

*Exhibit C*

# Democracy Dollars :

*Oakland's Transformative  
Approach to Campaign Finance*

**Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities**  
**May 19, 2025**

Mentimeter.com |



Public Ethics | CITY OF  
Commission | **OAKLAND**

Suzanne Doran, Program Manager [sdoran@oaklandca.gov](mailto:sdoran@oaklandca.gov)

Rabab Bobby Zaidi, Community Engagement Specialist  
[rzaidi@oaklandca.gov](mailto:rzaidi@oaklandca.gov)



*Exhibit C*

**Our mission:  
To “promote fairness, openness,  
honesty, and integrity in City  
government” and “a more  
inclusive, representative,  
and accountable democracy in  
Oakland”**



**Public Ethics Commission**

# Everyone is talking about Oakland elections

**Who are my neighbors voting for?**

**Who pays for all these ads in my mailbox?**

**When will we know who's won?**

**Will voters turn out?**





# Voting and Campaign Spending Vary Widely for Different Neighborhoods

Share of adult citizens vs. share of 2022 mayoral vote

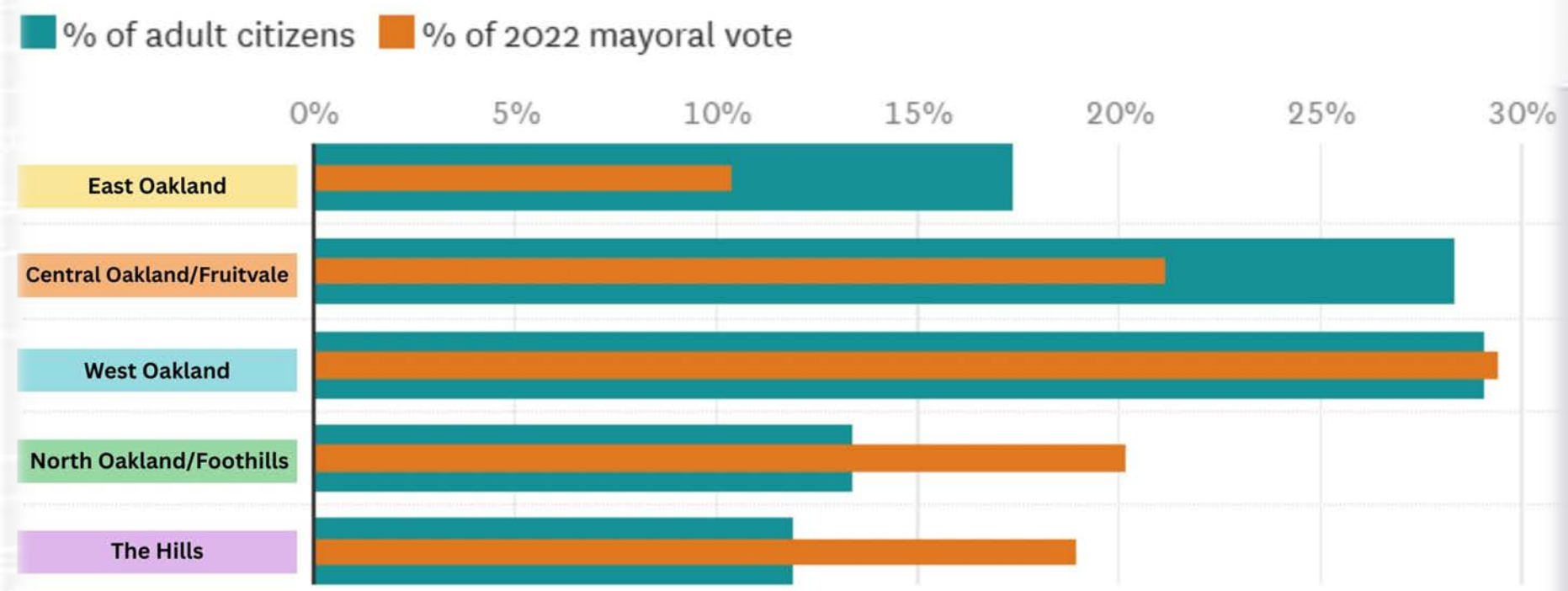
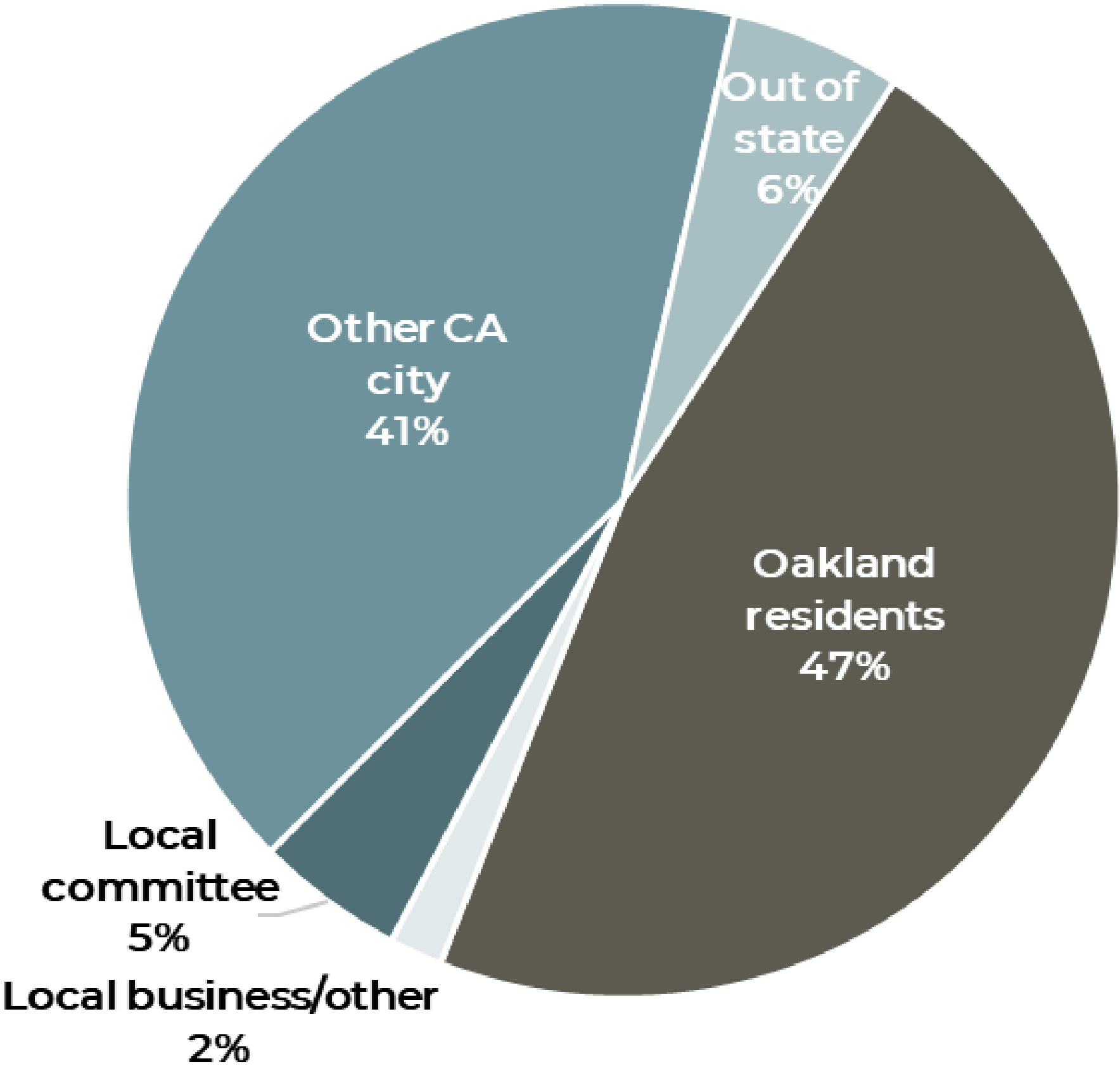


