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## **Dan Kalb's 2023 Safety Plan for Oakland**

I am committed to supporting strategies and policies that prevent violent behavior, reduce recidivism, take violent offenders off our streets, and enhance overall public safety in Oakland. This is a budget priority!

Over the past few of months there have been a number of violent assaults, property crimes and other criminal activity in parts of North Oakland and in several neighborhoods throughout our city. At a recent community meeting on crime and violence that I hosted, we heard from hundreds of Oaklanders who bravely shared their stories as victims of crime and from neighbors who have been enduring a heightened level of fear. Most everyone is insisting that we as a city government take more actions to reduce crime and ensure public safety.

The Oakland Police Department (OPD) and our Department of Violence Prevention (DVP) certainly are aware of the serious and violent crimes in North Oakland and, while there is not a single trend or apparent single, underlying reason associated with these robberies and shootings, the City of Oakland is committed to fully investigating these incidents and working to substantially reduce these horrible incidents throughout the city.

My staff and I meet regularly with the OPD Area 2 Captain and DVP senior staff to discuss recent crime trends in D1 and the city as a whole, OPD response and investigation, and implementation of DVP short and long-term strategies.

I have consistently supported the programs housed in our Department of Violence Prevention, and in 2021 successfully advocated for doubling what was their rather modest budget at the time. Additionally, I drafted, along with Council President Bas, the initial legislation to create the city's Mobile Assistance Community Responders of Oakland (MACRO) program, which will both enable a timely response to nonviolent incidents and free up sworn officers to focus on more serious criminal activity.

That said, we must do more as a City to create actual safety for the people who live, work and visit here. Our Police response times are often lacking and violent criminal behavior continues to affect many of our neighborhoods. To address these realities, I have developed a number of budget and service priorities. Budget priorities include money that the City Council can dedicate during the budget process. Service priorities outline ways in which the Oakland Police Department and other departments/offices can focus resources to better ensure public safety for all. I've outlined these priorities below.

## City Budget Priorities

1. Retain basic police services and improve response times by prioritizing, in the near term, sufficient overtime to fill service gaps. Non-mandatory overtime is a critical part of the service delivery system and allows flexibility for OPD to cover essential functions with its current sworn personnel. Overtime supplements the sworn staffing we have and will have at OPD with the six academies being planned for in the FY 23-25 budget. For example, overtime can be used to assign walking officers into a dozen or more neighborhoods.
2. Restore funding to the Department of Violence Prevention program strategies. This funding provides money for violence interrupters, gender-based violence reduction programs, youth violence prevention and other helpful services and programs. I strongly recommend that the grants be fully restored in FY23-24 and at least partly restored now for the proposed grant cycle starting in FY24-25.
3. Prioritize hiring of 9-1-1 dispatchers to improve response time. Currently, calling 911 may or may not lead to a quick phone response in large part due to the lack of dispatchers. It is critical that we prioritize hiring and training 911 dispatchers immediately to address this essential function. We should analyze the impacts of separating the police and fire/medical dispatch phone-in lines for the public. These positions are in the budget, we just need to recruit for and fill them, and then retain those who we do hire.
4. Set aside funds if available and authorize the Chief of Police to recruit for and conduct one lateral police academy over the next two years. This could shorten the time it takes for some new officers already accounted for the budget to get on the streets.

## Service Priorities

1. Ensure a sufficient number of officers in the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) to help guarantee that serious and violent crimes are fully investigated. Serious and violent crimes must be investigated and OPD needs adequate resources to do so. As I have advocated for repeatedly over the past several years, this also involves having a sufficient number of civilian police evidence technicians and expert crime lab staff in order to best investigate crimes.
2. Ensure that CeaseFire and the Criminal Investigations Division are fully staffed or as close to fully staffed as practical.
3. Institute on-going, rotating walking beat officers in crime hot spots. Walking beat officers can be a deterrent to crime and improve community relations and good will.
4. Increase visible patrol, particularly in business corridors such as Piedmont Avenue, Rockridge and Temescal in District One and in many other commercial corridors around Oakland such as Fruitvale, to deter criminal behavior.
5. Focus OPD and outside agency work on getting guns off our streets. This requires coordination with relevant agencies at all levels of government.

6. Continue to build the Mobile Assistance Community Responders of Oakland (MACRO). MACRO enables a response to nonviolent, low-level crimes and non-criminal behavior and transfers the responsibility for responding to such calls from the Police Department to the Fire Department where MACRO is housed. This reduces the number of calls OPD is required to address, allowing OPD to focus on calls for service involving violence and other serious crimes. It also increases the number of calls overall the City is able to respond to. We need to continue to build MACRO's capacity to take and respond to these calls for service.

By focusing on these budgetary and service priorities, I support both the ability of the Police Department to focus on responding to and investigating violent crime, and, at the same time, resourcing the reduction of violence short and long term. Prioritizing sufficient overtime, 911 dispatch hiring, walking beat officers and a lateral academy emphasizes the Police Department's role in public safety and gives the Department the tools it needs to be successful. Restoring the budget of the Department of Violence Prevention and building MACRO maintains the number of violence interrupters and other staff the Department of Violence Prevention supports and increases the ability of the MACRO to address low-level, nonviolent calls for service. All of these policies resource the reduction of violence. As always, we must take a comprehensive approach to public safety.

These policy decisions will give the OPD and DVP the resources they need to be successful, free up some resources to respond to violent crimes, and help to create a safer Oakland.

### **Collaboration Efforts**

Step up our communications with the County Board of Supervisors District Attorney's Office, the County Sheriff's Office and other relevant County departments regarding appropriate consequences, reentry services and more.

Let us continue to dedicate ourselves to making Oakland a safe and vibrant city for all.



Dan Kalb  
Oakland Councilmember, District 1