

# 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): \*

Marshall Lewis  
.....

Preferred Name (if different than campaign name):  
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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? \*

Pleasant Hill City Council, District 1 .....

CA FPPC ID # \*

1469753

Campaign Website \*

<https://www.marshallewis.org/>

Campaign Consultant/Manager \*

California Progress Lab

Social Media Handles \*

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61563505987348>

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

I grew up in Pleasant Hill, and love this city with all my heart. I'm running because we need an experienced leader to help the city navigate the challenges that lie ahead, namely:

- 1: The city faces a looming fiscal cliff. Our pension system is underwater, and high UAL payments to the state threaten to deplete our General Fund as early as 2029.
- 2: The cost of housing has soared to unsustainable levels. When my family moved to Pleasant Hill, we paid the equivalent of half a million dollars (in today's money) for our home. Today, that same home would cost \$1.2 million. The skyrocketing cost of living is leading to displacement of Pleasant Hill residents and must be addressed with swift, bold action.
- 3. Although crime rates in Pleasant Hill are low, we still face genuine public safety concerns. Failure to address the city's financial issues will result in cuts to our police department, hampering our ability to fight crime. Beyond that, Pleasant Hill's transportation infrastructure was not originally built with pedestrian safety in mind, and the city has very few sidewalks or bike lanes. This transportation infrastructure badly needs to be modernized.

1.2 - What are the responsibilities that come with the office you are running for? \*

Council sets the city's budget, provides direction to city staff regarding the direction of city operations, and passes ordinances. Much of this work is done via planning documents (e.g. the Housing Element) in which Council works with the community to chart a path forward, and staff then executes that vision. Councilmembers also serve on various regional bodies (e.g. MTC) and participate in community events.

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

I have local government experience from serving on the Concord/Pleasant Hill Health Care District Grant Committee, which disburses property tax dollars to community health organizations operating in Concord and Pleasant Hill. I also have financial leadership experience from serving as Controller of the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County, where I helped to develop the budget, performed fiscal forecasts, and ensured adequate liquidity to meet the party's operational needs. I also have a certificate in accounting from UC Berkeley, including specialized training in municipal accounting (which is different from private-sector accounting because it uses GASB standards rather than FASB).

I actively participated in the development of Pleasant Hill's Housing Element, including identifying a technical fix that needed to be made to the city's HPUD zoning provision in order for the Housing Element's rezoning provisions to properly take effect. I'm also broadly knowledgeable about housing, land use, city planning, transportation, and general urbanist issues due to my many years of participating in local politics and my desire to be as well-informed as possible.

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

My goals break down into three main areas, corresponding to the three major challenges the city faces:

**FISCAL CLIFF:** The city's General Fund is currently projected to run out of money in 2029. This is a conservative estimate based on some unrealistic budgetary assumptions, so it's probable (but by no means certain) that we'll have a little longer than that. If elected, I will work with the rest of Council, the city's Finance department, the department heads, and the city's bargaining units as part of a collaborative budget process to extend General Fund solvency through to at least 2032. Once we reach 2032, the last of the city's long-term debt from building the library will be paid off, which will free up about \$2.5 million a year that's currently being used for debt service to instead be used to shore up the General Fund. I'll also work to expand the city's tax base in order to maximize city revenues.

**HOUSING:** The city needs to build more housing, both so we can meet our RHNA numbers and so we can develop our property tax base. Our current Housing Element is heavily reliant on a small number of sites that are projected to see large numbers of units even though the sites have significant barriers to development (e.g. steep hillsides). Although the Housing Element was certified by HCD, I'm extremely skeptical that it will be a viable path towards actually meeting our RHNA numbers, so I will work to perform a mid-cycle update that will put us on a better footing.

These mid-cycle changes should involve a gentler, more distributed approach. Instead of concentrating development on a small number of sites, which results in significant community backlash and heavy concentration of risk, we should build on recent changes to state law (e.g. SB9 and SB10) to allow for more flexibility in single-family areas, promoting the development of ADUs, duplexes, triplexes, and 4-plexes. The city is already working on a program to pre-approve ADU designs, and we should expand that to also include pre-approved designs for duplexes, triplexes, and 4-plexes.

We also need to reduce the time it takes to bring a project from conception to execution. This is important for the financial viability of projects, since long approval times can jeopardize project financing, and it's also important for stabilizing the General Fund, since we can't realize property tax revenue until the project is actually built. In order to streamline the permitting process, the city should establish an affordable housing zoning overlay in which affordable projects along major thoroughfares are eligible for ministerial approval. This will help bring down costs, increase property tax revenues, and ensure housing for our residents.

**PUBLIC SAFETY:** The number one priority here is to stabilize the city's finances so we can ensure continuity of service with the police department. Police officers are very difficult to hire, and layoffs in the police department would take a long time to recover from, which could significantly affect the police department's ability to respond to public safety issues.

