



CITY OF OAKLAND

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COUNCILMEMBER LOREN TAYLOR
DISTRICT 6

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Date: March 15, 2021
To: Mayor Libby Schaaf, City Administrator Ed Reiskin, City Attorney Barbara Parker and Interim Finance Director Margaret O’Brien
From: Councilmember Loren Taylor
Subject: District 6 Budget Priorities FY 2021-23

Dear Mayor Schaaf, Administrator Reiskin, and Interim Director O’Brien,

As a third-generation Oaklander, I remain humbled by the faith that District 6 residents have placed in me to represent them in City Hall. When I first began in this role, I never could have imagined that our community would face the challenge of a global health pandemic on top of the deep-rooted issues that continue to plague Oakland beginning long before I took office. The impact of COVID-19 has exacerbated our housing affordability and homelessness crisis, increased income, and food insecurity for our most vulnerable neighbors, widened the achievement gap faced by young Black and Latinx scholars, and contributed to rising rates of violent crime and other public safety challenges across our city. As we approach the beginning of the 2-year budget planning process, tough decisions must be made as we face an unprecedented budget shortfall that threatens our ability to maintain and support our employees, fulfill our financial obligations, and deliver the vital City services Oaklanders need, expect, and deserve.

I came into office with a commitment to change the status quo and by partnering with you and others, we are reimagining and reconstructing our city so that it better serves our needs and lives up to our values. I am honored to co-chair [Oakland’s effort to reimagine public safety](#) through which we are delivering to the full council over 60 recommendations that will improve public safety and equity. I am similarly grateful to serve as chair of our Life Enrichment Committee through which we are transforming how the City of Oakland shows up for its residents, ensuring that our babies (Head Start), our elders (Senior Center and Services), and everyone in between has more enriched and fulfilling lives. And I am also grateful to continue serving on the Council’s Community & Economic Development (CED) Committee through which we are ensuring equitable development that uplifts the lives of long-term Oaklanders instead of displacing them. We are creating a more vibrant economy in East Oakland through investments and partnerships that will have a lasting impact such as [The Akoma Outdoor Market](#), the [ESO Ventures Entrepreneurship Program](#), and the [People of Color Small Business Network](#). The upcoming 2-year City Budgeting process allows us to recommit to the priorities we delivered against over the past two years while expanding our focus on new areas of opportunity that have become more urgent than ever before. The following represent the *Top Seven Budget Priorities for District 6* based on community engagement that my



office regularly conducts with district 6 residents through town halls, Neighborhood Council meetings, open office hours, and email/phone interactions.

1. A Safer East Oakland: As the City sets out to reimagine public safety and invest in community-centered solutions, our neighbors in District 6 are plagued by increasing violence and crime threatening their safety in their homes and neighborhoods. Public safety ranked at the top of District 6's budget concerns based on a recent District 6 online idea exchange, and to address this need, we must restore critical public safety resources that were removed in the December 2020 deficit-driven budget cuts. We must restore and continue adequately funding our Ceasefire gun violence reduction team, our sideshow enforcement and investigations unit, and our Community Policing resources that are vital to solving the neighborhood problems that matter most to Oakland residents. Specific investments underneath this priority must include:

- Sideshow Unit - Continued funding to Oakland's sideshow unit to ensure proactive intelligence gathering, rapid sideshow response, and effective follow-up investigations that lead to fines and vehicle seizures and penalties to deter future activity. *(These measures are needed to address the persistent problems of dangerous sideshows across the City that often include gun fire and draw hundreds of people from around the region)*
- Ceasefire - Continued funding to increase collaborations and coordination among law enforcement, social services, and community members to prevent violent crime
- 911 Call Response - Increased investment into staffing and technology upgrades that increases the number of dispatchers and improves their efficiency to decrease response time
- Violence interrupters - Increased investment into Violence Prevention strategies, allowing for the hiring and training of staff to reduce the incidents of violent crime
- Community Policing - Continued support for Community Resource Officers (CROs) to conduct their high-value problem-solving work on behalf of the community according to their Public Safety priorities.
- ShotSpotter - Increased investment to expand ShotSpotter technology to additional coverage areas to address gun violence in East Oakland, including the Foothills of District 6 between MacArthur Blvd and the 580 Freeway.