Chart: Aseem Shukla/S.F. Chronicle - Source: Chronicle analysis of Alameda County Registrar of Voters and Census data

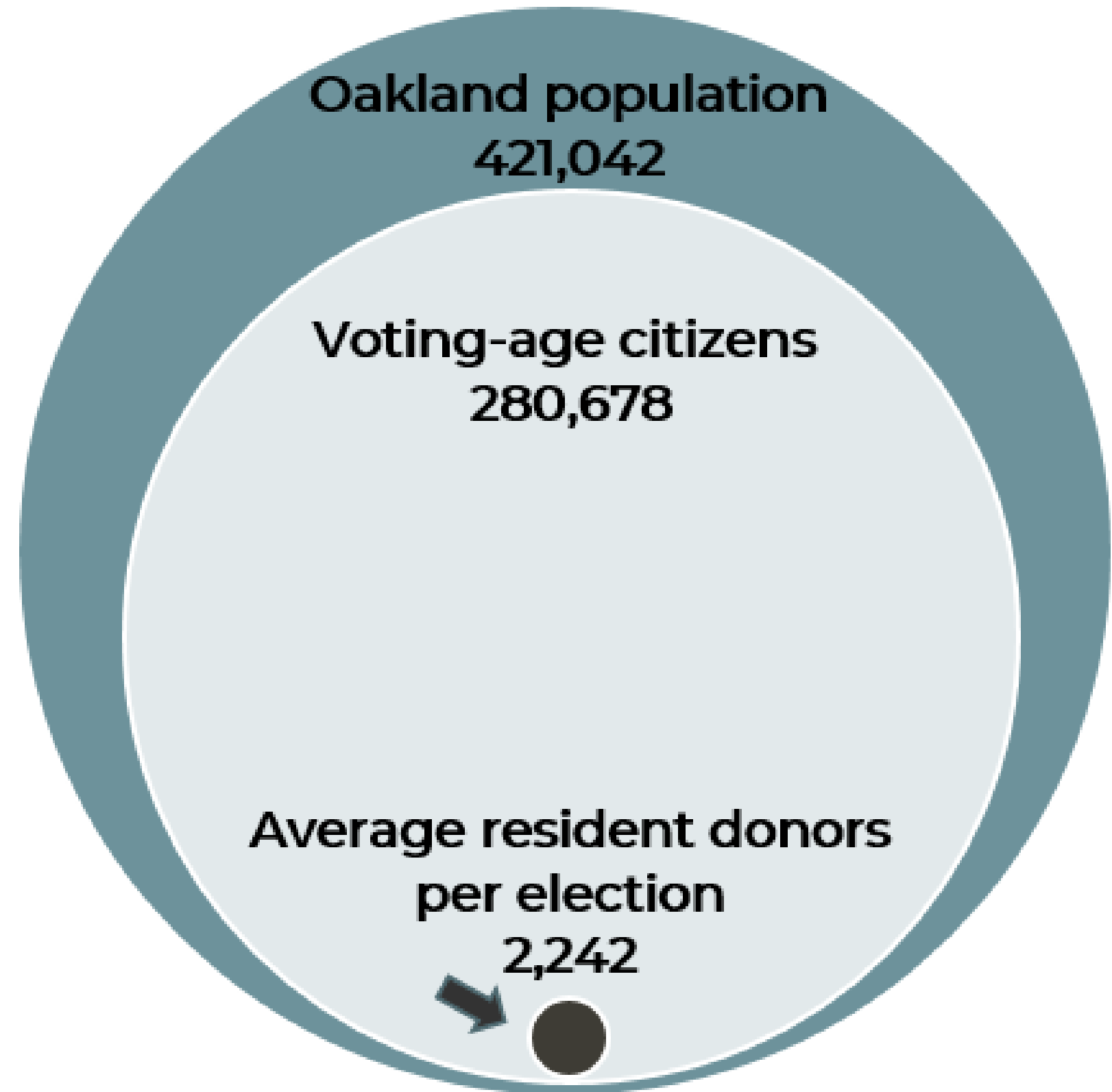
# Less than Half of Contributions Come from Oakland Residents

