

CITY OF OAKLAND



CITY HALL • ONE CITY HALL PLAZA • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612

Office of the Mayor
Honorable Sheng Thao

(510) 238-3141
FAX (510) 238-4731
TDD (510) 238-3254

Letter of Appointment

September 17, 2024

Dear President Bas and members of the City Council:

Pursuant to City Charter Section 601, the Mayor has appointed the following person as a member of the following board or commission, subject to City Council confirmation:

Budget Advisory Commission

Mandela Bliss, to serve a three-year term as the Community and Economic Development Committee representative on the Budget Advisory Commission that began October 1, 2022 and ending September 30, 2025, filling a vacant seat that was previously held by Michael Silk.

Guadalupe Garcia, to serve a three-year term as a Mayoral representative on the Budget Advisory Commission beginning October 1, 2024 and ending September 30, 2027, filling the seat that was previously held by herself.

Larissa Casillas, to serve a three-year term as a Mayoral representative on the Budget Advisory Commission beginning October 1, 2024 and ending September 30, 2027, filling the seat that was previously held by herself.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Mayor Sheng Thao

Profile

Larisa

First Name

Casillas

Last Name

Pronouns

she/her

Email Address

Street Address

Suite or Apt

State

Postal Code

City

What City Council district do you live in? District 6

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

Urban Habitat

Employer

program director

Job Title

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Budget Advisory Commission: Submitted

Interests & Experiences**Please tell us how your qualifications and participation will relate to the requested board and/or commission's mission.**

I have decades of experience working in the non-profit sector. I have led multi-racial coalitions and have strong facilitation and training skills. I worked to pass policies at the state and federal level and understand how the policymaking process works. I currently work with emerging leaders interested in serving on commissions and have navigated commission service personally. Years ago, I served on Oakland's Citizen's Police Review Board under Mayor Quan and when I lived in San Francisco, I served on the Immigrant Rights Commission. I was appointed to the Budget Advisory Commission (BAC) in the spring of 2023. I have been serving out an unfinished term that expires in September. I am interested in continuing to serve on the BAC, especially as the city faces an historical budget deficit. As a new member of the BAC last year, I jumped into an ad hoc leadership position and led the development of the commission's budget process recommendations to the city council. I am currently serving on a subcommittee that is working to increase community engagement in the budget process and to make our budget process more transparent to Oakland residents. This work is important to me and I would like to continue serving and contributing to the commission.

Please submit your resume or curriculum vitae. You may upload a document. (A Word format is preferred.) Alternatively, you may paste the text of your resume in the field provided below.

[larisa_casillas_resume_2023.pdf](#)

Upload a Resume

Please paste the text of your resume or curriculum vitae below.

Please click the acknowledgement below.

Service on City of Oakland boards, commissions, and committees may require filings of the FPPC's Statements of Economic Interest (Form 700). Upon appointment and determination of filing status, I will comply with all filing obligations.

I Agree *

Profile

Mandela

First Name

Bliss

Last Name

Pronouns

Email Address

Street Address

Suite or Apt

City

State

Postal Code

What City Council district do you live in?

 District 4

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

Celerity Consulting Group

Employer

Staff Consultant

Job Title

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Budget Advisory Commission: Submitted

Interests & Experiences

Please tell us how your qualifications and participation will relate to the requested board and/or commission's mission.

I'm a long-time Oaklander with a passion for community. In 2020, I graduated with a B.A. in Hospitality Business from Michigan State University, followed by a Master's in Business Analytics from the University of Arizona in May 2021. Since then, I have returned to my beloved Oakland and have been working for a consulting firm that primarily serves public utilities. Additionally, I have become very involved in my community, joining two non-profit boards and volunteering for several local political campaigns and nonprofits, mostly based in Oakland. With my business background and passion for community, I would be a great addition to the Budget Advisory Commission.

Please submit your resume or curriculum vitae. You may upload a document. (A Word format is preferred.) Alternatively, you may paste the text of your resume in the field provided below.

[Mandela Bliss Resume 2024.pdf](#)

Upload a Resume

Please paste the text of your resume or curriculum vitae below.

Please click the acknowledgement below.

Service on City of Oakland boards, commissions, and committees may require filings of the FPPC's Statements of Economic Interest (Form 700). Upon appointment and determination of filing status, I will comply with all filing obligations.

