

2016 MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES RESPONSES TO DOWNTOWN BERKELEY ASSOCIATION QUESTIONS

September 21, 2016

While the DBA does not endorse candidates, the DBA has invited Mayoral and City Council candidates to respond to the following eight questions regarding the future of the Downtown Berkeley. We see these questions as an opportunity for the DBA to express our concerns and priorities, and then for the candidates with their responses help inform the DBA, Downtown stakeholders, and the entire Berkeley electorate about the candidate's positions on these Downtown and city-wide issues. Unedited answers have been posted on the [DBA website](#), and will be shared with local media.

The eight same questions were asked of all candidates:

1. What is your near-term vision for the Downtown and its role in the City? Your vision over the next four years? Ten years?
2. What are your thoughts regarding the persistent street behavior challenges in the Downtown, Telegraph and other areas in the City? Do you support the Community Sidewalks Ordinances?
3. What is your perception regarding parking in the Downtown? Do you support the DBA position of doubling the parking at the City's Berkeley Way lot in the event the parcel is developed?
4. What are your ideas for making Berkeley more welcoming environment for new businesses, particularly for retail and office space in the Downtown?
5. What is your vision and ideas for revitalization of the Civic Center Historic District?
6. Would you support public/private partnerships to adaptively reuse the Downtown Post Office?
7. What is your vision for public art in the Downtown, including visual and performing arts? Also, what is your vision for additional visual and/or performing arts venues in the Downtown?
8. What do you see as the critical management and financial issues facing the City over the next several years?

We received responses from the following candidates:

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| Mayor | Laurie Capitelli, Ben Gould |
| District 2 | Darryl Moore |
| District 3 | Deborah Matthews |
| District 5 | Sophie Hahn, Stephen Murphy |
| District 6 | Isabelle Gaston, Susan Wengraf |

You can view all of the candidate responses under the Documents/Other section of the DBA website at www.downtownberkeley.com/documents/#other

1. What is your near-term vision for the Downtown and its role in the City? Your vision over the next four years? Ten years?

Laurie Capitelli – Mayor

My near-term vision for the Downtown consists of friendly, welcoming streets and sidewalks; a healthy mix of restaurants, retail, and cultural amenities; improvements to our streets and open spaces; and the completion of projects such as the exciting Center Street hotel and conference center, as well as the new BART plaza.

I am the only mayoral candidate that has consistently worked to achieve a realistic, forward-thinking vision for Downtown Berkeley. I unequivocally championed our Downtown Plan, which has created new market-rate and affordable housing Downtown and brought in millions of dollars in affordable housing funds. One of my opponents, Councilmember Arreguin, continues to undermine this award-winning and successful plan by pushing for burdensome new requirements and review processes. Instead of creating new obstacles to the creation of housing and jobs, I believe we should build on Downtown Berkeley's success.

Berkeley deserves a vibrant Downtown. Over the next four years, I want to eliminate red tape in order to help sustain our locally-owned, small businesses and to keep new businesses and housing coming to Downtown Berkeley. I want to see a variety of housing for all income levels and ages, so that Downtown Berkeley can continue to be a place where everyone can live, work, and play.

In ten years, I want the Downtown to be a fully-realized neighborhood that provides its diverse residents with a variety of shopping, dining, and services, new arts and public spaces, and high-quality housing they can afford. I want to see Downtown Berkeley realize its full potential, including the preservation and adaptive reuse of the Main Berkeley Post Office and Old City Hall. And I want all of Berkeley to be able to share in these successes through greater transit accessibility to Downtown.

Ben Gould – Mayor

As a resident of Downtown, I am excited for the area's future. With the BART plaza remodel, Shattuck realignment, and 2211 Harold Way, Berkeley Way West, Center St. Hotel, and the UC Berkeley Hotel projects underway, the next few years will significantly change the look and feel of the Downtown, bringing more vibrancy and activity to the area. In addition, the new Center St. garage will bring an opportunity to re-evaluate the streetscape and layout of Shattuck beyond the Center St. alignment. I hope to explore the possibility of bike lanes, bus lanes, or bus rapid transit on Shattuck through Downtown, reclaiming valuable and limited public right-of-way for moving people.

Over the next ten years, I would seek to continue to bring new housing and jobs to Downtown, and find ways to develop underutilized sites. The vacant University property at Oxford and Kittredge could be removed, allowing for a realignment of Oxford St. to improve pedestrian safety, and the nearby car wash could be an excellent location for new student housing close to campus, transit, and everything Downtown has to offer.

I would work to preserve the front portion of the historic Post Office, while finding new uses for the warehouse in the rear, such as a homeless shelter, or a new mixed-use building with homeless services included. I would also support developing other sites (such as the car rental on Kittredge and Milvia, and the many low-rise buildings on University and Shattuck) into new housing, stores, restaurants, and office space.

Additionally, as part of my citywide efforts to reinvest in parks & infrastructure, I would work to rehabilitate Civic Center Park, expand parklets throughout the Downtown, and find ways to preserve the façade and character of the historic Veteran's Memorial and Old City Hall while rehabilitating the buildings to be safer, cleaner, and more functional.

Darryl Moore – District 2

In the next four years, we must:

- **Replace the Center Street Garage:** While I'm all for alternative forms of transportation, in the near term, we must face the fact that a significant number of people visiting the downtown are doing so by means of their own personal vehicles. The centrally-located, newly-improved Center Street Garage will allow for improved vehicle bandwidth while we continue to work to move people toward alternative transportation. If we do not address parking needs, not only do we not serve our purpose of trying to reduce our carbon footprint, as most people will be circling the block until they find parking, but we will also continue to lose business to the more car-friendly Emeryville and other surrounding commercial districts.
- **Build a hotel in the downtown:** UC Berkeley is one of the very few top-tier universities without a nearby hotel/conference center. Building a hotel/conference center near the university will make the university a much more attractive location to hold conferences and, therefore, capture the secondary business revenues. This project is also very important to the long-term sustainability of the downtown and the City of Berkeley because it would provide \$6 mil to the Housing Trust Fund in initial fees that would go a long way in helping to mitigate the current housing crisis, and would provide \$3-4 million a year in transient occupancy tax which would help us improve our municipal service levels.
- **Complete the One Stop Center (The Hub) for homeless services:** While the City of Berkeley spends upward of \$3 million a year in homeless-related services annually, often times our homeless population does not know how to access these disparate services. As we have been seeing our homeless population grow in recent years, it is even more important that we effectively and efficiently move this population into services so that we can stabilize their situation to the extent possible so they are able to get back on their feet. The Hub would be able to provide the gamut of homeless services under one roof in a centrally located facility, which would make it much more accessible to this population.
- **Ensure the completion of the downtown BART station:** As we are trying to encourage alternative forms of transportation, we need to make them as attractive as possible to recruit commuters away from their private vehicles. A rejuvenated downtown BART station would go a long way in giving our flagship station a makeover that might make this option a little more attractive.
- **Ensure that Alta Bates stays open:** Berkeley prides itself on its response times for public safety. Our fire department can respond to calls at lightning speeds due to our 7 fire stations and relatively small geographic area. While our paramedics can stabilize patients that may be experiencing life-threatening illness or injury, the closure of Alta Bates could undermine our emergency response when each minute could mean the difference between life and death. We must fight to keep our local emergency room up and running.

In the next ten years, we must:

- **Build the buildings outlined in Measure R:** Encouraging the buildings under Measure R being built would provide not only significant amount of housing to help mitigate our current housing crisis, but also provide a wide array of community benefits under our new community benefits agreement. Under the community benefits package that I put together with my colleague Councilmember Droste, developers would be required to contribute to some combination of affordable housing, local labor, arts and culture, street and open space improvements, green building standards, restoration of historic buildings, and/or supportive social services. These investments would help improve the condition of our downtown and likely many other parts of our city.
- **Improve real-time parking signage:** Real-time parking signage would help to direct motorists to available parking in our downtown. This would drastically reduce the frustration of shopping in our downtown by allowing shoppers to quickly and efficiently find parking. Efficient routing of motorists to parking would also have a dramatic effect on our greenhouse gas emissions. Approximately half of greenhouse gas emissions in the City of Berkeley are created by vehicles. Every minute that a motorist is circling the block looking for parking adds to this number.

- Encourage solar in downtown buildings: While we might not be able to eliminate vehicle travel altogether, we can find other ways to reduce our carbon footprint. Encouraging solar in our downtown buildings seems like low-hanging fruit that would be an easy way to reduce load on the grid.

