

Item 6 - 06 - Disclosure Report



Ryan Micik, Chair
Francis Upton IV, Vice Chair
Alea Gage
Vincent Steele
Karun Tilak
Tanya Bayeva

Nicolas Heidorn, Executive Director

TO: City of Oakland, Public Ethics Commission
FROM: Alex Van Buskirk, Lead Analyst, Compliance and Disclosure
Jelani Killings, Lead Analyst, Education and Engagement
DATE: November 26, 2024
RE: Disclosure and Engagement Monthly Report for the December 11, 2024,
Public Ethics Commission Meeting

This memorandum provides a summary of major accomplishments in the Public Ethics Commission's (PEC or Commission) Disclosure and Engagement program activities since the last regular meeting.

Commission staff disclosure activities focus on improving online tools for public access to local campaign finance and other disclosure data, enhancing compliance with disclosure rules, and conducting data analysis for Public Ethics Commission projects and programs as required.

Engagement activities include training and resources provided to the regulated community, as well as general outreach to Oakland residents to raise awareness of the Commission's role and services and to provide opportunities for dialogue between the Commission and community members.

Compliance with Disclosure Requirements

Commission staff conducts filing officer duties as required by state and local law and aims to help candidates, lobbyists and City officials submit required disclosure reports and ensure residents can easily access campaign finance, lobbyist, and ethics-related data and information.

Campaign Finance Disclosure – The second pre-election deadline for the November 2024 election was October 24, 2024. All candidate-controlled committees with candidates on the November 2024 ballot raising or spending \$2,000 or more must file pre-election statements for their campaign committees as well as any other committees that they control. Ballot measure committees and other recipient committees with fundraising or spending activity connected with the November 2024 ballot (also raising or spending \$2,000 or more) must also file by the pre-election deadlines. These filings are made on the Form 460. Candidates intending to keep their campaign activity under \$2,000 must file the Form 470.

Commission staff coordinated with the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) to swiftly contact candidates that missed any pre-election deadlines. All relevant candidate-

controlled, ballot measure committees, and other select types of committees have filed their September 2024 and October 2024 First and Second Pre-Election campaign statements. Commission staff completed surface review of all 94 First and Second Pre-Election campaign statements to ensure compliance. Two of the 94 campaign statements were filed late. Commission staff is assessing the required \$10/day late fee related to these late filers. The next scheduled campaign statement in the semi-annual covering the period from October 20, 2024, through December 31, 2024, and is due January 1, 2025.

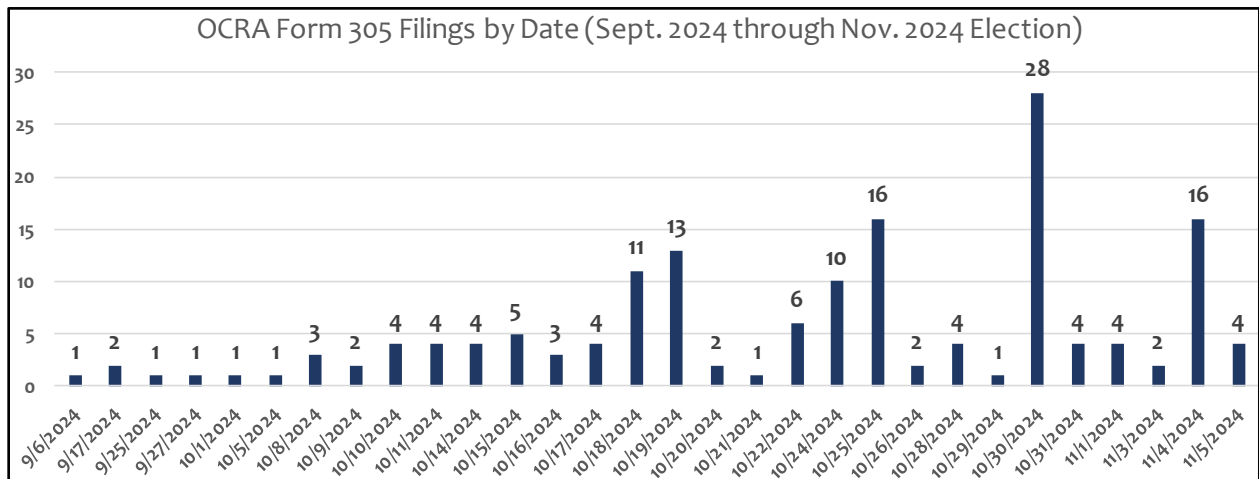
Commission staff also conducted an audit of Form 497 (24-Hour/10-Day Contribution Reports) reports and Form 460 campaign statements to ensure proper reporting occurred – where Form 497 statements reported information subsequently appeared on relevant Pre-Election Form 460 statements. All 33 committees audited that filed Form 497 (Part 1) statements reported that Form 497 information on subsequent relevant Form 460 statements.

