

Oakland Moving Forward
Community Task Force Report on
CITY GOVERNMENT



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Oakland Moving Forward
Community Task Force Reports

CITY GOVERNMENT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
EDUCATION & COMMUNITY LEARNING
HEALTH
HOUSING
PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVERSITY/HUMAN RELATIONS
NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZING & CIVIC PARTICIPATION
TRANSPORTATION



Oakland Moving Forward Community Task Force Report

Introduction

October of 2005, various sectors of the Oakland community decided to revamp the process of selecting a candidate for Mayor. Historically, candidates were chosen based on the individual candidates announcing their intention to run for office and *then* proceeding to ask voters for their support. A coalition of residents of the City of Oakland decided to identify an individual rather than wait to be asked for their support. A petition drive was started to draft the Honorable Ronald V. Dellums to run for Mayor. After several months of gathering signatures for the petition to “draft” Mr. Dellums for Mayor, approximately 9,000 names were submitted to him for his consideration. It was this amazing act of civic participation, which began the “Ron Dellums for Mayor” campaign. Six months from the date of the primary election, the former Congressman who had served Oakland for more than twenty-seven years, began a campaign to once again answer the call to public service.

It was a phenomenal expression of the power of organized political action by residents to dare to fight **for** “City Hall.” On Election Day, Mr. Dellums’ candidacy rallied the support and votes of fifty plus one percent of the vote. It was a victory for citizen participation as well as a victory for the democratic process and the system by which citizens are represented in government. This unique coalition encompassed residents who were long-time activists and newcomers to the process. It bridged the generational, racial and gender divide to such an extent that it was often commented by observers, as well as participants, that the campaign had reenergized the passion within the community. Despite differences of opinion on some issues, the overall consensus was that this candidate could and would be a champion for all of the residents of Oakland and that together, anything was possible.

The task force process which was proposed during the campaign as a means of bringing forward specific recommendations to address the myriad of challenges faced by Oakland, as well as other urban centers around the nation, systematically reached out to a wide variety of citizens with a broad range of expertise on the issue addressed by each committee. The participants included residents in the medical profession, developers, academicians, social service providers, city and county employees, business owners – both large and small – union activists, public safety employees, artists, musicians, formerly incarcerated as well as other citizen and community activists. More than 800 citizens participated in the initial phase of the establishment of this process. Nine major committees were formed which ranged from education to City Hall. Subcommittees were formed within each committee to address a specific aspect of each issue. For example, the Education Committee had several subcommittees, one of which was to develop

recommendations regarding wrap-around services for the public schools. The participants were asked to frame their recommendations with three basic principles in mind; multi-jurisdictional collaboration, public/private partnerships and regional collaboration. All recommendations were to include strategies for implementation and further collaboration based on these principles.

The initial phase of the task force process begun by Mayor-Elect Ronald V. Dellums in September 2006 lasted through December 2006. This structure was designed to revitalize democracy by reinvigorating community participation in the City of Oakland and bring forth the brilliance and wisdom from within this community. Mrs. Cynthia Dellums helped to shape the process with the input of hundreds of people from every neighborhood collaborating on dozens of task forces dealing with every aspect of community life.

Over 800 people volunteered for forty-one committees as part of the task force, in conjunction with several "Neighbor to Neighbor" meetings held throughout the city. Each task force had one, sometimes two specific questions to address for deliberation. The task force operated with a set of organizing principles that combined democracy and structure. Agreement on any recommendation required a vote of two-thirds or more of their members. Some committees also developed minority reports as part of the recommendation process. The Mayor, city staff, task force members and others (e.g., business, labor, faith community, etc.) are currently engaged in an ongoing dialogue regarding the follow up on the recommendations.

A steering committee of the task force members provided the day-to-day leadership and logistical support for this largely volunteer process. The National Community Development Institute, an Oakland-based non-profit, provided strategic advice and consultation during this process. Special recognition and gratitude go to Kitty Kelly Epstein for her contribution to the coordination and outreach, which contributed to the success of this effort.

