



Office of the Inspector General

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN | 2024-2026



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Executive Summary

The Office of the Inspector General's (OIG's) 2024-2026 Strategic Communications Plan provides a comprehensive outline of the agency's unique and targeted approach to communicating with Oaklanders. This plan is heavily informed by the OIG's countless conversations with community members, police accountability organizations, and fellow civilian oversight practitioners throughout 2023. As the office continues to grow and evolve, the strategic messaging around OIG's roles, responsibilities, and impact will remain paramount to community members understanding the importance of civilian oversight of the Oakland Police Department (OPD). To anchor its multi-faceted communications plan, the office utilizes the following vision statement and values to navigate each of its projects.

Vision

Via transparent, timely, and culturally competent communications, the Office of the Inspector General seeks to remain a civilian oversight agency community members can trust.

Values

Equity	Directing ample resources (time, energy, attention, and funds) toward Oakland's most impacted community members.
Integrity	Upholding the truth and office principles at all times.
Intentionality	Producing easily digestible content, tailored to the project's target audience.
Courage	Fearlessly releasing accurate and data-backed audits, evaluations, reviews and recommendations.



Situational Analysis

In 2020, 81% of Oakland voters passed Measure S1, establishing the Office of the Inspector General. Stemming from the national call for police accountability, following the heartrending murders of Oscar Grant, Tamir Rice, Michael Brown, Sandra Bland, Philando Castillo, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, among others, the OIG was created to strengthen local reform efforts. Through auditing the policies, practices, and procedures of OPD, the OIG was tasked with providing effective and efficient civilian oversight.

To date, OPD remains one of the longest federally monitored law enforcement agencies in the United States. This is a direct product of *Delphine Allen v. City of Oakland*, commonly referred to as the “Riders Case,” where six veteran officers allegedly violated the civil rights and liberties of community members. Consequently, the corresponding and ongoing Negotiated Settlement Agreement (NSA), from 2004, provided OPD with fifty-two (52) tasks to address the cultural, legislative, and behavioral issues within the department.

Per Section 604 of the Oakland City Charter, the OIG is required to assess OPD’s compliance with these NSA tasks, during and after federal oversight is over. As only a component of Oakland’s hybrid civilian oversight structure, which also includes the Oakland Police Commission and Community Police Review Agency, the OIG seeks to deliver on its Charter mandates via transparent audits, evaluations, inspections and reviews.

To accompany its substantive work, the OIG is committed to engaging with Oaklanders to build, repair, and sustain community members' trust in the City of Oakland’s ability to hold OPD accountable. The following sections outline the strengths, challenges, opportunities, and dangers of the office, which continue to impact our communication strategy.

Strengths & Challenges

Utilizing the qualitative data from community members, civilian oversight practitioners, police officers, non-profit organizations, and other external partners, the OIG assessed its communication strengths and challenges. The following tables serve as a synopsis of reoccurring commentary from the office’s rigorous discussions over the past year.



Strengths

Strengths are defined here as existing elements of the office that will support the execution of its communications strategy.

Mission-Oriented	The office is dedicated to accomplishing its legislative mandates, outlined in Oakland's City Charter and Municipal Code.
Knowledge Base	The OIG staff contain a wealth of knowledge and skill sets that enable the office to produce high-quality work products.
Public Service	The office is committed to going above and beyond its scope of work, in the ministration of Oakland's community.
Strong Existing Relationships	Through its public service, the office has established deep connections with community members from various racial, religious, educational, social, and economic backgrounds.
Innovative Approach	The OIG utilizes non-traditional tactics to reach its target audience.

Challenges

Challenges are defined here as hurdles that may hinder or delay the OIG's ability to connect with community members.

Knowledge Gap	Currently, many community members do not understand the purpose, functions, and duties of Oakland's civilian oversight entities.
Distrust of Government	Given the complex history between community members and the City of Oakland, many people are not confident that OPD officers will be held accountable for misconduct.
Limited Resources	The office has an expansive list of responsibilities, all of which have a communications component. With a wide breadth of communication related tasks, the OIG must be creative on how to optimize its limited resources (staff, discretionary funds, materials, etc.).



Opportunities.

As the OIG continues to expand its reach via the execution of a culturally competent communication strategy, the growth opportunities are infinite. By centering community members most impacted by officer misconduct the OIG seeks to not only enhance its work but collect valuable data for agencies and organizations looking to reach similar audiences. Utilizing various channels and methods to distribute its messages, the office plans to advance its use of new technologies.