I Agree *

Mandela Bliss

Oakland, California

EDUCATION

Master of Science in Business Analytics (M.S.B.A.), University of Arizona | May 2021

- Zipperman Scholar at University of Arizona's Eller College of Management | Fall 2020

Bachelor of Arts in Hospitality Business (B.A.), Michigan State University | May 2020

WORK EXPERIENCE

Staff Consultant | Celerity Consulting | Walnut Creek | Dec 2021-Present

- Reviews business and technical documents
- Performs searches using document database software
- Provides status reports to project managers and key personnel, and recommends process improvements

Intern | MTIPLY | San Francisco | Sept-Dec 2021

- Performed market research and analyzed industry data and trends
- Assisted with brand development strategy for clients

Front Office Associate | Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center | East Lansing, MI | April-Sept 2019

- Registered incoming guests, processed various reservations and answered inquiries at 160-room luxury hotel
- Highlighted hotel's strengths by providing recommendations to guests about hotel's services and amenities

Intern/Management Trainee | Bubba Gump Shrimp Company | San Francisco, CA | May-Aug 2018

- Managed shift operations at a fast-paced, full-service restaurant with high customer service standards
- Supervised 20+ restaurant employees including staffing duties, resources, and breaks, etc.
- Addressed guest and staff complaints, and provided efficient and friendly customer service

Caterer/Bartender | Freelance Hospitality Provider | Oakland, CA | May- Aug 2018

- Developed, marketed and delivered a menu of distinctive food, beverage and special event services
- Trained and managed a team of 5 to provide high-level guest service while bartending and catering
- Served and delighted over 250 guests at various large events

COMPETITIONS

Team Member | Data Analytics Challenge | Aug 2020

- Analyzed complex dataset (in Estonian) to identify and solve local traffic issues

2nd Place | Hilton Hackathon | Oct 2019

- Used data-driven approach to develop and present new ideas to improve the guest experience at Hilton Hotels

Best Label | Intercollegiate Wine Business Invitational | Sept- Oct 2019

- Developed the concept for a wine and winery including the mission, vision, and goals
- Established sales and marketing strategies and conducted a competitive analysis for the wine

SKILLS – ANALYTICS/PROGRAMMING

Python, University of Arizona | Spring 2020

Power BI, University of Arizona | Spring 2020

R, University of Arizona | Fall 2020

Stata, University of Arizona | Fall 2020

Tableau, University of Arizona | Fall 2020

SKILLS – HOSPITALITY

ServSafe: National Restaurant Association, Food Protection Manager Certification | April 2018

California Academy of Bartending and Mixology, Bartending Class | June 2017

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

RPYP Board Member | Reading Partners | SF Bay Area, CA | July 2022-Present

Board Member | Peralta Hacienda Historical Park | Oakland, CA | Jan 2022-Present

Intern | SPUR | Oakland, CA | March-May 2016

Profile

Guadalupe

First Name

Garcia

Last Name

Middle Initial

Email Address

Street Address

City

Suite or Apt

State

Postal Code

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

PolicyLink

Employer

Coordinator

Job Title

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Budget Advisory Commission: Appointed

Interests & Experiences

Please tell us how your qualifications and participation will relate to the requested board and/or commission's mission.

As an interdisciplinary equity advocate and researcher, I apply a systems-change approach towards my policy advocacy efforts. I also hold a public health training that helps me uplift the interconnectedness of health equity, climate justice, housing, economic inclusion, and cultural strategy. I currently work at PolicyLink, a national research and action institute advancing racial and economic equity. In this role, I support several project teams across PolicyLink, including the California Policy; Housing Justice; and Water Equity & Climate Resilience teams where we partner with organizers, policy advocates, and policy makers to secure structural wins for the most impacted communities. Through this role, I have strengthened my understanding of the critical role budgets, whether it be local or statewide, have on advancing racial and economic equity and community priorities. My previous role at a local social impact consulting firm working to strengthen the Bay Area's public service systems has also given me insights towards the roles and responsibilities that local jurisdictions have in supporting community well being. At a time where there is a once in generation influx of federal funding while at the same time the State of California and many cities throughout the state including Oakland are grappling with a budget deficit/ revenue shortfalls, I believe it is imperative that budget decisions continue to support long-term investments in community health and resilience to withstand future economic shocks. Overall, I am very interested in supporting near term and long term work that transforms our public systems into life affirming systems for all by ensuring budgets reflect the priorities and values of low income communities and communities of color. As a long standing resident of Oakland who has a deep love for the city and its communities, I am committed to the wellbeing of our communities here in Oakland and want to support a thriving, safe, equitable, and sustainable city of Oakland. My participation in the Budget Advisory Committee will ensure that racial and economic equity is at the forefront of discussions and not an afterthought.

Please submit your resume or curriculum vitae. You may upload a document. (A Word format is preferred.) Alternatively, you may paste the text of your resume in the field provided below.

[GUADALUPE_GARCIA_resume_2023_.pdf](#)

Upload a Resume

Please paste the text of your resume or curriculum vitae below.

Please click the acknowledgement below.

Service on City of Oakland boards, commissions, and committees may require filings of the FPPC's Statements of Economic Interest (Form 700). Upon appointment and determination of filing status, I will comply with all filing obligations.

I Agree *

GUADALUPE GARCIA

Oakland, CA

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Interdisciplinary equity champion, convener, and mixed-methods researcher. Applies a systems-change approach towards policy advocacy efforts and supports equity movement leaders with data, communications, and network power to accelerate achievement of transformative policy wins and powerful impacts. Skilled at building partnerships across sectors, translating information, and project management. Committed to climate justice, frontline leadership, Black Liberation, and movement for a more just and sustainable economy.