Deborah Matthews – District 3

At the heart of our city is our downtown, which provides the iconic landmarks and distinctive features that reflect Berkeley's storied history and unique vibe. It is a visitor's first introduction to the culture and spirit of our city. Downtown Berkeley serves as a lens through which to view Berkeley's past, present and future. Therefore, I earnestly believe the next 4-10 years must focus on continuing our revitalization of the downtown.

Integral to the revitalization of the downtown is weaving together the rich elements of our history. This can be done in the short-term. Berkeley was the cornerstone of the Free Speech Movement, home of the Black Panther Party and led the fight in the Anti-Apartheid Movement. These historically important elements, among others, need to be incorporated into our vision for downtown each for their contributions— they are critical pillars in the backbone of our City.

Our efforts long-term must be focused on an approach that offers proactive growth strategies that unite the public, private and civic sectors. This includes becoming a destination for conventions and businesses. We are a world-class leader in education, research and health care. I believe that adding a Center for Workforce Technology & Training downtown would help our residents unleash their full economic and intellectual potential by gaining access to workforce development tools and resources.

Above all, we must demonstrate through planning and policies our commitment to be inclusive of our low-income communities, not treating them as liabilities, but creating policies that empower job creation self sustainability and equitable redistribution of resources, services and income infrastructure while improving quality of life.

Creating a vibrant downtown will help to attract and retain talented community members and the companies who want to hire them. It will provide economic opportunities for our local residents, and make our city a destination point for a broader base of tourists and business interests. along with enjoyment to our Berkeley residents.

Sophie Hahn – District 5

Every city needs to decide what it wants to be, and I believe that Berkeley should build on its history and reputation as a center for multicultural arts, intellect and creativity. Walnut Creek is a regional destination for shopping. Ashland, Oregon, a much smaller city than Berkeley, is a national destination for Shakespeare. Berkeley can and should be a regional, statewide and international destination for art, entertainment, food, performance and intellectual exploration. Downtown Berkeley's role is to be the hub, with world-class public spaces and creative shops, arts, festivals, restaurants and other destinations. Underlying and driving the entire concept should be Berkeley's progressive values of diversity, equity and multiculturalism.

This may sound ambitious, but Downtown Berkeley already has many of the elements necessary to make this vision a reality. Home to the greatest public university in the world, Berkeley boasts thousands of arts organizations, artists, authors, chefs, thinkers, innovators and visionaries. We have an increasing number of fairs, forums and events and an abundance of cultural and arts opportunities every day of the year.

Our next step would be to clarify, articulate, plan for and realize this vision in a more comprehensive manner, and ensure that our policies, investments, funding, marketing and all other factors are in alignment. *I am a strong believer in exceptional public space as the defining element of great cities.* My #1 goal is for the City and private partners to invest in a vibrant, animated, pedestrian oriented downtown and Civic Center with high

quality landscaping and spaces, outdoor cafes and kiosks, amenities for children, game tables (like in NYC's Washington Square Park), and more. Berkeley's Streets and Open Spaces Improvement Plan for the downtown (SOSIP) includes many elements that will enhance the public experience of our downtown. I would like to update/expand the plan with an emphasis on "placemaking," and then focus on funding and achieving implementation.

The award winning Addison Arts District is a good example of how policies to support the arts in a concentrated manner, through zoning and investments, can yield a critical mass that turns a regular street into a destination. Downtown Berkeley already hosts the University Art Museum, the Book Fair, Berkeley's "Uncharted" Festival of Ideas, our revitalized Main Library, Habitot (which provides creative play-space for our youngest citizens), Berkeley Rep, Aurora and Freight and Salvage, the UC Theatre, Cal Performances/Zellerbach, and many more destinations. Our task is to link these in a meaningful manner, through enhancement of the public spaces that surround and connect them, and through more cohesive branding, marketing and coordination.

Development of new housing is also important, and on the Zoning Board I have supported the overwhelming majority of large projects in or near the downtown. I always advocate for high quality and contextually appropriate design, maximum affordable housing built on site, green building and transit amenities, family-sized units and access for people with disabilities. "Transit oriented development" takes advantage of an important public good – transit – and it's important to me that everyone in our community, including low and moderate income residents, families, seniors and the disabled - have access to the great benefit of proximity to transit.

Four years from now I hope that Downtown Berkeley is immersed in implementing upgrades to our public spaces, and that our existing businesses are supported in weathering the transformation. I support grants and loans to existing businesses and not for profits that may be disrupted or displaced by both public and private construction, and will work to put a program in place to ensure that our businesses are not left to shoulder the cost of transforming our downtown. Ten years from now I hope that our downtown will be a place that invites and unites people from all of Berkeley, is a widely recognized destination for the arts, intellect and creativity, and is an exceptional place to spend time – and money. There is much work to be done, but I am confident that we can do it. I look forward to partnering with the Downtown Association, arts organizations, merchants, community members and UC Berkeley to move forward decisively.

Stephen Murphy – District 5

I imagine that in ten years, Downtown Berkeley could become an economic, cultural, and social hub. In order to make that happen, we will have to focus on encouraging economic development, creating more housing, and preserving and nourishing Berkeley's history and art.

The Downtown Area Plan is a great start. It encourages thoughtful economic development, effective parking strategies, more housing, and better affordability. I strongly support the Downtown Plan. In 2014, I ran the ground campaign to defeat the anti-growth Measure R (co-authored by my opponent) that would have overturned the Downtown Plan. I'm excited to see that the Downtown Plan is already having a positive effect on the city. New commercial space, restaurants, cafes and housing are appearing along Shattuck and the new BART plaza will soon be under construction.

Our job for the next four years will be to maintain the momentum with a sensitivity to aesthetics, culture, and history. We should continue to focus upon revitalization, and make quality, affordable housing, office, and commercial space available for more people. As the city evolves, we must work to preserve Berkeley's history, retain prized architecture, celebrate important spaces, and maintain a diverse, connected community. We must usher in the City's bright future while celebrating its soulful past.

Isabelle Gaston – District 6

If the plans that are currently underway continue unchanged, my near-to-long term vision of the downtown is one of seemingly endless construction. There will be seven tall architecturally-uninspired buildings built including the 18-story Harold Way project and two hotels. Several of the buildings will be constructed at the same time which will result in significant inconvenience, and at times paralysis, for anyone trying to do business downtown.

I imagine that many cafes and restaurants will close, some permanently, in the downtown area because of the construction - too much noise, too much dust. There just won't be adequate foot traffic to sustain them. Perhaps some of these establishments will relocate to other parts of the city.

The streets will be overtaken by construction workers' trucks, cement trucks, cranes, etc. Fewer people will frequent the main library; they may prefer going to their neighborhood branch. Cal students will find other places to go have lunch rather than downtown, and Berkeley High students will have a more difficult time getting to school with all the detours. I wouldn't be surprised if the farmer's market relocates due to construction on weekends. Disabled people who live downtown will be trapped, like Pamela Dahl currently is: <http://www.dailycal.org/2016/08/03/berkeley-resident-disabilities-faces-health-risks-due-construction/>.

Depending on the outcome of this critical election, I believe there is the potential for even more tall buildings over the next 10 years than just the original seven. These additional buildings would extend beyond today's downtown, creeping northwards towards the Gourmet Ghetto, west on University, and along Shattuck towards the Berkeley Bowl. The temptation to sell a one or two-story local business to a big real estate developer will be too great to turn down. Many renters will be displaced as is already the case in other parts of Berkeley. Like downtown, most if not all of the new construction will be cheaply built and constitute the tenements of tomorrow.

Ten years from now, in 2026, what will downtown look like when all the construction is complete? Well, because of the poor transportation infrastructure and the inadequate parking for new residents, downtown Berkeley will be in a permanent state of gridlock (I believe no mitigations were required for the increased traffic). There will not be as many cyclists as envisioned, partly because the City's Bike Plan in 2016 shortchanged the development of a low-stress bikeway network. Virtually all of the new restaurants will be chains like P.F. Chang's and Panera Bread. There will be a Gap, Victoria's Secret, Apple Store, and Nike. Maybe a Whole Foods will open as well. The beautiful blue sky and sunshine will be blocked by the height of the new structures. Less fresh air will circulate because of the increased number of people and cars, as well as the towering buildings. Views of the Berkeley hills for those living west of downtown will be lost forever and the view of the Golden Gate Bridge from Campanile Way will be at least partially obstructed.

Architects around in the world will wonder how this came to pass. Why were such undistinguished, aesthetically-drab buildings with poor quality materials constructed? Why would anyone permit the encroachment of an iconic view (Campanile Way) with an 18-story monstrosity? How could a city with such intelligent people and natural beauty sell out to developers?

