

Nikki Fortunato Bas Oakland City Council President

Inauguration Speech: January, 2023

Thank you! Do ze, cam on, gracias, salamat.

I am **SO** honored to continue serving District 2 and all of you, Oakland!

This was a remarkable election for our town.

HAPPY-ARM UP

- In District 2, two thirds of our neighbors said YES to our vision and our track record.
- Two thirds said YES to continue governing together with values that we have nurtured.
- Two thirds said YES to equity, inclusion, and community participation.

What's remarkable is that **this mandate** shows that there is a powerful, Progressive majority that has stuck together and stood up for these values in the face of a narrow minority that seeks to maintain the status quo.

In these times of fear and anger around the challenges we face on public safety, homelessness, and economic inequality, our powerful majority said NO to polarization, and YES to our Oakland traditions.

SLOW-STACCATO-HEART: We, Oaklanders can be tough, but we have a certain care and love that is part of our Oakland identity. We gather in community, help our neighbors, and have each other's backs.

And let me be clear, I will have YOUR back and represent you whether you voted for me or not, and whether you look like me or not.

I will do so as the first Filipina Councilmember representing our diverse AAPI communities as we've pushed back on anti-Asian hate.

I will do so as a long-time Oaklander in solidarity with our Black and Brown communities who've been fighting displacement and anti-Black racism.

And I will do so by putting our values into action through People-Powered Government.

In my first term, I talked with thousands of residents and business owners at your doorsteps, in community meetings, and during my office hours.

My first term was one of the hardest periods in our lifetime. BUT despite the monumental challenges of the pandemic, an economic downturn, a racial reckoning, and growing inequality, we laid the foundation for a stronger Oakland.

- We worked together to expand violence prevention and create an alternative crisis response program.
- We worked together to build tiny homes on public land, prevent evictions during COVID, and help tenants purchase their homes with land trusts.
- We worked together to increase hazard pay for frontline workers, and create a progressive corporate tax for greater economic equity and better city services.

This sets us on a path to scale up for the next four years with **YOU!! The People!**

First, we will advance housing as a human right. With \$350 million approved by voters, we will increase supportive housing for unsheltered residents, create deeply affordable housing for working families, and break ground on the East 12th Parcel to build not one, but two 100% affordable housing projects.

Loud: I will do this with YOU, The People.

Second, we will invest in community safety, expanding our public safety system with violence prevention and healing, alternative crisis response, and addressing the root causes of violence and economic inequality with youth programs and good jobs.

LOUDER: I will do this with YOU, The People.

Third, we will create a budget based on our values, implementing our new progressive corporate tax, and listening to you to deliver equitable services from safe streets and clean parks to support for our youth, seniors, small businesses and arts community.

LOUDER! I will do this with YOU, The People.

SLOW: As your Councilmember and Council President, I will work with all of you, our new Mayor Sheng Thao, and all branches of our city government as one united, effective unit to serve our communities - not as a politician - but as an **ORGANIZER - with YOU - The People!!!! LOUDEST!**

LIGHT: This year, I celebrated 25 years in my home in District 2, 30 years with my husband and partner Brad, and our daughter Balana left for college.

HEART: I share your **DEEP LOVE** for Oakland and will work with you to bring our City into a new chapter for ourselves, our children, and the next seven generations.

But this is not about me - our success requires **YOUR** voice, talking with **YOUR** neighbors, and engaging in **YOUR** government.

My hope is that our majority grows even stronger, and brings even more people in.

Let's start that today. Right here. Right now. WITH ALL OF YOU!

If you believe in an Oakland in which we help our neighbors and have each other's backs, **please stand up and shout YES!!!**

If you believe in an Oakland grounded in racial equity where we stand in Black/Brown/Asian solidarity, **please stand up and shout YES!!!**

If you believe in bridging our differences to stitch back together the social fabric of our city, **please stand up and shout YES!!!**

Everyone please stand up and SHOUT YES!!! (People up on stage stand behind and shout)

CLIMAX-ARMS UP and OUT: This is YOUR people-powered government!!!!

It's going to take all of us working together to meet this moment, solve our challenges, and connect to that sense of community and belonging that we all yearn for.

Let's stand together over the next four years as we stand together today.

I am so humbled to represent you to truly make this a town where we ALL belong. Thank you.