



When viewing the google doc, navigate to specific sections by clicking on the titles to the left.

Hello Reader! We are an all-volunteer organization who has spent *hundreds* of hours trying to help educate Berkeley voters. It's A LOT of work.

Please (please!) consider joining or donating to the Berkeley Democratic Club, especially if you find this information useful.

https://www.berkeleydemocraticclub.com/home/bdc_membership/

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BALLOT MEASURES	2
MEASURE W	2
MEASURE X (no formal opposition filed)	4
MEASURE Y (no formal opposition filed)	5
MEASURE Z (no formal opposition filed)	6
MEASURE AA (no formal opposition filed)	7
MEASURE BB	8
MEASURE CC	11
MEASURE DD (no formal opposition filed)	14
MEASURE EE	15
MEASURE FF	17
MEASURE GG	20
MEASURE HH	23
SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES	25
Jen Corn	25
Laura Babitt	27
Ana Vasudeo	30
Abdur Sikder	32
RENT BOARD	34
Alfred Twu	34
Carole Marasovic	36
Xavier Johnson	38
Avery Arbaugh	39
Andy Kelley	41
Dominique Walker	43



BALLOT MEASURES

MEASURE W

Measure W (Homeless Services Transfer Tax) Proponents

(ballot question and specifics on p. 3 [here](#))

1. Why should voters support Measure W?

Measure W will continue providing the funds Berkeley needs to successfully address our homeless crisis. Since the inception of this transfer tax, on only the top 1/3 of property sales/transfers, Berkeley rehoused more than 1,500 people and reduced unsheltered homelessness by an unprecedented 45%. With these funds sunsetting soon, and partner agencies concerned about their ability to sustain programs they've established to meet pressing needs, it's important to reauthorize - and enhance - what's already an exceptionally successful measure. With the threshold for application of this tax resetting every year, it only applies to high-dollar commercial, multifamily, and home sales, most Berkeleyans will never pay it. No impacted community in the Bay has registered the success Berkeley has achieved, as a direct result of funds provided by this revenue stream. Vote Yes on W to continue our important work serving and rehousing our homeless neighbors.

2. Although the funds from this measure have historically been treated as a special tax, with proceeds going directly to homeless services, it is technically General Fund money. How will you ensure that these funds remain dedicated to homeless services, especially in the face of potential future budget deficits?

The Homeless Services Panel of Experts, established by the original Measure (P), remains in place and will continue to make recommendations to the City Council for use of these general funds. The Council has been true to the promised uses of these funds - even during the economic crisis of the pandemic years - and will continue to keep faith with the people of Berkeley.

3. Will Measure W be used to sustain existing programs or to create new ones?

Funds from Measure W will continue to be used for a variety of successful programs and initiatives to meet the challenge of homelessness in Berkeley. As needs and best practices evolve, existing programs funded by the original measure will be continued and adjusted, and new programs may be initiated. We will also continue to leverage funds from this measure to obtain County, State, and other available funds to address homelessness; we've already received \$40M from outside sources to supplement local dollars - funds that would not have been accessible without "local match" dollars provided by this measure. The end goal for use of Measure W's continued and additional funds will be sustained - to successfully rehouse and meet the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors, experiencing homelessness.



Measure W (Homeless Services Transfer Tax) Opponents

1. Why should voters reject Measure W?

OPPONENTS DID NOT RESPOND TO BERKELEY DEMOCRATIC CLUB QUESTIONNAIRE.

2. Proponents state that the previous iteration of this tax—[Measure P](#)—[significantly reduced street homelessness by 45% and overall homelessness by 21%](#). Why do you oppose the alteration and extension of this measure if it is correlated to a reduction in homelessness?
3. If Measure W is not passed, a projected [~\\$15 million shortfall](#) is expected in Fiscal Year 2029. How do you propose the City should either ramp down services or address this financial gap if the measure does not pass?

MEASURE X (no formal opposition filed)

Library Tax Measure X

(ballot question and specifics on p. 22 [here](#))

1. Why should voters vote for the library tax?

Vote Yes on X to keep our libraries well-staffed, well-stocked, and open on nights and weekends; to fix long-deferred maintenance and technology needs; and to keep popular youth, educational, and cultural programs going. Without additional funds, the Library will be forced to cut hours, reduce staff, shrink collections, delay much-needed upgrades and repairs, and decrease youth and other public programs.

2. Why is the existing special tax insufficient for maintaining library services?

The Berkeley Public Library's main source of revenue is a dedicated tax fund that was established on an ongoing basis through the Library Relief Act in 1980. While this funding is very important, it has not kept pace with the rate of inflation in the Bay Area, and the costs associated with operating a library—both materials as well as staff. Although the Library has had successful bond measures to expand and retrofit the Central Library and branches, these did not cover essential deferred maintenance projects. The Library has not raised the tax rate beyond what can be adjusted by the Consumer Price Index and Personal Income Growth measure, since the tax was established more than 40 years ago.

3. How will the proceeds of this tax be allocated?

The top three spending priorities include: keeping neighborhood libraries well-staffed and in good repair; maintaining weekend and evening hours; and increased afterschool reading, homework help and tutoring. Vote Yes on Measure X to keep our libraries strong and vibrant.

www.BerkeleyLibrariesYesOnX.com

MEASURE Y (no formal opposition filed)

Measure Y–Parks Tax Proponents

(ballot question and specifics on p. 34 [here](#))

1. Why should voters vote for an increase in the parks tax?

Due to storm damage, drought, old age, and lack of funding, there are 10,000 empty tree spaces in Berkeley's parks and right-of-way that need replanting. Many of our landscaped medians are in a sorry state. Approximately \$91M is needed to fund key capital improvement projects in the 250 acres of Berkeley's parks and the waterfront. Adequate career staff needs to be hired to do the work.

Berkeley's waterfront parks and facilities are similarly stressed. Maintenance and improvements at the waterfront were historically funded by revenues generated by Marina hotel, restaurant and berth leases. But since 2008 these funds have been increasingly insufficient due to the failure of much of the original infrastructure and, more recently, decreased revenue due to COVID-19. The revenues are no longer adequate to cover waterfront capital needs and maintenance. As a result, staff has been reduced and waterfront maintenance and capital improvements have been deferred.

2. Why is the existing tax rate insufficient?

Currently, property owners (except those of very-low income) are assessed 22.1 cents annually per building square foot. Considering deferred major maintenance, needed new capital investment and facilities and inflation, existing Parks Tax revenues are simply not adequate. Accordingly, a modest increase to approximately 26.5 cents a square foot is proposed. Moreover, the projected additional \$3.6M in annual revenue can be leveraged to attract third-party contributions. For example, from 2000-2024, \$129M in non-City funds for our parks, camps and waterfront was generated by grants and donations to match or leverage Berkeley taxpayer funding.

Berkeley is a highly diverse community with a rapidly growing population. And, with a density of approximately 11,500 persons per square mile, Berkeley is among California's most dense cities. The maintenance and improvements that Berkeley deserves will not happen on its own. It's our turn to contribute to Berkeley's parks legacy.

3. How will the proceeds of this tax be allocated?

Every dollar of Parks Tax will be set aside, dedicated and leveraged to maintain and improve Berkeley's much-loved and much-needed parks, waterfront, trees and right-of-way landscaping.

We can all argue about how to deliver the most effective and efficient government services, but we can all agree with the simple proposition that PARKS ARE EQUITY IN ACTION. Berkeley needs and deserves first-rate parks, a renewed urban forest, and locally-biodiverse landscaping that brings joy to everyone. Our parks, waterfront, trees and landscaping are a precious legacy which we have inherited and that we all enjoy daily.

MEASURE Z (no formal opposition filed)

Measure Z (Sugary Beverages Tax) Proponents

(ballot question and specifics on p. 45 [here](#))

1. Why should voters support Measure Z?

Measure Z is a simple extension of the already existing 1-cent per ounce tax on wholesale sugary drink distributors that was passed by 75% of voters in 2014. This distributor tax has raised nearly \$12M and has supported norms-change through engagement and education to reduce the consumption of sugary drinks, while increasing the consumption of water. A renewal of the existing tax helps support vital programs including the Berkeley Public School Gardening and Cooking Program, dental screenings, health screenings, and education programs run by community-based organizations.

The citizens' commission put in place to oversee the use of funds and make recommendations to the City Council has done diligent and transparent work to ensure equity. It speaks volumes when the City Council has unanimously approved each funding cycle recommendation from the commission!

2. How has Berkeley's soda tax affected the health of the Berkeley community?

The sugary drink distributors tax has positively affected the health of the Berkeley community!

- *Consumption of sugary drinks has gone down, water consumption is up, and obesity rates for Berkeley's kids have decreased.*
- *It helps pay gardening teachers in all 17 BUSD schools so kids of all ages can participate in Cooking and Gardening Programs.*
- *It has supported over 77,000 health and dental screenings for low-income community members.*

Partial list of funded organizations and programs:

- *Healthy Black Families – "Thirsty for Change" program and classes on healthy food selection and preparation for parents*
- *Berkeley YMCA – diabetes prevention program*
- *YMCA of the East Bay – Early Childhood Education nutrition teaching*
- *Berkeley Youth Alternatives - youth training in urban gardening, produce handling, and nutrition education.*
- *Multicultural Institute - Outreach and education to day laborers on hydration and the perils of sugary beverages*

3. If the soda tax is successful, it will generate less revenue because fewer people will be consuming sugary drinks. How do you envision the future and the sustaining of programs created by the proceeds of this tax?

The tax has worked effectively, and tax revenues have already decreased by approximately 30% due to decreased sales. Programs have already had to adjust and are seeking

supplemental sources to continue activities. Additional funding is necessary as the soda industry continues to barrage our children with advertising. Advocates and the commission can bring additional focus to ensuring that all the appropriate taxes are being collected and that this is done in the most cost effective manner to seek additional benefit from the tax measure. That said, the City Attorney has advised against increasing the tax at this time as this would likely result in legal challenges due to preemption laws that a simple reauthorization would not. Reauthorization would secure existing funds and allow advocates to explore options for modifying the tax in the future.

