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To: Oakland Development Policy Roundtable
From: David Binder Research
Date: May 17, 2006
Re: Oakland Development Analysis

OVERVIEW

Voters in Oakland are strongly supportive of development at the same pace, or even greater; at the same time, they strongly support requiring benefits from large-scale developers, such as living wage jobs and affordable housing.¹

The survey research demonstrates the following:

- Compared with other localities, Oakland voters are more supportive of development in general, but there is strong support for the development to be tied to community benefits.
- Voters in Oakland view development as a means to improve conditions in the city, with creating good jobs, improving neighborhoods, and increasing affordable housing options as the most desired outcome of development.
- Voters in Oakland strongly prefer a Mayor that would bargain hard with developers to get the best deal for Oakland residents, rather than a Mayor that would aggressively pursue and get approvals for development projects.
- Voters find that providing living wage jobs, hiring local workers, and building affordable housing are the most essential benefits to be required from development projects.

¹ David Binder Research surveyed 560 likely voters in Oakland between May 4th and 7th, with a margin of error of 4.1%. The survey included an oversample of 79 Latinos and 80 Asian Pacific Islanders. Likely voters are defined as those who plan to vote in June of 2006, voted in November 2004, and at least one of: March 2002 or March 2004. Also includes those who voted in November 2005 if registered after November 2004 and those who voted in November 2004 and November 2005 if registered after March 2004.

PREFERENCES FOR DEVELOPMENT

While a plurality (44%) of voters say the amount of development is about right, nearly one-third (32%) say there is too little development. Only 14% saying that there is too much development. Especially compared with other locations in California, Oakland voters are more supportive of development, largely with a focus on housing.

Voters are split as to the most important goal for development, with creating good jobs (31%), improving neighborhoods (31%), and creating housing (24%) as the top goals stated. Less than one in ten (9%) say generating tax revenue is the most important goal. Voters in Oakland view development as a means to improve a city, one that has many compelling and important needs that have not been addressed.

Most important goal for development	
Improving neighborhoods	31%
Creating good jobs	31
Creating housing	24
Generating tax revenue	9
Other/Don't Know	5

Nearly three-fourths of voters (72%) in Oakland prefer a Mayor that would bargain hard with developers to get the best deal for Oakland, as opposed to the 20% that prefer a Mayor that would aggressively pursue and get approvals for development projects.

Over half (57%) say the issue of Oakland losing long-term residents is extremely or very important, with 26% finding the issue extremely important.

PREFERENCES FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Oakland voters are strongly supportive of requiring benefits from developers building large-scale projects, finding living wage jobs and affordable housing to be most important. Over two-thirds of voters (69%) agree with requiring benefits to the community from large-scale developers as opposed to thinking the benefits will drive away development. Also, 82% support community benefits, such as living wage jobs, affordable housing and a requirement to hire local workers. Over half of voters (51%) strongly support these community benefits, demonstrating the depth of intensity for development projects to directly benefit the community.

When asked which is the most important, living wage jobs are the top standard named, with 31%. Close behind in importance, affordable housing and a requirement to hire local workers are both named by nearly one-quarter of voters (23%) as most essential.

Most essential to be required from development projects	
Living wage jobs	31%
Affordable housing	23
Requirement to hire local workers	23
Community services and childcare	10
Open space and parks	6

Other findings include:

- Two-thirds of voters (66%) support requiring all residential developments with five or more units to make at least twenty percent of the units affordable to low-income families.
- Voters strongly support environmental protection with 41% of voters saying that environmental laws in California are not strict enough, with only 6% saying they are too strict.
- 61% of voters in Oakland say it extremely or very important for the local government to encourage developers to negotiate directly with community organization for community benefits.
- 82% of voters support a law that would enforce the promises of jobs for residents and money for city services made by developers when getting their projects approved.

APPENDIX: SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. When thinking about the amount of development currently occurring in Oakland, do you think there is too much, too little, or is it just about right?

TOO MUCH	14	
TOO LITTLE	32	
ABOUT RIGHT	44	
DON'T KNOW	10	
REFUSE	<1	

2. How important to you is the issue of Oakland losing long-term residents – extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?

EXTREMELY	26	
VERY	31	→57%
SOMEWHAT	30	
NOT AT ALL	10	→40%
DON'T KNOW	3	
REFUSE	0	

3. What do you feel is the most important goal for development – is it (ROTATE) generating tax revenue for the city, creating good jobs for Oakland residents, creating housing that families can afford, or improving neighborhoods?

GENERATING TAX REVENUE	9	
CREATING GOOD JOBS	31	
CREATING HOUSING	24	
IMPROVING NEIGHBORHOODS	31	
OTHER (RECORD)	1	
DON'T KNOW	4	
REFUSE	<1	

4. Which would you prefer...(ROTATE)

A Mayor that would aggressively pursue and get approvals for development projects

OR

A Mayor that would bargain hard with developers to get the best deal for Oakland residents

(IF CHOICE IS MADE, FOLLOW-UP: Is that much more likely or only somewhat more likely?)

