

Oakland People’s Budget 2023 Priorities--Top Lines Only

Note: This is an overview of the Oakland People’s Budget Coalition’s 2023 Budget priorities to Protect, Preserve, and Expand Vital City Services as of March 6, 2023.

Labor and Community Coalition partners will be working over the next several weeks to add more detail and context.

The Oakland People’s Budget Coalition was originally formed in late 2013 as *ReFund & ReBuild Oakland* by community, labor and faith groups representing racially and economically diverse communities. The Coalition seeks to increase public investments to improve and expand key city programs and services, department staffing and infrastructure to better meet the needs of Oakland’s diverse communities, especially economically vulnerable BIPOC flatland residents. In 2021 we fought for a Just Recovery – this year we continue the fight for a recovery for ALL communities impacted by the fallout from the pandemic.

The Oakland People’s Budget proposal aims to protect and preserve critical public programs and services and to ensure funding and staffing for the departments that administer them. We believe this can happen by utilizing incoming tax revenues including the vacant property tax, using state, federal, and other grants, increasing the office and commercial impact fee, exercising upcoming bonding capacity, holding big real estate and corporate actors accountable for their fair share, civilianizing eligible roles within the Oakland Police Department (OPD), and redirecting money away from criminalization and over-policing of Oakland’s Black, Indigenous and communities of color.

We urge the passage of a municipal budget that prioritizes solutions to our housing & homelessness crisis, maintains vital city services, protects low-wage workers, reimagines public safety in ways that actually keep us safe, resources Oakland’s rich artistic and cultural assets and communities, and meets the needs of all Oaklanders so everyone can thrive.

Our priorities for the 2023-25 Budget Cycle are as follows:

1. RENTERS PROTECTION AND SOLUTIONS TO OUR AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS CRISIS

a. Protect tenants and prevent individuals and families from falling into homelessness.

- Use Boomerang funds to support “Oakland Housing Secure,” and to provide legal services/eviction defense, tenant counseling, and flexible financial assistance to prevent displacement.
- Fund Tenant Counseling API language services.
- Fill open positions in Housing and Community Development and Code Enforcement Departments.
- Resource the City Attorney’s office to implement the Tenant Protection Ordinance.
- Ensure HCD is not susceptible to any “across the board” cuts as very little of its funding comes from the General Fund.

b. Support the production of more affordable housing.

- Commit all assessed impact fees to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund for quicker financing of housing construction.
- Allocate 100% of funds from public land disposition to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.
- Allocate 100% of Transient Occupancy Tax revenues from Short-Term Rental housing programs to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.
- Provide seed funds to initiate voters' authorization for social housing development.

c. Address the homelessness crisis and assist unhoused residents.

- Provide increased services, sanitation, cleanings, and improved living conditions at unhoused and vehicular settlements.
- Establish aggressive City acquisitions and under-utilized hotels and motels, public land and open lots, to provide significantly increased inventory of transitional accommodations for the unhoused.
- Implement a system of universal enrollment in HUD database programs, coordinated with increased utilization of the unhoused for their financial benefit.
- Utilize an "Instant Remediation ('Capping') Procedure" at the North Gateway parcel of the Oakland Army Base to provide a Safe Parking Settlement, together with others at needed locations throughout the city.
- Provide sites and funding for two "pilot" Manufactured Modular Campus Developments, including wrap-around services for approximately 150 households each.

2. REIMAGINING PUBLIC SAFETY & INVESTING IN COMMUNITY SAFETY INFRASTRUCTURE

OPD currently receives approximately 40% of the General Purpose Fund (GPF) — by far the single largest GPF allocation, which comes at the expense of every other city department. For years, the Oakland People's Budget Coalition and our community partners have been advocating for a more just, sensible and effective budget distribution that divests significantly from policing and invests in services and programs that will prevent crime by addressing root causes. City Council created the Reimagining Public Safety Taskforce in June 2020 "to rapidly reimagine and reconstruct the public safety system in Oakland by developing recommendations for Council consideration to increase community safety through alternative responses to calls for assistance, and investments in programs that address the root causes of violence and crime (such as health services, housing, jobs, etc), with a goal of a 50% reduction in the OPD General Purpose Fund (GPF) budget allocation." Council adopted a dozen of the Taskforce's recommendations in May 2021, most of which have yet to be implemented. We are uplifting many of those recommendations here for Council's urgent inclusion in the next biennial budget.

a. Fully fund MACRO for 24/7 citywide operations and Mental Health First scaffolding training program