All in all, the downtown will be far tidier, pleasing some, especially investors, but it will have no character to speak of. Berkeley will become yet another bedroom community for tech workers in the Bay Area, but on the positive side, there will be more much-needed apartments for Cal students (living cheek by jowl to pay the rent, of course).

And what will many of today's residents who lived during this 10-year construction boom get in return besides increased density, traffic, and skyrocketing taxes to pay for additional police and fire, and new schools? The pleasure of saying they supported "smart growth?"

If I am elected, I will work as hard as I can to make sure that the process of any future development does not destroy our city and to improve the quality of new development. I will work towards a vision of a livable and healthy Berkeley, even if it means slowing down the pace of development.

Susan Wengraf – District 6

I envision the Downtown as a destination; the place where we all want to go. It would be vibrant with activity, restaurants, coffee shops, theatre, cinema, music venues, art museums and some good opportunities for shopping.

Civic Center Park would be the site for regular performances, dance, music and theatre, open and free to the public. The sidewalks would be clear and all of the people living on the street now would be in homes with the assistance of supportive services.

Residents living downtown would form a neighborhood of caring and committed folks, who want the downtown to succeed and would participate in its planning.

2. What are your thoughts regarding the persistent street behavior challenges in the Downtown, Telegraph and other areas in the City? Do you support the Community Sidewalks Ordinances?

Laurie Capitelli – Mayor

Yes, I supported the Community Sidewalks Ordinance. Berkeley is a compassionate city but, unlike my opponents, I believe that compassion must be balanced with basic rules that maintain the basic safety and cleanliness of our public commons. I think the City should provide public restrooms, but we should also enforce common-sense laws against urinating or defecating in the street. I also want to see Berkeley provide storage spaces for our most vulnerable, so we can make sure our sidewalks are clear of scattered possessions and debris.

I want Berkeley to collaborate with other cities to implement a regional Housing First program to get our most vulnerable citizens into safe, supportive housing. Housing First models have proven the most effective in reducing homelessness, but Berkeley can't go it alone. Our regional homelessness problem far outstrips Berkeley's capacity to solve it. More than any other candidate in this race, I have the experience, the relationships, and the sense of realism to tackle this thorny and persistent problem. I secured \$10 million dollars more than my opponents in housing trust fund money so we have financial resources to create innovative housing solutions for our poorest community members.

Much of our homeless population is also saddled with severe mental health problems. Unlike my Council opponents, I supported urging our County Board of Supervisors to begin a pilot of [Assisted Outpatient Treatment](#) (AB1421) which allows our courts to direct persons who are seriously mentally ill to enter into community-based housing and wrap-around services.

Ben Gould – Mayor

I think Berkeley has to do more to get residents off the streets and into supportive housing. I do not support unnecessarily cruel measures that fail to provide adequate resources for houseless residents; however, I am not on principle opposed to measures to restrict the most egregious behavior in public spaces

I believe the Community Sidewalks Ordinance is close to something I could support, but I am concerned about the adequacy and location of the storage to be provided, the frequent and significant relocation requirements for individuals (especially considering those with disabilities and/or mental health challenges), the small size of

the permitted sidewalk space, and the restrictions on the use of planter walls or proximity to tree wells. I would like to see outreach for and an evaluation of the services provided prior to implementation of the ordinance, rather than implementation as soon as they exist.

Darryl Moore – District 2

I do support the Community Sidewalks Ordinance. I believe that everyone should be able to enjoy our downtown, regardless of our circumstance or means. If you are patronizing a restaurant or are homeless and just need a place to hang out during the day, one should have equal access to our downtown. This means that one should not preclude the other, and the way in which one enjoys our downtown should not make it unusable for others. The Community Sidewalks Ordinances would ensure equal access by making visitors feel comfortable paying for parking by prohibiting panhandling near parking pay stations, defecating and urinating in public, and impeding the public right of way. These are basic requirements to allow everyday citizens, as well as our homeless population, enjoy our downtown.

Deborah Matthews – District 3

On any given day in the downtown area, sidewalks and storefronts serve as painful reminders of homelessness in our community. People are in dire need, living in broken-down cardboard boxes and plagued by alcohol and drug addictions. We have become too accustomed to signs saying “will work for food,” tarps as the only protection from the weather, and shopping carts full of worldly possessions. We need to find concrete long-term solutions to help these members of our community.

I support the Community Sidewalk Ordinances. These ordinances are geared towards ensuring safe, clean streets and walkways to all residents, which I believe is essential to attracting new residents, businesses and visitors to our wonderful city. However, prior to effectively implementing these policies we must ensure the appropriate safety nets are in place for the most vulnerable in our community. We must first address the root causes of homelessness -- mental illness, violence or abuse, street as choice, and transient residents – and find permanent, supportive housing solutions for this population.

Sophie Hahn – District 5

The street behavior challenges we face in our downtown and commercial corridors are real and damaging, both to merchants and to the public. Within the past two years, my own son was punched on his way back to Berkeley High, and I was struck on the back of the head by a bottle thrown in the course of a sidewalk altercation between two beleaguered individuals. This is clearly unacceptable. It is imperative that Berkeley residents, visitors, customers, and business owners feel safe and comfortable when downtown, and this comfort is key to the economic viability of all our commercial districts.

The key question is how to achieve the goal of safe, clean and inviting streets for all. I believe that shabby environments invite shabby behaviors, and one of my top priorities for our downtown and commercial corridors is to create high quality public spaces and amenities to attract and serve a broad cross-section of the public. A second priority, and the only long term solution to the crisis of homelessness (which accounts for a large portion, but not all of our street behavior challenges), is to move the homeless into supportive housing and provide the mental health and other services they need to repair their lives.

I believe in the housing first model and would like to see Berkeley partner with other East Bay cities and Alameda and Contra Costa counties to create a comprehensive program to address the homeless crisis, modelled after successful programs in San Francisco, Portland, Seattle and other communities. The only real solution to homelessness is homes (and supportive services); everything else is just wishful thinking – with a very high price to the homeless themselves, and to the communities that, by default, pour money into expensive police, criminal justice and emergency-room “services.”

Objectionable behaviors are already against the law – both of the incidents my family experienced would be rightly prosecuted as assaults - and we have laws against lying in the street, public urination, threatening behaviors and more. Police officers and emergency personnel are rightfully concerned about the optics – and effectiveness - of constantly arresting our most vulnerable residents and cycling them in and out of jails, courts and emergency rooms. Thus, I do not believe that more laws against more behaviors – many of them entirely innocuous such as placing objects or sitting on the sidewalk - are the solution. They are inevitably overbroad, criminalizing innocent activities and inviting unequal enforcement. A better path would be to create real solutions to the homeless crisis and enforce our existing laws against aggressive, threatening and violent behaviors.

More broadly, I believe we must de-emphasize policies and approaches that rely on emergency response personnel and police to address a housing and mental health crisis. When a significant portion of calls to police and other emergency personnel are to respond to situations involving the homeless (the police estimate 35% of calls may involve this population), it represents an inefficient use of public resources – with no real solution in sight. This ensures a cycle of continued inefficient use of resources, and continued misery for those who live on our streets, and for those who wish to use and enjoy them for their intended purposes.

I believe we should address the homeless crisis in four ways. First, we need to create an East Bay corridor task force including representatives from Oakland, Berkeley, Richmond, Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, and other local jurisdictions, to create a comprehensive, coordinated plan to provide services. Second, we need to expand emergency services for people on the brink of homelessness, so that we stem the tide of newly created homeless. Third, we need to invest, with our regional partners, in real, coordinated, long term solutions to the homeless crisis. San Francisco’s navigation centers are working – we should quickly create several throughout the area. We need to acquire or build supportive housing, and fund the comprehensive services models that have proven to be successful in other cities. Finally, we need to implement stop-gap measures while we wait for long term solutions to come online. The Homeless Task Force Report outlines a number of measures Berkeley should adopt. I am also open to exploring sanctioned tent cities with sanitation facilities, services and some self-governance. A comprehensive study written by Yale University’s National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty provides an overview of these imperfect, temporary measures that Berkeley should consider. They are not a solution, and should never be tolerated over the long run. But, certainly they would be more humane, sanitary and contained than the encampments under our freeways and in our streets and parks.