Commission staff further conducted an audit of relevant campaign committees for overages in campaign contributions above the City of Oakland’s contribution limits related to data reported on the First and Second Pre-Election campaign statements. No committees with reportable activity during this period were found to have overages related to contributions received and the City’s contribution limits.

The Oakland Campaign Reform Act (OCRA) requires any committee or person required by state law to file a 24-hour/10-day Late Independent Expenditure Report (Form 496) with the PEC also submit a Supplemental Independent Expenditure Disclosure (OCRA Form 305), due at the same time as the corresponding Form 496. The PEC received and processed 160 OCRA Form 305 filings related to independent expenditures in all November 2024 election contests.

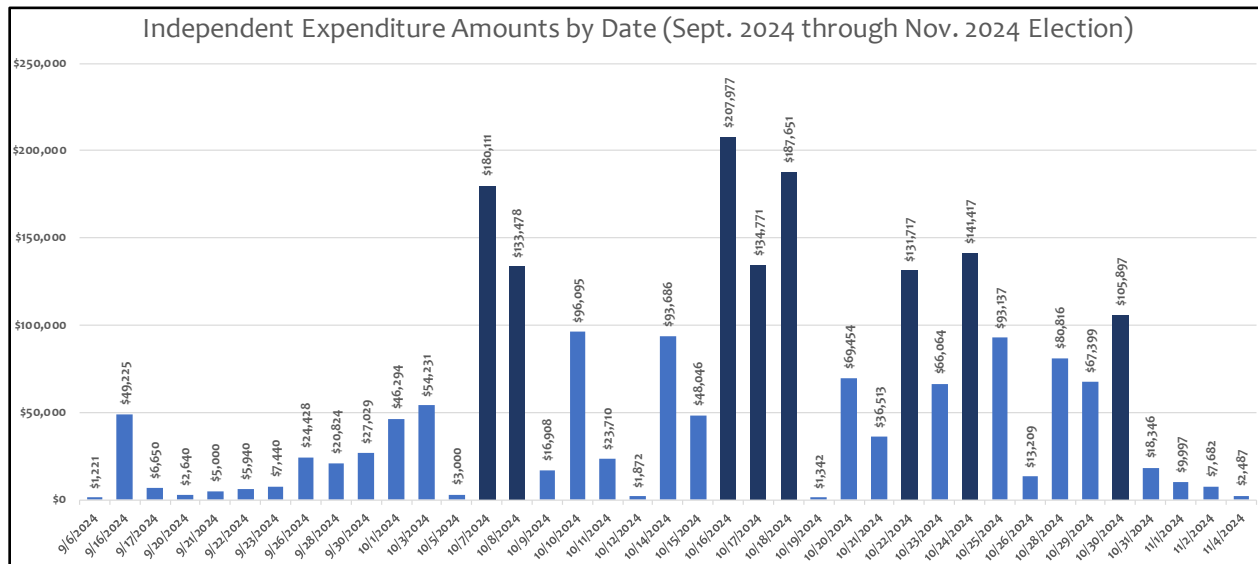
The following shows the number of OCRA Form 305 filings (i.e., dates independent expenditures were reported) through the November 2024 election.