MEASURE AA (no formal opposition filed)

Measure AA (GANN Limit) proponents

(ballot question p. 58 [here](#))

1. Why should voters support Measure AA?

A vestige of the Proposition 13 era, State law requires voters to reauthorize the expenditure of previously approved taxes every four years. Measure AA was placed on the ballot by a unanimous City Council. THIS MEASURE DOES NOT RAISE YOUR TAXES. It is a formality required by State law to continue spending proceeds from taxes Berkeley voters have already approved.

If Measure AA does not pass, the city will lose tens of millions of dollars in voter-approved tax revenues every year. This will have significant negative impacts for everyone in Berkeley - forcing our public libraries to close, fire stations to be shuttered, reductions in park maintenance, the elimination of services for the disabled, and crippling our wildfire prevention efforts.

With your YES vote this measure will allow Berkeley to continue these important, voter-approved services. Vote YES on Measure AA.

MEASURE BB

Measure BB (Mayor Arreguin, Councilmembers Bartlett, Tregub, Hahn, Lunaparra-Sponsored Rent Stabilization Ordinance Amendments)

(ballot question and specifics on p. 63 [here](#))

1. Why should voters support Measure BB?

Measure BB (the Berkeley Tenant Protection and Right to Organize Act) was placed on the ballot by the City Council as a compromise between tenants and property owners. It is based on recommendations from the Rent Board based on their experience of where Berkeley's tenant protections are falling short. BB has a number of important provisions for the Berkeley community, including protections around eviction in response to over 70 eviction notices being filed against low income seniors at Strawberry Creek Lodge, some for as little as \$10 of rent. Additionally, Measure BB updates and modernizes the Rent Ordinance for current standards, and increases readability for the public.

2. Explain why you think these changes help tenants.

- *Tenants in low income or senior housing often face the same problems that tenants in private housing do. This is because many income-restricted properties are now owned or managed by for-profit companies. BB expands the rent ordinance to cover these tenants.*
- *Standing up to corporate games. The Right to Organize makes it easier to form a tenant union and collectively bargain, which can help hold landlords accountable. A building tenant union can also protect Berkeley's many tenants who lack the time, money, or knowledge to advocate for themselves.*
- *Rising utility costs. In older buildings on a single meter, tenants who pay a percentage of the bill can face higher bills even if they save energy, if others in the building are wasteful. BB would limit increases in pass-through utility bills unless tenant has an individual meter.*

3. Explain why you think these changes are not too burdensome on property owners.

BB is written to focus on big property owners. The Right to Organize applies only to 10+ unit property and property run by a management company. There is no change to the current language in the rent ordinance that exempts golden duplexes, single family houses, and ADUs.

- 4. Explain the reasoning behind requiring that a tenant be in arrears by an amount equivalent to one month of fair market rent, rather than the actual rent paid, before an owner can issue a three-day notice?**

This was done because the tenants who have the lower rents are the ones at greatest risk of homelessness if they are evicted. This policy gives these tenants more time to apply for housing retention programs that can get them back current with rent. Basing the standard on fair market rent rather than actual rent means wealthier tenants in more expensive units can't abuse the rules, while providing additional protections for low income tenants. This change is identical to one adopted in the past few years in Oakland and Los Angeles.

- 5. Can you explain how Measure BB impacts the process of establishing fixed-term rental agreements compared to current law?**

Tenants already in leases cannot be forced into year to year leases after the first year lease. Right now all tenants and this is mostly an issue for all of the students are forced to sign leases for a full year. This leads to students forced into lease that they cannot satisfy or lots of subletting over the summer leading to 10 students sleeping on the floor and problems with load parties.

Opposition to Measure BB—(Mayor Arreguin, Councilmembers Bartlett, Tregub, Hahn, Lunaparra-Sponsored Rent Stabilization Ordinance Amendments)

- 1. Why should voters reject Measure BB?**

Measure BB fails to provide incentives for small owners of single-family homes or duplexes to rent out their available units. Berkeley has a substantial number of secondary units built after WWII, many of which could be brought to the rental market. However, Measure BB includes provisions that make it even more difficult to end a tenant-landlord relationship when issues arise. This creates hesitation among property owners, particularly those who would be sharing the property with their tenants. People are understandably reluctant to enter such close arrangements without a fair and reasonable process for ending the relationship if things go awry.

- 2. Explain why you think this measure does not help tenants.**

This measure ultimately harms tenants by reducing the number of available housing units. Increasing the supply of rental units and expanding Berkeley's housing options directly contributes to greater affordability. A diverse range of housing options and price points is essential. Homeowners who rent out backyard cottages, for example, are more likely to rent to fellow community members—like teachers, firefighters, or city workers—often at rates lower than those charged by large corporate-owned properties.

Measure BB imposes additional regulations on small owners. Historically, when regulatory demands increase, the number of community-owned properties decreases. When small owners get frustrated with those demands, they choose to sell their properties. They sell to buyers with deeper pockets who can absorb the risks—typically larger corporations. This shift results in

more corporate-owned housing at a time when we should be working to retain our small owners and foster the relationship between small owner and tenant.

3. Explain why you think these changes do not help small property owners.

When a single-family homeowner learns that reoccupying their house after renting it out for a couple of years could cost them over \$27,000, they are unlikely to rent it in the first place. This hefty amount represents a relocation fee that must be paid to the tenant if their tenancy is terminated through no fault of their own.

Measure BB does not provide any alternative to that scenario, nor does it further instill confidence in a single-family home or duplex rental owner.

4. Why do you think this measure affects owners of Accessory Dwelling Units (backyard cottages, in-law units)?

Measure BB introduces a new requirement when a tenant violates the lease. The owner must prove the violation "caused actual injury to the landlord" in order to terminate the tenancy. Often, the issue isn't a major violation, but rather one where the owner and tenant simply don't get along—whether it's disagreements over yard use or late-night noise. Proving that loud music "causes actual injury" can be challenging, leaving the owner stuck with the tenant until the tenant decides to leave.

When a small property owner learns that legally terminating a tenancy could involve hiring a lawyer at a cost of \$15,000 and taking 4 months or more, they are more likely to hesitate and not rent out their backyard cottage or converted basement.

5. Explain the reasoning behind the opposition to tenant protection in relation to large utility bill increases.

In Berkeley, rent control restricts how much an owner can increase rent each year. The "allowable increase" is determined by applying 65% of the Consumer Price Index. This cap on rent increases also applies to any services included in the rent, such as water and laundry facilities.

Price controls like these prevent owners from covering rising costs. If water rates increase due to rate hikes, owners are not permitted to pass those expenses on to tenants. They must bear the cost alone. The longer the tenancy, the more likely the owner faces financial gaps.

When tenants are shielded from rising utility costs, they have less incentive to conserve. The most effective way to encourage conservation of electricity or water is to make individuals responsible for the cost of their consumption. Measure BB prevents owners from holding tenants accountable for the utilities they use, reducing the incentive to conserve.

MEASURE CC

Measure CC (Citizens' Initiative to Amend the Rent Stabilization Ordinance) Proponents

(ballot question and specifics on p. 108 [here](#))

1. Why should Berkeley voters support the citizens' initiative to amend the current Rent Stabilization Ordinance?

Berkeley voters should support Measure CC if they want to create a practical solution for increasing housing affordability. By voting for Measure CC, they help ensure that their children, friends, and other community members have the opportunity to enjoy all Berkeley has to offer, by incentivizing small property owners to make secondary units available.

Voters should support Measure CC because it establishes a dedicated housing fund to cover rent payments. During the pandemic, for a three-year period, rental property owners could not evict tenants for non-payment. Duplex owners in particular, were heavily impacted, as they were more likely to rent to tenants who were living paycheck-to-paycheck and thus more prone to default during COVID.

The city previously allocated \$1m+ for rent relief, successfully helping nearly 1,000 Berkeley residents stay in their homes. To ensure ongoing aid, Measure CC allocates \$1.2 million annually. It's funded by taxes on large corporate landlords.

2. Can you explain how more lenient rules for terminating tenancies might affect housing security for renters? How does this measure benefit tenants?

Measure CC does not introduce "more lenient rules" for terminating tenancies. In fact, it adds a new requirement for landlords that is not present in current law. Measure CC stipulates that landlords must provide tenants with at least 60 days' notice before the end of their lease. This gives tenants more time to decide if they want to extend their lease for another term.

The measure provides crucial financial assistance to tenants during emergencies or crises. Many tenants are just one unexpected event away from being unable to pay rent, which increases their risk of eviction. Such evictions can contribute to housing instability and potentially lead to a rise in the unhoused population.

Measure CC establishes a fund specifically designed to support tenants before they reach the point of eviction.

3. Explain how you think the current rent stabilization rules are too burdensome for duplex and single family property owners.

They aren't necessarily burdensome but rather confusing, complex, and punitive. The prospect of a small owner with just one rental unit—such as part of a duplex—facing jail time or fines for not strictly adhering to the law is intimidating. Most small owners aim to be fair to tenants who live on the property with them and strive to maintain safe and habitable conditions. However,

when the responsibility of being a landlord carries risks they can't afford, they are less likely to become rental housing providers.

4. Measure CC exempts all owner-occupied duplexes from rent control. Why is this part of the measure? What happens to current tenants who enjoy rent control in a duplex?

Measure CC will only affect new tenancies created after November 5, 2024. Current tenants in rent-controlled units will continue to benefit from rent control. For properties with no more than two units where the owner lives in one as their primary residence, any new tenancy after November 5 will not be subject to rent control. This means that if the owner chooses, they could increase rent to cover rising costs. This is especially critical in properties where utilities like gas, electricity, and water are not separately metered. In such cases, the owner will have the flexibility to adjust the rent annually to account for increased utility usage by the tenant.

5. Explain why you believe that Measure CC's tenant right to organize provision is better than Measure BB's right to organize provision?

Measure CC agrees – tenants should (and already do) have a right to organize. However, current law does not mandate that an owner must meet with the tenants if they make that request.

Measure CC is clear and straightforward. If two-thirds of tenants in a building request a meeting with the owner to discuss concerns, the owner must engage with those tenants in good faith. This measure establishes a process that previously did not exist.