There are no easy, quick or inexpensive solutions to this crisis, which is excruciating for the homeless themselves, and presents serious challenges to people and businesses of our downtown, commercial areas and for our parks. The Obama Administration and Department of Veterans Affairs created an initiative to end homelessness among veterans, and they have shown their model works, ending veteran homelessness in states and counties across the US. We don’t have to re-invent the wheel to get this done - we just need to have the will - and devote the resources - to implement real solutions for our homeless neighbors, and for the community (including the business community) at large.

Stephen Murphy – District 5

As the Associate Director of the Alameda County Family Justice Center, I work daily with disenfranchised people who have are survivors of assault, abuse, and trafficking. Many of the people I work with are or have been homeless, and I have seen firsthand how difficult it is to escape homelessness. My work has helped me understand that the vast majority of people who are homeless have been victims of many layers of abuse over the course of a long period of time. These people need a vast network of resources in order to truly get help. This requires a long-term, regional plan, and a collective, housing first, case management focused model. Realistically, the problem can’t be fixed right away, but we must work together to make progress.

I support the Community Sidewalks Ordinance because I agree with its underlying principle: Berkeley residents are compassionate and wish to support our homeless population and they wish also to preserve public safety and health, especially in our common spaces. The Community Sidewalks Ordinances strikes a compassionate balance in that it sets limits on inappropriate behavior and at the same time provides important services, including an increase in public bathrooms. I believe that this kind of approach – basic rules coupled with reliably available resources – is an important strategy as we work to tackle this issue.

Isabelle Gaston – District 6

The street behavior is unacceptable. I fully understand why many people do not enjoy walking around our downtown area. As the next District 6 City Councilperson, I pledge to work hard on this issue but I will first want to understand why the policies enacted by the current City Council have failed. We must learn from our mistakes so we don't repeat them. I can't guarantee an immediate improvement but I am very open to hearing and exploring alternative approaches.

With regard to the ordinances, we definitely need more bathrooms and showers for the homeless; this should have been done years ago. I have several reservations regarding the lockers including the cost, \$300K/year (it is only \$100K/year in Pomona). It sounds like a Band-Aid approach but it may be the best interim solution.

Susan Wengraf – District 6

YES. I am a strong supporter of the Community Sidewalks Ordinances. We need to take a balanced approach and make our sidewalks function for everyone; the disabled, the elderly, young children, etc.

3. What is your perception regarding parking in the Downtown? Do you support the DBA position of doubling the parking at the City's Berkeley Way lot in the event the parcel is developed?

Laurie Capitelli – Mayor

We need to improve parking availability. I strongly support the City's continued use of evidence-based strategies for providing parking in Downtown Berkeley. Parking is essential to meeting the needs of people for whom driving to Downtown Berkeley is the best or only option. At the same time, excessive parking requirements would conflict with Berkeley's efforts to encourage transit, prevent congestion, and reduce pollution. I believe Berkeley should take a balanced, nimble approach that frequently re-evaluates and responds to Downtown parking needs. And I also support dramatically improving other modes of transportation to help people get to Downtown Berkeley without using a car.

My efforts as a City Councilmember reflect this responsive approach. I supported the successful goBerkeley program, which has used adaptive pricing and time limits to help improve the availability of Downtown parking and reduce traffic. I secured funding for our new BART plaza as Berkeley's representative on the Alameda County Transportation Commission. And I also secured funding for the bike lane connecting BART plaza to Lawrence Berkeley Lab. As mayor, I would continue my efforts to balance competing transportation needs and improve mobility, for all Downtown residents and visitors.

Until a proposed project on the Berkeley Way Lot is more fully funded, I believe the City should keep multiple options on the table with respect to the level of replacement parking. Parking in this area is extremely important to nearby businesses. But it would also be unfortunate to saddle an affordable housing project with millions of dollars in additional costs. Ridesharing, autonomous vehicles, and improvements to local transportation are rapidly changing the way people get around Berkeley. Since it will likely be years before a Berkeley Way project is shovel-ready, the City would be premature in committing itself to a particular level of parking for this site beyond the existing capacity.

Ben Gould – Mayor

I perceive parking to be a challenge for those who lack adequate public transit access in their neighborhoods and depend on automobiles to get around. However, given the goals of creating a vibrant, walkable Downtown; and considering the not-too-distant-future of autonomous vehicles (especially relative to the lifespan of a building), I believe the best approach to alleviating parking challenges – which are really challenges of accessing downtown with the modes available – is to increase transit access to other areas of Berkeley, and improve biking safety along critical bike routes.

As a result, I am generally disinclined to support net increases to parking in Downtown, and so I do not support the DBA position of doubling parking at the Berkeley Way lot if it is developed.

Darryl Moore – District 2

While as stated above, I believe our long-term goal should be to reduce the overall parking demand by offering practical and attractive alternatives to private vehicles, we do need to acknowledge the fact that we are not there yet. I believe that our parking downtown is currently underserved and that increasing the number of parking spaces for Berkeley Way's lot, in particular, if it is developed is quite sensible. The supportive housing model will not only require parking for its residents, but the wide range of service providers that will have to be onsite throughout the day and night. This will significantly increase the need for parking in that immediate area.

Deborah Matthews – District 3

I believe that we should move forward with caution. Parking should be designated in one area in order to provide residents with walkable, safe access to downtown. I believe that we should include a shuttle roundabout as well, so that people can easily move through downtown without disrupting traffic and pedestrian flow.

Better pedestrian and limited vehicular access to our downtown will bring in and support new businesses to contribute to our local economy and bring growth and innovation to the community.

By providing better designated parking access, more convenient shuttle stops and safer walking routes we will make it easier for residents and visitors to access downtown while creating the perfect climate for small businesses to thrive.

Sophie Hahn – District 5

In the absence of truly accessible and safe bus, shuttle, bike and pedestrian routes to the Downtown, Berkeley residents are left with only two options: to drive to the downtown, or to take their vehicles and money somewhere else. Making our downtown inaccessible to local residents robs the city of their tax dollars as well as the opportunity for the Downtown to serve as a community heart and hub. Lack of access to the downtown pushes our neighborhoods apart, with people on the North choosing El Cerrito and even Corte Madera to meet their shopping needs and South/West Berkeley residents choosing to shop in Emeryville, Oakland, and Walnut Creek – because they can park.

Rather than pushing people away, Berkeley should be encouraging residents to shop, dine, and find entertainment in the Downtown. My first choice is to have robust public transit options that are safe, clean, and timely, and link residents to the downtown and other commercial areas. I have advocated for years for Berkeley to pursue options similar to the Emery-go-round or UC shuttles, to complement AC Transit and Bart. Much of Berkeley is eminently bike-able, but our biking infrastructure is inadequate, incomplete, and does not provide the safety and protection necessary for more Berkeleyans to adopt biking as their primary mode of transit. On the Council, I will pursue the development of safe bike lanes, shuttles and infrastructure for pedestrians so that all Berkeley residents can access the downtown, without having to own or drive a car.

Nevertheless, it is inevitable that some residents will need to drive to access their Downtown at least some of the time. In particular in District 5, some of which is both hilly and poorly served by AC Transit, we have elderly individuals, families with small children and others who are unlikely to use alternative transit to access the downtown, especially at night.

I have supported additional parking for visitors to the downtown on a number of projects that have come before me on the Zoning Adjustments Board. I approved the expanded Center-Addison garage and sought to make it even larger by bringing in an adjacent Milvia lot and a neighboring Center Street parcel currently developed with only a small, one-story building. Unfortunately, I was unsuccessful in adding these two spaces to the garage project. In addition to expanding the number of available spaces and incorporating state of the art technologies to direct cars to open spaces and get them efficiently in and out of the garage, I am particularly proud of this development's green attributes - and restrooms. The roof is covered with solar panels and the garage is wired to accommodate electric vehicle charging. I led the charge to ensure that the structure also provides much needed public restrooms in the downtown, both on the Addison and Center street sides. Strangely, the City was the applicant on this project and fought hard against the Center Street restrooms, arguing that they would be difficult to maintain. Despite repeated objections from the City's representatives, I was successful in getting the restrooms onto the plans, and for good measure added a condition that the restrooms be maintained at all times that the garage is open. It will probably fall to the DBA to be vigilant and ensure that these conditions are met – but at least they are part of the approved plans!

In addition to supporting the rebuilding and expansion of the Center-Addison garage, I opposed leasing large amounts of this new public parking structure to the proposed hotel development. The first hotel developer group that came before the ZAB envisioned NO parking at the hotel and planned to lease a large number of spaces in the new public lot. I felt strongly that the new public lot should be available for residents seeking to access their downtown, and not be allocated to a private hotel development mostly serving non-residents. The second development team for the hotel, whose plans were approved, has included parking – something the first team said was “impossible” and would not “pencil out” – a good reminder that not every development team has the experience, vision and savvy to get things right for Berkeley.

