



CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: **Sheng Thao**

Age: **33 years old**

Family:

Single mother to an 11 year old son, who is a classical cellist and Joaquin Miller Alumna

Hometown: **Stockton, CA**

Lived in Oakland since:

2014, but have lived in the Oakland/Berkeley area since 2003

Education: **UC Berkeley; Merritt College**

Occupation: **Chief of Staff to Oakland's At-Large City Councilmember**

Employer: **City of Oakland**

Political experience:

5 years as Policy Director and Chief of Staff to At-Large City Councilmember

Notable affiliations:

Redwood Heights Association, Board member

Oakland Asian Cultural Center, Board member

Asian Pacific American Democratic Caucus of Alameda County, Vice President

Member of other various democratic clubs, e.g. Wellstone Democratic Renewal, East Bay Women's Political Alliance, MGO Democratic Club etc..

1. What do you see as the greatest challenges when it comes to providing residents with a livable, affordable and safe community?

The greatest challenge to providing residents with livable, affordable and safe community is resources, dollars.

2. What is the biggest opportunity for your district or city during the next four years?

The biggest opportunities in District 4 in the next four years is to support the up and coming business districts, including Dimond, Laurel and Montclair. I'm also excited for the opportunity to establish a business district in the Fairfax area as well. There is enormous opportunity in the near future to establish a strong and well fleshed-out vegetation management plan, which includes passing a Special Wildfire District, that will have dedicated funding for wildfire prevention.

3. Describe your commitment to your district or city leading up to your bid for office.

I'm a lifelong public servant. I've worked in the At-Large City Council office for almost 5 years to uplift Oakland, this included District 4 as well. I started my work in City Hall as the Community Liaison and Communications Director, I was then promoted to Policy Director where I drafted many policies and legislations, and now, I'm currently Chief of Staff. I am committed to District 4 and Oakland. Outside of my work for the City, I've taken on leadership roles in the community, including as a Board member of the Redwood Heights Association (my neighborhood association in District 4), I'm on the Board of the Oakland Asian Cultural Center. My son and I are active participates for various clean-ups in our district, enjoy the green space at Joaquin Miller Park, and the plays and music concerts at Woodminster. I have strong relationships with the small businesses in the District, and have the endorsement of the Executive Director of the Montclair and Laurel Business Associations. My son and I have lived in District 4 our whole time living in Oakland, and we enjoy all of its beauty.

4. Silicon Valley and the Bay Area are at the center of global, technological advancement. How do you see technology's role in changing the lives of both longtime residents and transplants?

Technology will be changing the lives of everyone in Oakland, we must keep up with it, but at the same time, we must implement policies that will not displace longtime residents of Oakland. As legislators, we must implement technology through an equity lens. Implementing environmental justice, clean air mitigation and remediation in areas that have been historically hit the hardest, like West and East Oakland.

Through technology, we can also create green jobs, which can be good paying union jobs, therefore, we must invest in job training centers, and ensure that those living in Oakland are prioritized for these jobs. This will help with keeping Oaklanders in Oakland.