However, Measure BB introduces a punitive element. It permits the Rent Board to determine whether the owner has "conferred in good faith" with the tenants. If the Rent Board finds that the owner did not act in good faith, it can reduce the tenant's rent-controlled rent or mandate a rent refund. These actions would be based solely on the Rent Board's judgment of the owner's conduct with the tenants.

Opposition to Measure CC (Citizens' Initiative to Amend the Rent Stabilization Ordinance)

1. Why should Berkeley voters reject the citizens' initiative to amend the Rent Stabilization Ordinance?

Measure CC takes money away from Berkeley affordable housing funds, and puts it directly in the pockets of landlords. Its so-called "Rent Relief" program is not means tested - in fact, there are no regulations in Measure CC for how the money would be distributed, leaving the details to an unelected committee. There are no safeguards to make sure it goes to tenants and owners with a genuine need, versus the politically connected. CC also pulls the rug out from under many Berkeley tenants, who would suddenly find themselves at risk of high rent increases and/or no-fault eviction. It also weakens the ability of the rent board to protect tenants.

2. Explain why you think the current rent stabilization ordinance is a better option to protect tenants than Measure CC.

Measure CC takes away protections from current tenants. Some units would either immediately become exempt, or could become exempt due to a change - even a partial change - in ownership. Tenants in these homes would be at risk of eviction even if they have paid rent on time and followed all the rules. Measure CC would also put up onerous barriers to the Rent Board reducing a tenant's rent when they provide evidence of uninhabitable conditions, like mold, rats, or broken windows.

3. Explain why you think the current rent stabilization ordinance is not too burdensome for small property owners.

Berkeley's rent ordinance has been in effect for over forty years. There have been adjustments over time, but at this point, people who buy property in Berkeley should know what they're getting into. While there are many regulations, small property owners also have seen large increases in market rent and property value throughout this time. Renting housing is a business, and compared to other small businesses like a restaurant, renting housing is still a simple process.

4. Could you clarify how Measure CC addresses tenant rights regarding holding landlords accountable for making necessary repairs?

Measure CC's "right to organize" provision was written to be intentionally ineffective, as it exists to counter Measure BB's Right to Organize. CC's language requires a 2/3 supermajority of tenants to join to be able to form a union, and contains little language empowering such a union to do anything.

5. Can you explain the concerns or potential impacts associated with Measure CC's proposed rent increase allowance from 7.0% to 7.1%?

It would cause rents to go up even more in times of very high inflation, when tenants on fixed incomes would already be struggling. In this time of rising rents, why raise allowable rent increases at all?

MEASURE DD (no formal opposition filed)

Measure DD (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations) proponents

(ballot question and specifics on p. 138 [here](#))

1. Why should voters support Measure DD?

Measure DD will keep Berkeley factory farm-free and continue Berkeley's legacy of leading the way on social and environmental issues.

Measure DD prohibits Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), commonly known as factory farms. Voters may be surprised to know that, until recently, there was a CAFO in Berkeley (see below question). Passing Measure DD will ensure no other CAFO is established in Berkeley.

CAFOs in the Bay Area and across California have been exposed for widespread animal neglect and abuse. CAFOs are also a leading cause of pollution and pose a serious risk to public health. In 2017, Berkeley banned the sale of new fur despite not selling any. By 2019, California had done the same. Berkeley has always led the way on important issues. Passing Measure DD will set an example for other places to also evolve away from factory farming.

2. Are there concentrated animal feeding operations in Berkeley? If so, where? If not, why should voters support this if none exist?

Until June 2024, there was a CAFO in Berkeley. The EPA classifies facilities that confine over 500 horses as large CAFOs due to their impact on the environment, water quality in particular. The stables at Golden Gate Fields, located within city limits, confined upwards of 1,400 horses. Thousands of horses died and the facility polluted the Bay with coliform bacteria.

Volunteers started collecting signatures for this initiative in early June 2023. In mid-July 2023, Golden Gate Fields announced they would be shutting down, which they did this past June.

Voters should support Measure DD to ensure no other CAFO takes Golden Gate Fields' place and to encourage other cities and counties to pass similar legislation in order to protect animals, the planet, and public health.

MEASURE EE

Measure EE--(Citizens' Initiative--Fix the Streets) Proponents

(ballot question and specifics on p. 144 [here](#); City's impartial 9212 analysis [here](#).)

1. Why should voters vote for Measure EE?

Berkeley has been underfunding its streets for decades. In 2022, the City Council adopted a resolution increasing funding for the streets, but additional funding is needed help the city catch up. We developed a measure based on the September 21, 2023, report of the Public Works Director on costs. Measure EE carefully defines what would be funded—fixing the streets, sidewalks, and paths.

2. Measure FF addresses the same issue—paving the streets and sidewalks. Why is your measure better than the other measure?

Measure FF does not provide full funding for sidewalks and does not specify what much of the funds could be used for.

Measure EE is specific about what will be funded, provides for independent oversight, requires monitoring of outcomes, and requires regular reporting so the public knows how the money is being spent.

3. What are the oversight mechanisms and requirements for the measure?

We carefully worded the oversight mechanism in the measure to ensure that both the oversight body and its responsibilities were clearly delineated. The measure requires an independent oversight commission, workshops in different districts with poor streets, careful monitoring and audit of results, and an annual report on progress. You can find the details in the measure, Section 7.11.040 on our website: <https://www.berkeleyansforbetterplanning.org/our-measure>

4. How does the tax interplay with current paving allocations from the General Fund?

While the measure would establish some policy direction, the City Council has authority to spend the remaining more than \$17 million each year.

5. How is pedestrian safety addressed?

Measure EE provides full funding for repair of the sidewalks and paths and provides funds for the high priority pedestrian projects in the Vision Zero Plan to match contributions by Alameda County.

Measure EE–Opponents

1. Why should voters vote against Measure EE, especially if it will allocate more money to fixing Berkeley streets, sidewalks, and pathways?

Berkeley's streets will get worse under EE, according to an impartial City analysis. Measure EE raises less money than FF - and it's not enough to fix our streets. We can't pave more streets with less money. EE also requires a wasteful and inefficient approach to repaving, by neglecting preventative maintenance and only prioritizing failed streets.

Voters have no guarantee this money will be spent as promised. EE's authors left a multi-million dollar loophole in the measure: the City Council can reduce funding for street paving and still collect most of this tax. There's no guarantee the Council won't cut millions from the paving budget and use this tax to plug the gap.

Measure EE does not guarantee a dime in safety improvements for kids or pedestrians. What little money is available can't be spent on Safe Routes to Schools, improving 911 response times, or addressing reckless speeding on neighborhood streets.

MEASURE FF

Measure FF (Citizens' Initiative—Berkeley Citizens for Safe Streets) Proponents

(ballot question and specifics on p. 144 [here](#); City's impartial 9212 analysis [here](#).)

1. Why should voters vote for Measure FF?

Measure FF is the only measure expected to maintain or improve our streets. It generates over **\$100 million** for street and sidewalk repair, plus another **\$55 million** for safety improvements, to protect kids and seniors and improve emergency response times.

Measure FF will make our streets safer for kids and pedestrians. Measure FF requires the City to implement critical safety features like bulb-outs, raised crosswalks, and safety flashing beacons when doing repaving, so we don't just fix our streets only to tear them up again later.

Measure FF has the strongest oversight provisions of any measure, requiring Council to maintain 100% of existing paving funding, establishing an expert oversight body, and requiring regular audits.

That's why Measure FF is endorsed by the Berkeley Firefighters, Sierra Club, Building Trades, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, Mayor Jesse Arreguín, a City Council supermajority, City Auditor Jenny Wong, and the entire School Board.

2. Measure EE addresses the same issue—paving the streets and sidewalks. Why is your measure better than Measure EE?

Measure FF will deliver more than double the funding for street paving, safety improvements, and environmental enhancements as Measure EE - at only a small additional cost to homeowners (about \$1.50 per week).

Measure FF is the only measure expected to maintain or improve our streets, according to an impartial City analysis. Berkeley's streets will continue to degrade without a significant infusion of funds. Measure FF delivers.

Measure FF has the strongest oversight and accountability provisions of any measure, requiring the City Council to maintain 100% of existing paving funding, establishing an expert oversight body, and requiring regular reporting and performance audits.

Measure FF guarantees over \$50 million for safety improvements to protect kids and seniors, including Safe Routes to Schools, improving 911 response times, and traffic calming citywide. Measure EE doesn't guarantee a penny - and what little money is available can only be spent on a handful of streets.

3. What are the oversight mechanisms and requirements for the measure?

Measure FF uses a triple oversight system to provide accountability from the public, from staff/Council, and from the City Auditor.

First, FF establishes an independent Citizen Oversight Committee, with 4 City Council appointees required to have expertise in relevant fields, and 3 more appointments made by the Transportation and Infrastructure Commission and the Environment and Climate Commission. The Citizen Oversight Committee prepares an annual, independent report on progress and performance.

FF also requires the City Manager to prepare an annual report of performance metrics, outcomes, and accomplishments that reflects all City street, sidewalk, and safety funding. This includes streets paved, changes in pavement condition, safety projects implemented, fatal and severe traffic crashes, changes in mode choice, and more. This report is submitted to Council and the Oversight Committee.

Lastly, FF requires - and fully funds - regular performance audits by the City Auditor.

4. How does the tax interplay with current paving allocations from the General Fund?

Measure FF requires the City Council to maintain 100% of the existing paving funding. For any year in which Council fails to meet this full obligation, Measure FF is suspended for the following two years. At the same time, this requirement has provisions in place to accommodate a natural disaster, financial crisis, or loss of external funding - the ultimate goal is to hold Council accountable, not suspend funding at the times we need it most.

In contrast, Measure EE simply allows the Council to reduce the existing budget for street paving while continuing to collect the tax, albeit at a reduced rate. There is nothing preventing Council from reducing street paving funding on a permanent basis and just turning around and using funds from Measure EE to backfill the General Fund instead.

