

# Preserve Oakland's affordability and cultural identity while growing

*"We can revitalize our city, have progress and development, invite new people to be here, have new businesses open up, and we must do it in a way that the people who have always been here don't get displaced and directly benefit from that new prosperity."*

— Libby Schaaf

## What I Think

Oaklanders should be part of Oakland's progress. Progress means having an inclusive economy and moving the city forward without moving long-time residents out. Housing makes up the largest single piece of most people's budget; when housing costs go up, it can wreak havoc for a household. Oakland should be aggressive in adding housing, keeping tenants in their homes, and growing affordable housing options. At the same time we have to help lift people up.

Oakland is getting the worst of all possible worlds right now – housing prices are skyrocketing and there is very limited new development to help temper prices. For Oakland to address its housing crisis, it will need to find a way to build new housing at all income levels, but do so in a way that involves the community.

## What I Have Done

**Fought for Tenants:** I have been the city champion of a record setting tenant lawsuit that improved living conditions for many low-income immigrant families in Oakland. My track record has earned me endorsements by social justice leaders like Esperanza Tervalon-Daumont of Oakland Rising, Anne Omura of the Eviction Defense Center and Lateefah Simon of Rosenberg Foundation.

**Improved Living Conditions:** I led the Decent Housing Taskforce and the Dirty Dozen Landlord campaign, which resulted in improved living conditions for thousands of Oakland's lowest-income tenants across the city.

**Kept rents affordable:** Earlier this year, I negotiated and built consensus to adopt the strongest new rent control protections that Oakland tenants have seen since the state passed Costa-Hawkins. These new regulations limit cost pass-throughs to tenants and place an overall cap on all allowable rent increases, giving families the security that they will be able to afford staying in their existing housing.

**Championed a higher minimum wage:** I was the first elected official in Oakland to endorse the Lift Up Oakland campaign for a significant increase in the minimum wage and paid sick leave for Oakland workers and was recognized by the East Bay Express as one of the only candidates who "never waffled" in my support.



**Supported organized Labor:** I have enjoyed strong support and partnerships with Oakland's labor unions and am endorsed by Alameda County Building Trades Council (2nd place), Oakland Rising Action, United Food & Commercial Workers Local 5, Teamsters Local 70 and Joint Council 7, Operating Engineers Local 3, Sheet Metal Workers Local 104, United Association Local Union 342 (2nd place) and International Association of Machinists District 190.

**Fought against displacement across the Bay Area:** As a member of the ABAG Executive Committee, I wrote and got passed an amendment to our regional plan (Plan Bay Area) to tie more than \$300 in regional transportation funds to the adoption of anti-displacement measures by cities. As a result of my proposal, regional grants are now tied to the existence of local anti-displacement measures and affordable housing production.

## What I Will Do

**Help new housing get built:** We have added 400,000 jobs in the region in the past four years and nowhere near enough housing to keep up with that demand. While some housing growth took place downtown during the 2000's, there are more opportunities to create new homes throughout Oakland. The pressure on Oakland's existing neighborhoods can be reduced if we can add more housing. Creative solutions like adding secondary units (or granny flats) and preventing rental units in duplexes and triplexes from converting to condos, can help create affordable housing without changing neighborhood character. There are also many places in Oakland where new housing construction makes sense but project financing and environmental review are some the barriers in the way of getting projects going.

**Look for new housing funds and use affordable housing funding strategies that work:** Thanks to my advocacy, Oakland will soon complete its nexus study and financial feasibility analysis to determine how to set appropriate impact fees on new residential development that will help fund new affordable housing.

**Pursue additional sources of funding for affordable housing:** There are other ways of funding affordable housing that we should consider, such as a citywide or countywide bond. That way affordable housing funding does not just come from new development. We all care about housing affordability - it is a problem that affects us all.

**Prioritize protection of current rentals:** The city should use some of its scarce housing funds to purchase currently affordable rental units to keep them affordable for the long-term. This will increase the supply of affordable units and act as a buffer against rent increases, as well as protect against displacement from gentrification.

**Incentivize the creation of affordable units:** I will monitor and adjust the city's density bonus rule that encourages developers to include affordable rents. I would develop a complementary reduction in developer fees while accelerating project review for projects supplying affordable units.

**Get tough on bad landlords:** Oakland needs to do more to educate both landlords and tenants about Oakland's renter protections and then be more proactive in enforcing these laws. Oakland can strengthen enforcement of Oakland's Rent Control and Just Cause Eviction requirements already on the books and develop pro-active inspections, rather than wait for complaints.



**Fight for Oakland's fair share:** Since Oakland is one of the cities slated to accept the most growth under our regional plans, I will fight to make sure that Oakland gets its fair share of resources for affordable housing, and also for resource to build the infrastructure that will keep our city livable: transit, great streets, parks and social services. I will support region-wide measures to fund resources for communities like Oakland that are doing their part to accept growth.

**Raise the minimum wage to a livable wage:** I'm confident that Measure FF will pass this November and raise the minimum wage in Oakland to \$12.25 per hour in March of 2015. As the first Oakland official to endorse this proposal, I will ensure the city does its part to educate, assist small businesses and non-profits in transitioning to and enforce this critical new law that will help thousands of working families.

**Bring down the cost of living:** Beyond housing, life in the Bay Area is expensive but we can make a dent in some of those costs. I will make sure Alameda County and the State of California are reaching Oakland residents to help make healthcare affordable. I will also work for an East Bay transit pass would make transportation more affordable for Oaklanders. As opportunities arise to reduce the cost of living in Oakland, especially for those who are most in need, I will pursue them.