

# Democratic Party of Contra Costa County Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you for seeking the endorsement of the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC).

Please submit your completed questionnaire and remit the endorsement application fee of \$30 no later than , August 12, 2024. Interviews will not be scheduled without both a completed questionnaire and received payment.

- Pay Endorsement Application Fee:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/2024campaignunityfund>.

1. Click on "Donate"
2. The page will say "2024 Campaign Unity Funds" - Just fill in \$30 as the amount to pay.

- Complete Candidate Questionnaire.

### \*\*\*IMPORTANT INFO\*\*\*

- Your application fee must be paid before questionnaires will be processed.
- Interviews will not be scheduled without both a completed payment and completed questionnaire.
- You must have submitted your questionnaire and payment **before August 12, 2024 before 11:59pm PST**.
- Your completed questionnaire will be added to the DPCCC website after all interviews are conducted.
- The DPCCC membership will vote on endorsements at a **Special Meeting on August 29, 2024**. You will be sent an invitation to the meeting which you are welcome to attend.

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The DPCCC aspires to be an organization where members are empowered and feel safe to be who they are, regardless of ethnic, cultural, or social demographics. We are committed to fostering equity and social justice through our policies and actions.

We hold ourselves accountable for unwanted behavior and we expect decision-making to be based on justice principles. We actively oppose **racism, sexism, classism, ageism, ableism, homophobia, and all other forms of prejudice wherever we see it**, and we take action individually and collectively to right past wrongs in our communities.

Section 1: Candidate Information

Name (First, Last): \*

Darlene Gee  
.....

Preferred Name (if different than campaign name):

Darlene Gee  
.....

Age \*

- Under 18
- 18 to 24
- 25-44
- 45-65
- Over 65
- Prefer not to disclose

Pronouns: \*

- She/Her/Hers
- He/Him/His
- They/Them/Theirs
- Ze/Zie/Hir/Hirs
- Prefer not to disclose
- Other: .....

Gender Identity (*check all that apply.*): \*

- Gender non-conforming
- Genderqueer
- Genderfluid
- Non-binary
- Woman
- Man
- Transgender
- Prefer not to disclose
- Other: .....

Sexual Identity (*check all that apply.*): \*

- Bisexual
- Queer
- Gay
- Heterosexual or straight
- Lesbian
- Asexual
- Pansexual
- Prefer not to disclose
- Other: .....

With which racial or ethnic group(s) do you identify? (*Mark all that apply.*): \*

Native American or Indigenous

Black, African-American

Eastern European

Latino/a/x/e

Pacific Islander

Asian

East Asian

South Asian

Southeast Asian

Middle Eastern, Northern African

Native Hawaiian

East African

West African

South African

Central African

White

Multiracial/Mixed Race

Prefer not to disclose

Other: .....

Which office are you seeking? \*

Orinda City Council .....

CA FPPC ID # \*

#1472560

Campaign Website \*

www.darlenegeeforcouncil.com

Campaign Consultant/Manager \*

Lisa Tucker

.....

**Social Media Handles \***

only social media site I have is LinkedIn  
.....

**1.1 - Why are you running for this office? Give no more than your top 3 reasons. \***

I have served on the Orinda City Council since 2015 and am currently the Mayor of Orinda - I would like to continue my service to my community.

I have a broad depth of experience in Orinda -- having served on the Council for 9 years and being a 35 year Orinda resident that gives me insight into community issues; resident concerns and critical matters affecting the city. I want to continue working toward solutions on the key issues that Orinda faces.

My experience is especially helpful to Orinda given that in 2025 we will have a new city manager, a new police chief, a new fire chief and a relatively new planning director. If re-elected, I will be the most tenured member of the city council and I want to use that experience to reduce the learning curve for the new staff and help ensure that our city priorities remain on track.  
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**1.2 - What are the responsibilities that come with the office you are running for? \***

The commitment to attend a wide range of local and regional meetings; stay well-informed on issues and city business; work closely with city staff; and be responsive and available to both staff and the community.  
.....