- Count of OCRA Form 305 filings by date from September 2024 through the November 2024 election:

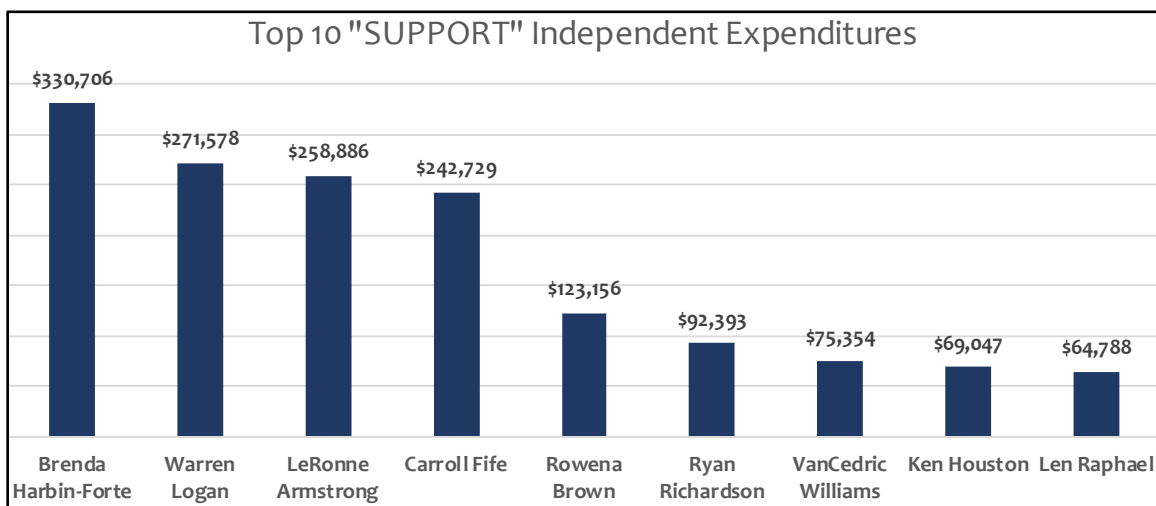


The following highlights information of interest about independent expenditure spending related to the November 2024 election.

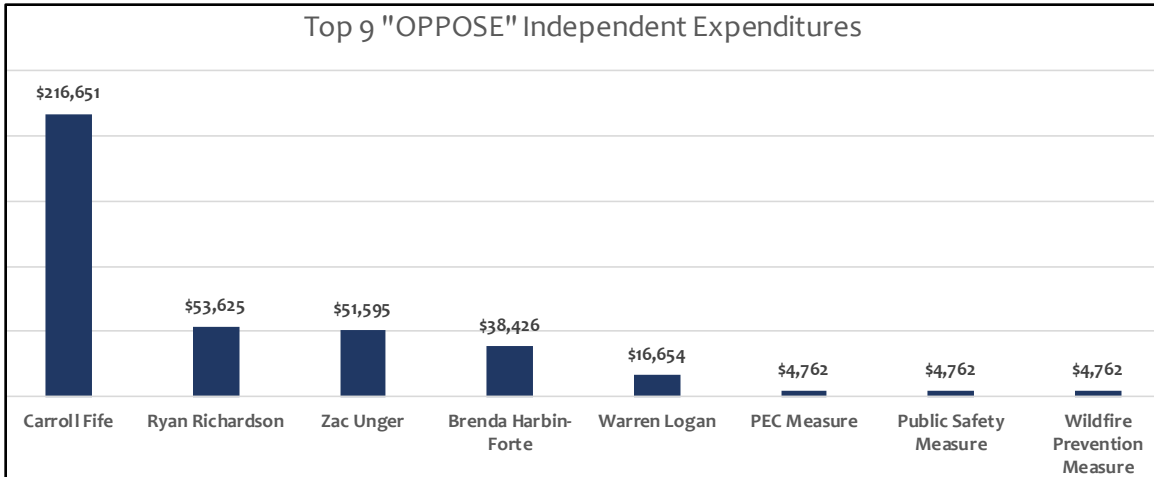
- Display of independent expenditure amounts (i.e., spending totals) by reported date of the expenditure from September 2024 through the November 2024 election. Coloring in dark blue marks spending that totaled \$100,000 or more on a given day. Totals are for all independent expenditure committees' reported spending by day:



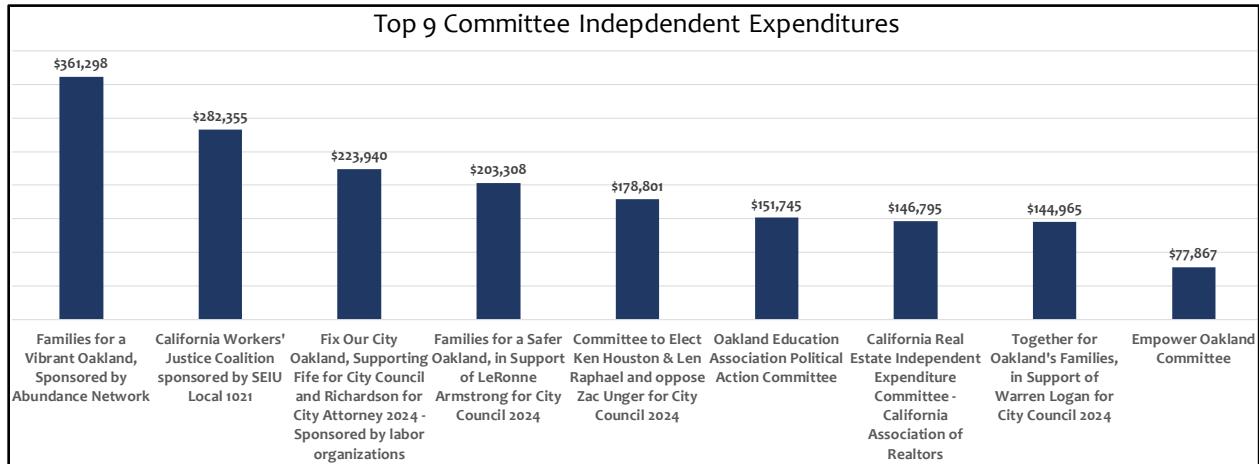
- Candidates receiving the most “support” independent expenditures related to the November 2024 election:



- Candidates with the most “oppose” independent expenditures related to the November 2024 election (there were only nine candidates/measures that received opposition spending, hence why the count is only “Top 9” as opposed to “Top 10”):



- Committees with the highest independent expenditure spending related to the November 2024 election:



It is important to note that Commission staff raised the expenditure ceiling for all applicable City Council election contests (Districts 1, 3, 5, and 7) in September 2024 and October 2024, after independent expenditures exceeded \$30,000 in each race before the November 5, 2024, election.

Campaign statements are available to view and download at the Commission’s [Public Portal for Campaign Finance Disclosure](#). Campaign finance data, graphs, and visualizations are available via the [City’s Open Data portal](#) and Commission-sponsored apps [Show Me the Money](#) and [Open Disclosure Oakland](#), as well as links on the Public Ethics Commission website.

Lobbyist Registration Program – The Oakland Lobbyist Registration Act (LRA) requires any person that qualifies as a lobbyist to register annually with the Commission before conducting any lobbying activity. Registration renewals were due January 31. To date, 54 lobbyists are currently registered with the City of Oakland for 2024.



(There have been several lobbyist registration terminations in 2024, but there have also been new lobbyists filing, resulting in the same number of total Oakland lobbyists at 54.)

October 31, 2024, marked the deadline for lobbyists to file their Quarterly Activity Report for Quarter 3. Of the 54 registered lobbyists, all filed the required Quarter 3 2024 activity report. Nine of the 54 Quarterly Activity Reports were filed late. Commission staff is assessing the required \$10/day late fee related to these late filers.