---



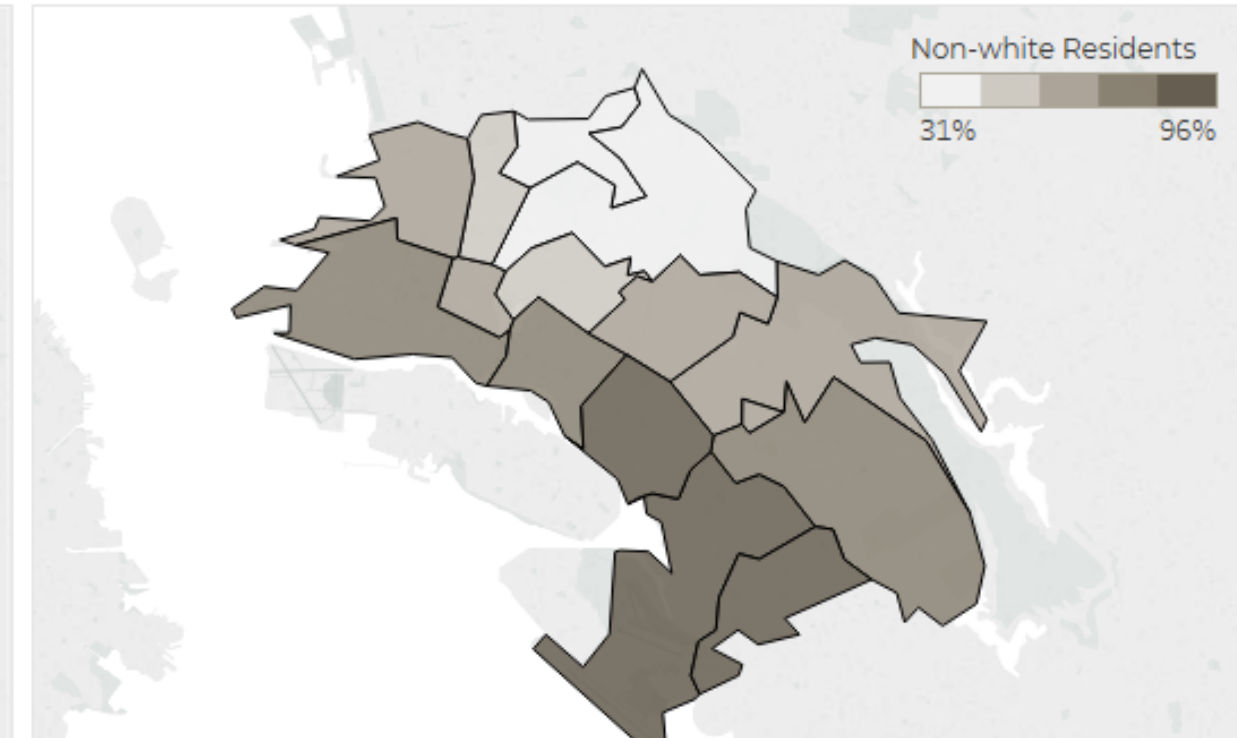
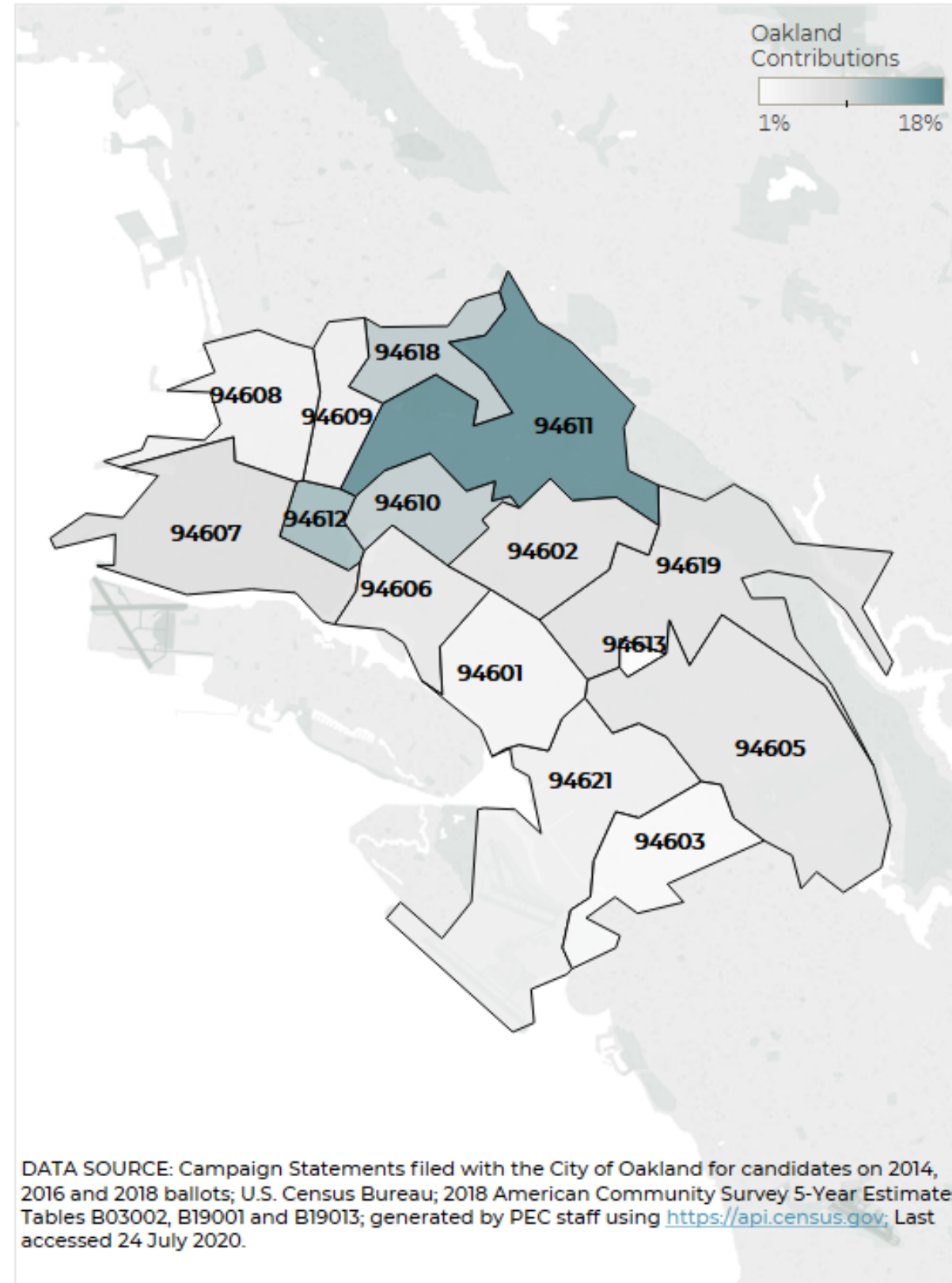
# Less than 1% of Residents Donate to Oakland Candidates