1.3 - What are your personal or professional qualifications that you believe make you the best candidate? \*

Besides my existing city council experience, I am a registered California civil engineer with an extensive career in transportation and infrastructure that gives me great insight into public works and infrastructure issues. I also have an MBA from UC Berkeley and over 30 years of professional managerial experience in the private sector with responsibility for hundreds of employees and major financial objectives. Professionally, I have a great deal of expertise which I have been able to bring to issues and needs at the city.

I am confident I have demonstrated the ability to listen to residents and interact successfully and respectfully with the community; as well as the ability to deal with tough situations professionally and with integrity.

My husband and I are 35 year residents that raised our family in Orinda. It was a wonderful set of experiences that I believe has given me a great deal of understanding and insight into the community and what the residents value.

1.4 - What are your top goals for this office? How do you plan on achieving them? \*

1. Continuing work toward long-term sustainable infrastructure plans for funding and maintenance --- in 2024 I initiated a special subcommittee to receive input and make recommendations to the full council – I plan to work toward implementing the recommendations.

2. Collaborative efforts to tie wildfire prevention measures to resident improvements in homeowner’s insurance – I serve on a special subcommittee with the fire district (MOFD) – working toward solutions to improve community safety.

3. Ensuring that Orinda’s overall fiscal responsibility is maintained --- work with staff and Council to implement responsible budgeting.



1.5 - How do you plan on engaging your constituents in dialogue after you are elected? \*

I make sure that constituents know that I am available to them at all times via email or phone; and I am happy to meet in person with anyone that would like to. I am extremely responsive to anyone reaching out and always try to respond the same day.

Additionally, there is dialogue at a wide variety of city meetings and town halls where I am always in attendance.

I enjoy a positive reputation throughout the community and with neighboring agencies for being collaborative, responsive, and available. I give a great deal of time and energy to my position on the city council and to the community at large.

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1.6 - This is a 3-Part Question: Why are you seeking the endorsement of the DPCCC? How will you use our endorsement? How will you support other endorsed candidates and issues? \*

I am seeking endorsement because many members of the Orinda community care about the positions of the Democratic Party on candidates and I want them to know I represent values they - and I - consider important.

I will incorporate the endorsement in my campaign materials

I will appear with other endorsed candidates at community events and give my personal endorsement to them as well

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1.7 - Please feel free to include any additional information you would like us to consider in evaluating your candidacy. \*

After 9 years of service on the Orinda city council, I have accrued extensive experience, and knowledge of issues facing the city. I have built staff and community relationships that are valuable in getting things done for the city and finding solutions to complicated and challenging matters.

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Section 2: Democratic History

2.1 - List your previous and current party affiliations. When did you first register as a Democrat and why? \*

I am a life-long Democrat - I first registered in 1975. Most of my family were Democrats and the Democratic Party platforms were most aligned with my personal beliefs.

2.2 - I have read and acknowledge the California Democratic Party's current platform (value statement) and will adhere to these values in the performance of my elected position. \*

To learn about the CADEM Platform, please click [here](#).

Yes

No

2.3 - In your opinion, which elements of the CADEM Platform are most relevant to the position you are seeking? If elected, how do you plan to advance them? \*

The two Platform areas I see as most applicable to the position I am seeking, are Sustainable Communities and Business and Economy.

In regard to Sustainable Communities, I will continue to support smart planning for our community; increased housing options; the re-use of surplus state property for housing; continued improvements in active transportation and transit friendly services. Additionally, I will advocate for continued "green" solution alternatives in our capital projects and the addition of electric charging facilities.

In regard to Business and Economy, I will continue to support policies that help the numerous small businesses in Orinda and encourage new small businesses to join our community.

2.4 - Have you actively supported policies and initiatives that prioritize and protect reproductive healthcare and freedom, and can you affirm your commitment to continuing this support if elected? \*

Yes

No

2.5 - If elected, what would you do to advance equity, anti-racism, justice, and belonging? \*

1. Continue to encourage more diversity in city hiring as part of the City Manager's objectives

2. Appoint candidates to city commissions and committees that reflect the growing diversity of the community and that give them experience to run for elected office

3. Reinststate our collaborative subcommittee with the Orinda Union School District to foster greater community inclusion in Orinda

4. Continue to support our public safety committee to review policing in our community and ensure that racism is not a part of our police activities

2.6 - Have you actively opposed LGBTQIA+ issues, which may involve voting against solidarity, supporting harmful or exclusionary policies, or publicly expressing opposition through statements or comments? (*i.e. voting against or making disparaging remarks about the display of pride flags, marriage equality, trans-inclusive policies, or queer-inclusive curricula*). \*

Yes

No

2.7 - Have you previously sought the endorsement of the DPCCC? If yes, for what elected office? Were you endorsed? \*

Yes, I have previously sought endorsement from the County party. I received endorsement in the 2016 general election. I did not receive endorsement in 2020.