2. A More Economically Vibrant East Oakland: East Oakland has been historically left out of the economic growth and investment experienced by the rest of the City. Moreover, these disparities have only been exasperated by the COVID pandemic. Investment in the economic empowerment of under-resourced communities like those in the East Oakland flatlands will lead not only transform the lives of those living in Eat Oakland, but also increase Oakland's tax revenue and overall prosperity.

- Business Improvement Districts (BID) – Establish a funding mechanism for conducting feasibility and planning for prospective Business Improvement Districts across Oakland with a focus on Commercial corridors that have been historically under-invested, and for which a catalyst investment will significantly revitalize the surrounding community. *(A revolving loan fund should be established to fund the*



feasibility study, formation costs, and other necessary support for potential BIDs at various stages of maturity)

- Vacant Parcel Activation Fund – Establish a small-site pre-development loan fund to support small local property owners in activating their vacant parcels and by doing so eliminate neighborhood blight. *(The loans should be paid back upon project completion at a minimal interest rate)*
- Elimination of Contract Disparities Facing Black-Owned & Women-Owned Businesses - Increase investments into contract compliance and monitoring activities of DWES to ensure more effective monitoring of adherence to the [Local/Small Local Business Enterprise \(L/SLBE\) Program](#) in an effort to reduce disparities facing Black and Women-owned businesses that were documented in the recently released [2017 Race and Gender Disparity Study](#).
- East Oakland Small Business Support and Entrepreneur Development – Increase funding within the Economic & Workforce Development Department to strengthen East Oakland’s Small Businesses through the following efforts:
 - Establishing a satellite Small Business Assistance Center in East Oakland to provide similar services and resources that are provided to businesses in Downtown Oakland.
 - Investing into small business technical assistance and capability building by funding the organizations that demonstrated their effectiveness supporting East Oakland businesses to start, stabilize, and grow their operations during the COVID recovery.
- Workforce Development Program – Increase investments into workforce development programs that are even more critically needed post-COVID given the number of Oakland residents who are unemployed and under-employed due to job loss or reduction of work hours

3. Improved, Cleaner, and More Attractive Streets: Blight, illegal dumping and the condition of our streets continues to be a high priority for all residents. When our street are riddled with potholes, children and adults cannot safety ride their bikes or drive their vehicles which can lead to accidents and property damage. Also, District 6 residents have asked for traffic calming measures and obstructions to curb the dangerous driving.

- Traffic Calming Measures-Increase funding for speed bumps, round-abouts, and more immediate solutions (E.g., bollards and other visual makers) to protect Oaklanders from harm.
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental (CPTED) Design-Environmental solutions to aid in crime and traffic calming, including increased investment into street light replacement/ additions, and façade improvement, graffiti abatement, and tree trimming
- Beautification and Streetscaping-Funding in under-resourced areas of the city to improve the look and feel of neighborhoods and attract more businesses. This should include litter and illegal dumping removal, graffiti abatement, and abandoned auto removal



