



# CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

## CINDY TORRES

### **From your perspective, what happened to Russell City, why do you think it happened, and how did it affect your family?**

Institutional racism and greed emboldened those in power to benefit. The homes were destroyed, and the land was stolen from a community that was purposefully, and repeatedly denied the infrastructure needed to allow them to thrive and succeed. A wonderfully diverse community known for its warmth, caring, and welcoming spirit was displaced because their value as contributing members of society was not recognized.

Trust was lost, and hearts were broken from the loss of the community that held each other together in solidarity while having to start over again.

Historically the trauma continues to this day.

### **What is your connection to the Russell City Community?**

I am the descendant of my grandparents, Reyes and Virginia Pacheco, and their daughter Mable Pacheco Torres, along with her fifteen siblings.

### **What is your background? What meaningful value or expertise can you bring to the committee?**

I am the President of the Cherryland Community Association, a similarly disenfranchised and underserved community of unincorporated Alameda County, that I have lived in since a child and which I have and continue to strongly advocate for equitable services, and public amenities. It is the parallel experience of these two communities which has allowed me to deeply understand the significance of the effects of disinvestment and institutional racism by those in power.

### **Do you have any additional or unique qualifications you would like to share? If so, please list them below.**

I am a past-vice president of the Castro Valley/Eden Area Chamber of Commerce where I also proactively advocated for engagement to uplift the business community in the underrepresented unincorporated Eden Area. I am also a long-term docent and volunteer of the Hayward Area Historical Society and have consistently attempted to change the negative narrative of Russell City to encompass a broader and accurate portrayal of the historically cultural attributes of the community, and in my family's opinion, idyllic life.



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**Tell us about your experience working in a team or community-based process.**

I am involved with many inter-related organizations within Alameda County in order to have a more cohesive understanding of the connectedness and shared issues of my community.

And, at times, although sometimes contentious, I always strive for consensus building and a transparent community-based process where the value of all stakeholders is recognized.

**What is your purpose for being here? As a member of the committee, what do you want to achieve? At the end of the day, what would you want to see happen and what are you willing to do to get us there?**

To represent the Pacheco family of eighteen people in this effort.

Most important to me, is to restore an honest narrative to correct the misstatements of the past, about the demise of Russell City, and to bring back honor to all that lived there.

My goal is to fulfill the wishes and needs of the remaining Russell City community, whatever they may be, and will do everything in my power to prevail.

Cindy Torres