

# 2020 Endorsement Questionnaire East County

Email address \*

richardforcitycouncil@gmail.com

APA Democratic Caucus of Alameda County



**PLEASE COMPLETE AND SUBMIT BY SEPT. 9, midnight. Please take time to review the questions before filling in the boxes since you cannot save the responses for later completion. Thank you for your interest in being considered for an endorsement by the Asian Pacific American Democratic Caucus of Alameda County. Please answer each question in 250 words or less. Be honest and direct. Please note: your questionnaire will be posted on our website for Caucus members and the public to review.**

Personal Information

Candidate Name \*

Richard Illgen

City and zip code of residence.

Berkeley 94708

What is your campaign website address?

richardforcitycouncil.org

What is your campaign email address?

richardforcitycouncil@gmail.com

What is the office that you are seeking? \*

- City of Dublin Mayor
- City of Dublin City Council
- City of Dublin, Unified School District Trustee, Area 1
- City of Dublin, Unified School District Trustee, Area 4
- City of Livermore, Mayor
- City of Livermore, City Council, Dist. 3
- City of Livermore, Unified School District
- City of Pleasanton, Mayor
- City of Pleasanton, City Council
- City of Pleasanton, Unified School District Trustee
- AC Board of Supervisors, District 1
- AD 16, State Assembly Representative
- Other: Berkeley City Council, District 6

Are you the incumbent?

- Yes
- No

Are you a registered Democrat? The APA Democratic Caucus can only endorse registered Democrats

Yes

No

How long have you been a registered Democrat? If less than 5 years, please explain your reason for becoming a Democrat.

50 years

Are you an APA Caucus member?

Yes

No

Why are you seeking the Caucus's endorsement?

I am seeking the Caucus' endorsement because Asian and Pacific Americans are a large part of this district and a constituency I have worked well with currently and in the past. It is an at-risk population and I would want to ensure they can feel safe and thrive. Not only are many in the district, but many of the small business that form the backbone of Berkeley's economy are owned by APA. Your caucus could be instrumental in working with this constituency and making effective policies.

List ONLY the top 5 endorsements that you have received. (Please reference your website if you want to alert us to more).

Berkeley Councilmembers Kate Harrison and Ben Bartlett, former Assemblymember Sandre Swanson, County Treasurer Henry Levy, SEIU Local 1021.

Please my website for a more complete list of endorsers [richardforcitycouncil.org](http://richardforcitycouncil.org).

If we endorse you, will you use our name in your campaign materials?

Yes

No

Maybe

How long have you lived in the district which you are seeking to represent?

10 years, 28 years total in Berkeley

Educational background: What schools have you attended, date graduated, major and degree(s) earned.

UC Berkeley, BA Political Science 1971; University of San Francisco, P:ublic Service Graduate work 1978; Golden Gate University School of Law 1986

Employment: List the last three (3) paid positions, indicating name of employer, job title, and length of employment.

Oakland City Attorney's Office, Supervising Deputy City Attorney, Oakland, CA 1999-2018; Alexander and Karshmer, Associate Attorney, Berkeley, CA, 1997-99; Preston Gates & Ellis, Senior Associate Attorney, Anchorage, AK, 1989-97

What are the names of any community or nonprofit organizations with which you have been an active volunteer in the past 3-5 years.

Just Cities/Dellums Institute, Board member and Board Chair

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## CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

