

BCT Candidate Questionnaire
Deborah Matthews

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1. *What role do you see the arts playing in Berkeley's future? What specific policies or directives should the City Council champion to make this happen?*

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.

2. *Recently, Berkeley citizens came together and worked with the City Council to win our first increase in funding to the Civic Arts Grant Program in 14 years. Knowing how important the arts are as an economic driver and community building block, what concrete ideas do you have to create a sustainable and progressive income stream to support our growing, vibrant, and diverse arts ecosystem in the years to come?*

I dream of a better Berkeley; a city that gives a voice to all of its citizens – including its underrepresented and underserved populations. To achieve this, the arts must continue to thrive and be representative of our great diversity as a City.

We must continue to pursue traditional funding routes, such as grants and national endowments. But we must also be creative, exploring crowd-funding and other online fundraising opportunities, and encourage our artists to attend events like the National Arts Marketing Program Conference, which offers professional development networking opportunities and sessions centered on visibility and fundraising. I will work to make sure the *Percent for Art policy is fully implemented in the interest of all Berkeley residents.

*On June 28, 2016 the Berkeley City Council passed the One-Percent for Public Art on Private Projects Ordinance.

1. Include on-site publicly accessible artwork valued at 1% of construction costs; or
2. Pay an in-lieu fee to the Cultural Trust Fund valued at .8% of the construction costs

Most critically, this needs to be a partnership between the City and its artists. There are various ways to make public-art policy work in Berkeley, including tying funding of public art to an endowment or foundation, or exploring if our projects qualify

to receive the state tax credit for historic renovation. But at the forefront of our City/Art partnership lies the truth that we must make a concentrated effort to include artists in anything the City approves. 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.

- 3. Affordable housing is clearly a big issue across the whole Bay Area. Working artists increasingly struggle to find a place to live in our competitive rent market. Please explain how you would address this problem.*

As transformations occur in neighborhoods around us, we must support our diversity and cultural history. In order to make that happen we must develop new affordable housing stock and revitalize the Adeline Corridor, supporting greater economic prosperity and creating new job opportunities without displacing long-term residents, including local artists.

For more than 24 years, I have overseen many of Berkeley's housing and commercial projects, all of which included affordable housing to serve our under-represented community members. As a Board Member of Oakland and The World Enterprises, my team and I are serving as the project development lead for approximately 55 units of 100% low-income housing for the formerly incarcerated and the working poor. I know that I can bring that experience to Berkeley and work to create more affordable housing in our city.

I am also concerned about the home of our beloved Berkeley Flea Market where artisans, drummers, tourists and community members gather on Saturdays and Sundays. We must embrace the artisans' desire to keep the Flea Market at the South Berkeley BART location, where it has lived for more than 30 years. We must integrate the market into the design of the new housing development project supporting artisans and art.

I am running on a platform of creating more affordable and inclusionary housing (without displacement to long term residents) to off-set the Bay Area's skyrocketing housing costs. I will work hard to make this happen by continuing the push for affordable housing while maintaining our diverse culture. I want to be a voice for all of the people of District 3, including the artist community.

- 4. What other issues concerning the arts community would you like to address? How might the arts community collaborate with the city to address the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century?*

From leading the freedom of speech movement to protesting wars to stepping forward against apartheid, the City of Berkeley has been on the forefront of some of the nation's most important social justice initiatives. As such, our City is often looked upon during times of turmoil to lead the way toward change. With tensions around race relations and police behavior at an all-time high in our country, I believe that it is essential that we have leaders who will serve our underrepresented communities and

work toward finding equitable solutions to some of our community's – and our nation's – toughest problems.

I believe that the arts in Berkeley can help us continue to be a progressive thought leader not only in the Bay Area, but in the country. We need to showcase diversity in art that represents the issues of the 21st century – and of our residents. However, in order to achieve this, we must first address the lack of funding for the arts.

One way to combat this is for artists to seek out funds in new and modern ways. With a better understanding of what funds are out there and available, our artists will be able to represent the rich diversity of people and issues facing our City.

I strongly believe in bettering our community's health and safety – and I think art can be an avenue through which to achieve that.