Additionally, the OIG will build upon its previous partnerships to showcase the intersection of police accountability with other areas of interest such as violence prevention, alternative response, mental health and wellness, accessibility, homelessness, and more. Through collaborative events and initiatives, the OIG envisions community members' increased understanding of civilian oversight and other essential City of Oakland services.

Restraints.

Community members' strong skepticism of the City of Oakland's ability to hold officers accountable remains the greatest hurdle in reaching OIG's target audience. Many Oaklanders impacted by police misconduct have staunch preconceptions of the city's accountability mechanisms yet lack an understanding of its current civilian oversight structure. The complexity of Oakland's hybrid system also makes it difficult to establish shared understanding in one engagement. When coupled with the OIG's limited capacity, this skepticism and lack of trust serve as significant restraints to reaching our communication goals.



Audience Analysis

Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Impacted Community Members	General Public	External Civilian Oversight Practitioners
Oakland Police Department	Oakland's Police Accountability Organizations	Related Agencies, Boards & Commissions
Oakland's Civilian Oversight Structure	Media Partners	
City Administration	Elected Officials	

Primary

For the purpose of this strategic plan, a primary audience is defined as key parties to the office's duties and function.

Audience Description	Desired Behaviors, Actions or Thoughts	Barriers to Communication	Where They Access Information	Messaging Themes
Impacted Community Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deep Understanding of Importance & Value Two-Way Line of Communication Trustworthy and Impactful Easily Accessible High-Level Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distrust in Governmental Agencies Strong Preconceptions Complexity of Civilian Oversight Structure Uninterest in Substantive Work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Social Networks Social Media Trusted Community Organizations Local Publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-Centered & Informed Equity-Based Public Servants Open Door Policy



Primary (continued)

Audience Description	Desired Behaviors, Actions or Thoughts	Barriers to Communication	Where They Access Information	Messaging Themes
Oakland Police Department	Fair & Balanced Firm Yet Helpful Accountability Partner Mid-Level Engagement	Sworn vs. Civilian Mindset Blue Code of Silence	Internal Meetings OPD Management Email Distributions Local Publications	Shared Goal of Constitutional Policing Symbiotic Relationship
Oakland's Civilian Oversight Structure (Police Commission & Community Police Review Agency)	Streamlined Communication and Collaboration Collective Understanding of Roles & Responsibilities Productive & Transparent Working Relationship	Complexity of Structure Adjacent Objectives	Public Meetings Direct Emails Social Media Website Local Publications	Same Team, Different Roles Stronger Together
City Administration	Effective & Efficient Agency Strong Working Relationship	Expansive Priorities	Public Meetings Internal Correspondence Social Media Website Local Publications	Necessary & Impactful City Function



Secondary

Secondary audiences are community members whose engagement is important but not mandatory to OIG’s function and duties.

Audience Description	Desired Behaviors, Actions or Thoughts	Barriers to Communication	Where They Access Information	Messaging Themes
General Public	<p>High Level Understanding of Mission & Impact</p> <p>Consistent Engagement</p>	<p>Limited Resources & Capacity</p> <p>Misconceptions of Authority</p> <p>Lack of Interest</p>	<p>Social Media</p> <p>Newsletters</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Local Publications</p>	<p>Effective & Efficient</p> <p>Data-Backed & Accurate</p>
Police Accountability Organizations	<p>Collaborative & Reliable</p> <p>Subject Matter Experts</p> <p>Impactful</p> <p>Mid-Level Engagement</p>	<p>Adjacent Objectives</p> <p>Staunch Ideologies</p>	<p>Social Media</p> <p>Newsletter</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Local Publications</p>	<p>Community Partners</p> <p>Shared Vision of Police Accountability</p>
Media Partners	<p>Trusted Source</p> <p>Highly Responsive</p> <p>Necessary Level of Engagement</p>	<p>Volatile News Cycle</p> <p>Lack of Understanding</p>	<p>Press Releases</p> <p>Public Reports</p> <p>Social Media</p> <p>Local Publications</p>	<p>Effective & Efficient</p> <p>Data-Backed & Accurate</p>



Secondary (continued)

Audience Description	Desired Behaviors, Actions or Thoughts	Barriers to Communication	Where They Access Information	Messaging Themes
Elected Officials	Productive & Valuable Informative Subject Matter Experts	Competing Priorities Non-Political & Independent	Internal Meetings Direct Emails Public Reports Social Media	Effective & Efficient Data-Backed & Accurate

Tertiary

Tertiary audiences are entities that may occasionally review, intersect, or supplement the office's work.