WORK EXPERIENCE

September 2019 to present **Coordinator**

PolicyLink- Oakland, CA

- Coordinate local, state, and national level advocacy efforts and campaigns in the areas of housing equity, climate resilience, water justice, and sustainable economic development in partnership with coalitions, community and policy leaders (legislative, executive and agency leadership)
- Manage daily operations of a national network of over 60 organizations working to advance water equity and climate resiliency at the federal policy level including member relationships, communications, programmatic activities and overall support the network's strategic direction setting where we have won major legislative victories for environmental justice communities
- Develop and maintain internal systems for grant reporting, strategic program planning and results outcomes, and support the overall proposal and grant reporting writing process.
- Gather and synthesize priorities, insights, and feedback from movement partners and translate back into internal policy, programmatic, and grantmaking strategies
- Co-design and deliver presentations, convenings, webinars, learning events and discussions to provide reflection, learning and community building opportunities with movement partners (utilizing arts & culture strategies for building deeper engagement)
- Lead development and coordination of external communications including drafting and editing communications pieces (i.e. flyers, collateral handouts, electronic newsletters, website updates, social media, and electronic advocacy strategies)

September 2016 to August 2019 **Research Associate**

Resource Development Associates- Oakland, CA

- Supported more than 15 evaluation, needs assessment, planning, organizational development and technical assistance to for public and community-based health and human service stakeholders
- Developed and administered surveys, focus group/interview protocols, and other evaluation tools tailored to specific research questions
- Obtained, maintained, and analyzed quantitative datasets from clients
- Developed evaluation reports, needs and organizational assessments
- Supported facilitation of planning processes for strategic initiatives and program development with public and community-based stakeholders
- Supported provision of technical assistance to clients through the process of implementing their strategic plan and/or evaluation recommendations
- Supported organizational development as a key member in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

February 2019 to April 2019 **Project Analyst, Contracted Consultant**

Centro Legal de La Raza- Oakland, CA

- Conducted an organizational climate assessment through the lens of racial and gender equity
- Coordinated and conducted data collection including an organization-wide survey, 10 listening sessions, 6 interviews, and a document review
- Developed and presented strategies to address organizational development facilitators and challenges

EDUCATION

June 2016 **Bachelor of Arts, Public Health; Public Policy Minor- University of California, Berkeley**

Honors: UC Berkeley Regents and Chancellor's Scholar 2012-2016

OTHER

- Boards and Commission Leadership Institute 2023 Cohort Member, Urban Habitat

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY


CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY MAYOR SHENG THAO

RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE MAYOR'S REAPPOINTMENT OF LARISSA CASILLAS AND GUADALUPE GARCIA AND APPOINTMENT OF MANDELA BLISS TO THE BUDGET ADVISORY COMMISSION

WHEREAS, Section 601 of the City Charter provides that members of City boards and commissions shall be appointed by the Mayor subject to confirmation by the affirmative vote of five members of the City Council; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 13337 C.M.S., adopted November 3, 2015, creates the Budget Advisory Commission to advise the Mayor and City Council on topics deemed important to the fiscal health of the City, encourage public participation and input into fiscal decision making, and improve the transparency and accountability of City fiscal information and decision making; and

WHEREAS, the Budget Advisory Commission shall be composed of 15 members appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council in accordance with Section 601 of the City Charter; and

WHEREAS, three members are selected by the Mayor, two members are recommended by the Chairperson of the Finance and Management Committee, one member is recommended by each Councilmember, one member is recommended by the City Auditor, and one member is recommended by the Chairperson of the Community and Economic Development Committee; and

WHEREAS, the Community and Economic Development Committee Chair Dan Kalb has recommended the appointment of Mandela Bliss to the Budget Advisory Commission and the Mayor has selected the reappointment of Guadalupe Garcia and Larissa Casillas to serve as mayoral representatives; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the City Council hereby confirms the Mayor's appointment of the following individuals to the Budget Advisory Commission as set forth below:

Mandela Bliss, to serve a three-year term as the Community and Economic Development Committee representative on the Budget Advisory Commission that began October 1, 2022 and ending September 30, 2025, filling a vacant seat that was previously held by Michael Silk.

Guadalupe Garcia, to serve a three-year term as a Mayoral representative on the Budget Advisory Commission beginning October 1, 2024 and ending September 30, 2027, filling the seat that was previously held by herself.

Larissa Casillas, to serve a three-year term as a Mayoral representative on the Budget Advisory Commission beginning October 1, 2024 and ending September 30, 2027, filling the seat that was previously held by herself.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - FIFE, GALLO, JENKINS, KALB, KAPLAN, RAMACHANDRAN, REID, AND
PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST: _____

ASHA REED
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California

3370177/MJM