



## Questionnaire for Candidates for Oakland Mayor

### BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot: Rebecca Kaplan
2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number): Mayor of Oakland
3. What is your current occupation or elected office?: Oakland City Councilmember At-Large
4. Are you the incumbent? No
5. How long have you resided in this district and city? 13 years

### CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name:	Kaplan for Oakland Mayor 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 have been clear that I would have chosen not to lay off the officers and bargained hard for increased police pension contributions instead. I was not in the negotiating room but the rank and file police officers never voted on the deal I outlined, which was forestalling layoffs in exchange for higher pension contributions. Last year I led the special election to raise City revenues without raising general taxes on residents. The City must budget for the long-term, so that we aren't hunting for service cuts every June. In the short term we can look at targeted staffing changes, repositioning City property, and integrating cost-saving technology at City Hall. In the medium term we can civilianize part of police work and implement efficiencies with a new City Administrator. In the long-term, we need to greatly increase the sales tax base. This needs to be part of our planning and we need to work better, smarter, and with a more realistic and sustainable outlook when planning Broadway Auto Row and the Oakland Coliseum Transit Village, which are our greatest opportunities for major retail development.

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

I voted in favor of the Measure Y revise (Measure BB) to retain public safety resources within existing funds. I support the revise because it preserves several very important services, without raising taxes. Specifically it will allow the preservation and reinstatement of community policing positions, violence prevention programs, and fire safety funding.

I voted against the Parcel Tax (Measure X) because I believed it failed to address the long-term financial viability of our budget, and because no serious attempt was made to craft it to meet community needs, take public input, and be viable at the ballot box. Recent polling suggests it is quite unlikely to pass. I supported an alternative proposal to have police pay their "employee share" pension and eliminating the layoffs, while also looking for long-term solutions like civilianizing some positions. Such a Measure should have been smaller, and part of a broader package of solutions to our budget crisis. I believe had some of the changes been made that I had suggested, we would have had a better chance strategically, while also doing more good for the long term. Finally, those who crafted it also dismissed the 80 newest Oakland Police officers, and promised to re-hire them if the Measure passes. However, many of those officers are already getting jobs, and we shouldn't expect them to be available to be re-hired, and so I also felt I could not support it because I could not honestly make the associated promises.

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

Local jobs and economic revitalization

Safe, livable, healthy communities

Effective and responsive government – a City Hall that works for all of us.

- 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?**

The youngest generation of workers has disproportionately been hit by the burden of decades of old bills coming due, at the same time as the current financial crisis and downturn. We lack adequate job programs aimed at the needs of young adults, as well as needing to dramatically increase our local job creation efforts.

We are the first generation in the US to have lower life expectancy and lower earnings than our parents. The wave of layoffs of the early 2000s and again the current wave have all been done in a “last hired, first fired” strategy which leaves the youngest workers to suffer the most. We must shift this focus to job creation, and make sure our economic revitalization and job match programs are focused on genuine growth industries. Sectors like food production, the arts, film, healthcare, trade and logistics and more are growing – but we must do a better job of matching our workforce with genuinely available opportunities.

- Strengthen Local Hire policy and make sure it is actually enforced
  - Improve business attraction, including easing permits for key sectors to attract, revising zoning, and outreach efforts, to grow food sector, entertainment, trade, logistics, and more in Oakland
  - Refocus job training efforts on growth industries, and centralize management of the City’s varied job creation efforts, including reforming the WIB
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?**

There are many ways to improve public safety by implementing the best practices of other cities. Better lighting, infrastructure, and strong neighborhoods are the “eyes on the street” that can, and have in parts of Oakland, reduced crime. CompStat and other proven management techniques must be implemented immediately at the Police Department. And of course, we must have a budget balanced for the long-term so we can provide the resources our Chief needs to decrease crime, without sacrificing Neighborhood Service Coordinators and other vital public services. In addition, as Mayor I will implement the following public safety strategies:

- After school programs available to all Oakland youth (crime peaks between 3pm – 6pm)
  - Neighborhood-beat police officers
  - Intervention and restorative justice programs
  - Recruit local residents to be police officers
  - Crossing guards, safety ambassadors, lighting, “safe routes to schools”
  - Stop the layoffs by changing police pension contributions.
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 have been a strong advocate for transit throughout my personal and professional life. Before I joined the AC Transit Board I was an advocate with TransForm and helped secure free bus passes for Oakland students. On the AC Transit Board I created new late-night service to San Francisco and put bike racks all buses. On the City Council I have led updated zoning for transit-oriented development in our downtown core; started the free Broadway shuttle; created programs to make it easier to bike and walk, including working to fund road repair and transit in the upcoming Countywide ballot measure; and secured funds to plan for Transit Oriented Development.

