

2026 EBRPD Board Candidate Questionnaire

Your answers will not be saved until you submit the form at the end. If you don't feel you can answer these questions in one sitting, you may want to [download the questions](#) and draft your answers externally, then paste them into this form.

Email *

vote4olivia@gmail.com

Please record your full name below: *

Olivia Sanwong

When you visit the East Bay Regional Parks, how often do you enjoy the following activities?

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Hiking	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cycling on dirt trails or natural surface roads (mountain biking, gravel riding, fire roads, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cycling on paved trails and roads within the park	☐	☐	☐	☐
Running/Jogging	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dog walking	☐	☐	☐	☐
Horseback riding	☐	☐	☐	☐
Picnicking or other gatherings	☐	☐	☐	☐
Visiting park amenities (lakes, visitor centers, gardens, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐

Narrow Trail Maintenance

Historically, basic ongoing or scheduled maintenance of existing natural surface narrow trails has been a low-priority activity for the EBRPD. As a result many trails are badly eroded and even dangerous.

What are your thoughts on regular institutionalized EBRPD collaboration with volunteer organizations that have expertise and are eager to assist with such maintenance on narrow natural surface trails (singletrack) that are open to bicycles?

Candidate declined to respond

Historically EPRPD trails suffer from explosive vegetation growth during spring. As a result some of those trails are nearly impassable for weeks if not months until mechanized crews are able to clear the tall grasses and weeds directly impacting the trails. The volume of work is impractical and has safety concerns making volunteer hand work unreasonable. We understand the union MOU issues would need to be worked through. There are stewardship volunteers that would also like the authorization to operate line trimmers to do more effective work.

Do you support finding ways for volunteer groups such as BTCEB to operate powered tools for the exclusive purpose of trail brushing? Would you make this a priority objective? Why or why not? If not, do you support the park district making it a priority to clear vegetation impacted trails in a much more timely manner?

Candidate declined to respond

Narrow Trails - Demand & Access Issues

Since 1995, EBRPD park acreage has nearly doubled while less than 25 miles of narrow trails have been added. Demand for access to these parks and its trail system is now at an all-time high. In the last few years much of this demand has been driven by the increase in popularity of mountain biking, especially among youth. High school and middle school teams have sprung up all over the Bay Area with many hundreds of young riders joining.

The imbalance of demand and supply of the Park's existing narrow trails (singletrack) has been magnified by historical inequity regarding access for bikes. Equestrians (a small and decreasing user group) have access to roughly 55% of the narrow trail system while cyclists (a much larger and growing group) have access to less than 25%. Pedestrians have nearly 100% access. Ordinance 38 allows broad pedestrian off trail access. All this has resulted in user conflicts - real and perceived. In addition, the Park has seen an increase in the creation of unofficial, unsanctioned trails due to the absence of EBRPD trail additions and actions on access.

There has been minimal addition of singletrack trails over the last several decades in part due to the high resource load for planning, environmental review for new trails, and funding. Change in Use is an option to address some of the access issues in a much shorter time frame.

What strategies do you have in mind to balance increased recreational demand overall for narrow trail experiences, with the preservation of natural habitats?

Candidate declined to respond

Do you support consideration of Change In Use for existing trails to alleviate some of the lack of bike access? Why or why not?

Candidate declined to respond

With the *Briones Pilot Program*, EBRPD took a significant step toward recognizing and addressing issues of trail conflict, non-system trail impact on habitat, and equitable access for bikes. The Pilot was a pragmatic approach to today's reality, the resulting impacts, and not a reward to rogue trail building.

What are your thoughts on the results from the pilot and how learnings & outcomes could be applied at other parks? What are your thoughts regarding further evaluation of non-system trails in other parks, adoption of those that can be sustainable and make sense in the trail system, along with closure and habitat rehabilitation of unsustainable non-system trails?

Candidate declined to respond

The Wildcat Bike Trail Project

The Wildcat Bike Trail Project is proposed to add 1.4 miles of downhill directional bike only trail. The public process for this trail has been extraordinary given the very limited project scope. There has been some vocal opposition to the project while several thousand members of the public support the project. The project is currently working on an EIR. Staff brought the project back to the board for a second time requesting approval to proceed with an EIR. A majority of board members supported moving forward with the EIR and issuing the contract for the EIR.

If a vote to continue the EIR were to come before you today would you vote to support continuing or would you vote to stop the project and why?