- Pothole Repair and Paving Continue investing in equitable road repair including pothole repair, repaving, restriping of roadway markings, and enhanced signage.
 - Education and Public Awareness Campaign for Littering and Illegal Dumping – Increase resources and other investments into more robust and compelling Education and Public Awareness campaigns against illegal dumping and littering
 - Code Enforcement Improvement-Increase the number of code enforcement officers who can inspect and hold negligent property owners accountable for improving health, safety, for nearby residents and businesses and reduce neighborhood blight.
 - Lead abatement and other programs to promote healthy homes - In partnership with Alameda County, invest resources into healthier communities by supporting abatement of lead, asbestos, and other negative environmental factors in homes and neighborhoods.
 - Wildfire Abatement & Disaster Preparedness - The City must continue to support and fund fire prevention efforts to ensure that we are prepared for potential disasters.
 - Funding for Fire Inspectors and wildfire abatement monitoring & enforcement
 - Vegetation Management Program Implementation
 - Funding for removal of hazardous trees and wildfire abatement on city-owned property (e.g., Dead Monterey Pine trees in the Skyline Blvd median)
 - Disaster and Emergency response funding
- 4. End the Push-Out/Price-out of Longtime Residents:** Homelessness and housing affordability continues to be higher priority issues across our City, and we must continue making progress against this seemingly intractable issue.
- Homelessness Prevention – Prevention is the most effective way of addressing homelessness, ensuring that Oakland residents don't become displaced, ending up on the streets
 - Maintain momentum of the Rental Assistance Program & Keep Oakland Housed Program providing assistance to renters and property owners including those deeply impacted by the pandemic. (To include Rental Assistance Funding, Mortgage Assistance Funding, and Establishment of a citywide rent registry)
 - Partner with Alameda County to increase funding for home rehabilitation for Oakland residents who live in areas negatively affected by redlining practices and the war in drugs
 - Immediate Response/ Support of Unhoused Oaklanders
 - Fully Implement the Encampment Management Policy and provide the critical resources to support unhoused residents in transitioning from high sensitivity areas to alternative housing solutions
 - Continue investments into Safe RV Parking lots to allow for removal of RVs from high sensitivity areas of the city
 - Mobile showers, sanitation and restroom funding for homeless encampments
 - Investments in Transitional and Long-Term Housing Solutions



- Acquisition of county-tax-liened residential properties for conversion to deeply affordable housing
- Increase funding support for Oakland's First-time homebuyer program including Down Payment Assistance - Funding for long-term current and formerly displaced Oakland residents
- Continue exploring opportunities to purchase properties for ensuring permanent affordability
- Prioritize Recruitment and Installation of the New Homelessness Administrator - Prioritize filling this position to ensure adequate focus on and coordination of the City's homelessness strategies and their implementation

5. Enriching The Lives of Oakland's Youth and Seniors: It is important that we prioritize work force training for our youth to provide them with safe pathways to economic opportunities and well-paid careers. Also, we should support child-care and support programs for our most vulnerable communities.

- Summer Jobs Program – Increased Funding for Youth Employment OK Program – Sustained funding for The Our Kids (OK) Program out of a non-general fund account such as OFCY
- Funding for apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs in partnership with OUSD and building and trades organizations
- Head start and meals on wheels – Continued funding for Head Start and Meals on Wheels to meet the needs of low-income families with small children and low-income seniors
- Mental Health Support – In partnership with Alameda County, invest in greater mental health resources and services for Oaklanders to address the impacts of trauma and adverse events

6. Parks & Recreation Facilities Improvement:

- Capital Improvement Program funding for Arroyo Viejo Park Renovation
- Implementation of previously funded bathroom installation at Concordia Park
- Continued build-out and launch of commercial kitchen rental program at East Oakland Parks & Recreation Facilities that was initiated in December 2020
- Seed funding for new Concessionaire at Oakland City Stables to initiate vibrant array of programming that is equitable and accessible for all Oakland youth

7. Improved Efficiency of City Operations: The City must have transparent, effective, government which serves as the bedrock for our City's ability to deliver on our priorities.

- Implement Performance Management System – Stand up a city-wide performance management system with single-page dashboards for each department to report on priority metrics on a quarterly basis
- Reduce HR Hiring Time - Increase department resources as needed and implement necessary policy changes to reduce HR hiring time by 50 percent



Revenue

The current budget deficient has increased the need to grow our sources of revenue. The City should pursue the following potential sources for additional revenue:

- Establish a landing page for users when they first sign onto OAK-Wifi and sell internet ad space on the landing page
- Explore the possibility of selling naming rights for City of Oakland Sports fields as a way to generate revenue to support ongoing maintenance of those fields
- Pursue all eligible liens, fees, and fines for which the city has yet to reimbursement for staff time for work completed due to code enforcement and building violations by increasing penalties and fines for illegal dumping and blight.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Loren Taylor'.

Councilmember Loren Taylor
Oakland City Council, District 6