

**Redistricting Commission  
Applicant Profile**

<b>Applicant #</b>	11309317657
<b>First Name</b>	amber
<b>Last Name</b>	blackwell
<b>District</b>	District 3
<b>Time living in District</b>	More than 20 years
<b>Time living in Oakland</b>	More than 20 years
<b>Education</b>	Master's degree
<b>Income</b>	\$35,000 - \$74,999
<b>Voting history</b>	2018 election
<b>Gender</b>	Female
<b>Race/Ethncity</b>	Black or African American
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## Supplemental Questionnaire

Your response to each of the mandatory following questions is limited to no more than 500 words. Please type in the space provided for each question.

\*1. Why do you wish to serve on the Commission and why do you think the work of the Commission is important?

I wish to serve on the commission to lend my professionalism, humor, and keen knowledge of Oakland with its unique neighborhoods, children, and families. I feel the work of the redistricting commission is important because it helps chronicle population trends and help make decisions based on the population inhabiting areas during certain points in time. Over the past ten years the demographics of Oakland have changed drastically. The needs that communities had ten years ago have changed with the populations that have relocated out of and inside of the city. This work is important to me as an African American Female resident of Oakland for forty-nine years. It is important because I have witnessed the trends within the city, I am familiar with the history of Oakland because I am an Historian by training while being raised up within it neighborhoods, and I am passionate about the continued diversity and equity that our city is known for.

\*2. Explain what it means to be impartial and describe your ability to exercise impartiality.

What it means to be impartial in the context of service reflects one's ability to work alongside others evaluating the facts or data presented for decision making or discussion in an open-minded way. Being impartial is being able to evaluate information neutrally and fairly once mutually. Honoring agreements around engagement that have been set by the group is also ways impartiality is maintained. I am able to engage impartiality because I have the ability to look at facts, data, or information in an objective way utilizing my knowledge of Oakland balanced with what other individuals perceive the data reveals and the perspectives of the group.

\*3. The Commissioners will need to work collaboratively in redrawing district boundaries. Provide an example from when you had to set aside your own self-interest to achieve a common goal.

In operating a non profit that provides school and community based services I have had to manage our organizations community collaboratives providing services alongside partners who have competing priorities at times. My self-interest can manifest in that if one has a set of objectives to meet as well as a set of principles by which to deliver services to Oakland's most vulnerable populations the need to be assertive is necessary. Often times what is best for the children and families is not what is best for partnership adult outcomes. In order to achieve common goals which are high quality service delivery options for children and families being able to navigate through the white noise and extrapolate the common points of service focus on achieving that common endeavor can be done.

\*4. All Commissioners must demonstrate an understanding of and appreciation for Oakland's diversity. Describe your knowledge of and appreciation for Oakland's people and places, and how this will enhance your work as a commissioner.

My knowledge of Oakland's people, places, history and achievements will be an enhancement as a commissioner. My forty nine proud years as a Oaklander will help me demonstrate all the ways I understand and appreciate my City. My family came to Oakland during the great migration of Blacks from the South after World War II. I grew up hearing my Grandmother stories of the history of African Americans in settling West Oakland then migrating to the East because she lived it. I know stories about the first African American woman to work in retail downtown Oakland because my Grandmother knew her. I have a deep appreciation for Oakland because I was raised here, have had my success here, birthed and raised my children here, and educate its children as a part of my life's work. My Grandparents and parent graduated from Oakland Public Schools and I dedicated much of my college studies to the examination of Oakland and its place in the African American diaspora. As an Ethnic Studies Major, from San Francisco State in the 90's I have a knowledge and keen understanding of the interface of culture in Oakland. Oakland once held the reputation of being the most diverse city in the world. That was a very proud honor. I have an appreciation for the history of Oakland, I lived it, grew up with stories of old Oakland including 7<sup>th</sup> street, Eastmont Mall, and Bushrod Park. Lake Merritt and Chabot are all familiar to me as I lived and received much of my elementary education I these areas, or hung out in every part of Oakland above and below MacArthur.

\*5. Provide an example from when you faced a complex question or situation. What problem solving skills did you use to solve it?

I am an individual when faced with a problem breaks it down rationally. I have a set of questions I ask myself when alkalinizing the problem. I ask myself what the end game is. I ask myself and at times the other variable, what the other person is being asking for and why is it a problem for me. I then move from there. I always try and see the other persons perspective in order to make my point in a way that can be heard. I look at the facts and them weigh them with emotion as all humans have emotion. I also try and see what the root of the problem is and what the other person emotions and words are really asking for. As I am doing this, I am constantly trying to align what I want with what the understanding of what the problem is. If we cannot come to a point where there is understanding I can move using consensus-based decision-making strategies. If I cannot move past things, I would ask for more information to address my concerns or fears all the while attempting to persuade or understand the log jam of ideas.

\*6. Describe any professional, social, political, volunteer, community activities, and/or causes in which you have been involved or that you have financially supported. If you do not have any activities to report, type N/A in the space provided.

I have been an member of the Black Alliance for Educational Options, I am a member of the African American Chamber of commerce and I fiscally support Berkeley High Schools Black Engineering Program, and I helped found and administered the McClymond's Merit award, a one million dollar endowment that established a scholarship fund particularly for McClymond's High School students. Most of my time is spent operating the non profit in which I am a founding Board member working in six Oakland elementary the High Schools providing after school, school based behavioral health, and workforce development programming.

***Additional Information (Optional)***

*\*Response required*

If there is any additional information that was not asked in the Supplemental Questionnaire that you believe would help the Screening Panel in making their nominations, you may enter that information here. Your response here is optional.

I am a long time resident and historian of Oakland. I feel our strength is in the diversity that we have on every level and where applicable I will work my best to help keep that community and neighborhood feeling that Oakland residents have had for the past sixty years remain and guide the decisions I make around redistricting priorities.
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\*I understand that if selected as a Commissioner, I shall be ineligible, for a period of 10 years beginning from the date of appointment, to hold elective public office for the City of Oakland. Additionally, I shall be ineligible, for a period of four years beginning from the date of appointment, to hold appointive public office for the City of Oakland or Oakland Unified School Board, to serve as paid staff for or as a paid consultant to Oakland City Council, or any member of the City Council or Oakland School Board, to receive a non-competitively bid contract with the City of Oakland, or to register as a lobbyist. This four-year ban on having a paid consultancy or entering noncompetitively bid contracts applies to myself individually and all entities for which I am a controlling person. Please enter your initials below to confirm your understanding of these statements.

Initials:	AB
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\*I affirm, by entering my name in the space provided, that the statements contained in this application are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Name:	AB
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