I have expressed unhappiness that Harold Way's parking would not be open to the public, and I questioned the University's elimination of parking spaces at the Berkeley Way/Shattuck/ Hearst property now being developed with a large new building. The structure will have zero parking, which is another loss for the downtown and car-bound residents and workers. As it stands currently, we have no power over this UCB development. When the subject of parking was brought to the University planners' attention, their response was to suggest that employees and professors in the new downtown building will simply park at the new (and horribly designed) parking facility next to the football stadium - a dubious claim.

I am open to looking at the DBA's ideas for the Berkeley Way parking lot. The planned development is a 100% affordable project that offers critical homeless services. As such, it is a fragile development with unusual financial constraints. So long as the added parking does not burden the realization of this development, I am willing to consider increases in parking, especially if the parking is designed such that it can be converted into habitable space in the event demand for parking is diminished over time. However, with the large Center-Addison garage coming online soon, my preference would be to first develop excellent shuttle, bike, and pedestrian options for accessing the downtown.

Stephen Murphy – District 5

Anyone who tries to go to dinner or a movie Downtown knows how difficult it is to find parking. And now that the Center Street garage is under construction, it is even more difficult for people to park at all times of day. I believe that in the short-term, more parking availability is important. Since the Berkeley Way project is several

years away, I believe we should monitor the parking demand in the upcoming years to determine what the community needs.

In the long-term, though, I believe in working to find ways to reduce driving and parking in Berkeley. I supported the Downtown Area Plan partly because it called for massive improvements in other modes of transportation, like increased bicycle parking in new development. The Downtown Plan has helped reduced car ownership by residents and new development along transit corridors will help that trend continue. With housing near transit and commercial hubs, Berkeley can become a model city where streets are more pedestrian-oriented, and residents don't need cars to live comfortably.

Isabelle Gaston – District 6

Many District 6 residents I've spoken with do not go downtown as much as they used to because of the lack of parking and/or expense of parking. I stopped going to my gym, 24-hour fitness, solely because of the parking cost (\$3.50/hr). I cannot comment on the DBA position until I learn more about it but I am inclined to support more parking downtown. There are many people in District 6 that don't live close to bus routes and so driving downtown is their only good option. (I'm not sure how many people Uber.)

Susan Wengraf – District 6

We need to provide parking for our arts and culture patrons and for people who do not have good access to public transit. The residents of District 6, for example, do not have access to bus service after 8:30 p.m. In addition, BART does not serve every community in the Bay Area. If we want our arts and culture venues and restaurants and retail to be successful, we must support them by providing adequate parking. We need to improve our signage to parking structures. In addition, the parking we provide should include car-sharing spaces; electric charging stations and pricing should incentivize non-polluting vehicles.

4. What are your ideas for making Berkeley more welcoming environment for new businesses, particularly for retail and office space in the Downtown?

Laurie Capitelli – Mayor

As the only mayoral candidate with recent experience in both the private and public sectors, I understand how challenging it can be for Berkeley businesses to get their doors open and keep them that way. Berkeley is way behind other cities in creating office space in our Downtown. Helping new and existing businesses thrive means doing as much as possible to keep processes simple, costs low, and customers coming in the door. I want the City of Berkeley to serve its small and local businesses just as well as they serve Berkeley.

I believe that most retail and restaurant uses should enjoy "over-the-counter" permit processes that are fast and efficient. As Councilmember, I worked to simplify the process for outdoor cafe seating, because a local coffee shop shouldn't have to spend months in bureaucratic limbo just to offer sidewalk table service. On the other hand, one of my opponents, Councilmember Arreguin has stood in the way of Downtown businesses, [voting against Yali's Cafe](#) opening in the Trader Joe's building as well as against [medical offices moving into vacant Downtown commercial space](#). Arreguin also co-authored 2014 Measure R, which would have made it more difficult to create new housing and office space Downtown and more difficult for businesses to stay open later. I opposed Measure R along with 74% of Berkeley voters because I want Berkeley to keep the door open for new jobs and housing.

As mayor, I'd work to further consolidate and automate the permit process so that it doesn't take multiple visits to different offices to secure even a simple business license. I also want the City to establish a new position for a small business ombudsman who could guide business owners through City processes and break up procedural logjams. Contrary to several of my opponents, I want the City to continue to work with local business

associations to foster a healthy economic climate in Berkeley. That's why I continue to support the important continuation of [City contracts](#) with the Downtown Berkeley Association and the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce.

Ben Gould – Mayor

I think we can make Berkeley a more welcoming environment for new businesses by ensuring the permitting process is simple and straightforward and making it easy to find space and make it usable. I think it's also important to ensure there is ample space available – both retail and office – and, perhaps most importantly, that employees are able to find housing somewhere where they can get to Downtown for work. Right now, much of Silicon Valley and San Francisco is facing pressing housing issues that are making it impossible to find chefs, wait staff, and other ground-level customer service oriented positions. Berkeley needs to ensure we have adequate housing at all income levels to allow new businesses to open up and hire people locally.

Lastly, I think new businesses spun out from the University would benefit if collaborative relationships were expanded and support were in place to help move new research and startups out of the lab / incubator and into real office space. Dedicating some commercial laboratory space in Downtown could further help new businesses, especially with the easy transit access to Berkeley Lab and University research facilities.

Darryl Moore – District 2

I believe streamlining the process all the way around could considerably improve the environment for doing business in Berkeley. One of the biggest complaints that I hear from businesses that decide to locate in Oakland or Emeryville is just getting a business up and running in Berkeley. The planning process and the process of getting a business license are both significant hurdles to new businesses. I have seen quite a few businesses enter into a lease agreement without understanding how arduous the process of starting a new business in Berkeley and eventually have to shutter their doors after being open for just a few months because they have had to carry a lease for 6 months without being open. We must change that for us to have a healthy retail community in Berkeley.

Deborah Matthews – District 3

Our City has incredible potential to appeal to a wide range of businesses and residents from throughout the region and around the world. Everyone loves the San Francisco bay area. With coordinated public and private investments and concentrated efforts to create jobs, our downtown will become an attractive destination for residents, tourists, business owners, retail and restaurants.

I am dedicated to creating a vibrant, people-centered downtown where people want to live, work and play. I believe in the Main Street approach. Our community has a strong emotional, social and civic connection to our downtown, and I am excited about making it a place where new businesses want to come as well. As your District 3 City Councilmember, I will work with the community to both understand what our community wants, but also what it needs. We will then take those ideas through a transformation strategy where we design, organize, promote, and revitalize our downtown using the community's input and the needs for thriving business. We already know our community is invested in a more vibrant downtown that provides services, local shopping and family entertainment, now we need a City Council representative who wants to listen, act, and transform our downtown with a reflection of our diverse communities. With a bustling downtown brought about by sensible planning and development, we will be able to integrate low-income families into the wider fabric of Berkeley's urban social life and economic opportunity.

Sophie Hahn – District 5

Berkeley has been very good at saying “no” - to big box and chain retail. Now, it's time for us to figure out what it means to say “yes” to small and independent businesses, and provide them with the support they need to establish, grow and thrive in Berkeley. Small businesses contribute not just to the local economy, but provide

the unique character that attracts so many people to live and work here. Many struggle to stay afloat, and need our help.

The investments in public space described earlier will go a long way towards creating a more welcoming environment. Why should businesses invest in Berkeley when we don't invest in ourselves? I applaud the new businesses that have established themselves – despite terrible streetscapes and shabby sidewalks and streets. They are risking their capital, time and vision on our downtown and commercial districts – something the City has yet to do. In addition to upgrading public space, the City needs to convene a task force of small business owners to identify barriers to entry and success, and address them with changes in our permitting and zoning requirements, updating fee structures, and by making loans and grants more easily available.

San Francisco has a small business service center offering “one stop shopping” for small business. It's a model we should emulate.

I serve on the Solano Avenue Business Improvement District (BID), and am working with merchants on ways to improve Solano. Streetscapes, parking, pedestrian safety and empty storefronts result in negative impacts to our small businesses, who have seen significant declines in patronage over the past few years. They feel abandoned by the City and by their Council representative. Holiday lights are impossible – the City won't provide electricity. Trees were planted but tree wells are not maintained, leaving merchants to clean out feces, syringes, garbage and weeds on their own. No wonder businesses are looking elsewhere! Revitalizing Solano Avenue as a vibrant “Main Street” for North Berkeley is my top priority for District 5.