5. How is pedestrian safety addressed?

FF requires the City to add safety features when repaving. FF doesn't specify projects in advance - instead, it relies on a citywide public input process, similar to Measure T1, to determine community priorities. The only requirement is that safety features are consistent with City plans or policies, like the Pedestrian Plan, Complete Streets policy, or Safe Routes to Schools.

FF's funding has flexibility to meet Berkeley's needs. FF can fund crosswalk enhancements, like flashing beacons, raised crosswalks, and bulb-outs; as well things like speed cameras, traffic calming, and road diets to help prevent dangerous speeding. It also funds improvements to emergency response times through traffic controls and emergency access lanes. FF funds safety citywide, not just on a handful of streets (like EE), to keep all residents safe.

<https://www.yesonff.com/>

Measure FF Opponents of Safe Streets

1. Why should voters vote against Measure FF, especially if it will allocate more money to fixing Berkeley streets and infrastructure?

Measure FF does not provide full funding for sidewalk repair. Many of the injuries that occur are caused by poor sidewalk conditions. Further, people with disabilities rely on sidewalks to get around the city. Berkeley was where efforts to provide equal rights to those with disabilities began, we should keep our promises to people with limited mobility.

MEASURE GG

Measure GG (Citizens' Initiative–Large Building Fossil Fuel Tax) Proponents

(ballot question and specifics on p. 172 [here](#); The City of Berkeley's impartial [9212 report](#))

1. Why should voters support the citizens' initiative taxing large buildings?

A tax on the owners of large buildings for their methane gas usage will ensure climate-friendly and resilient buildings in Berkeley. The funds raised would support green upgrades for homeowners, renters, and businesses (including those subject to tax), reducing Berkeley's greenhouse gas emissions, lowering energy costs, and improving local air quality. Berkeley has a long history of climate leadership but is far behind on its goals. In order to meet our 2030 goals – a fair share of emissions reductions required by the Paris agreement – we need to cut emissions by 50% relative to 2023 levels in just 6 years! While EVs and dense housing address transportation emissions, we have no similar measures to reduce emissions in buildings, which account for 43% of Berkeley's total emissions. Measure GG fills that gap. See this report for more details: <https://tinyurl.com/ffbkgg>.

2. Carbon taxes are generally designed to be cross-sectoral and broad-based to incentivize lower overall emissions. Critics argue that this measure instead would just lead businesses to relocate, and many business owners have stated during public comment that they might have to cease operations in Berkeley. How do you respond to these concerns?

Berkeley has a history of developing policies that quickly spread regionally and beyond. We expect a similar result from this measure. Regional regulations prohibiting the sale of gas space and water heaters take effect in 2027 and will require Bay Area cities to provide funding and technical support to businesses and residents. Measure GG provides a model policy to meet those needs. We believe that business concerns are exaggerated based on the data. A number of the businesses and nonprofits cited by opposition will have tax-to-revenue ratios in the tenths of a percent, which will not by itself cause relocation. Of course, there will always be exceptions. Instead of rigid spending requirements, Measure GG defines spending priorities, allowing the City to support businesses facing financial challenges. These businesses can then both do right by the climate and control their costs. GG also provides for Council amendment.

3. The City's impartial [9212 report](#) stated that there could be a potential loss in sales tax, transient occupancy tax, and short-term rental taxes, if a building became or remained vacant and it's unclear whether the initiative-specified funding will be sufficient for City hiring to support the Fossil Fuel Free Buildings Just Transition Fund (approximately 10% of tax revenues). Do you agree with this assessment? Please explain.

Given Measure GG's typical tax rate of \$0.58/sqft (in line with existing property taxes), the risk of ancillary tax revenue loss due to vacancies is overstated. On the flip side, the local costs of business-as-usual methane use in absence of GG are substantial. Studies demonstrate higher asthma rates in homes with gas appliances and estimate that electrifying all appliances in the Bay Area would avoid over \$1.2 billion in healthcare costs annually. The hiring analysis incorrectly assumes that staffing for City programs grows proportionally with program size and that initial costs for program design repeat annually. In fact, the data shows a clear trend where staffing costs proportionally decrease when larger programs are implemented over multiple years. Anecdotal evidence agrees: representatives of the building trades stated that the existing City-run electrification pilot could triple in size with little additional staff overhead.

Measure GG (Citizens' Initiative—Large Building Fossil Fuel Tax) Opponents

1. Why should voters vote against Measure GG?

Measure GG is a dramatic, unsustainable tax that hurts hundreds of Berkeley nonprofits, small businesses, hospitals, faith institutions, schools, and renters by nearly tripling natural gas costs almost immediately — costing tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of dollars a year, and making it impossible for many to stay in Berkeley. It puts Berkeley institutions like Berkeley Bowl in jeopardy, and hits Berkeley's only hospital with an unaffordable, unsustainable tax increase almost immediately. Renters will face rent hikes or displacement as a result of the unintended consequences of this measure, which was written without community input. For many, it will take years to transition off natural gas, and GG does nothing to help them in the meantime. It just hurts.

2. Measure GG is intended to combat global warming. Can you share your reasons for opposing this measure?

Berkeley leads the nation on climate action and we're making big progress in reducing natural gas usage. Berkeley's nonprofits and small businesses are eager to transition off natural gas in a way that ensures corporations pay their fair share, but without harming nonprofits, small businesses, and renters. The nonprofits impacted by GG include numerous environmental organizations at the David Brower Center.

Measure GG doesn't help nonprofits or businesses electrify before the tax goes into effect, and for many, the technology for transitioning doesn't exist yet. Many building owners will pass the cost of the tax on to small business and nonprofit tenants, who have no control over buildings' heating and cooling systems. Those that do electrify may find PG&E can't serve their increased electricity demand. Businesses that leave will lose access to our clean electricity grid, and force Berkeleyans to drive further for goods and services, worsening—not reducing—emissions.

3. Measure GG includes some exemptions. Why do you feel the listed exemptions are not sufficient?

The City's own 9212 report on Measure GG concludes that "none of the non-profit properties subject to this tax would qualify for this exemption." (Page 25) The authors of the measure claim that the City Council may exempt a nonprofit-owned building by a two-thirds Council vote, but only if the nonprofit's annual revenues are under \$1,000,000. However, this applies to virtually zero buildings in Berkeley—which nonprofit owns a building larger than 15,000 square feet and also has annual revenue under \$1 million? Nonprofits, such as the YMCA, David Brower Center, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and Berkeley Playhouse would all pay this tax. City staff and leadership are already working with nonprofits, small businesses, PG&E, and property owners to transition to a zero-emissions city. The No on GG coalition is eager to join them, and to do this in a sustainable, effective, Berkeley way. www.NOonGG.org

MEASURE HH

Measure HH– (Citizens’ Initiative for Healthy City Buildings)

(ballot question p. 185 [here](#); The City of Berkeley’s impartial [9212 report here](#))

1. Why should voters support Measure HH?

The Public Works Department concluded the standard in this measure: “is essential for enhancing indoor air quality and reducing the risk of airborne disease transmission.” Measure HH protects infants, children, seniors, the public, and workers from wildfire smoke, toxic pollutants, and infections with common sense air quality standards in municipal buildings that pay for themselves. To protect occupants, the measure requires the City to achieve minimum air quality. These standards were developed by the White House and ASHRAE, a respected global engineering standards organization City-owned and leased buildings, e.g., libraries, senior/recreation/permit centers, health facilities are not adequately ventilated. City data shows COVID-19 outbreaks remain frequent, negatively impacting the public. At least one City employee died of COVID likely contracted at work. Many more developed long COVID. During wildfires and heatwaves, City buildings become dangerous and unfit as designated disaster shelters.

- 2. No revenue source was included in this citizens initiative and the [city’s impartial 9212 report](#) stated “The estimated cost range for facility assessments alone is \$2M - \$4M, with additional hard and soft costs anticipated for system upgrades, Staff training, and ongoing maintenance... Unknown costs associated with tenant improvements to existing City building leases, monitoring, and building management associated with the requirements are likely to far exceed existing budget allocations for facility maintenance.” Why was no revenue source identified, and what areas of the current budget do you believe should be cut to fund this ordinance if it passes?**

There is no need to cut funding. We respectfully disagree with the City’s estimate, which is provided without evidence and not informed by recent research. The City has a capital budget and excess equity every year. A small investment in the thousands of dollars—not millions—would save Berkeleyans thousands to millions per year! Clean air costs \$1 per year per additional cubic feet of filtered air per minute. For an average office building, that’s only \$500 per year. Clean air pays for itself and saves the City money; it is the fiscally responsible policy. Senior economists at Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security specializing in cost-benefit analysis of public health policy [found](#) that each COVID infection costs society (including the City) \$1,900 and the standard in this measure could save up to \$62,000 per room annually! There’s also City savings from avoided sick leave, workers’ compensation, and health care.

Measure HH (Citizens' Initiative for Indoor Air Quality) Opponents

1. Why should voters reject Measure HH?

Measure HH is an unfunded mandate with no source of city funding identified.

A recent City report found that the cost of "adopting the Healthy City Buildings Ordinance are significant." The report couldn't even evaluate the full cost of implementation due to its immense scope. The estimated cost of facility assessments alone would total at least \$2-4 million dollars, with additional unknown hard and soft costs for facility upgrades.

Measure HH would force the City to sacrifice these important services to fund expensive and unnecessary new indoor air quality systems in all city-owned buildings.

Vote No on Measure HH. Tell proponents to go back to the drawing board and work with city leaders to come up with a more sensible and less costly plan.

2. This measure aims to enhance indoor air quality and reduce the risk of airborne disease transmission. Why do you believe this approach is not adequate?

The City of Berkeley follows strict COVID protocols, increases ventilation in buildings and installs and maintains air filtration systems. Also, Berkeley's effective efforts throughout the pandemic resulted in the lowest COVID-19 case rates of any city in the country. Yet despite these efforts, Measure HH was put on the ballot without any consultation with city leaders.