Candidate declined to respond

One candidate has publicly opposed the Wildcat Project and and stated 'I don't see how recreational trails of this nature fit in the ethos of a park district', ' Briones was just expanded ... before that it was Crockett. What park is next after we do this one? ... Where does it end?'

Do you agree that recreational trails of this nature don't fit the park district ethos? Why or why not?

Candidate declined to respond

The Next Century District Plan and Future Bike Access

The park district is in the process of developing it's next century plan or district plan. The 2013 District Plan included Trails for All and envisioned both multi-use and single use trails. It did not provide a clear vision for a magnitude of trail expansion or additional bike access. BTCEB has proposed that the district set a vision of all residents in the park district having access to a park with 10 miles of bike legal singletrack within a 20-25 minute drive from their home. The lack of bike access is leading to increased unauthorized trail creation by park users which often may result in increased natural resource impacts. We ask that the district target reaching 75% of the district having this available to them in the next 20 years.

What is your vision for Singletrack bike access from a volume and timing perspective and why?

Do you support the above proposed level of bike access and trails? Why or why not?

Candidate declined to respond

The Roles of Access, Education, and Enforcement

Singletrack bike access is limited in the East Bay Regional Park District. The addition of sanctioned access at Crockett Hills and the adoption of unsanctioned trails at Briones have shown a positive impact on unsanctioned trail activity. Those increases in access are significant yet much of the district has very limited opportunity to biking singletrack trails. Some members of the community call for increased enforcement and also self policing by the mountain bike community. Self policing is challenging in light of decades of access advocacy with EBRPD while other land managers demonstrate significantly more expansion in access. Meanwhile the net impact to habitat is much worse than additional well planned trails.

Where do you see the roles of increased access, education, and enforcement in the overall situation related to mountain bikes in EBRPD?

Candidate declined to respond

Other Comments

If you have any other comments on the topics discussed here or any related topics, please leave them below. Press Submit when you are done. Thank you for your time and consideration.

I am proud to have the support of local mountain biking leaders in Ward 5, including Chris Beratlis, Bryan Gillette, and Jerry Pentin. I had hoped my Park Advisory Committee appointee would work with these Ward 5 mountain biking leaders to build support and advocacy for priorities at Pleasanton Ridge, Vargas Plateau, and Del Valle, but he had other plans.

During my first term, EBRPD opened the Valle Vista mountain biking flow trail at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. EBRPD's top priority now is to provide direct access within the City of Pleasanton boundaries by opening Garms Staging, as called for in the 2016 Memorandum of Understanding between the two agencies. Garms Staging, at West Las Positas and Foothill, would also bring Pleasanton Ridge access closer to BART and the City of Dublin, approximately 2 miles away. Opening Garms will also add new trails connecting Garms Staging to the Pleasanton Ridge trail network. I fought to keep this project on the Capital Projects list in both the 2025 and 2026 budgets after it was removed from the respective draft budgets. I spent 90 minutes on the phone with Scott Bartlebaugh in early April 2026 explaining why it matters to the local mountain biking community. It remains important, and I will continue working on it with my local mountain biking leaders.

At our August 2026 EBRPD-City of Fremont liaison meeting in Fremont, we reviewed the Vargas to Garin trail, part of the Bay Area Ridge Trail, which will construct approximately five miles of new trail. I was disappointed not to see anyone from BTCEB at the meeting when we discussed this important new trail project.

At Del Valle, the top priority has been resolving the issues around the Del Valle kiosk. I appreciate Bike East Bay's advocacy, which helped me find a solution. In August 2026, Bike East Bay and several of its advocates submitted public comment supporting the decision to purchase 10 Ventek automated payment machines for Del Valle, and their comments are part of the public record. Livermore City Councilmember Steven Dunbar can speak to this problem-solving work.

If I have one broader critique of BTCEB, it is that its Ward 5 membership appears less active, and advocacy for the Eastern and Southern Alameda County projects that matter to our local mountain biking community appears limited. Or perhaps Eastern and Southern Alameda County projects are simply not a priority for BTCEB.

I would like to close with the following: I am the only Ward 5 candidate who attended that EBRPD-City of Fremont liaison meeting, as well as our first-ever Board meeting in Livermore at Camp Arroyo, also in August 2026. I do my homework and show up to meetings.

Olivia Sanwong