The "Oakland Moving Forward" Community Task Force developed the recommendations included in this document for review and consideration by Mayor Dellums.

The task force process and the structure, which continues to evolve, will be an integral component of this administration and the development and implementation of strategies for public policy moving forward.

Mayor Dellums would like to take this opportunity to once again thank all of the individuals who have participated in this process to date and to encourage those who would like to join him and their neighbors in creating a "Model City" for the twenty-first century.

Together, we **can** do great things!

Oakland Moving Forward
Community Task Force Report on

City Government

- ▶ Oakland Beautification
- ▶ Youth Issues and Youth Commission
- ▶ Transparency in Government
- ▶ Emergency Preparedness
- ▶ Animal Shelters
- ▶ Museums, Libraries, Oakland History, Oakland Identity
- ▶ Civil Service Commission
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Community Task Force Report on
City Government

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Nine City Government Task Forces met from approximately September to December 2006 working to answer a wide range of questions and issues related to city government – its organization, functions, impacts – and specific recommendations for improvement across the board where service to the public is at issue. Arguably, these groups tackled the greatest diversity of topics under one single category. Everything from the preservation of Oakland’s open spaces and beautification of its parks to more accountable police services, better designed youth outreach, and ways to showcase the City’s rich cultural history (to mention only a few), were explored in depth. Expertise from many different citizens, both those representing various non-profits or government agencies as well as many who spoke on behalf of the ordinary Oakland resident resulted in the recommendations and proposals that you will find in the the following pages of this Report.

OVERVIEW OF CITY GOVERNMENT TASK FORCE

TOPIC 1

Question

Oakland Beautification

What policies will lead to the beautification of Oakland?

RECOMMENDATION 1

Maintenance/Funding Initiative

Background

Over the past 25 years, funding and staffing levels have decreased significantly despite ongoing expansion in the number and size of municipal properties, including some 300 acres of new parks, medians and open space areas. Inefficient use of available resources, as well as an increase in utility expenses has also led to the deterioration of many of our City parks and other facilities. The recent failure of an increase in the City's Landscaping and Lighting Assessment District (LLAD) funding has created an immediate financial crisis having the potential to lead to cutbacks in essential City maintenance service for our parks, facilities, and lighting.

Proposed Policy

Improvements should include an employee-driven work plan; a "Best Practices" Maintenance Task Force; an Operational and Management Audit of Public Works maintenance operations; public disclosure and periodic progress reports of maintenance standards for facilities, parks, trees and open space; an on-line reporting system similar to San Francisco's; revision of job classifications and job descriptions; a continuing education program for current and future gardeners; employing a Master Gardener with proven expertise; establish volunteer/partner friendly policies; implementing policies for plant establishment periods and for securing funding for new City, private developments; pursue other funding/staffing options including local, state, federal and private grants, and an augmentation of LLAD funding should be sought to help enhance maintenance and lighting for public safety, instead of cutting back on these essential services.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Implement Tree Initiative – Putting the Oak Back in Oakland, Enhancing The Tree Canopy, Neighborhoods

Background

During the last 6-8 years, greening efforts in Oakland in terms of tree planting suffered a setback with nearly twice as many trees being removed as were planted. The reduction in Oakland's tree canopy has significant implications in terms of air and water quality, along with adverse impacts on the health of Oakland residents. Oakland faces a challenge of replacing its aging forests in the Oakland hills, while enhancing greening/beautification efforts in many flatland neighborhoods lacking trees.

Proposed Policy

For a City named "Oakland", there is a practical challenge of replacing aging forests of non-native and fire-prone trees with new plantings of street trees in Oakland neighborhoods that will help in preserving the tree canopy and enhancing the environment. This policy initiative reflects Mayor Dellums' vision of "putting the Oak back in Oakland" by: planting approximately 2000 trees each year; securing additional funding support from public and private partners to enhance tree planting and care; appointment of an Urban Forest Advisory Board; development on an Urban Forest Master Plan relative to tree planting and removals; building strong partnerships with non-profit tree groups, including contracting with tree groups for curb cuts, tree planting; development of maintenance plans for existing forests and new trees; enlisting youth and community partners in tree planting/care; utilizing tree partners/volunteers to help carry out many beautification and maintenance projects that will make Oakland a more beautiful city.