---

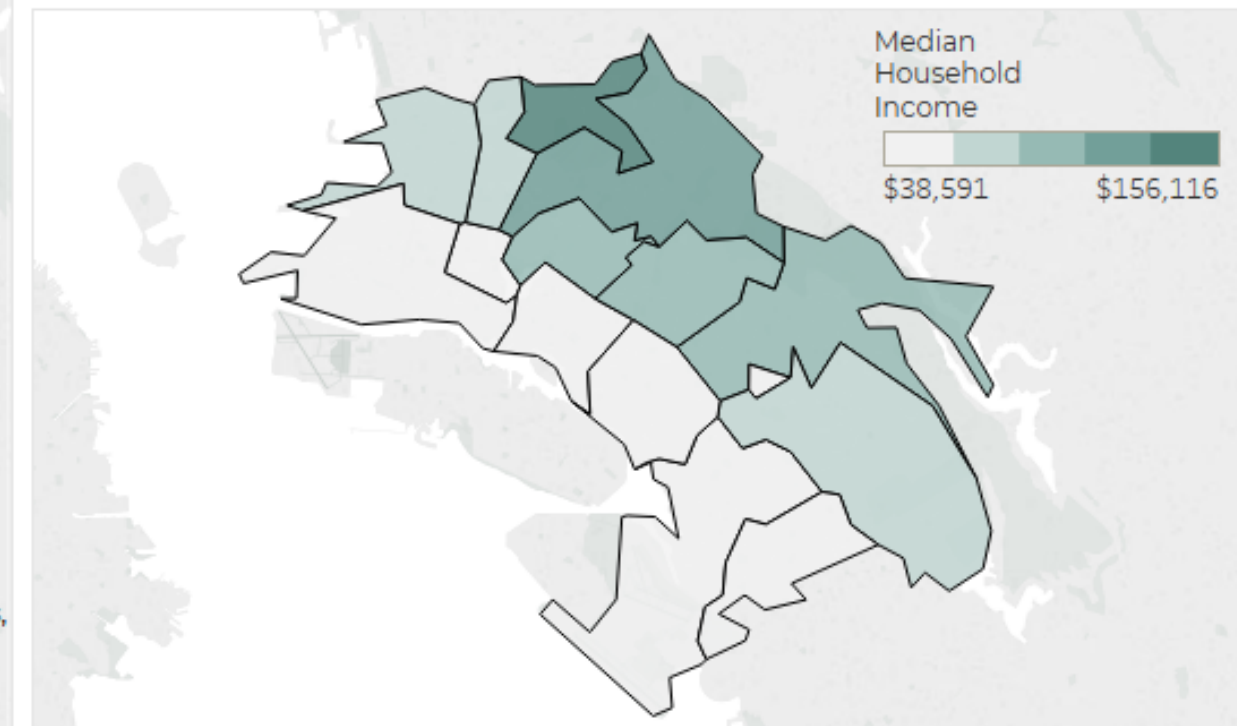


# Majority of Oakland donors live in the wealthiest, majority-white neighborhoods

---



Campaign Donors Concentrated in Wealthiest Neighborhoods





**On average, how much money do you think a winning mayoral candidate spends in a single election?**

**\$505,765**

---



*Exhibit C*

**Do you think income is a barrier to running for office?**



**Do you think donating to candidates makes them care more about your support?**





*Exhibit C*

**Have you  
heard of  
public  
campaign  
financing?**





A stylized illustration of a hand holding a stack of green money. The hand is positioned at the top, with fingers gripping the edges of several bills. The bills are depicted with simple outlines and a light green color. Below the hand is a brown, trapezoidal shape representing a box or a platform. The entire scene is set against a white background.

**If you had coupons worth \$100 that you could donate to the candidate of your choice, would you use it?**

# **In 2022, Oakland residents approved Measure W, making clear they want a fairer, more equitable campaign finance system**

## **Democracy Dollar Program goals:**

- **reduce the influence of large donors**
- **increase political engagement**
- **make donors more representative of residents**
- **help candidates run for office even if they don't have a wealthy fundraiser network**




# What are Democracy Dollars?




- Democracy Dollars are \$100 in 'campaign cash' or vouchers.
- You can use these to donate to local candidates in future elections.
- Registered voters will automatically receive this in the mail.
- Targeted outreach to reach non-registered voters.

### Build a better Oakland with Democracy Dollars


You've been given \$100 to donate to any participating candidate running in Oakland this election season. Give all \$100 to one candidate, or split it up to several – the power is in your hands.

Find your candidates: [Oaklandca.gov/candidateguide](https://oaklandca.gov/candidateguide) 

There are three ways to donate your Democracy Dollars:

-  Go to [oaklandca.gov/democracydollars](https://oaklandca.gov/democracydollars) and donate online.
-  Give your Democracy Dollars to a candidate's team or at a drop off location.
-  Use the pre-paid envelope and drop it in the mail.