I myself am a former small business owner, having founded, grown and then sold a small manufacturing and wholesale business, Sigina Fine Papers. We designed and created fine stationery products which were sold throughout the United States and Canada. I am acutely aware of the creativity, hard work and risk associated with founding and running independent businesses, and am committed to identifying and supporting their needs.

Stephen Murphy – District 5

We need to work on making our permitting process more efficient and less frustrating so that new businesses can get business licenses, zoning permits, and building permits more easily. We can help develop a modified system for permits so that less complicated permits can be approved more quickly.

In addition, our efforts to revitalize downtown by building more housing and commercial space will encourage new business. We need to maintain the momentum—as new housing and retail and office space are built, more people are spending money in our city because they will be drawn to spend more time downtown.

Isabelle Gaston – District 6

Until the construction is completed, I don't have any creative suggestions as to how to make the downtown a welcoming environment. Personally, I would not entertain renting space downtown until there are people out on the streets again shopping and going about their daily lives. If you look at cities like San Francisco or New York, pedestrians, if they have a choice, avoid streets undergoing construction.

Susan Wengraf – District 6

The city needs to do a better job of helping businesses in Berkeley. I believe we need to give more support to the Economic Development Department so that potential businesses can be guided through the City bureaucracy and permitting process. Our process is too cumbersome, takes too long and costs too much. We need a major overhaul of the process.

5. What is your vision and ideas for revitalization of the Civic Center Historic District?

Laurie Capitelli – Mayor

Berkeley's narrow approach to the Civic Center Historic District isn't working. We need to consider all options for the revitalization of the district, including public-private partnerships. The City should leverage more diverse uses to help create affordable spaces for the many civic, arts, and non-profit uses that could help revitalize the area.

Ben Gould – Mayor

Berkeley's historic Civic Center has fallen into disrepair in recent years. I support reinvesting and restoring our parks, historic buildings, and public infrastructure. I would like to see the Berkeley High School Community Theater & Little Theater restored and used more frequently for public performances, which can charge admission to help pay off the cost of the renovations. Similarly, I would like to see Civic Center Park repaired and modernized, to be made available for regular public events (like food stands, live music, farmer's markets, and other festivals); and to see Old City Hall and the Veterans Memorial Building restored, and if currently underutilized, possibly used as office space for local nonprofit and community organizations.

Darryl Moore – District 2

I believe that we should go to the voters with a bond package that would provide funds to seismically upgrade Old City Hall and the Veterans building. Old City Hall is sitting vacant, unable to provide any sort of vitality to the community, and the Veterans building is filled with an assortment of uses, but everyone inside is in grave danger in the event of an earthquake. I also believe that we should use a portion of the bond money to bring the Civic Center Fountain online. We have a number of beautiful bronze turtles sitting in City Hall that should be utilized in the fountain to beautify the park.

Deborah Matthews – District 3

The gifts of civic space revitalization can be endless. Civic Centers are sometimes referred to as the front porch of a city. When they work well they are the space that brings people together and cultures mix. Too often where civic buildings are clustered they often feel cold and sterile a fail as welcoming public spaces. When the managers of these sites partner with nearby buildings to establish themselves as a true civic district, they can co-sponsor events, program each other's facilities, and otherwise share, trade or combine the use of their public spaces and resources. Let's take for example revitalization of our Landmarked Martin Luther King Civic Center Park and Historic Fountain; with park clean up and event hosting of ongoing community events focused on nationally known artist, culinary events, inactive learning for children & teens and inspiring seniors we have an excellent opportunities of benefiting from this treasured green open space and greater vitality to our downtown. I recommend that we focus on both short-term and long-term revitalization projects to make sure that we are delivering visible results and planning for the future.

Sophie Hahn – District 5

Berkeley has a significant and relatively intact historic core as compared to many other cities in California, and we should celebrate and reinforce our historic civic core. I am very proud to have co-authored the civic center zoning overlay which preserves the civic center for public and civic purposes, including museums, live performance, libraries, and similar uses, including a market like the highly successful SF Ferry Building Marketplace or Seattle's Pike Place Public Market. I believe in the importance of the public and civic realm, and do not support the privatization of public buildings, parks or land.

Civic Center park, at the heart of our City, should be an attractive, engaging, animated park that brings us together. The Farmer's Market provides this atmosphere, but the park is under-programmed and under-utilized on other days of the week. Sonoma and Healdsburg both have civic parks that draw in the community, as well

many towns and cities in Europe, Latin America and Mexico, where families flock to stroll in the “Zocalo” and enjoy cafés, music and community. The park could include features such as a small amphitheater for street artist performances or soap-box speeches (on a sign-up basis), free concerts, poetry readings and more. Amenities for children would draw in families, and kiosks with tables and chairs could create a café experience. There is no shortage of good examples we can emulate.

To refurbish and repurpose our historic buildings, partnerships with private organizations are likely to be needed, and the overlay encourages this by taking purely commercial development off the table. When the Post Office was in play, I reached out to the Berkeley Symphony to consider the possibility of establishing a small concert hall in the space. UC Berkeley’s Bancroft Library has a phenomenal collection – housed in basement archives – that could easily fill a museum in Berkeley’s Downtown. These are just a few of hundreds of possible civic uses we should encourage and explore. NYC’s Central Park Conservancy is a great example of a public/private partnership that has done a phenomenal job serving public and civic purposes. Most hardscape and structures in Central Park were refurbished using private/Not-for-Profit monies, while park maintenance is left to the City. There are many other examples across the country – and across the globe - that Berkeley can look to.

I have supported tasteful additions to historic buildings, including the new addition to Berkeley’s North Branch Library, for which I spearheaded fundraising efforts. I support additions and adaptive reuse for all our historic buildings, so long as they remain public and civic-serving, and look forward to breathing new life into our civic center while preserving the architecture and heritage.

Stephen Murphy – District 5

Our Downtown has just begun a renaissance – new housing, cafes, restaurants and other businesses are beginning to pop up. The Civic Center Historic District offers the opportunity to build on this momentum while also celebrating some of Berkeley’s most architecturally significant and grand buildings.

I believe that the revitalization of the Civic Center Historic District must be part of this renaissance rather than an exception to it. It should become the cultural hub it was meant to be. The most underused buildings could become places for the community to come together and enjoy various kinds of recreation – food, meetings, arts, shopping etc – while also experiencing a piece of Berkeley’s history. I would support any move in this direction. Although not in the Civic Center Historic District, the new Berkeley Art Museum offers a successful and creative model for what could be brought to this area. The architects of the new museum preserved the original Art Deco framework of the original printing building while adding modern additions that play off the historic architecture. The museum has become extremely popular among Berkeley residents and tourists alike and it has helped revive the north side of Center Street.

Isabelle Gaston – District 6

The historic district in Berkeley is truly amazing but I think it is largely underappreciated in our City. About half of our historic buildings are in desperate need of renovation to the tune of at least a hundred million dollars if not more.

I have written extensively on the neglected infrastructure in our City including several of these historic structures. Last year, I submitted a photo essay in Berkeleyside that included the Old City Hall, VA, and Warm Water Pool (which no longer exists). The title of the essay was Berkeley’s Ancient Ruins: <http://www.berkeleyside.com/2015/11/24/op-ed-berkeleys-ancient-ruins-a-photo-essay/>

The fundamental problem is there is no money to rehabilitate these structures. They’ve not received routine maintenance for decades (per staff reports). I believe we need to develop a comprehensive plan that addresses all our infrastructure needs and decide what we can and cannot do. Simple as that, we have to be realistic and

prioritize. Once we have prioritized them, we then can work on a strategy for funding (including public/private partnerships).

It is important for residents to realize that renovating structures is one thing, maintaining them is another. There is almost no money in our budget for routine maintenance. Our previous City Manager, Christine Daniel, made that point abundantly clear during her brief tenure. It goes without saying that the longer we delay developing a comprehensive plan, the more expensive its execution will be.

Susan Wengraf – District 6

I have a vision for at least three of the buildings in the Civic Center Historic District. The Old City Hall, must be saved, made safe, and renovated so that it is a viable venue for our City Council, commission and other public meetings. The Veteran's Building should also be retrofit and put back into productive use, using its magnificent theatre as a performance space for our many music and theatre groups. The Post Office should remain as a working post office in the front area and the back of the building should be re-purposed for a different productive use. The Civic Center Historic District is a wonderful opportunity to strengthen our Downtown with civic, arts and culture, and community uses.

6. Would you support public/private partnerships to adaptively reuse the Downtown Post Office?

Laurie Capitelli – Mayor

Yes.