Audience Description	Desired Behaviors, Actions or Thoughts	Barriers to Communication	Where They Access Information	Messaging Themes
External Civilian Oversight Practitioners	Thought Partners Enhancing Industry Standards	Limited Capacity Organizational Priorities	Social Media Newsletter Published Reports	Advocates of Civilian Oversight
Related Agencies, Boards & Commissions	Positive View of Work Product	Misconceptions of Authority Competing Scopes of Work	Social Media Newsletter Website Local Publications	Collaboration Shared Goals



Key Messages

The following key messages are points that will be consistent throughout the OIG’s internal and external communications.

Civilian Oversight You Can Trust	The OIG is committed to providing civilian oversight that advances Oaklanders’ call for a just and accountable OPD.
Stewards of Accountability	Utilizing its Charter authority, the OIG offers recommendations that will strengthen OPD’s compliance with their legal and departmental responsibilities.
Effective & Efficient Practitioners	The OIG will carry out its oversight duties in a strategic and methodical manner.
Accessible Public Servants	The OIG maintains an open-door policy for community members, while also using various engagements to meet Oaklanders where they are.

Supporting Facts:

Below are statements that staff members can use to support the OIG’s key messages. This should not be viewed as a comprehensive list, but rather talking points to enhance external communications.



Civilian Oversight You Can Trust.

The OIG is committed to providing civilian oversight that advances Oaklanders' call for a just and accountable OPD.

Supporting Facts:

- The office works diligently to release evidence-based reports that include accurate findings, clear recommendations, and useful considerations.
- Office-initiated projects included in OIG's Annual Audit Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2024 were informed and prioritized by community feedback.
- The OIG continuously seeks qualitative data from community members to bolster its substantive work and community engagement strategy.
- The OIG is highly transparent, housing and distributing its reports on various communication platforms.
- The office utilizes national best practices to inform and guide its work.

Stewards of Accountability

Utilizing its Charter authority, the OIG offers recommendations that will strengthen OPD's compliance with their legal and departmental responsibilities.

Supporting Facts:

- To establish a clear baseline of data, the OIG requested and is currently overseeing a staffing study and resource analysis of OPD.
- The OIG recommended that the Community Police Review Agency establish Standard Operating Procedures to codify their methods of investigating police misconduct allegations.
- The OIG recommended OPD establish a sexual misconduct Departmental General Order, to decrease instances of unlawful and/or inappropriate sexual behavior by its members.
- In addition to its substantive work, members of the OIG serve as police accountability subject experts for City of Oakland agencies, non-profit organizations, and community partners.



Effective & Efficient Practitioners

The OIG will carry out its oversight duties in a strategic and methodical manner.

Supporting Facts:

- Since its inception, the OIG has maximized its impact with limited resources (staff, discretionary funds, etc.).
- The OIG is fiscally responsible and highly intentional with its expenditures.
- For the first six months of 2022, the office was comprised of only the Inspector General. To date, the OIG has grown to a dynamic and hard-working team of five.

Accessible Public Servants

The OIG maintains an open-door policy for community members, while also using various engagements to meet Oaklanders where they are.

Supporting Facts:

- The OIG provides regular updates to the Oakland Police Commission, and members of the public via Police Commission meetings.
- The office regularly meets with community members, non-profit organizations, and fellow public servants to gain insight and perspectives.
- In 2023, the Inspector General completed several speaking engagements including panels, award ceremonies, neighborhood council meetings, and local podcasts to inform the public of the OIG's work.
- The OIG consistently attends and participates in community events and service projects, including Creek to Bay Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, Earth Day, Juneteenth, Oakland Pride, and more.
- To showcase its commitment to Oaklanders, the OIG was proud to organize and facilitate Love Life Week's Community Healing Circle & Summit.



Communication Goals

The table below lists the OIG’s strategic communication goals for the next two years. These goals will serve as a north star to advance its mission to provide effective and efficient civilian oversight.

Educate & Engage Community Members	Increase awareness and understanding of the OIG’s roles, responsibilities, and authority.
Build Sustainable Relationships	Create and maintain mutually beneficial partnerships with local stakeholders (residents, non-profits, law enforcement, elected and appointed officials, etc.)
Establish and Improve the OIG’s Brand, Culture, and Image	Strategically design and enhance the office’s brand identity, via its substantive and supplemental work.
Create and Optimize Communication Processes	Establish, evaluate, and improve communication systems that can be replicated beyond staff departure.
Elevate Industry Standards	Set new communication precedents and standards within the civilian oversight industry.



Objectives, Tactics, Metrics & Priorities

Goal 1: Educate & Engage Community Members

Increase awareness and understanding of the OIG's roles, responsibilities, and authority.

Objective 1: Introduce the OIG as a key component of Oakland's police accountability matrix.