Send in your Democracy Dollars by December X, and vote on or before November 3!

Questions? Call 510-888-8888  [Oaklandca.gov/democracydollars](https://oaklandca.gov/democracydollars)

**Oakland Democracy Dollars**  
2026 General Election **\$25**

Find a participating candidate at [oaklandca.gov/candidateguide](https://oaklandca.gov/candidateguide)

I'm assigning \$25 to the candidate written here:

Candidate Name:

I am donating these Democracy Dollars voluntarily, free from threat, and not in return for payment. Once donated, Democracy Dollars can't be canceled or transferred to another candidate. These Democracy Dollars expire on December X, 2026.

Signature:  Date:

Valid January 2026-December 2026 No Cash Value · Non-Transferable

**Oakland Democracy Dollars**  
2026 General Election **\$25**

Find a participating candidate at [oaklandca.gov/candidateguide](https://oaklandca.gov/candidateguide)

I'm assigning \$25 to the candidate written here:

Candidate Name:

I am donating these Democracy Dollars voluntarily, free from threat, and not in return for payment. Once donated, Democracy Dollars can't be canceled or transferred to another candidate. These Democracy Dollars expire on December X, 2026.

Signature:  Date:

Valid January 2026-December 2026 No Cash Value · Non-Transferable

**Oakland Democracy Dollars**  
2026 General Election **\$25**

Find a participating candidate at [oaklandca.gov/candidateguide](https://oaklandca.gov/candidateguide)

I'm assigning \$25 to the candidate written here:

Candidate Name:

I am donating these Democracy Dollars voluntarily, free from threat, and not in return for payment. Once donated, Democracy Dollars can't be canceled or transferred to another candidate. These Democracy Dollars expire on December X, 2026.

Signature:  Date:

Valid January 2026-December 2026 No Cash Value · Non-Transferable

**Oakland Democracy Dollars**  
2026 General Election **\$25**

Find a participating candidate at [oaklandca.gov/candidateguide](https://oaklandca.gov/candidateguide)

I'm assigning \$25 to the candidate written here:

Candidate Name:

I am donating these Democracy Dollars voluntarily, free from threat, and not in return for payment. Once donated, Democracy Dollars can't be canceled or transferred to another candidate. These Democracy Dollars expire on December X, 2026.

Signature:  Date:

Valid January 2026-December 2026 No Cash Value · Non-Transferable





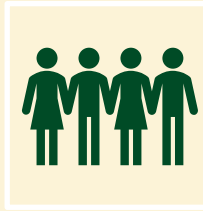
# Who can use Democracy Dollars?

## Eligibility for Democracy Dollars Program

- At least 18 years of age
- Oakland resident for at least 30 days
- U.S. Citizen, National, or Legal Permanent Resident (Green-Card Holder)

# How Democracy Vouchers changed Seattle elections

Successful Public Campaign Financing Model



*Increased number and diversity of Seattle donors*



*Decreased reliance on large donors*



*More competitive elections, candidates more diverse*



*Increased voter participation*



# How can Democracy Dollars empower the communities you belong to participate in local elections?





Exhibit C



---

## Priority Stakeholders:

## People with Disabilities

# Raising Awareness in Our Communities



Traditional and social media campaigns



Tabling at community meetings and events



Workshops and listening sessions to identify barriers to participation and get input from community members



Providing resources such as videos, brochures, and posters to organizations to help get the word out to their communities



Representative on the Community Advisory Committee or Community Liaison Group alongside diverse priority stakeholders



# In the Community

Exhibit C



PEC staff and Commissioner tabling with Open Oakland volunteers at City Hall Plaza and the public library.



# What are the best ways to stay in touch and reach your community for feedback and participation?

---



# **Questions? Comments?**

---

*Exhibit C*

# Thank you and stay connected! Please share your thoughts

Email us at  
[ethicscommission@oaklandca.gov](mailto:ethicscommission@oaklandca.gov) or [rzaidi@oaklandca.gov](mailto:rzaidi@oaklandca.gov)



# FAQs

---