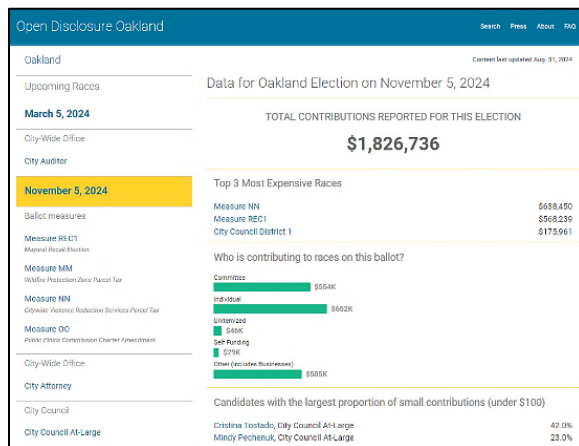
In November 2023, the Oakland City Council adopted amendments to the Lobbyist Registration Act including a new annual lobbyist registration fee as well as a requirement that lobbyists take an online training provided by the Commission. To date, 50 of 54 lobbyists have taken the online training provided by the Commission (the remaining, outstanding four are newly registered lobbyists still within the window of time to take the online training).

The Commission has received new annual lobbyist registration fees from 49 of the 54 currently registered lobbyists (one waiver was granted in mid-2024 for a current lobbyist and the remaining, outstanding four are newly registered lobbyists still within the window of time to provide payment), and one lobbyist has received a waiver. (The Commission has received registration fee payments from 55 Oakland lobbyists thus far in 2024, though some of these lobbyists have since terminated their registration.)

An up-to-date list of registered lobbyists and lobbyist activity reports with links to view and download individual reports is available at the Public Ethics Commission's [Lobbyist Dashboard and Data](#) webpage.

Illuminating Disclosure Data

Open Disclosure Oakland – The [opendisclosure.io](#) campaign finance app is still live with the data for the 2023-2024 election cycle. Open Disclosure Oakland, a nonpartisan tool, was developed by volunteers from [OpenOakland](#), a civic technologist group, in partnership with Commission staff to give all Oakland residents equal access to campaign finance data. The Open Disclosure Oakland website shows funds donated to both political candidates and ballot measure committees and provides clear summaries of money raised and spent as well as financial trends for each election. The website also includes a search function that makes campaign donation records easy to search and sort and allows users to search campaign donors by name across multiple campaigns and elections.



Find out who's spending money to influence Oakland elections.

See spending for and against candidates and ballot measures.

www.opendisclosure.io

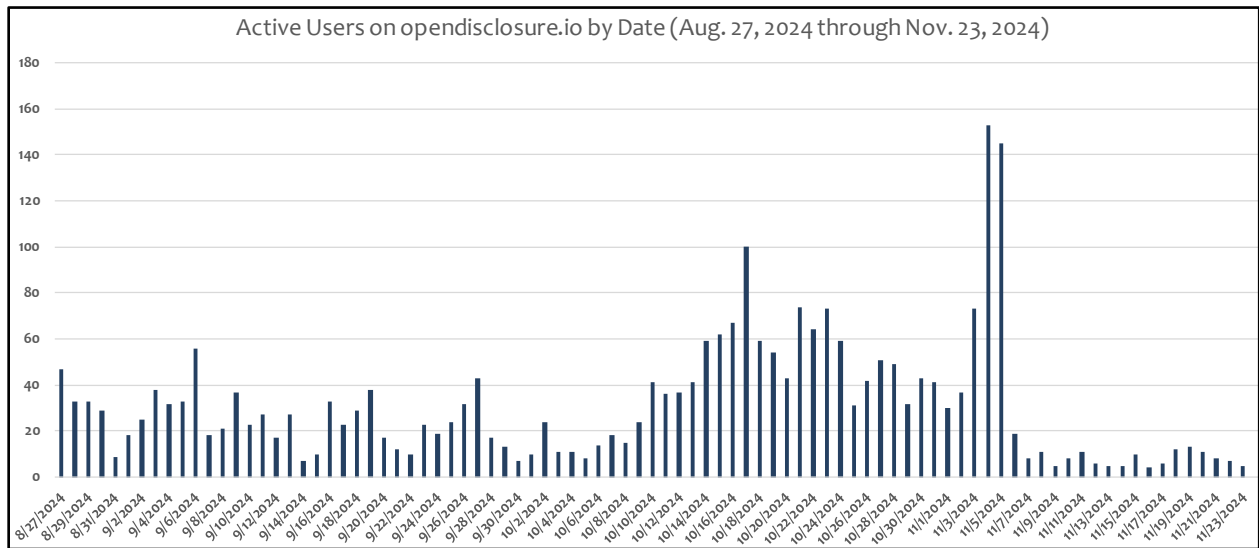
Open Disclosure Oakland is built by

Open Disclosure Oakland is updated daily regularly with data imported directly from the [City's campaign finance database](#) and includes a notification system that sends subscribers alerts about new campaign reports.