Berkeley currently owns 95 different facilities, some of which are historic landmarks. Measure HH imposes stringent air quality standards for all city-owned and leased property. It would force tenants who lease city buildings, including non-profits, to install and maintain expensive HVAC systems, even if unnecessary and infeasible. Measure HH creates civil penalties and a right to sue the city, potentially costing thousands in lawsuits.

SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

Note: Norma Harrison is not a Democrat and was not interviewed because The BDC can only endorse Democratic candidates

Jen Corn

1. Why are you running for office?

I am running for School Board because I believe in Berkeley kids, Berkeley families, Berkeley teachers, and Berkeley public schools. I am proud of the years I spent working as a teacher and principal in BUSD and grateful for the education my two children have experienced here. As a lifelong K-12 educator, I am uniquely positioned to be able to anticipate how the school board's budget, program, and policy decisions will impact schools and classrooms. My thirty years' experience as an educational leader have prepared me to review data and assess the impact of programs and initiatives, set priorities and make tough decisions, and steer our district toward our vision of Excellence, Equity, Engagement, and Enrichment for all our children.

2. What relevant experience do you have that prepares you for this role?

I have been an educator for thirty years. I worked with Partners in School Innovation and the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative before earning my teaching credential in 2000. I began teaching in a Spanish bilingual classroom in Oakland Unified, and then I transferred to BUSD in 2005 to teach at LeConte Elementary (now Sylvia Mendez), where I taught in both Spanish two-way immersion and English-only settings before becoming the Literacy Coach at Rosa Parks Elementary. I became principal of Oxford Elementary in 2011 and moved to Thousand Oaks Elementary in 2013, where I was principal for five years. In 2019, I began working in my current role as a central office administrator in OUSD, where I am Director of School Improvement. I have also raised two children through BUSD schools, K-12th.

3. What are the top three issues or challenges you would like to address if elected? What specific proposals or projects would you introduce or augment to achieve these goals?

My first goal is equity, accelerating the achievement of students of color, students with disabilities, and students who are learning English. I believe that the most effective way to interrupt long standing inequalities in our public schools is to focus on core classroom instruction. In particular, I am looking forward to the adoption this year of a new elementary literacy curriculum. As a former teacher and principal, I am prepared to help guide the adoption process and the implementation of the new curriculum, and to review data to monitor the progress of our implementation.



My second goal is belonging: ensuring that Berkeley schools are inclusive, anti-racist, and LGBTQ-friendly communities that truly partner with families to promote wellness and belonging for all students. I am particularly concerned about strengthening partnerships with families, particularly in middle and high school.

Third, we must ensure stability by recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers and classified staff, while also ensuring a balanced budget. Teacher and staff recruitment and retention depends upon competitive compensation and benefits, but also on ensuring that our staff are well-supported and respected for their expertise.

4. What are you proudest of OR most dismayed at [in the passage of this year's budget](#)?

My biggest concern about the budget is that there does not seem to be a strategic plan that is transparently communicated to the public. School budgets are complicated, with multiple revenue streams, some of them restricted to funding specific kinds of investments that serve certain student groups. This year's cuts seemed driven largely by an understandable desire to inflict the least pain possible—freezing unfilled positions, for example—rather than a clear, coherent vision for how to allocate our resources most effectively in order to meet our goals. The season of budget cuts is not behind us, as Covid-era funds are drying up and enrollment is still down from its pre-Covid levels. As we prepare for more potential cuts, therefore, I believe we must start early to have hard conversations as a community about our priorities, so that budgeting season is guided by clear agreements about our goals and priorities.

5. How, as a school board member, can you encourage transparency and dialogue with BUSD stakeholders around difficult issues that have activated the larger community ([Gaza](#), curriculum decisions, [religious intolerance](#))? What skills and capabilities do you bring to improve these dynamics?

As a former principal in BUSD, I have extensive experience leading diverse Berkeley communities of educators and families through challenging times and difficult conversations. I have a proven track record as a good listener and a clear communicator. While our community has had some painful conflict over the past year, I remain confident that we in Berkeley are more aligned than not, in terms of our core values and our hopes for our children and our schools. I believe it's important for elected officials to meet with all stakeholders, on all sides of an issue, and to work to find common ground that always centers the learning and well-being of our children.

6. The school resource officer has sometimes been a source of debate on campus but a committee recently recommended [to expand school resource officers](#) on Berkeley High's campus. Do you believe it should be expanded, disbanded, or stay the same? Please explain.

The movement for police-free schools aims to ensure that schools are places of learning and community, where student well-being is not negatively impacted by the presence of law enforcement officers on campus. I fully support these goals. However, as a former principal in Berkeley, I had occasions when I was required by Education Code or state law to call in police, and I know first-hand that it makes a tremendous difference when the officer who responds has training and experience working with children, and/or existing relationships with school staff, children, and families. The BHS committee uncovered a similar dynamic. Having a trained officer who knows the community leads to more positive experiences when law enforcement must be called. That said, I share the concerns of board members who have questioned whether the SRO must be armed on campus, and would like to continue to explore creative solutions.

7. Is there anything else you would like to add?

I am proud to be endorsed by many local Berkeley elected leaders, as well as both the Berkeley Federation of Teachers and the Berkeley Council of Classified Employees. I would be honored to be endorsed by the Berkeley Democratic Club.

[Laura Babitt](#)

1. Why are you running for office?

I'm seeking re-election because, since joining the board, I've driven significant progress through effective collaboration, oversight, and budgeting. We've reduced the achievement gap for K-2 students by 19.5%, made Vote 16 a reality, expanded reusable options in our cafeterias, and enhanced our sexual harm prevention programs. We've also increased gender-neutral bathrooms, delivered the largest pay raises for educators, and I led the effort to redirect \$27M from a parking lot project to modernize schools and expand STEM & CTE programs, all while resolving BHS staff parking issues in collaboration with the city. These accomplishments address long-standing challenges for BUSD, & there's more to accomplish. I've demonstrated that we can achieve equitable outcomes, balance our budgets, and fulfill BUSD's mission to enable and inspire our diverse student body to achieve academic excellence & make a positive contribution to our world. I'm running to continue making these vital improvements not only said, but done.

2. What relevant experience do you have that prepares you for this role?

Before joining the board, I spent 10 years as a dedicated parent advocate, serving on the BSEP Parcel Tax Oversight Committee, as Chair of the Parent Advisory Committee, and on the Supt. Budget Advisory Committee (SBAC), among other roles. This extensive involvement gave me a deep understanding of the School District's strengths and areas for improvement, which has enabled me to drive significant progress in less than four years, even amid the challenges of COVID-19. Additionally, I and the only board member that brings over 30 years of progressive

experience in finance, accounting, and operations management. This expertise has been crucial in navigating the \$3-\$7M in budget cuts we've implemented and will continue to be vital as we work to balance our budget and optimize our financial resources effectively.

3. What are the top three issues or challenges you would like to address if elected? What specific proposals or projects would you introduce or augment to achieve these goals?

Four years ago, Berkeley voters elected me to the school board on a platform of putting kids' needs first, driving equity and achieving fiscal accountability. I'm proud of what we've achieved together thus far – and there is more to do. I will continue to:

1. Implement outcome-oriented budgeting: *Align every dollar with our district's vision and ensure it leads to measurable student success. This includes improving our math and reading curricula, our afterschool programs, and management of our facilities.*

2. Enhance accountability structures *so that our programs/special education services are implemented with fidelity. We must improve clarity on roles and responsibilities, refine and standardize employee and program evaluations, and reduce bureaucracy to ensure effective implementation of services and programs.*

3. Promote inclusive, safe environments: *Ensure every student, no matter their race, religion, gender, ethnic origin, or identity, feels safe at school and in the community. I co-authored BUSD's "Hate-Motivated Behavior" policy approximately one year before BUSD's rise in Antisemitism and Islamophobia. Addressing bullying, harassment, and implicit bias is essential to ensure every child can learn and thrive in our schools.*

I will continue to build on our achievements and drive meaningful change in Berkeley Unified.

4. What are you proudest of OR most dismayed at [in the passage of this year's budget](#)?

I'm proud of our progress in using budget pillars—Equity, Transparency, Excellence, Engagement, Sustainability, and Stability—to guide our resource allocation. This approach ensures data-driven decisions rather than responding solely to major advocacy movements. Our SBAC committee, which includes union and parent leaders, played a crucial role as thought partners in this transparent process, resulting in minimal impact on current employee positions. Each department contributed by freezing open positions, combining oversight roles, timing voluntary retirements, and rebalancing school site enrollments to minimize classroom disruptions. As we face further budget cuts, I'm optimistic about how our investments in technology will streamline operations and create efficiencies. I am also pushing for more savings through a new cost-saving initiative, hiring in-house legal counsel.

- 5. How, as a school board member, can you encourage transparency and dialogue with BUSD stakeholders around difficult issues that have activated the larger community ([Gaza](#), curriculum decisions, [religious intolerance](#))? What skills and capabilities do you bring to improve these dynamics?**

Engaging with the community is one of my strengths. I am one of two board members that convenes regular office hours, I actively promote & attend BUSD's listening sessions, & I act to address our constituents' concerns. My strong interpersonal & meeting facilitation skills led me to host my own town halls during COVID when parents felt unheard in district forums. Before joining the Board, as PCAD leader, I united all BUSD parent advocacy groups to focus identify our common goals for our children. Instead of being pit against each other, we were able find that we all wanted differentiated learning techniques used in our classrooms. This collaboration led to advocacy for enhanced professional development, recognition of varied learning styles, and the ensuring that our children were seen in the classroom, not just present. This year, BUSD's #BerkeleyTogether initiative continues this commitment of community-building & finding common ground through courageous conversations and engaging events.

- 6. The school resource officer has sometimes been a source of debate on campus but a committee recently recommended [to expand school resource officers](#) on Berkeley High's campus. Do you believe it should be expanded, disbanded, or stay the same? Please explain.**

As a parent of Black children, I believe having a familiar officer on campus is far better than having one we don't know. This aligns with a core value of the BLM movement, which emphasizes the importance of officers building relationships within the community they serve. The School Resource Officers (SROs) at BHS exemplify this approach; students frequently share their achievements and homework with them, while SROs stay connected with parents and are aware of students' challenges. Their presence also ensures immediate response in emergencies, potentially saving lives. This perspective, supported by a diverse committee of community members, educators, and parents, led to the recommendation to expand the program. Given that our education code still mandates police involvement for certain offenses, it's crucial to have officers we know, have trained, and have established relationships with, rather than ones we don't.