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City Government



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Design Initiative Promoting a Beautiful Oakland

To help in developing a civic vision and policies leading to the beautification of Oakland neighborhoods and business districts, will require involving both design professional and Oakland residents/leaders in an interactive, community-based planning process. Oakland faces challenges in: revitalizing its parks and business districts; promoting greening and neighborhood beautification; supporting and upgrading various "Gateways".

On the road to becoming a Model City and more beautiful city, a Design Initiative is proposed to involve design professionals and Oakland residents in a community-based planning process that will feature: design workshops involving Community and Economic Development staff, design professionals, potential support from faculty/students at local universities/colleges, and community participants in developing a Gateway Master Plan and exciting plans for neighborhood, park, freeway, and downtown beautification; integrate public art; upgrade landscaping; create new public/private partnerships to help in implementing projects; emphasizing greening in parks, streetscapes, and new City facilities. The policy urges using our "world class design" resources, creative partnerships, and a community-based planning process to help make Oakland into California's most exciting, beautiful city.

Litter Prevention and Education Initiative

A major challenge in achieving beautification in Oakland is addressing the constant stream of litter and negative behavior that is reflected by illegal dumping and graffiti, and the City having to spend more than \$15 million and assign considerable staff/time to litter pickup.

In the pursuit of a more beautiful and litter-free Oakland, a multi-faceted program to change negative behaviors by increasing awareness and community education about keeping Oakland clean. The campaign should involve multiple public and private sector partners and include: an advertising campaign with litter prevention themes; disseminating information regarding Oakland's Blight Ordinance requirements as they apply to businesses and residents; hands-on litter prevention and education projects in local schools; public service announcements; providing staffing/funding to the City's Keep Oakland Beautiful (KOB) Advisory Board and KOB Division in Public Works on community cleanups, litter education programs, and Adopt A Spot; seeking involvement from youth and the Fund for Children and Youth in litter prevention efforts/campus cleanups; getting advertising firms/professionals, billboard companies, and other sponsors to help implement this campaign for a cleaner, more beautiful Oakland.

RECOMMENDATION 3 Background

Proposed Policy

RECOMMENDATION 4 Background

Proposal

RECOMMENDATION 5 Background

Proposal

Volunteer and Workday Initiative

Among the most effective approaches the City has developed to date to promote beautification in Oakland are public/private partnerships and recruiting and utilizing volunteers at multiple sites to supplement City staff in work-day project such as Earth Day, Creek to Bay Day, Wildfire Prevention Days, litter and community cleanups. The City's volunteer recruitment efforts still need more planning, coordination to maximize this important resource.

With financial constraints limiting City staffing and resources for beautification, a policy initiative that helps in expanding partnerships with major public and private sector partners to actively involve more volunteers is an important key to help maintain/beautify our parks, public spaces, medians, urban forests and watersheds. The Volunteer and Workday Initiative will: attempt to double the number of major workday projects each year; expand partnerships with major sources of volunteers, such as educational institutions and volunteer referral organizations; update the City's website to publicize volunteer opportunities; consolidate and regularly update City volunteer databases to help in recruiting and utilizing volunteers; add a skilled Volunteer Coordinator to help plan, coordinate volunteer recruitment and expand internship/workday programs; train City staff on utilizing volunteers; provide funding for publicizing and supporting more community workday projects.

TOPIC 2 Question

Youth Issues, Youth Commission

What programs and policies does the city of Oakland need to enhance the quality of life for young people? How can the youth commission be utilized to further these programs and policies?

