

**Berkeley Neighbors for Housing & Climate Action
2020 Candidate Questionnaire**

Candidate Name: Aidan Hill

District / Office being sought: Mayor (At-Large)

1. Please describe how you would approach addressing the housing crisis if elected. How would you achieve Berkeley's RHNA targets for extremely low income, very low income, low income, moderate income, and above moderate income homes? Where should these homes go? How should this be achieved?

In 2018, the Developing an Approach to Streamline Affordable Housing report by the Joint Subcommittee for the Implementation of State Housing Law stated "in addition to the \$310,000 the City [of Berkeley] was awarded earlier this year from the State's SB 2 Planning Grant Program to support preparation of the Ashby and North Berkeley BART zoning standards...the City of Berkeley is eligible to receive a LEAP award in the amount of \$500,000 based on local population. Once elected Mayor and given a similar budget during the 2021-2023 budget cycle, this is how I will contribute to achieving Berkeley's RHNA targets:

Extremely Low-Income: 266 units | Achieved %0.8

Quickly enact production and rehabilitation of non-profit, community-controlled housing through public financing with immediate emphasis on housing the homeless. Create programs designed to purchase, rehabilitate, and redevelop foreclosed, abandoned, demolished, or vacant properties on both commercial and residential lots. Strengthen and enforce fair housing laws against discrimination based on race, sex, familial status (children), marital status, disability, and sexual orientation as well as income and credit history. I will propose legislation classifying activities such as volunteerism, domestic work and child rearing as contributions to the economy.

Very Low-Income: 226 units | Achieved %0.8

Pursue more efficient use of our existing housing supply, such as home-sharing and cooperative conversions of existing dwellings. Create a rent subsidy program that prevent evictions without just cause. Our city will provide low-cost incentives for upgrading facilities, rental spaces and homes to become ADA compliant. Offer capital grants to non-profit developers of affordable housing until all people can obtain decent housing at no more than 25% of their income. Restrict owner move-in evictions of long-term tenants, elders, and disabled persons. Direct the City Auditor's office to audit rental agencies that refuse to maintain their properties in habitable condition, or who engage in illegal evictions, with hefty fines.

Low-Income: 442 units | Achieved %0

Build human-scale, low income housing and increase affordable housing supplies in the City of Berkeley. Enforce local affordable housing quotas. Rent and eviction control laws and collective bargaining for tenants. Develop public-public partnerships to create public housing units allowing residential ownership of available for the life of the unit. Integrate an increased and sufficient number of affordable and low-income housing units into urbanized areas to

address the dwelling needs of all citizens. Insist that architectural review boards and planning commissions represent the concerns of citizens, rather than the concerns of economic segments of the community. Remove restrictions on converting large, single family homes to multi-family use.

Moderate Income: 584 units | Achieved %0.5

Strengthen consumer protections for homebuyers to reduce predatory lending practices. Resident-controlled community renovation programs to create, not destroy, low- and moderate-income housing. Eliminate requirements for off-street parking and street dedication, which forces the housing sector to subsidize the automobile industry. Allow industrial and commercial developers to provide housing instead of parking spaces in new developments, and permit housing development in existing industrial and commercial zones. Provide incentives to increase homeownership by increasing assistance for down payment and closing costs through increased funding of the Community Development Block Grant program.

Above Median Income: 1401 units | Achieved %4.2

Base building codes on performance requirements rather than specific physical models. I support progressive taxation rather than a flat tax. Include aggregate of real property and stocks, bonds, etc. in a steeply-graduated property tax. Enforce laws against illegal hotel conversions. Make land decisions cooperatively to match ecological demarcations of space.

2. What actions have you taken, beyond this current campaign, in line with the approach you described above?

When I moved to our city to attend UC Berkeley, I lived in Dorms, Student Housing Cooperatives, and was unhoused, giving me a unique understanding of how the rental system works and its effects on marginalized groups such as students and low-income people. Since 2018, I have worked to support homeless encampments and protect RV's from being gentrified out of this area so people may have temporary accommodations and housing. Likewise, I have supported my residential neighbors who rely on Section 8 vouchers and have seen how agencies produce unlivable conditions on them, such as keeping them on 3rd stories without working elevators and refusing to relocate people to lower floors to accommodate them. I have worked dramatically towards aligning myself with people across our city inhabiting different housing arrangements. Likewise, I am a strong organizer towards eviction defense, working with Berkeley's Homeless Outreach and Treatment Team focusing on getting housing for our unhoused elders especially in District 7. I have a strong connection with the Bay Area Community Land Trust, the the East Bay Community Law Center and the Eviction Defense Center in Oakland.