- 7. Is there anything else you would like to add?**

Thank you BDC for your endorsement in 2020. I hope I've made you proud by fulfilling my campaign promises made during unprecedented times. Our schools re-opened with a Covid-19 gold standard of excellence, we enhanced needed mental health services, I've partnered with the city to align our resources/outcomes for youth, made vote 16 a reality, and fostered a data-informed, kids-first culture. I promised "Leadership for Changing Times", and most of these accomplishments highlighted throughout, I proactively championed while I was President or Vice President of the Board. While I am endorsed by Mayor Arreguin, all but one city council



member, current and former board members, a host of educators, parent leaders, and community organizers; I've proven that I am everybody's advocate, and no one's puppet. This is why I have accomplished in four years what others have not in 14+. For more information, visit www.laurababitt.com. Please Vote Laura!!

Ana Vasudeo

1. Why are you running for office?

As the current Berkeley School Board President, I am honored to seek re-election with the endorsement of the Berkeley Federation of Teachers, the Berkeley Council of Classified Employees, & State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond. During my tenure on the Board, I have worked hard for our students and schools. I established a Berkeley Unified Safety Committee and created the position of Districtwide Safety Coordinator to keep our schools safe. I advanced public health by expanding COVID-19 testing in Berkeley schools and throughout the state. As board liaison to the Berkeley Schools Excellence Program (BSEP) Committee, I believe firmly in fiscal transparency and accountability. As the parent of a student with disabilities, I will focus on expanding support and resources for students with disabilities and uplifting the voices of their families. I believe that there's more work to be done to close the opportunity gap for our most vulnerable students.

2. What relevant experience do you have that prepares you for this role?

I have served on the school board for 4 years and currently serve as School Board President. Additionally, I also serve on the Board of the California Latino School Boards Association, a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring Latino/a/x students have the best educational opportunities and resources available to succeed. CLSBA is committed to ensuring educational needs for all Latino/a/x students by working with educational organizations and empowering current and future Latino/a/x School board members. I have also attended School Board Governance trainings with the California School Boards Association. I have professional experience leading Safe Routes to School programs in the Bay Area.

3. What are the top three issues or challenges you would like to address if elected? What specific proposals or projects would you introduce or augment to achieve these goals?

1) Ensuring fiscal transparency and accountability Berkeley Unified School District, like many school districts throughout the state, faces a challenging budget cycle in which we will likely need to make cuts in the upcoming school year. I will continue to work closely with our district committees, such as the Superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee, to ensure that the voices of labor partners, staff, and our various affinity groups guide how we prioritize spending.

2) *Closing the Opportunity Gap for our most vulnerable learners Closing the Opportunity Gap is a critical task of our district, one that just became harder given our budget cuts. I will work to ensure that we keep equity at the center of our budgeting decisions and continue to fund our equity-based initiatives, such as our district's Latinx Resolution.*

3) *Maintaining Safe Schools I've been working with parents from various sites to properly fund safety investments in our buildings to keep our education workers and students safe. During my tenure on the Board, I established a Berkeley Unified Safety Committee and created the position of District-wide Safety Coordinator to keep our schools safe. I hope to be re-elected to continue to fund critical safety investments for our facilities.*

4. What are you proudest of OR most dismayed at [in the passage of this year's budget](#)?

I'm proud of our commitment to fund improvements in literacy in BUSD and more specifically, of our district's commitment towards literacy coaching, professional development, and curriculum adoption and assessments. By focusing on improving literacy in the district and directing investments towards this goal, we are ensuring that all our students will be able to meet key educational milestones. I'm saddened by the fact that we still have not completed the district's strategic plan, especially given then difficult budgetary situation that we will find ourselves in next year. Strategic plans are a best practice according to the California School Boards Association (CSBA) and can provide an important roadmap for how we spend our limited dollars most effectively and for the benefit of all of our students. I'm hoping that by the end of this school year, BUSD will have a completed strategic plan to guide our budget priorities.

5. How, as a school board member, can you encourage transparency and dialogue with BUSD stakeholders around difficult issues that have activated the larger community ([Gaza](#), curriculum decisions, [religious intolerance](#))? What skills and capabilities do you bring to improve these dynamics?

I pride myself in listening to diverse perspectives & keeping our students' needs at the forefront of our decision making. I'm a big believer that finding common ground & articulating common values is important in any community conversation. Ultimately, I do trust Berkeley teachers to teach Berkeley students. I also trust our superintendent's professionalism & poise in representing the school district at the national level in her testimony before congress. I've been saddened by the personal attacks on our teachers in the past few years, both around these issues locally & from federal right-wing forces around trans & queer youth & ethnic studies. These are difficult conversations, & I know that there will be differences of opinion, but the bottom line is that all members of our community - teachers, parents, staff, & students - must be treated with respect. I will not tolerate racism, transphobia, Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, or homophobia in our schools or at our School Board meetings.

6. The school resource officer has sometimes been a source of debate on campus but a committee recently recommended [to expand school resource officers](#) on

Berkeley High's campus. Do you believe it should be expanded, disbanded, or stay the same? Please explain.

I trust the recommendations made by the committee looking at this issue in 2021 that the school resource officer has had a positive impact in Berkeley Schools. However, creating a culture of safety in all of our schools requires a multi-pronged approach. I'm proud to have drafted our district's Safety Resolution which calls for updated safety plans, the creation of a district wide safety taskforce, and the hiring of a safety coordinator for the district. I have worked with our BUSD Make our Schools Safe parent group (MOSS) to meet with Berkeley's Police and Fire Departments and discuss ways in which we can have better collaboration on professional development opportunities for our district's administrators. We need to work on all of the issues above to create a culture of safety and not rely just on one solution.

7. Is there anything else you would like to add?

I've proudly served Berkeley Unified School District for four years and I would be honored to earn the BDC's endorsement for my re-election.

Abdur Sikder

1. Why are you running for office?

I am a parent of middle school child and as an educator, I like to serve to the Berkeley School Board.

2. What relevant experience do you have that prepares you for this role?

I have several years of experience to work as a Board member of a Berkeley non-profit, worked many years as a university computer science teacher and a financial consultant. I am an elected computer science department representative to California Faculty Association.

3. What are the top three issues or challenges you would like to address if elected? What specific proposals or projects would you introduce or augment to achieve these goals?

Parents - Teacher's engagement:

Recruiting and retaining high quality teacher:

Incorporating ethical education in the school curriculum:

4. What are you proudest of OR most dismayed at [in the passage of this year's budget](#)?

[CANDIDATE DID NOT ANSWER]

5. How, as a school board member, can you encourage transparency and dialogue with BUSD stakeholders around difficult issues that have activated the larger

community ([Gaza](#), curriculum decisions, [religious intolerance](#))? What skills and capabilities do you bring to improve these dynamics?

We need to encourage open dialogue among stakeholders more often to create an environment to have religious tolerance.

6. The school resource officer has sometimes been a source of debate on campus but a committee recently recommended [to expand school resource officers](#) on Berkeley High's campus. Do you believe it should be expanded, disbanded, or stay the same? Please explain.

I suggest it should be expanded to make it available to all students equally.

7. Is there anything else you would like to add?

We need to push politicians to approve more fund for our school. It is our children's right to have a nice classroom and all necessary resources for high quality education.

RENT BOARD

Alfred Twu

Right to Housing Rent Board Slate

- 1. What do you think are current problems that tenants and property owners face in the City of Berkeley and how do you propose to fix them? Please give specific policy proposals.**

Mold and habitability problems. Now rents are leveling off or going down in older buildings, the risk of cutting corners on maintenance is higher. This is especially a problem where tenants don't know their rights, lack the time, money, or language skills to use them, or are afraid to use them. Having a clear process for tenants to organize a tenant union and collectively bargain would protect more tenants from slumlords. I also support having posters in building entrances similar to labor rights posters in workplace break rooms.

For small property owners, it's unpredictability - most of the time, when tenants pay rent on time, it's profitable, but if someone doesn't, it's a problem. There are products such as rent guarantee insurance where for a monthly fee, the insurer pays rent if the tenant doesn't. This can help landlords have predictable income, and policies can be made to encourage using them.

- 2. Recent Rent Board and Council deliberation has revolved around Golden Duplexes (a duplex that is exempt from rent control because an owner lived in the property in December 1979), Accessory Dwelling Units, and/or owner-occupied duplexes with rent control. Tenant advocates want to increase regulation with respect to evictions and rent levels for duplexes, while property owners advocates want to allow on-site owners greater flexibility to control the property they live on with their tenant. What is your stance and why? Do you believe Golden Duplexes should retain their current exemption from rent control?**

Duplex units are often larger units that are popular with families. Having protections helps avoid the situation where children have to switch schools and move away from their friends. While I understand owners' desire to have more control of who they live with, the flip side to control is housing discrimination.

I feel a path forward is to phase out the exemptions when property is sold. It is likely that this issue will gradually fade away as property is sold anyway, as duplexes are worth more when sold to two homeowners than to a single owner renting out one half.

- 3. Many residents of Berkeley have been [mailed erroneous notices](#) by the Rent Board. How do you propose fixing the data gaps and communication errors?**



The 2023 erroneous notices were the result of an error made during a major data migration, and were quickly followed up with correction emails and letters. Now that data is in the new system this should not happen again. As a further backup, notices should contain information on who to contact if someone feels they received it in error, and a longer grace period be provided for phasing in new fees so that people don't get stressed out.

- 4. The demolition ordinance passed in 2024 requires any demolition of rent controlled housing to be replaced with subsidized Below Market Rate housing, a significant change from previous practices. Recent estimates have shown that one unit Below Market Rate housing costs ~\$700,000 to build. How do you envision this provision of the ordinance will affect future development and do you think it should be amended?**

This isn't a barrier to development when the new building is much larger than the old one, which should be the goal anyway. For example, if a duplex is replaced by a 20-unit building, the new building would be providing at least 2 BMR units due to both Berkeley's existing inclusionary ordinance, as well as a desire by the developer to use the Density Bonus.