RECOMMENDATION 1 Proposed Policy

Jobs for Youth

All youth in Oakland who want a job should be able to have that opportunity. Employment training is currently included in the City of Oakland's Violence Prevention Plan (2003) as a strategy for violence prevention, however little has been done to create more jobs for the city's youth once they are ready to obtain one. Creating jobs and helping young people be successful in those jobs will help to revitalize Oakland's economy and improve the standard of living for young people in Oakland. Job creation shall be promoted by providing tax incentives for businesses if they hire and train Oakland youth, adding requirements to City contracts and City subsidized development contracts to hire Oakland Youth Trainees (job ready, pre-apprenticeship level), and requiring unions to substantially increase the number of apprenticeships served by Oakland youth. A full-time job developer shall also be hire through the proposed Youth Department dedicated to seek out and help create employment opportunities for Oakland youth.

Jobs shall be posted on listing boards widely across the city in places frequented by young people. The capacity of existing employment programs for youth in Oakland shall also be increased through services such as expanding the Mayor's Summer Job Program to a year round program and increasing its job coaching, pre-employment training, and youth intern counseling capacities. Programs to receive more financial support will be determined by the Youth Department's research of best practices. The



Youth Department shall also have grant opportunities for Oakland youth for entrepreneurial pursuits and include training on how to write a business plan and ongoing support in executing the plan. The city shall also advocate for high school career centers would work as job readiness training centers as well as placement agencies for youth in Oakland and for reinstatement of pre-apprentice level vocational /technical education opportunities for middle & high school aged youth in various venues such as OUSD schools, Peralta Colleges, Parks & Recreation, City funded and non-profit youth service providers (i.e. carpentry, computer repair, electrical, plumbing, small business, auto-mechanics, etc.).

Alternative Media

The Alternative Media Campaign would provide the means for young people to make their voices heard and continue the legacy of Oakland fighting to improve peoples lives and in this case young people. When young people first enter the program they will begin by taking a number of classes which they must complete to prepare them to operate the three different areas of the alternative media campaign: radio, TV, and a newspaper, which shall operate within the same facility, possibly KTOP.

To operate this program, a new contract with Comcast should be negotiated to include a Community Access program. A model example is Berkley Community Media program, which receives \$300,000/year from Comcast and grants for rent and for maintaining their facility. An advisory/implementation board will give advice and serve as a resource of knowledge for those involved. The board would consist of both young people and adults who have experience with alternative media.

Fulfill the broken promises of Kid's First

In 1996, Oakland Voter's passed the Kid's First Oakland Children's Fund. The Measure K Initiative provided that "The KIDS FIRST! Oakland Children's Fund shall be used exclusively to increase the aggregate City appropriations and expenditures for children and youth services (exclusive of expenditures mandated by state or federal law)." This base amount was calculated in 1995-96 as approximately 5.68% of unrestricted city revenue. This baseline has not been maintained by the City. We would ask the mayor to repair this broken promise and establish 6% of unrestricted revenue as the minimum budget for the children and youth services in the new administration in addition to the 2.5 % increase approved by the voters over 10 years ago.

RECOMMENDATION 2

RECOMMENDATION 3

RECOMMENDATION 4 Proposal

Youth Enrichment & Development Department (YEDD)

The Youth Issues Task Force proposes the creation of a Youth Enrichment & Development Department (YEDD), which would function separately from Children and Youth Services as its own independent body in the Mayor's office. A primary function would be to centralize and create access to all information pertaining to youth service providers, CBO's, agencies, and programs and to identify issues and service gaps. In addition, YEDD will provide and oversee youth involvement in all city departments that affect young people, guaranteeing exposure to activities and cultures that are the essence of the city of Oakland. This includes coordinating the establishment of low or no cost after school activities on a daily basis and aiding in the creation of "neighborhood based resources for family support" (Dellums Commission, 2006).

Outreach and surveys will be done through multilingual youth employees and volunteers organized as Youth Street Teams (YST). YEDD will also seek funding and grants, bridge communication with the Mayor and youth groups, and collaborate with the Youth Advisory Commission (OYAC) to create policy to encourage the enrichment of youth lives. These activities shall culminate in the establishment of a system for providing advocacy and mentorship for all Oakland youth ages 10-24 either through schools, the department itself, Parks and Recreation and/or CBO's and agencies that currently exist to provide these types of services.