2.8 - Please list any elected offices, positions and date(s), which you hold/held or campaigned for as a candidate. \*

I have served on the Orinda City Council since 2015 – first as an appointed member, then by election in 2016 and 2020.

2.9 - In what ways have you supported and actively participated in the Democratic Party at the local, state, and national levels? \*

I have been an active and consistent donor and fundraiser for numerous Democratic endorsed candidates over many years

I consistently vote for Democratic Party endorsed candidates

2.10 - Please list any clubs, boards, commissions, and /or organizations with which you are an active member, including the length of your affiliation and any leadership position you hold/held. \*

1. I am a member of the Board of Directors of the Bay Area Council (BAC) and have been for over 10 years – for three years I have served as the co-chair of the transportation committee for BAC
2. I am an alternate commissioner for Contra Costa Transportation Authority – and have served for two years in this rôle – if I am successful in re-election, I will become a commissioner for Contra Costa Transportation Authority
3. I am a past President of the Women’s Transportation Seminar in the Bay Area and a member for over 25 years
4. I am a past President of the Bay Area Chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers
5. I am a past President of the Orinda Junior Women’s Club

2.11 - Have you ever endorsed non-Democrats? \*

Yes

No

2.11a - If so, what were the circumstances?

Once - in 2018 I endorsed Catherine Baker for Assembly -- she was supporting issues of importance to Orinda and the city had a good working relationship with her

Section 3: References & Club Endorsements

3.1 - Please list any other endorsements you have received for this campaign. \*

State Sen. Steve Glazer	Past Orinda Mayor Amy Worth
County Supervisor Candace Andersen	Past Orinda Mayor Victoria Smith
Orinda Vice Mayor Latika Malkani	Past Orinda Mayor Dennis Fay
Orinda Councilmember Brandyn Iverson	Past Orinda Mayor Sue Severson
Orinda Councilmember Janet Riley	Past Orinda Mayor Bobbie Landers

Past Orinda Mayor Dean Orr  
 Past Orinda Mayor Eve Phillips  
 Past Orinda Mayor Joyce Hawkins  
 Past Orinda Mayor Laura Abrams  
 Past Orinda Mayor Bill Judge  
 All 5 OUSD Board of Trustees, Cara Hoxie, Hillary Weiner, Edda Collins Coleman, Katie Shogan and Eve Phillips  
 MOFD Board Directors' Craig Jorgens and Mike Roemer  
 BART Director, District 3 Rebecca Saltzman  
 BART Director, District 1 Debora Allen  
 Over 30 other Orinda Commission, Committee, and Community Leaders

### 3.2 - What other endorsements are you seeking? \*

I have been in touch with Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan and I believe that she will be endorsing me

Some of the Democratic Clubs use this questionnaire in their endorsement process. If you would like to be considered for Democratic club endorsement(s), please contact the club(s) directly by going to our DPCCC website club's page:

<https://contracostadems.com/clubs/>

### Part 2: DPCCC Values Section

Please proceed to fill out the 2nd section of the Candidate Questionnaire on the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County's Values.

#### DPCCC Value: Criminal Justice & Conflict Resolution

- *Opposes criminalization of low level offenses, advocates for Community Support Services, funding for prompt rape kit processing, gun violence prevention measures; Opposes scapegoating, racial profiling, religious profiling, bigotry, vigilantism, exploitation, and any xenophobic conduct that polarize communities and denounce actions by the government or individuals that keep undocumented immigrants in the shadows of our society; Supports Law Enforcement Training, Civilian Oversight Committees, independent investigators for cases involving the use of deadly force or in-custody deaths, restorative justice;*
- *Supports a properly funded and staffed the U.S. foreign service that promotes democracy and human rights around the world; Supports candidates who work to de-escalate tension especially in areas of conflict like Israel/Gaza, Sudan, Haiti, and other parts of the world through good faith negotiations and work for world peace; Endorse candidates who support the Democratic Party as it works to counter aggression by countries that violate the sovereignty of other countries and that fund and implement physical, cyber, and financial attacks on democracies and developing countries.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. \*