There is no need to amend the Demolition Ordinance, however, it is important that Middle Housing allows more apartments per lot - at the minimum 5, to allow use of the Density Bonus, and ideally 10+.

- 5. The recent Rent Board Tenant Convention included a supplementary questionnaire by a co-sponsoring organization for potential candidates. These questions asked about particular policy choices including Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions for Israel, reducing police budgets, decriminalizing drugs, continuing exclusionary zoning unless even small projects are required to include subsidized Below Market Rate housing, supporting free transportation etc. The supplementary questionnaire also asked potential slate members if they would run with DSA-backed candidates Jovanka Beckles and Nikki Bas. Do you believe these topics are relevant to the Rent Board's role in the City of Berkeley? Please explain.**

Rent Board members on the 4x4 committee work with City Councilmembers on housing policy. Zoning, policing, drugs, and transportation are all related - for example, Berkeley's transportation demand management program includes free transit passes for residents in new buildings, and we have laws regulating smoking in multifamily buildings. On the zoning question I indicated on that questionnaire that I disagreed on requiring all small projects to include BMR housing.

While some of the questions are outside the Rent Board's immediate role, it is not unusual for organizations to ask candidates where they stand on a variety of issues, as candidates often run for higher office in the future.

Carole Marasovic

Rent Board Candidate (no slate)

1. What do you think are current problems that tenants and property owners face in the City of Berkeley and how do you propose to fix them? Please give specific policy proposals.

Focused on protecting tenants from displacement, as Chair of the Homeless Services Panel of Experts, I have consistently recommended sufficient funding for housing retention monies so that tenants retain their apartments and landlords receive the monies due them. I support continuing that funding.

Small property owners who keep their rental prices reasonable and reasonably respond to their tenants' needs merit having their concerns heard, their input incorporated and responded to with a reasonable application of the Rental Stabilization Ordinance.

Berkeley is an aging community and seniors and persons with disabilities need to remain in their homes. Accommodating disabilities mitigates displacement which includes enforcing disability laws such as the City elevator ordinance and identifying where the Fair Housing Act can be applied.

[WORD LIMIT EXCEEDED]

2. Recent Rent Board and Council deliberation has revolved around Golden Duplexes (a duplex that is exempt from rent control because an owner lived in the property in December 1979), Accessory Dwelling Units, and/or owner-occupied duplexes with rent control. Tenant advocates want to increase regulation with respect to evictions and rent levels for duplexes, while property owners advocates want to allow on-site owners greater flexibility to control the property they live on with their tenant. What is your stance and why? Do you believe Golden Duplexes should retain their current exemption from rent control?

Golden duplexes & ADUs should be exempt from rent control & good cause evictions. There are thousands of properties with multiple units throughout Berkeley, many rented out at substantial profit, where tenants need their rights protected & that is where the focus should be. Golden duplexes & ADUs, owner-occupied, are small in number by comparison & have unique circumstances.

The primary concern of owner-occupied golden duplex owners seems to be not the rental amount but that they will be required to have a tenant on their property indefinitely with whom they are incompatible so that the homeowner's quality of life is jeopardized.

Listening to one owner-occupied golden duplex owner provide public comment at a Council Land Use Committee meeting, I was struck by his comment that when there is only a thin wall

separating you, that if the golden duplex exemption were removed, it was the equivalent of forcing someone to stay in a marriage.

[WORD LIMIT EXCEEDED]

3. Many residents of Berkeley have been [mailed erroneous notices](#) by the Rent Board. How do you propose fixing the data gaps and communication errors?

As with any systemic errors, before the issues can be resolved successfully, one needs to identify how the issues arose. The system needs to be closely evaluated by an IT expert as to whether there is outdated information, cross information and why these mishaps are occurring.

Notices and retention of data are critical and it is critical that they be reported accurately. If the data is not reported properly and notices are improperly issued, the consequences could be major.

4. The demolition ordinance passed in 2024 requires any demolition of rent controlled housing to be replaced with subsidized Below Market Rate housing, a significant change from previous practices. Recent estimates have shown that one unit Below Market Rate housing costs ~\$700,000 to build. How do you envision this provision of the ordinance will affect future development and do you think it should be amended?

As a strong supporter of preserving rent control and supporter of below market rate housing to preserve economic, and other, diversity in the community on the face of it, I support the demolition ordinance.

I understand that the costs of labor and materials have greatly increased. Thus, I am open to hearing the impact of the demolition ordinance on future development and whether the ordinance should be amended or phased in differently.

While the ordinance is needed to protect tenants' rights to affordable rent and compensate for the loss of rent-controlled units, we want to insure that it is implemented so as to not be prohibitive by hampering further development including affordable housing. That said, any amendments must consider below market units, rent control and other strategies to maintain the character and diversity of the community.

5. The recent Rent Board Tenant Convention included a supplementary questionnaire by a co-sponsoring organization for potential candidates. These questions asked about particular policy choices including Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions for Israel, reducing police budgets, decriminalizing drugs, continuing exclusionary zoning unless even small projects are required to include subsidized Below Market Rate housing, supporting free transportation etc. The supplementary questionnaire also asked potential slate members if they would run with DSA-backed candidates Jovanka Beckles and Nikki Bas. Do you believe these topics are relevant to the Rent Board's role in the City of Berkeley? Please explain.

The Rent Board has a statutory mandate which it should abide by not exceed. These questions, with the exception of possibly taking a position on the below market rate housing issue, exceed the Rent Board's mandate.

In addition, delving this deep into every position on every possible perspective on issues unrelated to housing that a Rent Board candidate might have, in order to insure complete allegiance, does not lead to electing independent critical thinkers capable of thorough, fair, judicious analysis of individual facts.

Xavier Johnson

Right to Housing Rent Board Slate

1. What do you think are current problems that tenants and property owners face in the City of Berkeley and how do you propose to fix them? Please give specific policy proposals.

Long term tenants are facing big challenges and pressures from property owners seeking to get rid of them to increase rents on new prospective tenants. Costa Hawkins creates a pressure on existing tenants leading to increased instances of harassment and failures to make repairs. The solution is to continue to work to repeal Costa Hawkins and to make sure tenants know their right to petition habitability issues with their rent board.

2. Recent Rent Board and Council deliberation has revolved around Golden Duplexes (a duplex that is exempt from rent control because an owner lived in the property in December 1979), Accessory Dwelling Units, and/or owner-occupied duplexes with rent control. Tenant advocates want to increase regulation with respect to evictions and rent levels for duplexes, while property owners advocates want to allow on-site owners greater flexibility to control the property they live on with their tenant. What is your stance and why? Do you believe Golden Duplexes should retain their current exemption from rent control?

I believe that we should not provide exemptions for golden duplexes, ADUs, or owner occupied duplexes. At the end of the day the nature of the property doesn't alter the importance of housing as a human right over profit. Providing these protections in these spaces ensures stable long term housing. In addition there are processes in place for removing tenants who violate the law or their leases.

3. Many residents of Berkeley have been [mailed erroneous notices](#) by the Rent Board. How do you propose fixing the data gaps and communication errors?

We need to continue outreach to the community and ensure due process in the gathering of information. I believe we can work with the outreach team of the rent board to ensure property

owners are getting the communications they need through email, mail, and their addresses of record for the properties they own. We should provide incentives to the correction and completion of accurate information where possible.

4. The demolition ordinance passed in 2024 requires any demolition of rent controlled housing to be replaced with subsidized Below Market Rate housing, a significant change from previous practices. Recent estimates have shown that one unit Below Market Rate housing costs ~\$700,000 to build. How do you envision this provision of the ordinance will affect future development and do you think it should be amended?

With property owners and developers making record profits, I believe there is enough money being invested into housing to cover the costs of protecting sitting tenants from development. The alternative is long term tenants being evicted with no where to go other than homelessness and dependence.

5. The recent Rent Board Tenant Convention included a supplementary questionnaire by a co-sponsoring organization for potential candidates. These questions asked about particular policy choices including Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions for Israel, reducing police budgets, decriminalizing drugs, continuing exclusionary zoning unless even small projects are required to include subsidized Below Market Rate housing, supporting free transportation etc. The supplementary questionnaire also asked potential slate members if they would run with DSA-backed candidates Jovanka Beckles and Nikki Bas. Do you believe these topics are relevant to the Rent Board's role in the City of Berkeley? Please explain.

I believe we are all in a movement for justice that requires shared goals and cooperation across issue areas to ensure a just and equitable society. I believe it is laudable that the tenant convention takes a holistic look to who they select for their candidates. While we may not see eye to eye on every issue, most of the issues are connected in some way and we need to remain informed and connected across issue areas.

Avery Arbaugh

Right to Housing Rent Board Slate

1. What do you think are current problems that tenants and property owners face in the City of Berkeley and how do you propose to fix them? Please give specific policy proposals.

Affordability and accessibility are central to the difficulties faced by tenants and property owners. The majority of affordable and rent-controlled housing in Berkeley is older, being built before 1995, and doesn't meet modern accessibility standards, we need to create strong incentives to upgrade older buildings to be accessible for seniors and disabled renters, and find ways to help

people stay in housing that meets their needs. Additionally as climate change makes Berkeley less livable, we need to upgrade the habitability and cooling systems of buildings, and create new habitability rights for tenants. Reworking the incentive systems of weatherization, sustainability, and rooftop solar programs to give landlords incentives to improve the sustainability and climate resilience of rental units could help with achieving this.

2. Recent Rent Board and Council deliberation has revolved around Golden Duplexes (a duplex that is exempt from rent control because an owner lived in the property in December 1979), Accessory Dwelling Units, and/or owner-occupied duplexes with rent control. Tenant advocates want to increase regulation with respect to evictions and rent levels for duplexes, while property owners advocates want to allow on-site owners greater flexibility to control the property they live on with their tenant. What is your stance and why? Do you believe Golden Duplexes should retain their current exemption from rent control?