RECOMMENDATION 5 Proposal

Instituting Youth as Policy-Makers – Repositioning the Oakland Youth Advisory Commission and Youth Leadership Development

This proposal recommends repositioning the Oakland Youth Advisory Commission and Youth Leadership Development to the Office of the City Administrator, removing the OYAC/YLD from its current position in the Children and Youth Services Division of the Department of Human Services. A task force composed of youth, city leaders, administrators, staff, youth leadership development and civic engagement professionals and community members will develop content and language for this initiative, which should be secured permanently via city ballot. A clause shall be instituted that all city resolutions pertaining to youth must be reviewed by the OYAC and forwarded to the Mayor and City Council with comments.

In addition, youth members shall be chosen from each City Council District by City Council appointment and from each public high school by Mayoral appointment to ensure representation of the full diversity of Oakland youth. OYAC liaisons shall sit on the City Council and other city boards and commissions and report back to the OYAC on a regular basis. To provide support for youth public service, stipends shall be allocated to Youth Commissioners and at least one additional FTE position shall be created for a Youth Policy Director. The Youth Leadership Development Office shall coordinate a city Public Service Internship Program, providing school credit or stipends to students/youth for participation, create leadership development events in collaboration with community partners, and oversee a youth-to-youth participatory action research grant program.



Transparency in Government

TOPIC 3

Question

How can decisions be made with full public input, including a) decisions about the awarding of contracts and b) the use of language which makes the decisions clear in plain language to all residents?

Background

The general public has a right to be kept informed and actively engage in the decision-making matters of city government. There have existed ongoing concerns from local residents and the broader public of the growing need to enhance citizen participation and promote greater civic democracy. In this context, these recommendations address the significance of strengthening the decision-making processes concerning public expenditures and creating channels for broader citizen input, oversight and transparency in local government. It was our group's consensus that these recommendations were very inter-related and pertinent to the issues posed: transparency in government, contracts and public input in the decision-making processes.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Public Information and Outreach

In the spirit of fostering an atmosphere of transparency and openness in City government, the City must reaffirm its commitment at every level. Critical, analytical and pragmatic thinking is needed to convey, develop and implement "Transparency." This policy emphasizes a critical component to Mayor-elect Ron Dellums' vision of establishing Oakland as a Model City: the accessibility to and the dissemination of information and the process of facilitating citizen participation in local government. This policy places a high priority on improving the quality of all information services to ensure civic participation. It directs the City to maximize the use of existing resources and structures to better inform the public to enhance citizen input and participation. Suggested information dissemination approaches are as follows: Informational Kiosks; use-friendly, frequently updated, interactive changes to the City of Oakland Website; better use of KTOP for information dissemination to promote public involvement in Oakland's governmental processes; expand dissemination of educational/outreach materials to the general public distributed through local media and community outreach networks to reach a broader audience; and greater public access to campaign filings.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Implement citywide e-commerce software to manage and monitor the expenditure of all public funds; beginning with all contracts.

Background

We identified the need to institute significant improvement and changes to the overall contracting process. Currently, there is no easily accessible or central source for information about the historic and current expenditure of public funds for contracts in the City of Oakland.

Proposal

Create a centralized and comprehensive technology solution to provide the general public, elected officials, vendors and city staff with better access to in-depth information about the entire range of contracts offered and/or entered into by the City of Oakland. Suggested changes include: to purchase and implement a central contracting database that would be connected to the City's project accounting and financials software and give City agencies access to each other's contract documents and processes; institute an electronic-commerce system to enable the public and local vendors to easily participate in the City's contracting process and opportunities; provide comprehensive training in all areas of the City's purchasing/contracting processes; and establish a Contracting Technology Task Force to research and establish the steps necessary to implement the adopted recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION 3

That the City of Oakland establish a Transparency Commission to monitor, encourage and inspire the disclosure to, and input from citizens regarding significant decisions by elected bodies and city administrators in the area of public expenditures. The key here is citizen oversight and setting community standards regarding the process in determining the expenditures of public funds.

