

# *Can we improve the State of the City?*

## *YES WE CAN!*

### *We're All in This Together & Everyone Must Share in the Solution*

Oakland's budget isn't just about accounting; it embodies the values and priorities of the Mayor and City Council, and should address the needs of all Oakland residents.

The Mayor and Council's decisions to balance the City budget by taking a hatchet to city services and promoting anti-labor proposals, while at the same time opposing similar efforts by the Schwarzenegger Administration — is wrong.

In the words of President Barack Obama, we must act now to “choose hope over fear and unity of purpose over conflict and discord.” The Mayor and Council must put away the hatchet and begin working collaboratively with Oakland residents and employees towards a workable and ethical budget that preserves services and saves jobs.

City staff that provide library, senior, parks, housing, and many other services have already stepped up to the plate, taking the equivalent of a 10% pay cut. We see ourselves as partners with the Mayor and Council in solving Oakland's budget woes, but we shouldn't bear the entire burden of cuts.

We are under no illusion that this task will be easy and the choices before us anything less than difficult. During his inaugural speech, President Obama said, “What free men and women can achieve when imagination is joined to common purpose, and necessity to courage” is extraordinary.

#### *Progressive and practical principles must guide us in this effort towards a shared solution:*

1. Everyone must share in the budget pain, including an end to rewarding inefficient Police management with a blank check
2. Eliminate City Council 'slush funds'
3. Tighten controls on the millions of dollars Oakland pays for services by outside contractors
4. Pursue new revenue sources including a temporary increase in the local sales tax
5. Aggressively seek funding from the Federal Stimulus package now moving through Congress



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