PURSUE AND PUSH, MUCH	12	
PURSUE AND PUSH, SOMEWHAT	8	→20%
BARGAIN HARD, SOMEWHAT	20	
BARGAIN HARD, MUCH	52	→72%
DON'T KNOW	7	

REFUSE

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5. Some people say that Oakland can afford to require that developers building large-scale projects provide benefits to the community, while others say that requiring such benefits will drive away large-scale projects that are much needed in Oakland. With whom do you agree... ROTATE... those that support requiring benefits to the community or those who believe requiring benefits will drive away development?

REQUIRING BENEFITS	69
DRIVES AWAY DEVELOPMENT	17
DON'T KNOW	13
REFUSE	1

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6. Of the benefits, which do you think is the most essential to be required from development projects: ROTATE...the hiring of local workers, living wage jobs, affordable housing, community services and childcare, or open space and parks?

REQUIREMENT TO HIRE LOCAL WORKERS	23
LIVING WAGE JOBS	31
AFFORDABLE HOUSING	23
COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CHILDCARE	10
OPEN SPACE AND PARKS	6
NONE (VOLUNTEER)	2
OTHER (RECORD)	<1
DON'T KNOW	4
REFUSE	1

7. Do you support or oppose requiring these kinds of community benefits from large-scale development projects in Oakland? (FOLLOW-UP: Is that strongly or somewhat?)

STRONGLY SUPPORT	51	→82%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	31	
SOMEWHAT OPPOSE	6	→11%
STRONGLY OPPOSE	5	
DON'T KNOW	7	
REFUSE	<1	

8. How important do you feel it is for the local government to encourage developers to negotiate directly with community organizations for community benefits – extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?

EXTREMELY	32	→61%
VERY	29	
SOMEWHAT	27	→35%
NOT AT ALL	8	
DON'T KNOW	3	
REFUSE	1	

9. Do you support or oppose a law that would require all residential developments with five or more units to make at least twenty percent of the units affordable to low-income families? (FOLLOW-UP: Is that strongly or somewhat?)

STRONGLY SUPPORT	43	→66%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	23	
SOMEWHAT OPPOSE	14	→27%
STRONGLY OPPOSE	13	
DON'T KNOW	7	
REFUSE	<1	

10. Currently, many developers make promises of jobs for residents and money for city services when getting their projects approved. Do you support or oppose a law that would enforce the promises? (FOLLOW-UP: Is that strongly or somewhat?)

STRONGLY SUPPORT	62	→82%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	20	
SOMEWHAT OPPOSE	6	→13%
STRONGLY OPPOSE	7	
DON'T KNOW	5	
REFUSE	<1	

11. What is your opinion of environmental laws in California – are they too strict, not strict enough, or about right?

TOO STRICT	6
ABOUT RIGHT	46
NOT STRICT ENOUGH	41
DON'T KNOW	7
REFUSE	<1

DEMOGRAPHICS

12. First, what is your age?

UNDER 30	7
30-39	15
40-49	20
50-64	30
65+	22
REFUSE	6

13. Which of the following ethnic groups best describes you? You can stop me when I've read your group. (READ LIST.)

White or Caucasian	58
Black or African-American	21
Latino, Hispanic, or Mexican	5
Asian or Pacific Islander	6
Native American	<1
Mixed Race	6
Other (SPECIFY: (____))	<1
REFUSE	4

14. Do you currently own or rent your home?

OWN	67
RENT	32
OTHER	1
REFUSE	<1

15. Are you married, partnered but not married, single or widowed?

MARRIED	51
PARTNERED, BUT NOT MARRIED	11
SINGLE	28
WIDOWED	9
REFUSE	1

16. Do you currently have children under the age of eighteen living at home?

YES	23
NO	77
REFUSE	<1

17. Are you or is anyone in your household a member of a labor union or employee association? (FOLLOW-UP: Is that you, a member of your household, or both?)

YES, SELF ONLY	14	
YES, HOUSEHOLD MEMBER ONLY	9	→28%
YES, BOTH SELF AND HOUSEHOLD	5	
NOBODY IN HOUSEHOLD	72	
REFUSE	<1	

18. Regardless of your party registration– with which political party do you most closely identify? (IF INDEPENDENT, FOLLOW-UP: Do you lean more toward the Republicans or more toward the Democrats?)

DEMOCRAT	72	→78%
INDEPENDENT, LEAN DEMOCRAT	6	
INDEPENDENT	7	
INDEPENDENT, LEAN REPUBLICAN	2	
REPUBLICAN	5	→7%
OTHER PARTY	5	
REFUSE	3	

19. Which of the following best describes your educational background?

Not a high school graduate	3
High school graduate, but no college	11
Some college, but not a college graduate	20
College graduate, but not post graduate	23
College graduate with some post graduate study	10
Post graduate degree	32
REFUSE	1

20. Please stop me when I read the category that best describes your total annual gross income from all sources for the year 2005.

Under \$15,000	8
\$15,000 to just under \$25,000	9
\$25,000 to just under \$40,000	10
\$40,000 to just under \$50,000	11
\$50,000 to just under \$75,000	14
\$75,000 to just under \$100,000	10
\$100,000 to just under \$150,000	11
\$150,000 to just under \$200,000	3
\$200,000 or more	6
DON'T KNOW	1
REFUSE	17

21. RECORD GENDER:

FEMALE	59
MALE	41

22. RECORD PARTY:

DEMOCRAT	73
REPUBLICAN	8
DECLINE-TO-STATE	13
GREEN	4
MINOR PARTY	2