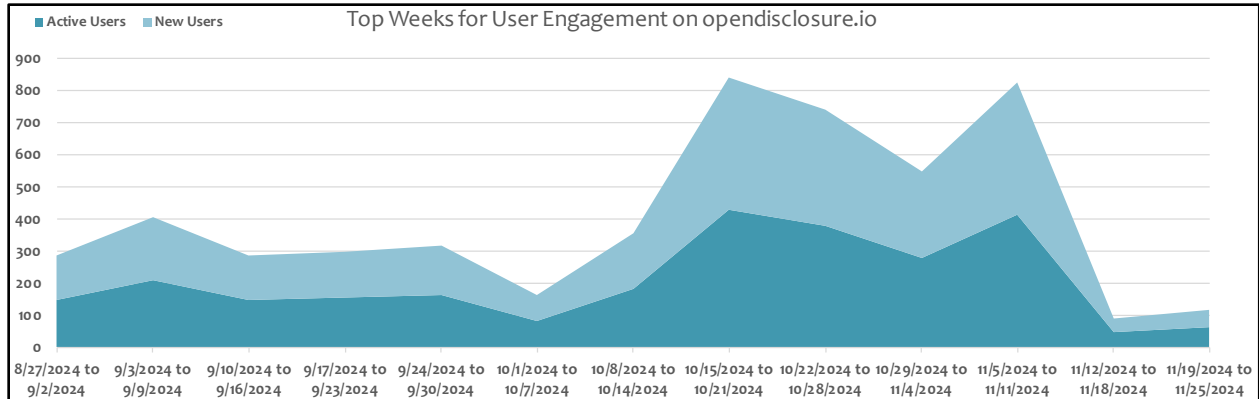
Leading up to the election, the PEC purchased digital advertisements in *The Oaklandside*, which ran from October 14, 2024, through election day, November 5, 2024, and also posted to social media to promote public awareness of the Open Disclosure Oakland platform.

Open Disclosure Oakland Platform Usage Overview – Commission staff analyzed activity on Open Disclosure Oakland for opendisclosure.io based on Google Analytics data covering the period August 27, 2024, through November 24, 2024 (89 days).

- Platform engagement highlights between August 27, 2024, and November 24, 2024 (89 days) include (1) nearly 9,400 total page views across all campaign-related pages and (2) 2,687 individual “active users” who engaged with the website.



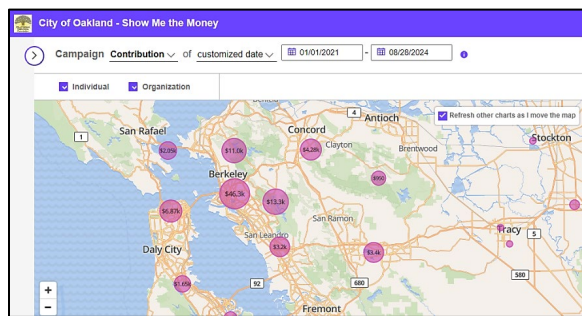
- Top weeks for user engagement include the weeks of October 15-October 21, 2024 (426 active users), October 22-October 28, 2024 (377 active users), and November 5-November 11, 2024 (414 active users).



- New users by “channel” data include 1,795 from organic searches¹ (76% of new users), 604 “direct traffic”² users, and 147 users through channels such as email and related referrals (which includes the PEC’s paid advertising of the Open Disclosure Oakland platform).

Open Disclosure Oakland gained 6,120 new users and generated over 20,610 pageviews in 2023-2024. Since launching Open Disclosure Oakland in 2014, the website has reached 45,655 users with 183,903 page views of Open Disclosure Oakland content.