Ben Gould – Mayor

Yes. I want to preserve the front section of the historic building for use as a Post Office, while finding ways to reuse (or redevelop) the warehouse in the rear, including expanding the building footprint to increase lot coverage and better fit with the character of the neighborhood.

Darryl Moore – District 2

I believe that this would be the perfect opportunity to show how effective public/private partnerships can be. I do believe that we should retain some sort of public use, likely a post office, in the building. This use could be scaled down from occupying the entire building, more inline with some of the smaller post offices throughout the city. The remainder of the space could be turned into some sort of retail space that could revitalize the building. I think a Market Hall type use would be magnificent for the space.

Deborah Matthews – District 3

Yes, I do support a public/private partnership for our Downtown Post Office. The sad reality is that we may very well lose this public facility. It is a beautiful and historic building – one that has long been a staple of our downtown. Through a public/private partnership, I believe we will be able to repurpose the building to benefit the community. I believe that the building should be used to foster better networking in the downtown, and as a place that provides services for our residents. Whether that be social services, co-op banking, land trust organizations or something else, I strongly believe the building should still be civic-focused, and a public/private partnership is the way to ensure that happens.

Sophie Hahn – District 5

For many reasons, I hope that the Downtown Post Office remains a post office. However, should the postal service sell the building, I would support the City or a not-for-profit adapting the building for one of the uses allowed by the Civic Center Overlay. As mentioned above, I reached out to the Berkeley Symphony to discuss the possibility of adapting the building to a concert hall. It was an idea they were open to explore, and we

discussed other partners who might be interested in a music venue as well. The building is one of Berkeley's most important architectural gems, and any new use should take advantage of its special architectural status and prime location – for the public benefit. In keeping with the zoning overlay's requirements, I envision a museum, library, concert hall or other important civic institution, and will work to achieve that vision should the post office eventually close down and sell.

Stephen Murphy – District 5

Yes, absolutely. As I mentioned above, and as BAM has shown, adaptive reuse can be an incredibly compelling way to create something new while also respecting a building's past. Moreover, the Downtown Post Office offers already beautiful inspiration for revitalization. Through my time campaigning and knocking on doors in my district, I have heard many interesting ideas for the Post Office: housing, a public market, a theater, museum. The Post Office could become an anchor for the Downtown – a place everyone wants to see.

We are also lucky to have a process in Berkeley that will ensure the original architecture will be respected. Any plans for changes to the building will go before the Landmark Preservation Commission, and its members will have the chance to discuss the best approach to a new project at such a historically significant place.

Isabelle Gaston – District 6

Yes I would. I believe we need new models to get things done in Berkeley. We need a vision, and fiscal accountability and transparency. Property owners keep paying more in taxes every year, and so little seems to ever get accomplished.

I would also support public/private partnerships for some of our parks and pools. For example, I would support a PPP for Willard Pool. How much worse can a pool filled with dirt get? I would also support a PPP for the Rose Garden. It is clear our Parks Department can no longer maintain our parks despite a recent 16.7% increase in the Parks Tax in 2014 (and an additional >5% increase or inflator, each year). (This tax was advertised as the "fix-it" tax; however, it has barely made a dent in improving our parks due to our large structural deficit because of rising pension costs.)

What is an example of a PPP? The Central Park Conservancy in New York:

<http://www.centralparknyc.org/about/about-cpc/>

I believe we need a robust public-private campaign to reinvigorate our City. There are probably people in Berkeley who have done well and wish to give back to the community - if they knew their money would be well spent.

It is fatiguing to always hear why things can never get done in Berkeley. I want to hear what we CAN and will get done. We need people on the Council who will spearhead such efforts and I hope to be part of that effort.

Susan Wengraf – District 6

Yes, in concept. I would have to see the specific proposal before expressing an opinion. The Post Office building is one of the most beautiful in the City and we must figure out a way to preserve the building and use it creatively.

7. What is your vision for public art in the Downtown, including visual and performing arts? Also, what is your vision for additional visual and/or performing arts venues in the Downtown?

Laurie Capitelli – Mayor

The visual and performing arts are vital to the economic success of our Downtown because they not only serve Berkeley residents but attract visitors from around the world. That's why I support Berkeley's innovative 1% for the Arts program, which ensures that projects provide new on-site public art or financial support for the arts community.

As mayor, I would continue my work to retain and expand performing and visual arts uses in the Downtown. I helped secure funding for the UC Theater so that Downtown Berkeley could have another first-class live entertainment venue. Having also worked to preserve the Elmwood Theater, I am the candidate with the most experience in finding creative ways to sustain arts and entertainment venues. But I want to go even further by creating housing affordable to artists and performers, as well as by bringing new arts and cultural uses to the Downtown's underutilized spaces.

There are opportunities with Old City Hall and other locations in the Downtown to create new venues for the arts, both performing and visual. I believe public-private partnerships could help achieve this vision by generating the funding that will be necessary to seismically upgrade and adaptively reuse these civic treasures.

Ben Gould – Mayor

I am excited about the direction Downtown is going with the existing Fine Arts district, the new Berkeley Art Museum / Pacific Film Archive, the newly renovated UC Theater, the BART plaza remodeling to create new public space usable for performing arts, and the upcoming improvements to Shattuck Cinemas. Additionally, with the "1% for the Arts" requirement, new construction in downtown will add to public art or make a contribution to the city's art fund.

I will continue to support the arts in Downtown, especially around the Fine Arts District. I believe having a diverse range of activities and businesses in Downtown is crucial for keeping it vibrant and thriving, and the arts serve as an important year-round draw to the area, stimulating other businesses and activities, and making Downtown an appealing place for new businesses and residents to locate. I would like to see the Berkeley High Community Theater and Little Theater renovated and used for more community events, and see Civic Center Park used for live open-air music and festivals.

Darryl Moore – District 2

I believe that arts, both performing and visual, are a huge economic driver in the City of Berkeley. This is demonstrated by the tremendous success of the downtown Arts District. I believe we should build off of its success, as the we have seen the UC Theatre do, to use what we are good at, the arts, to help revitalize or downtown. I believe that the new private percentage for the arts will go a long way to expand the Arts District, as well as build our arts capacity for the rest of the city.

Deborah Matthews – District 3

I see the arts as a major part of our City's future, not only in reflecting the story and diversity of our city, but showcasing where our City is headed. I think that the architectural design of our buildings can reflect our City's story. The new Downtown Berkeley BART Station is a perfect example of how to incorporate the design of a building into the cultural fabric of our unique downtown. Located right in the center of our City, the station is very contemporary and forward thinking in its design – reflecting our City's progressive nature. Continuing to implement art into development is very important.

I very strongly support public art, particularly in our downtown area. Often times, we see diversity in community art but not in the high-trafficked areas of cities such as ours. We have a rich historical narrative, and it is important to me that we see public art in our downtown that truly reflects our diversity.

We need to showcase a diversity in art that represents the issues of the 21st century – and of our residents. We must continue to pursue traditional funding routes, such as grants and national endowments. I will work to make sure the Percent for Art policy is fully implemented.

We are blessed to have wonderful performance venues at our disposal. By working together with the City and through proper planning, we can make sure these spaces are utilized to their full potential. Whether the City or a business collaborates with artists in designing gardens, installing art exhibits in vacant storefronts to improve a building's overall image, or encouraging local museums to loan out works of public art for temporary downtown placement, I will work hard as your District 3 representative to make sure that art is spread across our City in innovative and creative ways.

Sophie Hahn – District 5

Because my vision for the entire downtown is an “arts” vision, this topic has been covered in my response to question 1, above.

Stephen Murphy – District 5

Berkeley is experiencing notable change right now, especially Downtown. Art has a huge role to play in Berkeley's continued evolution, and we can use it to make our city's future beautiful, soulful, and thoughtful. I believe that art offers an important way to enhance the changes our city is experiencing and to preserve important pieces of our past. Artists and architects can think of ways to make public spaces that are beautiful and compelling for a diverse population; they can help create new spaces that still embrace the old; and, perhaps most importantly, they can help us think about how the city's aesthetics affect our collective state of mind and sense of community. As a City Councilmember, it will be my job to facilitate the opportunities to bring artists into the conversation as often as possible.

As Chair of the Berkeley Planning Commission, I led the charge to institute the 1% for Art program. This is an excellent start. The program means that local artists will have the chance to make their mark across the city. The program will help create new buildings that provide an inviting sense of place, which will in turn drive economic growth and a stronger sense of community. Moreover, the in-lieu fees for the Cultural Trust Fund, which people who build housing can choose to pay instead of installing art at their building, also offer an incredible opportunity to increase artists' presence around the city. The funds can be used to finance more projects for public and community spaces.