I agree with all of these values - in Orinda I contribute to our collective focus on inclusion and honoring diversity of all backgrounds. I voted to institute a gun safety ordinance in Orinda. We have a public safety oversight committee that reviews our community policing; is open to the public and addresses all community concerns regarding policing in the city. I will continue to support the city of Orinda's use of this committee to inform the public, be transparent regarding policing and ensure that Democratic Party values are guiding our local police force.

#### DPCCC Value: Criminal Justice & Conflict Resolution

- *Opposes criminalization of low level offenses, advocates for Community Support Services, funding for prompt rape kit processing, gun violence prevention measures; Opposes scapegoating, racial profiling, religious profiling, bigotry, vigilantism, exploitation, and any xenophobic conduct that polarize communities and denounce actions by the government or individuals that keep undocumented immigrants in the shadows of our society; Supports Law Enforcement Training, Civilian Oversight Committees, independent investigators for cases involving the use of deadly force or in-custody deaths, restorative justice;*
- *Supports a properly funded and staffed the U.S. foreign service that promotes democracy and human rights around the world; Supports candidates who work to de-escalate tension especially in areas of conflict like Israel/Gaza, Sudan, Haiti, and other parts of the world through good faith negotiations and work for world peace; Endorse candidates who support the Democratic Party as it works to counter aggression by countries that violate the sovereignty of other countries and that fund and implement physical, cyber, and financial attacks on democracies and developing countries.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. \*

I agree with all of these values - in Orinda I contribute to our collective focus on inclusion and honoring diversity of all backgrounds. I voted to institute a gun safety ordinance in Orinda. We have a public safety oversight committee that reviews our community policing; is open to the public and addresses all community concerns regarding policing in the city.

### DPCCC Value: Education & Child Support Services

- *Advocates for high-quality, affordable child care; support programs for low income families including access to parks and job retraining; ensures educational materials (textbooks, library books) are inclusive, historically accurate, and reflect scientific consensus including age-appropriate, medically accurate sex/gender education; replacing sworn peace officers in schools with trained non-police personnel; Supports policies that respect students' civil rights related to gender expression and addresses issues like gender-based violence and harassment.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. \*

I agree with all of these values and while the city does not directly have jurisdiction on a number of these issues we work closely with the County and our school districts to ensure that we have a welcoming and inclusive culture within our city and that our library, schools and policing all conform to these values.

### DPCCC Value: Seniors & Veteran Support Services

- *Supports the California Master Plan for Aging including dignified living at home housing options that are age, disability, and dementia-friendly; prioritize public housing initiatives over privatization for seniors and adults with disabilities; support retraining for those aged 55-65, and extend unemployment; oppose mandatory retirement; call for stronger oversight of reverse mortgage programs, rigorous prosecution of financial crimes against seniors; support comprehensive single-payer healthcare, with interim Medicare Part D reforms; support HICAP services, affordable mental healthcare including issues around isolation, quality caregiving, and increased funding for In-Home Supportive Services. Preserve programs like Adult Protective Services and home-delivered meals; advocate for the removal of the FICA income limit to strengthen Social Security and preserve pensions.*
- *Champions the needs of veterans and military families by promoting equitable treatment and benefits, access to education including tuition waivers and retraining, adequate healthcare funding including government assistance for those exposed to toxins; elimination of veteran homelessness, establishment of Veterans' Courts and justice programs and support independent investigations of claims of hazing, rape, sexual assault and harassment and that the military remove the chain of command from all investigations and prosecutions; support a path to citizenship for military service members, and protections against discrimination based on ethnicity, disability, gender identity, political affiliation, race, religion, or sexual orientation; oppose deportation of military personnel and limitations on citizenship for children of veterans who are born abroad.*



Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. \*

I agree with all of these values and Orinda collaborates with numerous other agencies to help ensure that these values are being implemented. Also, as a city we have several local programs to support seniors -- our seniors around town driving service is enormously popular and very beneficial in helping seniors stay in their homes and have reliable transportation for medical appointments, grocery shopping and errands that they need help with.