“Show Me the Money” Campaign Finance Mapping – The City of Oakland [“Show Me the Money”](#) app is still live with 2024 campaign finance data. “Show Me the Money” builds a map showing the geographic source of campaign contributions to candidates and totals donated



from that location. Oakland residents can dig deeper by clicking each location point, and the application will reveal the names of top contributors from that area. Up to three candidates may be selected at a time for comparison. Features beyond the contribution map include allowing users to review campaign contribution trends and campaign spending patterns.

Like the Commission’s other campaign finance projects, this app is updated daily with data imported directly from the [City’s campaign finance database](#). Followers of Oakland elections can find the “Show Me the Money” app via links on the Commission’s website, the [City’s Open Data portal](#), and Open Disclosure Oakland candidate pages.

“Show Me the Money” Campaign Finance Mapping Platform Usage Overview – Commission staff is still collecting analytics data for this platform.

¹ This refers to sessions originating from unpaid search engine results. It includes data from search engines like Google, Bing, etc. Users find the site through keywords or phrases and click on the organic (non-ad) links displayed on the search engine results page.

² This encompasses sessions where users directly type the website’s URL into their browser or use a saved bookmark. It can also include cases where the source of traffic cannot be determined (e.g., a non-tagged link in an email, PDFs, or certain mobile apps).

Limited Public Financing (LPF) Program

Commission staff administers the Limited Public Financing (LPF) program and provides training and ongoing interaction with candidates to facilitate program requirements and distribute the maximum amount of available public funds.

The deadline for candidates participating in the 2024 LPF Program to submit final reimbursement claims was November 4, 2024. Commission staff dispersed a total of \$154,999.95 in processed reimbursements to participating candidates out of the \$155,000 available through the election fund.

Name	District	Total Funds Dispersed
Zac Unger	1	\$22,142.85
Carroll Fife	3	\$22,142.85
Warren Logan	3	\$22,142.85
Noel Gallo	5	\$22,142.85
Erin Armstrong	5	\$22,142.85
Ken Houston	7	\$22,142.85
Iris Merriouns	7	\$22,142.85
	TOTAL	\$154,999.95

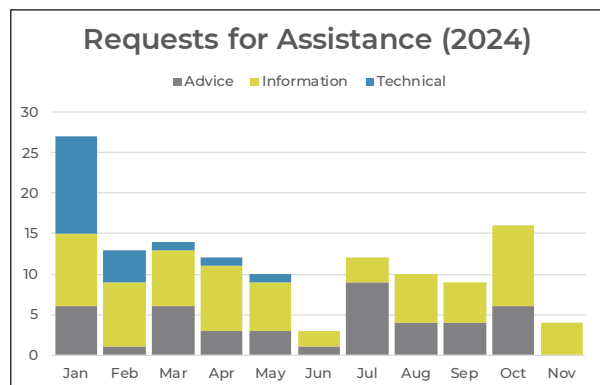
The next LPF program deadline is January 31, 2025, in which LPF participants must return any surplus funds remaining in their campaign account as of December 31, 2024. Staff will continue to work with candidates to close out the LPF program for the 2024 election.

Additional detail about participation trends in the 2024 LPF Program are included in a separate report for this meeting.

Advice and Engagement

The Commission’s Advice and Engagement Program seeks to ensure Oakland public servants, candidates for office, lobbyists, and City contractors understand and comply with City campaign finance, ethics, and transparency laws.

Advice and Technical Assistance – In the months of October 2024 and November 2024, Commission staff responded to 20 requests for information, advice or assistance regarding campaign finance, ethics, Sunshine law, or lobbyist issues.



New Employee Orientation – Commission staff continues to make presentations at the City’s monthly New Employee Orientation (NEO) providing new employees with an introduction to the Public Ethics Commission and overview of the Government Ethics Act (GEA).

In the months of October 2024 and November 2024, Commission staff provided an overview of the City’s ethics rules to 60 new City employees. Employees required to file Form 700 disclosure statements were also assigned the Commission’s mandatory online Government Ethics Training for Form 700 filers.

Social Media – Each month Commission staff post social media content to highlight specific PEC policy areas, activities, or client-groups. Communications in October 2024 specifically focused on promoting Open Disclosure and the “Show Me the Money” app.

