negotiate with the Association and reach a settlement; I would NOT have embarrassed the officers publicly in an open council meeting and then forced an ultimatum by threatening layoffs. The police officers were willing to relent on the pension issue; they wanted assurances about layoffs in trade. The trick here is to open the discussion of how much we pay our officers in total. I would approach this differently than the Council. I would encourage voluntary early retirement for the officers (about 15% of the force) who are 2-3 years away from retiring; then offer to hire them back at less than half time (under 1000 hours/year). They can legally be hired back as independent contractors, so long as they are less than half time. All I would have to pay is half their base salary. No health care, no pension, no overtime. I would then take the savings from those retirements and hire more officers at the entry level AFTER reducing base pay for new hires from \$85k (what we pay now) to \$45-50k (what they pay in New York and LA). I would not touch the existing compensation of current officers, thus avoiding interest arbitration. In this system, I would not have to lay off officers, and we could actually save money and/or grow the force.

2. What are your positions on the parcel tax (Measure X) and the police staffing requirements (Measure Y) on the November ballot?

I am against both of these measures. I believe that the solution for our police staffing issues lies in my innovative, common sense approach (see above) to police costs that will allow for increased hiring of officers without the raising of taxes. Additionally, I believe it is disingenuous to ask the voters to eliminate the staffing requirement of Measure Y and trust the City Council to do the right thing *this time*, when they now are forced to face the consequences of failing to live up to the bargain they made with the voters who enacted Measure Y.

3. What are your top three priorities if you are elected Mayor?

My top three priorities are to increase public safety by hiring, not firing more police officers and in doing so, improve police/community relations. I plan on growing Oakland's tax base, and increasing local employment opportunities through the creation of a city-wide retail and commercial development strategy, which ensures preference will be given to job applicants from Oakland. I will use the power of the Mayor's office to improve the educational opportunities for our young people from the elementary to community college levels.

4. Oakland's unemployment rate is 17.7 percent, almost double the national rate. Young adults and students face an especially hard time finding work in this economy. What will you do as Mayor to create sustainable and well-paying jobs for all Oaklanders, but especially for young adults? The San Francisco Chronicle recently reported on problems with the city's Workforce Investment Board and the Private Industry Council. What would you do to address these issues and ensure the city is appropriately securing and spending workforce development funds?

First things, first. The number you cited is an EDD statistic; most economists will tell you that understates the real number by 2%—meaning the real unemployment rate is just under 20%. Almost 1 in 5 people in Oakland are out of work. Underemployment (people with jobs, but living just above the poverty threshold) takes us up to 25-28%—or slightly worse than 1 in 4. This is scandalous—and worse in Oakland than most places. Fixing this problem requires a multi-prong approach to employment. To begin with, since many of the unemployed are male, people of color—and many of these may also be re-entry offenders or foster kids who have aged out of the system at 18 years old—I will target and attract employers who are willing to hire new workers even if they have criminal records or lack high school degrees (the latter refers to foster care kids who never get to graduate or finish high school because they are constantly being shuttled from family to family). We can do this by targeting employers in green energy (e.g., solar, recycling, bio-mass, etc) and offering them our resident employees who have attained some level of training. My plan for them would be to revive a kind of vocational education by partnering with adult education and community colleges in Oakland to promote a 2-4 class sequence (e.g., for solar panel installers or maintenance workers) with a base in some science, business, etc. Finishing and passing the classes would provide the workers with a certification—which would give them a base for the industry, and also demonstrate serious commitment on the part of workers for the new industry.

Next, I will implement a new city-wide retail strategy, designed to bring new small and large business development to Oakland, with preference for local labor. Specifically, I will target the downtown area—Broadway/North Oakland and uptown at the Broadway/Valdez triangle—encouraging new retail development (shops, restaurants, etc). I will go after 4 anchor department stores, and then use them to draw people who can also shop in the new retail, stretching all the way back down Broadway to Pill Hill. Conservatively, this will generate 3500 new jobs in the downtown alone, along with sales tax for the city from sales in all the shops. More important, it will give Oakland residents a reason to spend their retail dollars in Oakland, supporting Oakland business and employment, instead of spending those dollars in Emeryville, Walnut Creek or San Francisco. I will continue this retail strategy district by district, including new support for existing small business in some districts, and attracting new grocery store in West and East Oakland.