3. Please describe how you would approach addressing the climate crisis if elected. How would you achieve the goals set forth in 2006 Measure G? What does the city need to do to reach carbon neutrality by 2045? How can Berkeley become a Fossil Fuel Free City?

Measure G states the City of Berkeley [will] have a goal of 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and advise the Mayor to work with the community to develop a plan for Council adoption...which sets a ten year emissions reduction target” by 2016. However, this is no longer a realistic target due to the compound effects of climate change we have seen in the last 2 years. The City, if it wishes to adapt and mitigate the worst effects of climate change MUST achieve carbon neutrality by 2025 with a MAXIMUM deadline of 2030 according to *the intergovernmental panel on Climate Change (IPCC)*. Likewise, the United Nations’ most recent *Emissions Gap Report* states, “global greenhouse gas emissions must begin falling by 7.6 percent each year beginning 2020.” Because we have, as a city, not dramatically reduced GHG reductions this year, your decision for Mayor this next year will have an existential role to play if we wish to protect our city in this lifetime. I am the only Mayoral candidate that will set realistic and practical goals to achieve this target. I believe with my knowledge of the international political system, accessing the research as a student of the University of California Berkeley, my leadership will develop and implement a climate equity plan towards total carbon neutrality within the next four years. As such I will introduce maximum restrictions on developing on Berkeley open spaces and public parks in accordance with the “Berkeley Public Parks and Open Space Preservation Ordinance” (measure L). Our city’s residents must have easily accessible carbon buffers to prevent the worst effects of smog, heat exposure, and water contamination. Likewise, I will fight against the UC’s development agenda as they increasingly capture and develop upon available space for private partnerships rather than community centered conservation. Outside of the housing. The city needs to implement direct investments to create, rehabilitate, and maintain all public open spaces in all communities. Likewise, we need to preserve, protect, and restore streams, rivers, lakes, bays, wetlands, the ocean, and groundwater aquifers and simultaneously protect our flora and fauna. Our city needs to expand safe routes for foot and bicycle traffic and provide free and community serviced bicycles for tourists, visitors or others without bicycles so they can ride around town pollution-free. Lastly I will mention here (feel free to contact me for my full environmental vision) our city is in desperate need for education about all about the different types of wastes and the separation of of recyclables, compostables, and reusables. As mayor, I will work towards implementing banning of single-use non-biodegradable plastic consumer items except where medically necessary or necessary for A.D.A. compliance. In accordance with this, I will subsidize biodegradable packaging and equipment for consumer use while taxing excess or wasteful packaging. I emphasize plant-based diets since their wastes are biodegradable and compostable. I also believe in simplifying procedures that let people choose not to receive junk mail and messages.

4. What actions have you taken, beyond this current campaign, in line with the approach you described above?

The primary component of my work is based around preserving People’s Park from development because it is the only open space available for the District #7 Berkeley community with 4 buildings dedicated to student housing and at least 1 building dedicated to low-income housing surrounding it. Without this place, not only are we especially at risk for climate disasters but we will lose the available oxygen buffer that provides our clean air. At this Park, I have worked dramatically to re-establish a thriving community garden in partnership with 4 other community

gardens across our city. I am also a volunteer with East Bay Food Not Bombs and provide free meals to students, low-income people, and unhoused people once a week. Earlier in my political development, I organized trash clean ups with the California Public Interest Research Group and hosted three town halls in Oakland, Santa Monica and Monterrey to support the California Ban on Single Use Plastics as well as conservation measures to protect our wildlife. I am a strong environmental activist and did a tree sit to protect residential trees from being cut down by UC Berkeley without permits (August 26th). Protecting the environment for future generations is the most important thing to me.

5. b) For candidates not yet elected to the office they are seeking: in your opinion, what was the most important housing issue that Council voted on in the past four years, or expects to vote on before November? What was the issue? Do you believe Council's decision was the best one? If you had been on Council, what would you have done?