DPCCC Value: Affordable Housing & Environmental Protections

- *Supports eviction protections, rent control/stabilization, anti-harassment ordinances, and habitability protections; Supports zoning and housing policies that ensure sustainability and affordability, including infill and mixed-use developments that balance job opportunities with housing availability; Promotes the integration of green spaces and community gardens in all communities; Supports local authority in phasing out fossil fuel extraction and preventing the zoning of new extraction sites; Advocates for strong regulatory measures for setting science-based health and safety setbacks from residential areas for industrial sites, including oil and gas wells and toxic dump sites.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. \*

I agree with these values and have been a part of the Orinda City Council throughout all aspects of the 6th Housing cycle --- we were one of the first 13 cities in the Bay Area to have a compliant housing element. We are actively working on planning for housing near our BART station and on surplus Caltrans property,

### DPCCC Value: Equality & Human Rights

- *Actively advocates for a just and inclusive society, speaking out against all forms of racism, discrimination, harassment, hatred, and violence; Supports movements and initiatives that address discrimination; Enforces policies that ensure equal opportunities and equal pay for equal work across genders, races, and abilities; Upholds the rights of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals for acknowledgment of their stated name, gender, and pronoun; Supports the use of gender-neutral language to foster an inclusive environment; Promotes the participation of women, LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, and people of color in elected office and ensures access to facilities consistent with individuals' gender identity and disability access; Supports the right to free speech, ensuring it does not extend to discriminatory practices against any group based on race, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. \*

I agree with these values and work hard to help Orinda support them. Each month we recognize groups to take public positions on these values; we use banners, symbols and signage throughout Orinda promoting these values.

### DPCCC Value: Healthcare & Reproductive Rights

- *Advocates for the preservation of rights under Roe v. Wade, guaranteeing confidential and unrestricted access to reproductive services without the need for consent or judicial intervention, ensuring continued coverage of all healthcare options; Works toward implementing a universal, single-payer healthcare system, while in the interim, seeking reforms to make Medicare Part D more affordable and accessible, including the ability for Medicare to negotiate drug prices.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. \*

I agree with this value and while the city has no direct jurisdiction on elements involved, we do represent the value we place on women and individual freedoms. We are an all woman city council and will remain so after this election. That certainly impacts the power of the messaging we are transmitting to the community regarding these values.

## DPCCC Value: Economic Justice & Business Development

- *Support for Small Businesses and Entrepreneurship focusing on women, people of color, and those with limited entrepreneurship opportunities including veterans; Support the rights of employees to organize and Project Labor Agreements; Ensures a safe working environment free from harassment, intimidation, and retaliation; Advocates for the establishment of local banks and credit unions, limiting regressive financial operations like check cashing businesses and pawnshops; Promotes Project Labor Agreements to protect workers; Supports initiatives to counteract "food deserts" by developing local grocery stores and community gardens in underrepresented areas.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. \*

I agree with these values and work hard to ensure the success of our small businesses. I'm working on economic development within the city that will attract new small businesses.

### Reminders:

\* After submitting this questionnaire, please go and pay your endorsement application fee at:

<https://contracostadems.com/donate>

\* Please direct questions to the Endorsements Committee Chair Tamela Hawley or Vice Chair Cameron Sasai at [endorsements@contracostadems.com](mailto:endorsements@contracostadems.com)

\* The DPCCC Code of Conduct: <https://contracostadems.com/about/code-of-conduct/>

\* The CADEM Party Platform: <https://cadem.org/our-platform/>

If you like, you may submit a biography and/or resume in the section below. Not required.

 Darlene Gee Res...

 Add file

Submit Questionnaire

By submitting this questionnaire, I attest that the foregoing is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and to uphold the Code Of Conduct. <https://contracostadems.com/about/code-of-conduct/>

Thank you and good luck with your campaign! We will be in touch with you to schedule your interview time.

Interviews will be scheduled by District Directors.

**By submitting this questionnaire, I agree to accepting the endorsement of the DPCCC if offered.** \*

Yes

No

I have paid my endorsement application fee: <https://contracostadems.com/donate/> \*

Yes

No

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