

# 2020 Endorsement Questionnaire

Email address \*

malia.vella@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 \*

Malia Vella

City and zip code of residence.

Alameda 94501

What is your campaign website address?

[www.maliavella.com](http://www.maliavella.com)

What is your campaign email address?

[info@maliavella.com](mailto:info@maliavella.com)

What is the office that you are seeking? \*

- Alameda City Council
- Alameda School Board
- Berkeley, Mayor
- Berkeley, City Council, Dist. 2
- Berkeley, City Council, Dist. 3
- Berkeley, City Council, Dist.5
- Berkeley, City Council, Dist. 6
- Berkeley, Unified School District Trustee
- Berkeley, Rent Stabilization Board
- Oakland, City Council, Dist. 1
- Oakland, City Council, Dist. 3
- Oakland, City Council, Dist. 5
- Oakland, City Council, Dist. 7
- Oakland, City Council, At-large
- Oakland City Attorney
- Oakland USD, School Trustee, Dist. 1
- Oakland USD, School Trustee, Dist. 3
- Oakland USD, School Trustee, Dist. 5
- Oakland USD, School Trustee, Dist. 7
- AC Transit, Bd. of Directors, Ward 1
- AC Transit, Bd. of Directors, Ward 2
- AC Transit Bd. of Directors, At-Large
- EB Regional Park Dist. Bd. of Directors. Ward 1

Regional Council, Bd. of Directors, Area 1

AD 15, State Assembly Representative

AD 18, State Assembly Representative

Peralta Community College District, Bd. of Director, Area 2

Other: .....

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.

Since I could register to vote at 18 (2002) .....

Are you an APA Caucus member?

Yes

No

Why are you seeking the Caucus's endorsement?

As the only APA candidate in the race and a democrat I would be honored to receive the Caucus's endorsement. The endorsement holds a lot of weight as we have a large APA population in the city. As a councilmember, I've done many things to support the APA community in Alameda including voting for the city to become a sanctuary city and holding know your rights clinics, supporting tenants rights including COVID19 rent relief to prevent displacement, and supporting our small businesses with grants and funding for parklets during COVID 19.

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

CA Controller Betty Yee  
Assemblymember Rob Bonta  
Supervisor Wilma Chan  
City of Alameda Democratic Club  
Alameda County Democratic Central Committee

\*See the full list on my website.

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?

I was born in Alameda and lived here as a child and returned after law school in 2012.

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

Wellesley College, 2006, B.A. Architecture & Political Science

Santa Clara University School of Law, 2011, J.D. with a special certificate in Public Interest & Social Justice

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

Teamsters Local 856, Attorney & Public Policy Director (June 2014-present)

Mills College, Adjunct Professor of Practice (January 2016-present)

CSUEB, Adjunct Professor of Practice (Fall 2017)

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

Alameda Sister Cities Association (2015-present) - helped with bylaws, attend events, and serve in delegations

Alameda Food Bank - volunteer and organize baby supply donations (2014-present) Spectrum Community Services, Boardmember (2016-present)

Alameda Family Services, Boardmember (2015-2017) & Co-Chair of the Annual Holiday Home Tour Tea (2012-present)

City of Alameda Democratic Club, past President & Secretary, currently an active member (2012-present)

Alameda County Democratic Central Committee, Associate (2012-present)

Bike Walk Alameda, Member & Bike to Work Day Volunteer (2015-present)

CA Democratic Party, elected delegate (2015, 2019)

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

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

I've actually served on Council and been an effective elected official working to build coalitions to enact many of the things my opponents can only talk about.

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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.

The pandemic has created a lot of unforeseen challenges and I've been focused on meeting with my constituents to best determine how the City can help and create safer nets. I pushed for staff to be reassigned during the spring so that rather than sit at home, they helped facilitate mobile/contactless food pick up at Alameda Food Bank and could assist our community health partners in getting PPE. I personally went out and volunteered alongside staff throughout the spring, helping with AUSD lunch pick up, the Food Bank food distribution and the Senior Meals Program at Mastick (provided by Spectrum). I also worked to secure PPE for our most vulnerable residents at Alameda Point Collaborative and AUSD through the Buy One/Give One program I designed and worked on with Chris Tam & All Good Living Foundation. I also pushed staff on rent rebates, commercial & residential tenant eviction protections, and starting a citywide grant programs for renters and businesses in need. It's critical that in challenging times, the city steps up to do its part.

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

32%

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

1. Chinese, 2. Filipino, 3. Korean

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

Filipino & Chinese tenants were most at risk of displacement prior to 2017, however, we addressed that by enacting tenant protections. They are at risk due to COVID impacting their income and I've helped many connect with services like meal delivery through great plates or MOW and the food bank. Additionally, our elderly APA's, especially APA women have been disproportionately targeted for robberies while out shopping, leaving their businesses or visiting the bank.

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

1. Housing
  2. Schools
  3. Public Safety
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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 signed onto a number of resolutions calling this out and denouncing it. I have also used my platform on social media to highlight it and denounce it.

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

In some cities, like Alameda, yes, but generally I don't think we are. We can work to recruit and mentor the next generation, encourage APA's to apply for boards and commissions (and help they navigate the appointment process), volunteer on/support their campaigns and endorse qualified APA candidates when they run for office.

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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.

Rob Bonta, Assembly

Phong La, County Assessor

Sheng Thao, Oakland City Council

Nikki Fortunato-Bas, Oakland City Council

Aimee Sueko Eng, Oakland USD

Juslyn Manalo, Daly City City Council

Dee Rosario, East Bay Regional Parks District

Aisha Wahab, Hayward City Council

Dianne Martinez, Emeryville City Council

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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 North County Endorsement Meeting is scheduled for Thu., Sept. 24 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.

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