The most important housing issue that Council voted on in the past four years was approving the Housing for a Diverse, Equitable and Creative Berkeley framework. Although this was a proposal for further study rather than implementation, it outlines a path towards public-housing developments including community land trusts and cooperative living arrangements. This was long overdue and I would have used my position as Mayor to immediately hold forums with business improvement districts to discuss the needs of each neighborhood. Likewise, I would never displace homeless people during the same time I pass this. Existing unhoused populations in Berkeley are just as vital if not more than a framework for maximizing housing availability.

6. b) For candidates not yet elected to the office they are seeking: in your opinion, what was the most important climate or environmental issue that Council voted on in the past four years, or expects to vote on before November? What was the issue? Do you believe Council's decision was the best one? If you had been on Council, what would you have done?

In 2018, Council passed both The Climate Emergency and Fossil Free resolutions to reach 100% renewable energy by 2030. If I was on the council, I would not only have voted on this but also spend the majority of my time in office to continue working with partners to reduce carbon emissions before our covid crisis.

7. Berkeley must continue adding more homes in order to achieve its RHNA goals, especially for extremely low income, low income, and moderate income households. These new households will need ways to get around Berkeley. At the same time, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transportation comprise roughly 60% of total emissions in Berkeley. How would you ensure Berkeley continues to add new homes while reducing GHGs?

I support initiatives that advance complete streets and safety first outcomes, improve transit access and services, promote transit adjacent housing, reduce air pollutants that threaten public health, curb transportation emissions that fuel climate change, and harden existing transportation facilities and networks to make them more resilient to climatic events. City dollars must be used in ways that preserve and enhance the quality of life for all

Berkeleyans. As mayor, I will urge city council to budget public investments to reconstruct bridges, off-ramps, streets, and roadways in our city. I will push funding towards weatherizing our buildings, develop flood protection systems, and significantly enhance the inclusive design of our city's infrastructure in accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act. I envision a Berkeley with an extensive network of bicycle lanes and paths where our city partners with cooperatives to provide free and community serviced bicycles for residents, students, and visitors or others so they can ride around town pollution-free. I support our city budget to include funding for personal mobility equipment such as wheelchairs, white canes, and hearing aids. I support subsidizing the California Department of Rehabilitation and Ed Roberts campus so elders and disabled people may pursue education, vocational training, and reach their highest potential. Its important to work with regional partners to provide easy-to-understand and thorough information concerning mass transit schedules, routes and rates that are convenient and accessible to potential commuters. I will consider implementing light rails to establish expressway medians through our city and I support a regional high-speed rail network as an alternative to airplanes and cars especially over highly traveled medium-length routes to and from San Francisco. I will direct the city manager to deploy new transportation technologies and update local regulatory regimes addressing autonomous vehicles, ride sharing services and resources that expand travel options in our city. I believe transportation issues should be acknowledged in land use decisions.

8. Berkeley has a long history of segregation, racial zoning, restrictive covenants, and redlining, which continue to impact our community to this day. Much of this history was, and remains, reflected in Berkeley's zoning restrictions, with resulting implications for greenhouse gas emissions. How would you address Berkeley's history and impacts of segregation through housing policy?

I recognizing that all of us living in the city of Berkeley benefit from the forced segregation, assimilation, and ecological decimation of the Ohlone people and I recognize the Segorea Te Land Trust as an essential tax to repair damages against the Ohlone people. Any person who wishes to create true change in our city MUST recognize the history of this land openly and how our institutions benefits from development with limited citizen oversight. As Mayor Berkeley, I commit myself to strengthening and enforcing fair housing laws regarding discrimination based on race, age, gender, children, marital status, disability, and sexual orientation. I will advocate to provide incentives for non-profit affordable housing developers until all of our residents can obtain decent housing at no more than 25% of their income. I believe that housing is a human right and I support the production and rehabilitation of non-profit, community-controlled housing with immediate support for unhoused people. It is important that our city purchase, rehabilitate, and redevelop foreclosed, abandoned, demolished, or vacant properties on both commercial and residential lots for community benefit including housing cooperatives and community land trusts. Please view question #1 to see the direct policies I would implement.