As Mayor I will:

- Implement a universal transit pass (“easy pass”) for city employees
- Increase use of CarShare, both for City programs to reduce number of city vehicles, and to make CarShare widely available for the public in locations throughout Oakland
- Adopt Priority Development Areas and get real capital dollars to build transit oriented development projects at key locations throughout Oakland
- add staffed secure bike station and implement the Bicycle Master Plan
- Implement the Pedestrian Master Plan including new crosswalk policy
- Create a rational parking policy based on real data collection to set policies

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.**

I first ran for City Council when I was 29, and joined the Board of AC Transit at the age of 31. Transportation and environmental activism attract young, bright, and motivated people, and I have been working as a young adult, with young adults, since I began public service. I see my run for Mayor as part of a new generation of leadership. As Mayor I will continue to include a young staff, and I will seek to appoint a new generation of Oaklanders to boards and commissions. Finally, as our City bureaucracy reaches retirement age, an important job of the Mayor will be hiring a new generation of management. I will hire the best and brightest up-and-coming administrators, to build a vibrant and effective City Hall.

### **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.**

On the AC Transit Board, I rode the bus for my primary transportation, and so I talked to people about how they use the bus and service shortcomings. As a young adult myself at the time, I most often heard complaints about how BART stops running at night. I created a new Transbay Bus service that ran all night and stopped at BART stations in San Francisco and the East Bay. This was a project that served those who work late shifts in the service sector in San Francisco but live in the East Bay, or who enjoy concerts and other late-night activities in San Francisco.

On the City Council I heard from several young adults that the City's outdated cabaret ordinance was a big problem for their jobs, as DJs, bartenders and musicians. Reform of the ordinance had been stalled for some time, so I made reform a priority and successfully worked to have the City Council pass a new Cabaret Ordinance that addressed concerns we heard from businesses, customers, and entertainers. Now small venues don't have to pay the same permit fee as large dance clubs, restaurants and cafes can host live music without special public hearings, and DJs are no longer subject to arbitrary fines. In addition three downtown clubs are now open past 2am to serve food and non-alcoholic beverages, making our nightlife both more fun and safer.

Throughout my public life I have involved young people in the decision-making process. My City Council and campaign staff include those under 35, and I have been proud to appoint young leaders to Boards and Commissions. I first ran for City Council at the age of 29 and had been a leading public advocate for better transit before I was elected to the AC Transit Board at the age of 32. Sometimes it seems that East Bay local officials are all the same age. I have been proud to break that mold and to lead the way for a new generation of leadership.

### **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.**

I am running for Mayor to create jobs and revitalize Oakland's economy. Our most challenging problems are financial and without a vibrant, diverse business community Oakland will continue to face budget shortfalls and high unemployment.

While working toward my Master's Degree in Urban and Environmental Policy from Tufts University, I learned a "Practical Visionary" approach to governing. This approach has helped me implement concrete policies and programs for Oakland.



As a solution-oriented Councilmember who represents the entire City of Oakland, I know that until our residents and neighborhoods are safe and protected, we cannot accomplish any of our other goals. I am committed to getting Oakland the resources it needs to effectively fight crime. That is one reason why I voted “no” on the unbalanced City Budget to lay off as many as 80 police officers and numerous other city workers.

My work to solve problems and improve the lives of residents includes serving as Oakland’s representative on the AC Transit Board of Directors from 2002 to 2008. I helped bring AC Transit its first clean-fuel buses and has continued my commitment to improving active transportation for Oaklanders – by working to improve biking, walking, and public transit opportunities.

I led the creation of new all-night transit service, including new service to San Francisco and BART stations, and technological upgrades to make bus service faster and more reliable.

As an MIT and Stanford-educated lawyer, I am passionately committed to equal rights. While at MIT I received MIT’s highest non-academic honor, the Compton Prize for my work on equal rights, as well as earning top academic honors including Phi Beta Kappa. As an elected leader I restarted the Oakland LBGT Leadership Roundtable, and helped to launch Oakland Pride.

I fought for women’s rights as a member of the National Organization of Women and volunteered on Senator Ted Kennedy’s reelection campaign. In Oakland, I helped lead ballot initiatives to tax marijuana and protect tenants against unjust evictions. I have never been afraid to stand up for those who need a champion.

I represent a positive new direction for our City – an effective leader with a bold vision and the commitment to roll up my sleeves and tackle the issues that face Oakland.