I am not in favor of exemptions for Golden Duplexes, larger units such as duplexes are commonly occupied by families, and finding space for a full family with a limited income is difficult. Families in duplexes deserve the same eviction rights and displacement protections that other renters have citywide.

3. Many residents of Berkeley have been [mailed erroneous notices](#) by the Rent Board. How do you propose fixing the data gaps and communication errors?

While the issues in data migration which caused many of the erroneous notices in 2023 have been resolved, we should put more efforts into outreach, including incentives for response, to update our data systems and make sure other erroneous communications don't occur in the future.

4. The demolition ordinance passed in 2024 requires any demolition of rent controlled housing to be replaced with subsidized Below Market Rate housing, a significant change from previous practices. Recent estimates have shown that one unit Below Market Rate housing costs ~\$700,000 to build. How do you envision this provision of the ordinance will affect future development and do you think it should be amended?

The benefits of preserving the affordability of Berkeley's housing stock through the current version of the demolition ordinance are worth the potential disincentivizing effects on future development which, especially in combination with market incentives such as density bonuses, which can still be applied in cases relevant to the demolition ordinance, will not be significant.

We need more housing in Berkeley, but it is more valuable to reduce market barriers such as exclusionary zoning than it is to reduce the protections for rent-controlled and affordable housing and protections for the tenants who rely on this housing to live in Berkeley.

5. The recent Rent Board Tenant Convention included a supplementary questionnaire by a co-sponsoring organization for potential candidates. These questions asked about particular policy choices including Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions for Israel, reducing police budgets, decriminalizing drugs, continuing exclusionary zoning unless even small projects are required to include subsidized Below Market Rate housing, supporting free transportation etc. The supplementary questionnaire also asked potential slate members if they would run with DSA-backed candidates Jovanka Beckles and Nikki Bas. Do you believe these topics are relevant to the Rent Board's role in the City of Berkeley? Please explain.

Rent Board Commissioners play an important role in developing housing policy in general through the 4x4 Committee with City Council. Questions such as drug criminalization, zoning, and transportation are increasingly relevant, as we try to integrate our housing systems with transit systems, and recognize the role of built environments in causing, or preventing, crime.

While some of these questions aren't directly related to the role of a Rent Board Commissioner, I do think it can be fair to ask more general policy and political questions before lending support to candidates, especially given the propensity of former Rent Board Commissioners to run for higher office.

Andy Kelley

Rent Board Candidate (no slate)

1. What do you think are current problems that tenants and property owners face in the City of Berkeley and how do you propose to fix them? Please give specific policy proposals.

Rising housing costs are #1. Too many tenants are only a missed paycheck or two away from being unable to pay rent. At the same time, many small and low-income property owners are struggling to maintain the upkeep of their properties with raising costs for materials, contractors and changing standards.

The City should create a zero-percent loan program to help small property owners maintain habitability standards especially for older units with higher costs which would allow larger one-time expenses to be spread over many years.

Rent Relief Fund – The City should establish a rent relief fund for tenants temporarily unable to pay their rent in whole or in part to provide bridge funding while they get back on their feet. This would allow time to recover from illness, lost wages, or life transitions, without displacement or adding pressures to the homeowner.

2. Recent Rent Board and Council deliberation has revolved around Golden Duplexes (a duplex that is exempt from rent control because an owner lived in the property in December 1979), Accessory Dwelling Units, and/or owner-occupied duplexes with rent

control. Tenant advocates want to increase regulation with respect to evictions and rent levels for duplexes, while property owners advocates want to allow on-site owners greater flexibility to control the property they live on with their tenant. What is your stance and why? Do you believe Golden Duplexes should retain their current exemption from rent control?

Both tenants and homeowners deserve housing security and to be able to establish themselves in our community and age in place with dignity. That is the reason why many homeowners are choosing to build ADUs, either to move into when they retire and rent their house as a source of income, or to move in a family member or caretaker. These homeowners are concerned a long-term tenant would prevent that planned retirement. I believe there must be a middle ground that incentivizes homeowners to build desperately needed ADUs while securely planning for their future and providing tenants reasonable protections as well. If eviction protections are expanded to ADUS, the Just Cause should include provisions for caretakers, retirement, injury, loss of mobility etc. The same can be said for golden duplexes, the terms should be set on lease signing or sale of property not whether an owner resides on site.

3. Many residents of Berkeley have been [mailed erroneous notices](#) by the Rent Board. How do you propose fixing the data gaps and communication errors?

These 2 mailings were unfortunate and I have spoken with our Executive Director on how to avoid the problem happening again in the future. The first was caused by an error made by a third party vendor during the Rent Board's recent database migration and digitalization of paper records. This was a much needed modernization which will improve our efficiency, reduce costs, and streamline services in the future, but an error during the process resulted in errant mailings being sent. Staff has corrected this issue.

The second mailing was around Measure MM registration requirements, which the City has contracted the Rent Board to enforce. This impacted a group of approximately 2,500 property owners who may or may not be subject to Measure MM but had yet to register exemptions. Staff will conduct additional outreach as these properties continue to be reclassified.

4. The demolition ordinance passed in 2024 requires any demolition of rent controlled housing to be replaced with subsidized Below Market Rate housing, a significant change from previous practices. Recent estimates have shown that one unit Below Market Rate housing costs ~\$700,000 to build. How do you envision this provision of the ordinance will affect future development and do you think it should be amended?

The study referenced here found the median cost of constructing a BMR unit in Alameda County in 2022 was \$713k. By comparison, UC Berkeley's Turner Center Market Rate Pro Forma estimates a cost of a market rate unit in Alameda County to be \$637k -- a difference of \$76k -- as the true additional cost, which may potentially be offset by reduced fees or tax credits. As Keith Carson's appointee to and Vice Chair of the Alameda County Planning Commission, these are the tradeoffs we have to consider in our zoning every day -- how to incentive much needed housing without displacing current residents. I believe the updated Demolition

Ordinance is an effort to do this and supported it. Reducing community concerns around displacement will help projects avoid protracted appeals to advance faster and save on staff and financing costs. Its impacts should be monitored and evaluated as we get new data.

5. The recent Rent Board Tenant Convention included a supplementary questionnaire by a co-sponsoring organization for potential candidates. These questions asked about particular policy choices including Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions for Israel, reducing police budgets, decriminalizing drugs, continuing exclusionary zoning unless even small projects are required to include subsidized Below Market Rate housing, supporting free transportation etc. The supplementary questionnaire also asked potential slate members if they would run with DSA-backed candidates Jovanka Beckles and Nikki Bas. Do you believe these topics are relevant to the Rent Board's role in the City of Berkeley? Please explain.

I'm proud of my record serving these past 4 years on the Berkeley Rent Board and thankful to Berkeley Democratic Club for your past support. I believe the most important role for the Rent Board is to improve our outreach to tenants and small-property owners rely on our services the most. The Rent Board has a specific mandate to administer the Rent Stabilization and Eviction for Good Cause Ordinance and that has been my primary focus. As an independent candidate, I am proud to have broad community support including from Mayor Jesse Arreguin, Councilmember Terry Taplin, East Bay Regional Parks President Elizabeth Echols, Senator Loni Hancock, Supervisor Keith Carson, the Berkeley Firefighters Association, SEIU 1021 and the Building and Construction Trades of Alameda County. With your support I will continue to work to build a more affordable Berkeley for us all to call home. www.andykelly.org

Dominique Walker

Right to Housing Rent Board Slate

1. What do you think are current problems that tenants and property owners face in the City of Berkeley and how do you propose to fix them? Please give specific policy proposals.

Energy efficiency and habitability issues affect tenants and landlords. We have to work with the rent the city to come up with incentives for landlords that don't put the weight of the cost onto tenants. There is a way to do this and we have to work together to figure out policy-wise what that looks like.

2. Recent Rent Board and Council deliberation has revolved around Golden Duplexes (a duplex that is exempt from rent control because an owner lived in the property in December 1979), Accessory Dwelling Units, and/or owner-occupied duplexes with rent control. Tenant advocates want to increase regulation with respect to evictions and rent levels for duplexes, while property owners advocates want to allow on-site owners

greater flexibility to control the property they live on with their tenant. What is your stance and why? Do you believe Golden Duplexes should retain their current exemption from rent control?

We need to protect tenants. Golden Duplexes should not be exempt from rent control, I believe that all rental units should have rent control and tenant protections.

3. Many residents of Berkeley have been [mailed erroneous notices](#) by the Rent Board. How do you propose fixing the data gaps and communication errors?

The Rent Board is in the process of a tech update. I am currently the Chair of the Budget and Personnel committee, we recently approved a budget that includes an update to our registry system that would reduce errors resulting in a more efficient system.

4. The demolition ordinance passed in 2024 requires any demolition of rent controlled housing to be replaced with subsidized Below Market Rate housing, a significant change from previous practices. Recent estimates have shown that one unit Below Market Rate housing costs ~\$700,000 to build. How do you envision this provision of the ordinance will affect future development and do you think it should be amended?

The demolition ordinance is how we will retain housing low-income housing in Berkeley. I do believe that there is a way to lessen the cost and I think that something that should be considered, but replacing demolished units 1:1 is only fair and the least we can do for Berkeley. Berkeley has heavily displaced our African-American and low-income community as it continues to build housing, this is a start.

5. The recent Rent Board Tenant Convention included a supplementary questionnaire by a co-sponsoring organization for potential candidates. These questions asked about particular policy choices including Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions for Israel, reducing police budgets, decriminalizing drugs, continuing exclusionary zoning unless even small projects are required to include subsidized Below Market Rate housing, supporting free transportation etc. The supplementary questionnaire also asked potential slate members if they would run with DSA-backed candidates Jovanka Beckles and Nikki Bas. Do you believe these topics are relevant to the Rent Board's role in the City of Berkeley? Please explain.

I believe that the above-mentioned questions are important to voters. I think it's important to know how the candidate you're going to endorse feels about genocide and police, injustices that are outside the Rent Board. All the injustices and systems of oppression are interconnected and it is uber-important to determine how you feel about tenants and rent control.