Isabelle Gaston – District 6

My grandmothers were both artists so I am deeply aware of how important the arts are for the fabric of a community. My paternal grandmother was an actress on Broadway in the 1930's, and my maternal grandmother was an artist who painted with some of the well-known Bay Area figurative painters (Joan Brown, Elmer Bischoff, and David Park) in the late 50's/ early 60's. I cherish the arts, and I believe they should be wholeheartedly supported.

It would be marvelous to have a performance and a visual arts center in Berkeley. I would support a sales tax measure to raise the necessary funds to build a venue for the arts (either performing or visual arts) with a sunset date etched in stone. If we could prove to city residents that a venue could be built in a reasonable time and on budget, I think residents would jump at supporting a new sales tax for an additional venue down the road. This would be a real win-win for our City; however, I would only support doing this after we have developed the comprehensive plan I referenced in question #5.

Susan Wengraf – District 6

More of everything. Berkeleyans have an insatiable appetite for art and culture. We are well on our way to making Berkeley a destination city. Let's keep up the good work and figure out a sustainable source of funding for our arts groups, and re-purpose our underutilized buildings for arts uses.

8. What do you see as the critical management and financial issues facing the City over the next several years?

Laurie Capitelli – Mayor

We need to contain costs and continue to reduce our long-term unfunded liabilities while respecting the great City workers who support our community. Part of better managing Berkeley's finances is making sure we are using the best available tools to track City funds. Berkeley's financial software hasn't been updated since the fall of Communism. More than any other candidate, I want to prioritize fundamental upgrades to City software in order to provide greater financial transparency. This means making sure that we aren't siphoning money away from this critical need. This outdated system needed to be replaced yesterday for the financial security and smooth operation of our city, and we need to do it now.

Expanding Berkeley's economic base is crucial to generating the jobs and and tax revenue that will help guarantee Berkeley's continued fiscal health. For instance, the new Downtown hotel will generate \$3-4 million dollars annually in additional funding for the community. Downtown Berkeley is again becoming an economic engine for the City, and we should try to achieve similar successes across the city.

Ben Gould – Mayor

I think the biggest financial issues facing the City are ensuring we have a strong reserve fund to protect against the likelihood of an economic downturn in the next few years; and addressing our unfunded capital needs. Fortunately, the current reserve fund is over 12% of the General Fund, and only requires prudent policies and good stewardship to preserve. However, addressing our unfunded capital needs will be more challenging – with \$500 million in deferred maintenance and capital improvements, the \$100 million bond on the ballot this November (Measure T1) will only begin to pay down the debt, and do nothing to address the ongoing structural deficit.

Berkeley needs a comprehensive review and plan to address this structural deficit and rebuild our public resources, likely through some combination of efficiency improvements, adjustments in level of service, and tax increases. Most importantly, I believe the voters should have a choice in how to address this issue – but right now, the only option being presented is letting things fall apart due to neglect. If we're going to lose parks and historic buildings, I believe we should decide to do so consciously – not through failing to have the opportunity to raise enough money to pay for them.

Darryl Moore – District 2

Two critical components that will significantly improve our ability to more effectively and efficiently manage our systems and our finances. We need to replace our arcane management system "FUND\$" with a new, web-based, real-time system. Our FUND\$ system is still DOS based and hampers our ability to efficiently function as an organization. I also believe that we need to do our due diligence in developing our Strategic Plan. This priority and goal setting exercise will allow us to understand the direction that we want our city to move, instead of operating in a piecemeal fashion.

Deborah Matthews – District 3

I believe our city faces two major issues first is our infrastructure and second our city's employee pension and health benefits. As a council member I would support immediate in depth study- solution- focused planning by our council to address these issues. Exploring regional, state and federal opportunities which may offer matching funds to address needed upgrade projects throughout Berkeley. While the infrastructure needs are great throughout our city; The infrastructure needs for South Berkeley have gone unaddressed for more than 20 years. I will support an equitable distribution of infrastructure repairs throughout our city. I will fight for an emphasis on "immediate repairs" to long term infrastructure emergency needs being a priority to the residents of South Berkeley.

Sophie Hahn – District 5

I would like to see the City more affirmatively and comprehensively adopt a customer service model, to permeate the institution at every level. Many District 5 residents have limited contact with the City, other than to permit construction or call for police or ambulances. Residents report less than optimal experiences at the permit office, and as a Zoning Board member I see both applicants and the public struggling to understand our procedures and rules. Architects and builders have shared with me that Berkeley's permitting process is particularly difficult, and that other cities have more customer-friendly systems in place. I know from the small businesses I work with that their experiences with permitting and other City business are similarly stressful. With a customer-focused management system in place, we can do better.

One way we can improve city services is to invest in programs and technologies that support our dedicated – and overworked - employees and allow community members to obtain permits, pay fees, sign up for camps and programs and transact other business with the City online. Cities across the country are [investing in a broad range of digital solutions](#). For a City that prides itself on innovation, we are woefully behind. Some of the best minds live in the community, or are just up the street at UC Berkeley; we should be in front of these trends.

Many cities have strategic plans; Berkeley does not. I support the establishment of a strategic planning process and regular review of short and long term strategic plans, helping us prioritize our goals and reduce the “scattered” nature of Berkeley's progress.

Regarding financial issues, the City has close to \$500M in unfunded pension liabilities and another approximately half-billion dollars in identified infrastructure needs – with more that remain to be identified. These financial disparities call for better planning in the short- and long-term. The City's budget is not program-based, and it is difficult to fully understand what we are spending our money on. Accurate financial data in an easily understood format for councilmembers, the public and unions to review is a critical first step to addressing our financial challenges.

Increasing revenues is also, of course, a key priority. Working to meet the needs of the small business community should help boost city revenues, as well as the investments I hope we will make in our downtown and commercial districts. While investments in our schools, libraries, parks and other public facilities – which I wholeheartedly support – yield critically important social, community and societal benefits, investments in our commercial districts yield returns in the form of increased community and enjoyment . . . and in *dollars and cents*. Because monies spent improving our commercial districts are our best hope to yield additional dollars to support all of Berkeley's social and community goals, I believe they are among the most important investments our city can – and should – make.

Stephen Murphy – District 5

Our City has significant unfunded liabilities associated with pension obligations and infrastructure costs. At the same time a majority of our budget goes towards public safety costs. These circumstances present some real challenges. For this reason we must be fiscally responsible in how we spend our money while remaining focused on economic development. This is why I fully support the revitalization of our Downtown. As the Chair of the Planning Commission and as the person who led the ground campaign to defeat Measure R—a measure drafted by my opponent and which would have undone our Downtown Plan—I am the only District 5 candidate who truly supports economic development.

In addition, I think Berkeley has lost its sense of civility. Public meetings have become notorious for irrational arguments that lead to no solutions for anyone. Most Berkeley residents can't stand the idea of attending a meeting, or of having anything to do with City government because of how unpleasant and unproductive it all feels. Frustration and anger is understandable: Berkeley is experiencing a housing crisis and is changing more

rapidly than it has in decades. Such marked shifts have generated understandable concern among some Berkeley residents, and this can sometimes translate into defensive or even uncivil behavior. . Unfortunately, this lack of civility and the protracted conflicts that results have begun to drain City resources, including money and time.

As a City Councilmember, I will work to create a civil atmosphere at public meetings and in City government. I believe that if we create a civil atmosphere, everyone will be able to share their perspective in a way in which others can really listen. Civility is what will help us reach compromises that are good for our community and will help us confront the complex struggles of our changing city with sensitivity and compassion.

Isabelle Gaston – District 6

Over the last two decades, our City’s financial well-being has been largely ignored. There is no one on Council who ever asks the tough questions about the budget. Large raises are routinely given to city employees without analyzing the implications.

Susan Wengraf – District 6

Berkeley faces serious unfunded liabilities; both in infrastructure that is suffering from deferred maintenance and also employee pension and health benefits. We need to have a plan that will map out how we deal with these unfunded liabilities over the next twenty years. The council has taken steps to try to address the problem of employee pensions and health benefits. Now, all six bargaining units are contributing to their pensions. We instituted a two tier system so that new hires have a different retirement and benefit plan than classic employees. However, we still face challenges. The City needs to invest in new technology so that work is more efficiently accomplished and consolidation of functions can be achieved. We also need to do a cost-benefit analysis on all of our programs and make some tough decision on which are effective.