

# NEWS FROM THE PEC AND OPENOAKLAND



**CITY OF OAKLAND**  
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## Sunshine on Local Campaign Spending

As the 2014 election season kicks into high gear, the City of Oakland Public Ethics Commission (PEC) and the civic tech innovation organization OpenOakland, jointly launch a new web app to bring campaign finance data to life. The app was previewed during the PEC's public meeting Tuesday night and goes live for the public on Thursday, 4th at 9:00am PST. The new app, Open Disclosure (<http://www.opendisclosure.io/>), automatically pulls data from the City's campaign finance database and displays the data in a user-friendly interface where a voter can easily see and interact with the information.

The app allows a user to view a candidate's campaign finance data in a simple display of summary information, such as the total amount of contributions received, number of contributions given to each candidate, and the average size of each contribution compared with other candidates. It also allows the viewer to see detailed information for each candidate, such as the total amount of expenditures made, the source of the candidate's top contributors, and a list of contributors to that candidate. With another click, the voter can view information about the contributor as well. The site, which is being released as a Beta version, incorporates mayoral candidate data now but will expand to other local candidates and committees going forward.

The Open Disclosure project grew out of a proposal by Public Ethics Commission staff to OpenOakland in 2013, which led to the creation of a joint volunteer team.

"When we proposed the idea to OpenOakland, our goal was to make it easier for the public to access, search, and understand the wealth of campaign finance data submitted by candidates to the City," said Whitney Barazoto, Executive Director of the Public Ethics Commission. "The Open Disclosure team nailed it. Hats off to the talented OpenOakland volunteers and PEC staff who created this tool, which will evolve and expand as we continue to partner."

Esperanza Tervalon-Daumont, the Executive Director of Oakland Rising adds: "Campaign finance reform is the most pressing government reform facing our generation. We can't have authentic participatory democratic process until we disconnect big-money from American politics and Oakland can be the city to catalyze this change. This is how we are building a new and meaningful democracy for the people and by the people. The time is now. The app is here."

"Voters need to know who is funding their candidates in order to make informed decisions in November. Open Disclosure makes it easier for voters to be informed," said Daniel G. Newman, President & Co-Founder of MapLight, a nonpartisan research organization tracking money's influence on politics.

Detailed campaign finance disclosure is required by the California Political Reform Act, and in Oakland, candidates must file this information electronically per the Oakland Campaign Finance Reform Act, which was amended by City Council in March 2013 to require electronic reporting. Currently, the data goes into

Netfile, the City's contracted vendor for campaign finance and conflict-of-interest data collection, and is made available to the public on the Netfile portal, which allows for searching and export of a CSV/Excel file.

The Public Ethics Commission ([www.oaklandned.com/pec](http://www.oaklandned.com/pec)) oversees compliance with local campaign finance laws and ensures transparency of campaign, lobbying, and City government activities.

OpenOakland ([www.Openoakland.com](http://www.Openoakland.com)) works to improve the lives of Oaklanders by advancing civic innovation and open government through community partnerships, engaged volunteers, and civic technology.

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