1. What differentiates you from your opponents for the elected office that you are seeking?

I am the only candidate with the combination of fresh ideas for a critical time and decades of local, municipal experience with a proven record of active success and successful coalition building in and around Berkeley to implement my vision. Especially in these times, we must protect our communities and the most vulnerable. I worked with environmental organizations and advocates to create a successful ballot measure preserving open space on the Berkeley waterfront and I helped save threatened small businesses and stabilized vulnerable residential and commercial tenants to keep our communities and small businesses in place and secure. As an attorney, I worked on the lawsuit brought by Alaska against Exxon for the Valdez oil spill and helped hold polluters accountable. For nearly 20 years, I worked in a City Attorney's office holding people accountable to the public trust, including mandating fire safety, addressing human trafficking (many of the victims are Asian), illegal dumping, and housing issues ranging from foreclosed housing to affordable housing, rent control, substandard housing enforcement, historic preservation, and holding those who preyed on the vulnerable attempting to seek refuge in the United States to account. During the financial crisis, I wrote one of the strongest laws in the nation reigning in big banks decimating East Bay communities with foreclosures and mandating that banks keep tenants in place in and maintain foreclosed properties. Recently I drafted COVID emergency residential and commercial tenant protections with local community stakeholders for the City of Berkeley and other municipalities during the onset of the COVID crisis.

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2. Describe one issue for the district you want to represent for which you have provided leadership and about which you are passionate.

District 6 is a hill district next to a park and near where one of California's biggest urban fire storms occurred 30 years ago – and fire safety and emergency preparedness needs are at the fore. As a deputy city attorney, I worked with a fire department on reducing fire risk and emergency, including as the on-site attorney at the tragic ghost ship fire. I'll improve our ability to lessen fire dangers in District 6—including reducing flammable brush and vegetation, supporting defensible space, and improving our ability to escape fire danger, all of which maintain property values and lowers fire insurance rates.

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3. What percentage of the district you [or intend to] represent are of APA heritage?

Asian Pacific Americans represent approximately 15% of the District 6 population. I note that Asians represent 30% of the UC Berkeley population, some of whom live in D6..

4. Please identify the three largest APA ethnicities in your district.

Chinese, Japanese, and East Indians.

5. Please identify the most at-risk APA community in your district and explain why.

Chinese have been under attack by the current presidential administration, blamed for COVID. This has led to vitriol and physical attacks upon them. Further, because the Asian, particularly Chinese populations have increased at UC, they have been accused of taking positions away from others seeking to attend UC. APA owners of small businesses are a significant number of the small business in Berkeley and are at risk of losing their businesses due to COVID.

6. List the three top concerns of members of the APAs in your district.

Racism as evidenced by the attacks on Chinese Americans around COVID.

Protecting and saving APA-owned small businesses.

Health care services and protecting health care providers, many of whom are APA.

7. During the COVID-19 pandemic, reports of anti-Asian verbal and physical attacks have arisen. If you are the incumbent, how have you addressed this? If you are a candidate how will you address this?

I would address these attacks as hate crimes. I would have an on-going process to educate residents of the importance of non-racist views of people and to honor the achievements and cultures of other races and ethnic groups., as well as a clear and enforceable system of accountability for race-based crimes and other types of hateful conduct.

8. Do you believe that Asian and Pacific Americans are adequately represented in local government? What can elected officials do to improve participation?

No. I was proud to have served under Oakland Mayor Jean Quan and to have her endorsement for my City Council candidacy. But, historically Asian and Pacific Americans have been underrepresented in elective positions. One way of increasing their participation in the political process is to promote and support programs that proactively outreach, train, and encourage those in diverse communities to run for elective office, as well as give them the tools they need to be successful in a campaign, much like the APAPA program or Emerge.

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9. Please identify all Asian Pacific American candidates whom you have personally endorsed over the past 5 years including this election cycle. If there are none, please explain.

Until recently, as a Supervising City Attorney, I was strongly discouraged from endorsing candidates, as my impartiality was necessary to effectively do my job. However, I had worked closely with Sheng Thao and I enthusiastically supported her in her run for Oakland City Council because I anticipated retiring at the end of that year, and was thrilled that she was successful in her election. I have worked with her on some matters after my retirement from Oakland.

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10. If you were faced with a situation that involved an Asian Pacific American community, would you seek consultation with our Caucus as a resource?

Yes

No

Thank you for completing our questionnaire.

Please submit your responses by Sept. 9, 2020 midnight. Our East County Endorsement Meeting is scheduled for Thu., Sept. 17 beginning at 6:30 pm on Zoom. Only those candidates submitting the questionnaire on time will be on our endorsement ballot. No changes to your responses can be made after it is submitted.

# Google Forms