

Libby Schaaf's plan to bring Oakland government into the 21st Century

"Oakland can do so much better at improving our basic quality of life here by doing simple things like picking up trash, erasing graffiti and filling potholes. We need to make it easy for residents to get their requests to City Hall and we need to do a better, quicker job of solving their problems. You shouldn't have to drive down to City Hall to have your voice heard. You should be able to interact with government anytime in your home, office, and from your laptop or mobile phone. Government shouldn't be so time consuming."

— Libby Schaaf

What I Think

We need to build a more transparent, collaborative and responsive government that restores public trust and responds better and faster to needs.

Improve civic engagement by identifying and deploying digital technologies to improve efficiency and effectiveness of City services. Make information available to residents that otherwise wouldn't be accessible.

Deepen internal capacity for resident-driven performance to identify and solve the right challenges with easy-to-use, transparent systems. We manage what we measure. It is outrageous that the City of Oakland — a billion-dollar enterprise — has no performance measures right now. Managers must develop and meet clear performance measures, particularly around residents' most urgent needs, particularly potholes, illegal dumping and graffiti.

Train and support public servants for 21st century government. As Oakland, like many governments, moves to digital services and open data platforms, we need to train and educate public servants with the needed technology, communication and other skill sets to keep pace in this evolving environment. We need to free those entrepreneurial bureaucrats — they're out there.

What I Have Done

Code for America's innovation fellowship: I led the successful campaign to win Code for America's Fellowship for Civic Innovation. Among many things, Oakland's team of skilled technologists built RecordTrac that allows Oakland residents to request public records from anywhere, anytime, and makes the request process as well as all past public record requests available and accessible on the internet 24/7, increasing transparency and civic engagement. RecordTrac was named best CivicApp developed in the world in 2013.

Kiva Zip Micro Loans: Along with City Attorney Barbara Parker, I wrote the legislation making Oakland the first city in the world to join the Kiva Zip lending platform as a Trustee. Oakland now sponsors small Oakland-grown businesses to receive crowd-sourced micro loans — strengthening localism and democratizing access to capital for our small home-grown entrepreneurs.

Shining light on data and records: I wrote and got passed Oakland's Open Data Policy — using a public participation process that garnered national praise. This means that your governmental data should be available to you in machine-readable format 24/7 on the city's web portal. Open data has



been used by volunteers to create apps and websites to help residents better understand their city and government, including http://oaklandcrimespotting.org that maps crime data and http://openbudgetoakland.org that illustrates how Oakland's budget works. I appointed the creator of openbudgetoakland.org to the Oakland Budget Advisory Committee where he and others have worked to make Oakland's budget process more transparent and participatory.

Transparency of campaign contributions: I wrote the law making Oakland one of the first cities to require candidates to submit their campaign contribution reports in open data format, as well as mandating fines for faulty reporting. For the first time, campaign contributions are available 24/7 on the city's website in machine-readable format, allowing the most detailed and transparent analysis of campaign contributions in the 2014 Mayor's race at http://opendisclosure.io.

City budget transparency: I wrote the law ending back-room budget deals and requiring high levels of transparency and public participation in the adoption of the city's budget, including public notice before any item can be added or changed in the city budget. I fought to add funding in the last budget for a resident survey so that resident needs will drive the next budget development process.

Redistricting by the people: I put together a grass-roots coalition to write the ballot measure DD that takes the process of drawing political boundaries (called redistricting) away from incumbent politicians and gives it to an independent commission of diverse Oakland residents, free from political influence and guided by voting rights principles.

Commitment to good government: I am a long-time member, voter education volunteer, and former Board Member of the League of Women Voters of Oakland. I'm an active member of Code for America's Peer Network for Leaders in Civic Innovation, which strives to build public trust and engagement in government, and have even been a featured speaker at their international summit.

What I Will Do

Implement 311 System for better service delivery

Do you know what number to call to report illegal dumping or a pothole? Most big cities use a 3-1-1 system to make it easy for residents to request help from their government. As Mayor's I will implement a world-class 311 customer service center that transitions the City to a new generation of technology that centralizes citizen requests and makes the process and resolution of each request accessible to the public 24/7 on our website.

CityStat and the Office of Strategic Performance

I will link the 311 service request system with a CityStat performance accountability system led by a newly established Office of Strategic Performance (see Louisville, Kentucky for a good model). I will work with department heads to establish clear performance measures and nurture a culture of continuous improvement within City Hall. In pursuit of this goal, OSP will help City departments and agencies deliver high quality services to citizens in a cost-efficient and transparent manner. Three core efforts include strategic planning, performance management, continuous improvement consulting and training. We can save on technology procurement dollars by conducting internal and external user research to scope projects more efficiently, determine what the needs are and design a scope of work to fulfill those needs. Too often contracts are signed without a clear understanding of the pain points, and key opportunities to solve actual problems are missed.



Embrace public-private partnerships

This office will also be tasked with designing and championing strategic public-private partnerships, such as Kiva Zip, which has provided thousands-of-dollars of interest-free capital to small Oakland businesses at no cost or risk to the City.

Combat the digital divide and engage residents

Establish Civic Tech Labs throughout the community to train traditionally unengaged residents on how to access government services through the internet (see Chicago's Civic Labs as a model). Provide free computer training to low-income families and at-risk youth. Residents who complete the training will be given gift cards and when possible a refurbished computer.

Innovation fellowship for city employees

Oakland has gone too long without investing in its own workforce and has long underestimated their innovative potential. I will establish an internal Innovation Fellowship open to city employees at every level and from every department. This 16-week fellowship will train Oakland's employees in civic tech, design-thinking, and ethical decision-making — giving them the tools to redesign outdated city systems and solve resident problems collaboratively. Through this initiative, City employees will be encouraged and equipped to identify inefficiencies and embrace a new culture of innovation and improvement to provide the best constituent service possible.