



BUDGET MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 15, 2021
TO: Mayor Libby Schaaf, City Administrator Ed Reiskin, City Council
and Members of the Public
FROM: Council President Nikki Fortunato Bas, District 2
SUBJECT: District 2 and City Budget Policy Priorities for FY 2021-23

Dear Mayor Schaaf, Administrator Reiskin, Council Colleagues, and Members of the Public,

The goal of our City’s two-year budget should be to ensure a just and equitable recovery for Oakland, in which the people who are most vulnerable during the pandemic and recession receive our investment and support. Our unsheltered residents, essential workers, BIPOC neighbors, small businesses and artists are suffering. Even our hard working City staff continue to struggle to keep up with both the cost of living and the service needs of our growing population. The federal relief funds of up to \$192 million, together with strategic investments, innovative partnerships and new revenue measures, should collectively lift our City into a better and brighter future. Our budget work should be grounded in our values of equity, inclusion and democracy, with all branches of our city government working together to engage and serve the people of Oakland. These are my priorities for the FY 2021-23 budget cycle.

I. Housing as a Human Right

A. *Shelter and Services for Each Unhoused Person in Oakland*

1. **Purchase at least one hotel or SRO** to develop for transitional housing for unsheltered residents living in Oakland.
2. **Double the number of RV/ Safe parking lots, tiny home villages, modular housing, safe camping sites** and other city-sanctioned homelessness interventions utilizing at least one parcel of public land for unsheltered residents in each Council District. Provide services including: case management, health and hygiene, food programs, and housing navigation.
3. **Prioritize these encampments and provide alternative shelter and services to unhoused individuals living in these locations:** Parcel at E12th Street and Lake Merritt Ave., median at E12th Street and 18th Ave., Athol Plaza Tennis Courts, Pine Knoll Park, Peralta Park, Rose Garden, San Antonio Park, and the parking lot at Grand Ave. and MacArthur Blvd.

4. **Expedite hiring of the recently vacated position of “Homeless Administrator”** and improve the effectiveness of the position and staff team, based on lessons to date.
5. **Support the Homeless Commission including stipends for the advisory committee** of currently unsheltered residents in Oakland.

B. Acquire and Preserve Affordable Housing, Prevent Displacement of Black, Indigenous and Other People of Color Residents

1. Recapitalize the Acquisition and Conversion to Affordable Housing Program (ACAH) in the Department of Housing and Community Development which allows tenants to purchase their homes with land trusts and co-ops, preventing displacement.
2. Boomerang Funds: Dedicated funds should go towards affordable housing development.
3. Impact Fees: Collect assessed impact fees in order to direct those funds to the production of deeply affordable housing.

C. Protect Renters and Low Income Property Owners

1. Fund legal services and tenant counseling, ensuring Asian language resources are accessible.
2. Provide rent relief and assistance to struggling renters.
3. Provide mortgage assistance to individuals struggling with payments.

II. Just Economic Recovery

A. Protect Workers

1. Unfreeze Deputy Director in the Department of Workplace and Employment Standards (DWES) (\$272,000).
2. Allocate significant, dedicated funding for labor standards enforcement. Add 5 FTEs to enforce labor standards enforcement in DWES.
3. Maintain funding for the Fair Labor Oakland community-based education, outreach and monitoring work (\$240-250,000/ yr; \$480-500,000 total budget cycle).
4. Maintain funding for Day Laborer Program that provides health/social support services, outreach and education, economic opportunities, legal services for Oakland day laborers (\$220,000 per year; \$440,000 2yr total budget cycle).

B. Protect Small Businesses

1. Permit and support the Lake Merritt Vending Program, Black Vendors Association Partnership — Training programs for vendors (marketing, business grants, etc.) and support vendors to comply with business licenses and city requirements.
2. Provide facade improvement financial assistance to small businesses in order to assist with reopening.

3. Provide commercial lease assistance to small businesses.

C. Support Arts, Culture, and Youth Leadership

1. Develop programming in our public parks and facilities that supports and engages our youth, artists, culture workers and residents, in partnership with the Cultural Affairs Commission, Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission and Youth Advisory Commission.
2. Support the community partnerships in the development of the Kaiser Convention Center, which will support Oakland artists and performers.
3. Provide rent-free low barrier access to public land (i.e., Latham Square, Frank Ogawa/Oscar Grant Plaza, Civic Center, 13th St. Commons) as market space for vendors and outdoor performance space without the current permit and police security requirement barriers.
4. Restore the Summer Jobs for youth program, including arts and culture jobs.
5. Fund youth priorities by adding \$140,400 to the Youth Advisory Commission budget for stipends for youth members, additional program assistant and program associate to support youth leadership and engagement with the reimagining public safety process, and developing a citywide youth strategy.