When it comes to traffic safety, Pleasant Hill recently adopted an excellent Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, and the next step is to implement it. Top priority should be on the Safe Routes to School program, which aims to build out pedestrian safety infrastructure near schools so children can safely walk to class instead of being driven. This would also serve to reduce congestion around schools (which is horrendous during pick-up and drop-off times), and the decreased air pollution and increased exercise will be good for

students' health. Other priorities include physically-separated bicycle infrastructure, protected crossings along the whole length of the canal trail, and improving the city's sidewalk coverage.

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

Pleasant Hill has a long, proud tradition of engaging with the community. My own involvement with the city began when the city was transitioning to district elections, and the community created and debated a large number of district maps during a series of public hearings. Councilmembers also make themselves accessible to the public by attending various community events, including the weekly Off the Grid event at City Hall and the periodic Summer Concerts. It will be an honor to continue that tradition of community engagement.

### 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've been involved with DPCCC for many years, first as club representative for the Contra Costa Young Democrats, and then as Controller and a member of the Executive Committee. I believe in the incredible good this organization can do, because I've seen it with my own eyes.

If endorsed, I will proudly list the endorsement on my website, and I'll tell voters about it every chance I get. I'll also support the slate card program, and will coordinate literature drops with other candidates who are running in my area.

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

I proudly served my country in the Peace Corps in Tanzania from 2011 to 2013, teaching English in a secondary school in the mountains south of Mt. Kilimanjaro.

I work for a financial company that finances industrial equipment for small and mid-size manufacturers.

I live near Diablo Valley College with my wonderful wife, adorable son, and a temperamental Pomeranian named Churro.

## Section 2: Democratic History

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

I was an independent until Trump was elected in 2016, though I've always been left-wing. I registered as a Democrat because I saw the party's importance in on-the-ground organizing.

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 labor provisions, especially the part about promoting PLAs. If elected, I will fight for PLAs every chance I get.

The affordable housing provisions (all of them). See the portion of Question 1.4 about housing.

The climate section, especially the part that says "Support local communities' land use authority to phase out any existing and zone out any future fossil fuel extraction located in their communities". Many communities (e.g. Pinole and most of Solano County) have passed ordinances banning the construction of new gas stations, and Pleasant Hill should follow suit.

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? \*

For many decades, Pleasant Hill was a segregated city. Most of the homes here contain provisions banning black people from residing in them. After those provisions were ruled invalid by the Supreme Court, Pleasant Hill did a large-scale downzoning to drive up housing costs and price black people out of the market. The city is still disproportionately white. I will work to undo this racist legacy and open up Pleasant Hill to everyone, regardless of the color of their skin.

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? \*

No

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

N/A

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

Political Director - Contra Costa Young Democrats  
DPCCC Club Representative - Contra Costa Young Democrats  
Delegate - CADEM  
Controller - DPCCC  
Finance Committee - DPCCC

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. \*

Currently a member of DPCCC's Finance Committee (which I believe I joined in 2018).

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

Yes

No

2.11a - If so, what were the circumstances?

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Section 3: References & Club Endorsements

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

Laura Nakamura (Concord City Council)  
 Kevin Wilk (Walnut Creek City Council)  
 Marisol Rubio (San Ramon City Council)  
 Nick Spinner (Crockett Community Services District)

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

Central Labor Council

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. \*

Pleasant Hill is fortunate to have generally harmonious relations between the police and the community, due to a combination of stringent hiring standards and tone from the top. I will continue these practices to ensure an environment of inclusion, racial justice, and public safety for all.

#### 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. \*

Long ago, when I was in my early twenties, I was a founding member of the OSINT community, working to raise awareness of global conflicts, with my focus being on Afghanistan and what was then the Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan. My hope was that, by working to raise awareness, we would help to bring these conflicts to a close. My heart breaks over the situation in the Levant, Ukraine, and everywhere else that is ravaged by the fires of war, and I hope that all of humanity will someday know deep and enduring peace.

### 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. \*

As the parent of a small child, I keenly feel the importance of access to childcare. I also strongly support the LGBT community and believe that people should have access to information about the magnificent kaleidoscope that is humanity from a very early age.

### 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. \*

Yes to all of the above, especially single-payer health care and mental health services. Many of these things tie into the programs I helped fund during my time on the Concord/Pleasant Hill Health Care District Grant Committee.

### 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. \*

Yes to all of the above. Thank goodness we don't have any oil extraction in Pleasant Hill!

### 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. \*

Absolutely! These are all part of the values by which I live my life.

#### 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. \*

Yes to all of the above. Dobbs was one of the worst Supreme Court decisions of my life.

#### 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. \*

Yes to all of the above, especially the importance of PLAs.

**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.

 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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