- Additionally, improvements to MACRO are needed to ensure:
 - 1) MACRO dispatch operators are available
 - 2) There is a non-911 number to call for MACRO, and a promotional campaign to ensure the people are aware of it
 - 3) MACRO workers must have secured long-term employment

b. Violence Prevention

- Expand school-based violence prevention programs + revamp RFPs to ensure up-to-date practices.
- Implement an intergenerational and cross cultural community-building initiative to prevent violence, support healing, and invest in community safety and wellbeing, with funding for:
 - 1) public awareness (art, media) about respecting seniors and youth as a way to humanize and empower elders and youth in Black, Brown, Asian, and other communities of color
 - 2) community organizations working with youth and seniors to develop intergenerational programs for community-building and healing
 - 3) victims support services and violence prevention tailored for seniors
- Invest in non-carceral solutions for people trading sex on East 14th.
- Invest in “trauma responders” to respond to homicides.

c. Civilianization

- Immediately civilianize all possible positions within OPD.
- Execute up-to-date audit of OPD positions to determine what can be civilianized, including historical analysis of past classifications, and invest in a civilianization plan for those roles.
- Invest in a civilianization plan/feasibility study for the transfer of all traffic duties from OPD to OakDOT. (note: this does NOT include drunk driving or other criminal offenses)
- Invest in a feasibility study for the transfer of all internal investigatory roles from the Oakland Police Department to the Office of the Inspector General.

d. Sideshows

- Invest in legal sideshows at the Coliseum following the San Diego model.

e. Community Ambassadors

- Fully fund the Chinatown ambassadors program and include cross-racial relationship programming.
- Fund equivalent DPW-based programs for other districts based on their environmental design.

3. PROTECTING VITAL PUBLIC SERVICES

- a. Full staffing for High Quality Public Services** - Establish a Staffing and Service Restoration Task Force (“Staffing Task Force”) to address understaffing across all departments and department-specific challenges to achieving appropriate staffing.
- Fill budgeted vacancies, addressing inequities in promotional opportunities and

reducing inappropriate use of contracting, temporary part timers, and DEs, in the following departments:

- 1) Human Resources Management
- 2) Planning and Building
- 3) Department of Public Works
- 4) Department of Transportation
- 5) Department of Human Services
- 6) Housing and Community Development
- 7) Libraries

b. Libraries

- Equip Oakland's libraries with social welfare programs to help connect those in need of support, stability, and or services with what is needed.

c. Head Start Program

- Sustain funding for City run Head Start programs, including staff recruitment and hiring for vacant positions, professional development support for child care workers and maintaining the number of available program slots. (\$22M over next 3 years)

d. Summer Foods Program

- Fund the summer foods program, including increasing the number of local vendors and open sites and making the program accessible for all children, not just families who can pay for Parks and Rec programming. Identify opportunities to expand meal service to eligible community-based partners.

e. City Parks

- Upgrades and improvements to city parks infrastructure:
 - 1) Funding for the Lincoln Resiliency Hub, a vital community center in the heart of Oakland's Chinatown towards the costs associated with repair, renovation, design, as well as resiliency infrastructure. (\$10M over 2 years)
 - 2) Funding for east Oakland parks inc. Arroyo Viejo, Tassafaronga and Brookfield Village to improve playgrounds and increase accessibility for young children and children with special needs.

4. PROTECTING OAKLAND WORKERS

Oakland must invest in protecting all workers, especially those in low-wage industries, many of whom are BIPOC, who kept our city afloat at the height of the pandemic, and continue to prop up key local industries such as restaurants and hospitality. Oakland has a number of laws that increase wages and rights for workers, however they are meaningless without enforcement. Our priorities include:

a. Department of Workplace and Employment Standards (DWES)

- Hire a search firm for 1 DWES Deputy Director, 1 Assistant Controller, Labor Compliance Officers (3 in FY 2023-2024, 2 in 2024-2025)

- Allocate significant, dedicated funding for labor standards enforcement. Protect 7 FTE in labor standards compliance.

b. Community-based Worker Outreach and Education

- Increase funding for the Fair Labor Oakland community-based education, outreach and monitoring work (\$250,000 to \$300,000/year).
- Increase funding for the Day Laborer Program that provides empowerment/organizing through outreach and economic opportunities. Along with health/social support and legal services to the Oakland day laborer community: (\$220,000 to \$300,000 per year; \$600,000 2yr total budget cycle).
- Additionally, Oakland must continue to support community-based and labor organizations who are trusted by BIPOC workers to conduct outreach and ensure that workers know their rights.

c. Workforce Development

- Identify funding for workforce development, including new strategies to reach diverse needs populations through various methods including, but not limited to state and federal grants.

5. INVESTING IN ARTS & CULTURE

a. Cultural Affairs Division

- No cuts to funding committed to Cultural Affairs:
 1. Maintain all current granting and assistance programs.
 2. Provide technical assistance to artists and cultural organizations city wide.
- Fully staff the Cultural Affairs Department.

b. Arts and Cultural Spaces

- Implement identified strategies to increase accessible arts and cultural spaces city wide.
- Invest in the Black Arts Movement Business District by directly supporting CBO's engaged in pavement to policy work, prototyping, programming, and technical assistance.

c. Programming for youth

- Invest in city wide community-based youth enrichment programming
- Restore the Summer Jobs for youth program.