

CITY OF OAKLAND



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Commission on Homelessness www.oaklandca.gov/boards-commissions/commission-on-homelessness

June 9, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor Sheng Thao
Council President Nikki Fortunato Bas
Councilmember Carroll Fife
Councilmember Noel Gallo
Councilmember Kevin Jenkins
Councilmember Dan Kalb
Councilmember Janani Ramachandran
Councilmember Treva Reid

Re: Submitting Budget Recommendations for the 2023-25 Budget Period

The Commission on Homelessness is pleased to present our priority recommendations for consideration to the City Council for the budget year 2023-2025 as outlined in our Charter that will give direction to the Council on how to address homelessness in the City of Oakland. These priorities were developed through robust community engagement led by the City Administrator's Division of Homelessness Administration (HA).

City staff and commissioners recognize community engagement is essential to ensure that the City's budget process reflects the needs and priorities of the communities most affected by homelessness. Therefore, at the May 17, 2023 Commission on Homelessness' meeting, the Commission approved the first draft of 18 recommendations with minor amendments and requested staff set forth a 12-day public comment period in accordance with the Engagement Framework drafted by HA Division staff. A survey was created, and an outreach plan executed from May 19th until May 31st.

The Commission is pleased that the Mayor, the City Administration, and the City Council recognize that we must take swift and urgent action to address the homelessness crisis in the City of Oakland.

Homelessness continues to increase in the city with 73 percent of the individual's experiencing homelessness are unsheltered. This crisis also disproportionately impacts our Black neighbors representing 60 percent of the unhoused population in Oakland where they represent less than 22 percent of the general population in Oakland. On any given night, there a more than 5000 of our neighbors' experience homelessness in our community. This reality is unacceptable. Funding for this issue should be a top priority and not be limited to the ten recommendations provided. Ending homelessness will require significantly increased investments in prevention, interim and

permanent housing.

The purpose of the survey was to allow the public to provide feedback to help the Commission prioritize recommendations. The framework for the Public Comment Period was established to create equitable, open, and transparent public participation from the across the city. To that end, it was essential that the engagement strategy emphasize collaboration and partnership with existing service providers, shelter operators, local stakeholders, residents, businesses, CBOs, and advocacy groups working on the front lines. The Homelessness Division (HD) reviewed the data from over 585 submissions.

The Commission thanks the unhoused and housed residents alike, business owners, and employees who completed the survey. A special appreciation is given to the stakeholders, community leaders, organizations, and service providers who also shared the survey with their respective networks. Their input in this process has been invaluable. More details on the process can be found [here](#).

Staff presented the survey results on June 8th at a special meeting of the Commission. Commissioners engaged in dialogue, public comment was received and by unanimous vote the following 10 recommendations are being submitted:

1. Increase funding to expand contracted support of qualified services providers with clinician qualifications and access to HMIS to expand case management, service delivery, and relocation support for homeless community members.
2. Increase funding for Oakland Public Works (OPW) – Keep Oakland Clean and Beautiful (KOCB) staffing to increase trash collection and deep cleanings for homeless encampments.
3. Increase ways of providing contracted sanitation and regular porta-potty servicing for encampments with seven or more households, where feasible.
4. Increase Interim and Long-term Housing: Purchase buildings to convert to transitional and permanent housing for extremely low-income and unhoused residents.
5. Increase funding for new affordable housing projects. Allocate in advance Measure U affordable housing funds to help kick-start affordable housing projects.
6. Expand temporary housing options for unhoused residents by adding tiny home programs, modular housing, and other interventions. Ensure programs are accessible to transitional aged youth, LGBTQ+ residents, and seniors. Each program to provide case management, health and hygiene services, food programs, housing navigation, storage, pet care, and other services. Collaborate with County, State, Federal and private partners to expand housing options.
7. Fill positions in City departments that respond to the Homeless crisis including relevant Homeless Services Department and Housing and Community Development Department.
8. Perform a Staff Analysis and add an adequate number of staff with requisite analytical and technical skills to consistently track and monitor HMIS data, analyze data, and present results for management review and continuous review of racial and other demographic data from HMIS, Point in Time Counts, and the U.S. Census to ensure the city is identifying

and serving communities particularly vulnerable to, or impacted by, homelessness. Staff should also be culturally sensitivity and have demonstrable experience working with diverse populations.

9. Define the role of MACRO to clarify outcomes to 911 support, clear support role to the City's Encampment Team with criteria and metrics for service to the Homeless community and expand hours and geographic coverage for MACRO (Mobile Assistance Community Responders of Oakland).
10. Fund and utilize public and city-owned land and hotels for the development of deeply affordable units (temporary and permanent) for adult, family, Transitional Age Youth (TAY), veterans, formerly incarcerated, disabled and seniors. Prioritize development in transit corridors and seek out partnerships with government agencies, faith, health, and community-based organizations.

The Commission on Homelessness is submitting this memorandum into the record. Per the Ordinance issued by the City Council on February 2020 enacting and expanding the scope for the Commission on Homelessness, we hope that our recommendations will be used as a guide for the Council to make budget decisions. The Commission on Homelessness looks forward to working with the City Council to adequately address homelessness in Oakland.

Respectfully Submitted,

City of Oakland's Commission on Homelessness
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Members:

Chair Mark Walker

Vice-Chair Janny Castillo

Commissioner Candace Elder

Commissioner Joey Harrison

Commissioner Alexis Lozano