Tactic	Priority	Metric(s)
Maintain a robust presence at pertinent meetings, events, and activities	High	Number of engagements attended, attendee feedback, and follow-up invitations
Optimize social media activity across platforms	Medium	Increased follower count and engagements on Facebook, LinkedIn, X and Instagram

Objective 2: Educate community members on the functions and duties of the office.

Tactic	Priority	Metric(s)
Utilize visually appealing content to provide easily digestible information	High	Content engagement and community feedback
Improve the content and structure of the OIG's webpage	High	Completion



Goal 2: Build Sustainable Relationships

Create and maintain mutually beneficial partnerships with local stakeholders (residents, non-profits, law enforcement, elected and appointed officials, etc.).

Objective 1: Establish trust amongst Oaklanders of all backgrounds.

Tactic	Priority	Metric(s)
Utilize visual appealing content to provide easily digestible information	High	Content engagement and consumer feedback
Deliver work products in a culturally competent and transparent manner	High	Completion and consumer feedback
Develop direct lines of communication (formal and informal)	Medium	Completion
When able, go the extra mile to address Oaklanders' questions, concerns and requests	Medium	Community feedback

Objective 2: Participate in collaborative projects with mission-aligned community partners.

Tactic	Priority	Metric(s)
Participate in annual City of Oakland community engagement efforts	Medium	Completion and community partner feedback
Organize, co-host, and attend impactful events	Medium	Completion and attendee feedback



Goal 2: Build Sustainable Relationships (continued)

Create and maintain mutually beneficial partnerships with local stakeholders (residents, non-profits, law enforcement, elected and appointed officials, etc.).

Objective 2: Participate in collaborative projects with mission-aligned community partners.

Tactic	Priority	Metric(s)
Amplify relevant content from community partners	Medium	Sharing and reposts of content
Serve as subject matter experts at community discussions	Medium	Completion and attendee feedback

Goal 3: Establish and Improve O.I.G.'s Brand Culture and Image

Strategically design and enhance the office's brand identity, via its substantive and supplemental work.

Objective 1: Deliver more consistent updates on the status of OIG's work products and engagement activities.

Tactic	Priority	Metric(s)
Create a visual dashboard that provides live updates on the status of current projects	Medium	Completion and implementation
Utilize the City of Oakland's website to amplify calendar events	Medium	Completion and registered attendees



Goal 3: Establish and Improve OIG's Brand Culture and Image (continued).

Strategically design and enhance the office's brand identity, via substantive and supplemental work.

Objective 2: Enhance OIG's current brand assets and materials.

Tactic	Priority	Metric(s)
Review and update the aesthetic of the OIG's public platforms	Medium	Completion
Utilize logo and templates to build out an assortment of assets	Low	Completion

Goal 4: Create and Optimize Communication Processes.

Establish, evaluate, and improve communication systems that can be replicated beyond staff departure.

Objective 1: Improve communication distribution methods

Tactic	Priority	Metric(s)
Assess current distribution methods	High	Applicable social media and email analytics, OIG staff feedback
Develop office protocols and templates for distributing information	High	Completion and implementation
Track engagement data and feedback	Medium	Completion



Goal 4: Create and Optimize Communication Processes. (continued).

Establish, evaluate, and improve communication systems that can be replicated beyond staff departure.

Objective 2: Identify and take advantage of strategic communication opportunities.

Tactic	Priority	Metric(s)
Develop a social media plan and calendar	High	Completion and social media analytics
Research and implement innovative content strategies	Medium	Completion and implementation

Goal 5: Elevate Industry Standards.

Set new communication precedents and standards within the civilian oversight industry.

Objective 1: Develop or join a working group for communication professional in civilian oversight.

Tactic	Priority	Metric(s)
Reach out to fellow practitioners to gather and share best practices	High	Completion and increased engagement
Join the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement's Communication Committee	Medium	Completion of committee objectives



Goal 5: Elevate Industry Standards (continued).

Set new communication precedents and standards within the civilian oversight industry

Objective 2: Implement non-traditional communication methods to educate key stakeholders.

Tactic	Priority	Metric(s)
Produce interactive digital content	High	Social media and Constant Contact analytics
Revitalize and enhance current communication practices	Medium	Increased social media and website traffic

Conclusion

With the execution of its 2024-2026 Strategic Communications Plan, the OIG seeks to increase its presence, visibility, and impact in Oakland. Through a targeted and culturally competent approach, the office is extremely confident in its ability to achieve its communication goals. With defined metrics, the OIG will continue to build upon its communication methods. Ultimately, through this document, the OIG is proud to share how it plans to gain and sustain Oaklanders' trust.





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