



CITY OF OAKLAND

# MEMORANDUM

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**Date:** September 14, 2020

**To:** Reimagining Public Safety Taskforce Members and Members of the Public

**From:** Councilmember Nikki Fortunato Bas, District 2  
Councilmember Loren Taylor, District 6

**Re:** **Kickoff of Reimagining Public Safety Taskforce**

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Welcome to the first meeting of the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force, and thank you to each of our Task Force members. We appreciate the time and experience you will contribute to working with us to rapidly reimagine and reconstruct the city's public safety system.

Our ambitious goal is to develop recommendations to increase community safety through alternative responses to calls for assistance and increased investments in programs, services and infrastructure that address the root causes of violence and crime (such as health services, housing, and jobs), with a goal of a 50 percent reduction in the FY 2021-2023 General Purpose Fund budget allocation to the Oakland Police Department.

Through the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force, the Oakland City Council is answering the call from residents and community leaders who have stated unequivocally that the time has come for change. The Reimagining Public Safety Task Force will engage in an open, transparent, and thorough process—co-led with the community—to create a shared vision for the public safety system in Oakland that is rooted in equity and addresses the historic and current disparities created by racism and economic inequality.

Oakland's current policing system has been plagued by challenges for decades. The police department has been under the Negotiated Settlement Agreement for 17 years. In the public safety category of the 2018 Oakland Equity Indicators report, Oakland scored a mere 18.3 out of 100. Many residents are frustrated by the slow response times to emergency 911 service calls, while many others feel less safe when OPD does arrive. Moreover, the city spends significant amounts on punishment and enforcement that could be more effectively invested in community empowerment and violence prevention. Community members, electeds, and police officers agree that many of the calls police respond to (e.g., mental health crises, intimate partner violence) would be best answered by an alternative response from medical professionals, community-based interventions, or other public departments.

Responding to these realities and the national conversation about police violence, the Task Force's creation was unanimously approved in July 2020 through a [City Council resolution](#). After considering and vetting information, analysis, and perspectives provided by the City, Advisory Boards, and through deep community engagement, the Task Force will present recommendations to build a reimagined public safety system to the Oakland City Council for consideration before the 2021 budget adoption.

As we embark on this transformational journey, we recognize the magnitude of the moment we are in and the fact that our path toward success will not be an easy one. This makes us even more grateful for your



willingness to serve Oakland in this way. We look forward to embarking upon this important work with you to reimagine public safety.

In Partnership And In Service Of Oakland,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nikki Fortunato Bas".

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Nikki Fortunato Bas,  
Councilmember, District 2

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Loren Taylor".

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Loren Taylor  
Councilmember, District 6