5. Violence has plagued the city of Oakland for too long. Too often the victims and perpetrators of crime are young people, and the crime prevention efforts do not address the root causes of violence in our community. What steps would you take to increase public safety throughout Oakland?

See my above answer for the first answer: hire not fire police. Place more officers from the department into the community. This will discourage the use of violence by gangs and drug dealers—both of whom act as rational capitalists when it comes to using violence to advance their business. More visible, robust police presence discourages their use of violence. Of course, more police presence is not by itself a solution. I also want to hire more officers from the Oakland community, and work to expand efforts at community policing and improving the relationship between police and the community. At the same time, I also believe that some of the willingness to enter into crime and violence stems from the lack of employment and educational opportunities to those who suffer poverty in Oakland; addressing those issues will have ripple positive effects on violence and crime, and how these affect young people. If we want to eliminate this problem once and for all, we need a program that also attracts business development and employment opportunities for young people in Oakland.

6. Oakland has a Transit First policy. What would you do implement this policy and encourage transit, bicycling, and walking for city residents? What would you do to decrease car usage and increase alternative transit use by city employees?

I would actively encourage district by district transit-oriented development to reduce the need for residents to drive, insist that the streets and sidewalks remain clean and in good repair, and continue to implement integrated bike lanes, like those in the Lakeshore area, citywide. Residents who don't feel safe outside of their homes are far more likely to remain in their cars than to walk or take public transit. This is another reason that illustrates why the improvement of public safety will be my top priority as your Mayor. To encourage the use of alternative transit, I would eliminate free parking for city employees while considering possible public transportation subsidies, such as city-provided bus passes, instead. Further, as an avid bicyclist, I would happily uphold Oakland's transit-first policy and set an example for other city workers by biking to work myself.

7. 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.

My collaboration with young adults begins in the classroom. As a professor for over 25 years, I have been involved with young adults on a daily basis. Many of my current and former students volunteer for my mayoral campaign. These students are an integral part of the campaign process, as it gives them an opportunity to participate in and learn about politics. Oakland youth are a great priority for me. As Mayor, I will work towards creating programs that give kids a safe environment to live and play, including implementing after-school programs in sports, arts, and tutoring. I'd like to work with Oakland's non-profits to encourage teens and youths to become advocates for themselves, and to participate in Oakland in every way possible.

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.

During my 27 years of teaching, several thousand students have passed through my classroom. A great accomplishment of mine has been working with these students, many of whom come from impoverished backgrounds and are people of color. I am most proud of my involvement in helping many of these students apply to and attend graduate school and law school. Working with these students demonstrates a commitment on my part to education and working towards another's success, both of which are important attributes for a mayor. Additionally, as a debate coach at the University of California, Berkeley and San Francisco State University, I coached several national championship teams. Again, working with many students of impoverished background and people of color, I taught public-speaking skills, research technique, and creative critique. My years as a debate coach produced the first two African-American students to achieve All-American status. Lastly, I operated a small-business in Berkeley which taught advocacy skills to young people.

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.

First, I have 27 years of experience as an educator; this means that I have skills that include

inspiring, provoking, setting goals and evaluating performance for young people. Many of my students came out of the Oakland public school system. This means that I have special awareness of and sensitivity to young people in this city. It also means that my skills as a teacher are also essential skills for management.

Second, I have 23 years of experience at SFSU and 4 years at UC Berkeley, operating in large bureaucracies with balkanized departments, multiple unions, and budgetary problems. This is very parallel to the situation with the city of Oakland. My experience in these bureaucracies includes leadership and membership on department and system-wide committees designed to handle compensation issues and management/employee grievances. I will use these skills to help balance our budget, and insure funding for all core responsibilities of Oakland government, including training and counseling services for young people, and attracting new jobs for young workers.

Third, I have run four small businesses (including two family businesses). I have first hand experience in managing a workforce, making a payroll, operating a budget, and interactions with city and regulatory oversight. This experience will serve me in working with our next city administrator to run our city bureaucracy.

Fourth and finally, I have also been a political journalist and broadcaster. I have interviewed many of the political players in Oakland, and the state of California. I know how the systems work. Equally important, I know all the journalists who report on Oakland (and all too often focus only on crime). I can be a new face, with a new approach to also emphasizing what is positive about the city. This will help reduce the external negative perceptions about this city, and instead begin to encourage an image of Oakland that is positive and worthy of investment. This will encourage new employment opportunities for young workers./