D. Maximize Safe and Equitable Lake Merritt Open Space

1. Pilot for Lake Merritt Parks Ambassadors in partnership with a trusted community organization (\$286,000 for staff, equipment, materials, etc.).
2. Add 3 FTE Muni Code Enforcement Officers to cover the entire city, including vending and compliance issues at Lake Merritt and other code enforcement across the City.
3. Allocate funding to multiple departments to address weekend operations:
 - a) Staffing and equipment for street closures (on Lakeshore southbound, El Embarcadero, etc.)
 - b) Friday through Sunday Parking Enforcement
 - c) Additional cleanup crews for maintenance and bathrooms servicing on weekends/peak times.
 - d) Increase trash pick up during summer and add litter containers to the Lake—cardboard containers (during special events, peak times) and more large capacity trash compactors.
 - e) Additional PortoPotties and hand washing stations placed on Lakeshore at Cleveland Cascade, El Embarcadero/Astro Park on the weekends during peak seasons (Spring and Summer)
 - f) Fund Integrated Pest Management program and work with Alameda County Vector Control to implement recommendations to address the rat and pest population at the Lake.

III. Reimagine and Reallocate Public Safety Resources, Reinvest in Communities

Safety is feeling secure in our homes, neighborhoods and businesses, as well as having the security of a home, job, education and healthcare to provide the stability our communities

need to thrive. As Co-Chair of the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force, I am grateful to the hundreds of Oaklanders who have volunteered their time and shared their expertise over many months. I look forward to fully considering the Task Force recommendations at our April 20th Council meeting. I believe that there are immediate actions that the City can take to make our communities safer by (1) focusing OPD resources on violent crime and (2) reallocating police resources to more effectively address mental health, homelessness, minor traffic issues, non-criminal issues and violence prevention. I also believe we must continue the reimagining process to create the equitable systems and structures that will ensure long-term community safety.

- A. [Commit \\$8M of funding towards recommendations from the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force](#), which includes a second phase of Reimagining Public Safety that allows for transparent and thoughtful community input in creating a plan that leads towards effective results for systemic change in increasing community safety and addressing the root causes of violence, including housing, jobs, and public education.
- B. [Allocate ongoing funding for MACRO non-police emergency responders](#) for mental health, and other non-violent, emergencies for 24/7 operations through the Fire Department.
- C. Allocate ongoing funding for community ambassadors in Eastlake/Little Saigon and Lake Merritt, as well as Chinatown Ambassadors (unless they are funded by the Chinatown Community Benefits District in formation, beginning in 2022). This model is based on the community-led Chinatown Ambassador pilot from 2019, in which individuals from the local community provide a street presence, build relationships with merchants and residents, report illegal dumping, assist with reporting crime, and removing graffiti, and is [a recommendation to the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force](#).
- D. Increase funding to the Department of Violence Prevention for Commercially Sexually-Exploited Children (CSEC) and gender based-violence service providers addressing street-based human trafficking in East Oakland, hotspots on E 15th Street, International, etc., [as recommended to the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force](#).
- E. Transfer traffic enforcement duties from OPD to OakDOT [as recommended to the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force](#).
- F. Increase funding to the Department of Violence Prevention to convene a table of community organizations and provide funding for immediate violence interruption, rapid response, and street outreach teams.

IV. Preserve Essential City Services and Ensure an Effective, Efficient Government

- A. Our City workers are our biggest asset in delivering quality services. Prioritize: filling vacant positions quickly and efficiently, converting temporary part-time positions into permanent full-time positions, retaining valuable City employees, and ensuring services are not privatized/contracted out. This requires competitive compensation as Oakland competes with other jurisdictions for staff.

- B. Fill vacancies in Public Works (OPW) and OakDOT to prioritize high-needs neighborhoods and improve street and sidewalk safety, reduce blight, remove illegal dumping, and remove graffiti from business districts.
- C. Increase funding for OPRYD to expand hours of operation at Recreation Centers and increase services and programming for youth and seniors.
- D. Reinstitute independent analysts to support the legislative and budgetary work of the City Council by adding back to the Council Offices: one Council Budget Analyst and one Council Legislative Analyst.

V. Create New Revenue Streams and Strategic Partnerships

- A. Increase general purpose fund revenue with a Progressive, Equitable Corporate Business Tax on the November 2022 Ballot (+\$27M) per Resolution 88227 authored by CP Bas, with recommendations from the Equitable Business Tax Blue Ribbon Task Force.
- B. Continue to support the creation of the East Bay Public Bank and make plans to deposit revenue into the bank to allow for new investments in housing and small business development.
- C. Develop strategic partnerships with government and philanthropic institutions to increase investments in Oakland programs for affordable housing, homeless interventions and services, community safety and other priorities.

VI. Capital Improvements

- A. Bella Vista Park Improvements, prioritizing replacing the resilient surfacing under the large tot lot play area.
- B. Clinton Park and Recreation Center Rehabilitation, Design, and Improvements.
- C. Morcom Rose Garden Improvements, including upgrading security and lighting.
- D. Franklin Recreation Center Improvements.
- E. Lincoln Recreation Center Renovations (maintain unspent funds).
- F. San Antonio Park Head Start Center Renovations (maintain unspent funds).
- G. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) along E.15th Street, a human trafficking hot spot, including:
 - 1. Add L.E.D. lights on the street poles on E 15th (There are only light poles on the west side of E15th while the large trees on the east side block much of the light from reaching the east side)
 - 2. Add a stop sign at E 15th and 21st Ave and/or other traffic calming measures on E 15th.

I look forward to working with you throughout the coming months to address the most pressing needs of the Oakland community and help ensure a just and equitable recovery from the pandemic.

Respectfully,



Nikki Fortunato Bas
City Council President, District 2