Background

An outside, citizen-oriented commission is needed to ensure citizen input and facilitate broader community participation in decision-making processes of the City of Oakland. The Commission would serve to promote: 1) greater transparency and 2) ensure public participation and encourage citizen oversight. Such a commission would play a meaningful role as the City moves to affirmatively establish greater transparency in government

Proposed Policy

Establish a Commission for Transparency in Government with a mission, and a set of responsibilities that assure the citizenry of open, up front and fair expenditures of public funds. This citizen's commission would: 1) establish consistent standards for decision-making by elected bodies and city administrators; and 2) ensure that decisions going before elected bodies have been informed by ample public participation and involvement, particularly within the council committees and city council; and 3) hear complaints from citizens and city staff of instances in which transparency has not been practiced with regard to the expenditures of public funds.



Emergency Preparedness

How effective is Oakland's emergency preparedness? What Changes need to be made in light of Hurricane Katrina?

Since 1983 the City of Oakland has experienced eight Presidential declared disasters. The 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, 1991 Oakland-Berkeley Firestorm, the 1997 El Nino and 1998 La Nina Winter Storms were among the most notable. The 1990 Freeze contributed to some of the environmental conditions which fueled the Firestorm. Localized flooding in 1985 and 1995, as well as a major landslide in 1983 complete the list. Earthquakes, fires, winter storms, chemical spills/toxic releases, civil disturbance and terrorism are the most likely natural or human-caused disasters that threaten Oakland. In a declared emergency, the City of Oakland is responsible for the protection of life, property and the environment. Although the City of Oakland is making strides to fulfill its responsibility in terms of emergency management and services, several major areas for improvement have been identified. (Special City Council November 29, 2005) The Emergency Preparedness Task Force is submitting recommendations to address some of these areas for improvement as follows:

Augment CORE Program Budget

- Augment CORE (Citizens of Oakland Respond to Emergencies) budget to expand training to under-represented groups, particularly non-English-speaking and low-income residents;
- Implement marketing campaign to increase awareness of CORE; and provide support to help; and
- Maintain active CORE Groups.

Increase Emergency Shelter Capacity

Make an accurate inventory of established shelters. Proposal to increase shelter capacity from 3,685 to approximately 10,000.

Develop Water and Food Distribution Plan

Design a plan for short-term and mid-term water and food distribution to Oakland residents in need.

TOPIC 4

Question

Background

RECOMMENDATION 1

RECOMMENDATION 2

RECOMMENDATION 3

RECOMMENDATION 4

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City Government



RECOMMENDATION 4

Determine the Seismic Vulnerability of Oakland’s Non-residential Building Stock

Because a comprehensive building inventory does not currently exist in Oakland, it is impossible to accurately assess the seismic risk that the City faces, nor estimate the costs of programs to reduce that risk. At particular risk are unreinforced masonry buildings, URMs, (which the City has begun to address), soft-story buildings, and non-ductile concrete buildings.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Update Oakland Hills Vegetation Management Plan

To update, improve, and better implement vegetation management and fire safety awareness in the Oakland Hills with a special emphasis on education of all stakeholders and native habitat restoration.



Animal Shelters

How should the animal shelter be operated?

Implementation of an Oakland Animal Shelter Spay/Neuter program Oakland Animal Shelter (OAS) should develop a low-cost community spay/neuter program with active participation from local rescue groups to reduce overpopulation of cats and dogs in Oakland.

The most effective way to reduce the number of homeless animals both at the Shelter and in the community is with a city-subsidized Spay/Neuter program. Thousands of animals enter the Shelter each year, and many more die in our neighborhoods, creating a potential public health issue. Prevention is key to tackling both problems. City-subsidized spay/neuter programs have successfully reduced pet population and euthanasia rates at shelters in Berkeley and other U.S. cities. Over time, investment in spay/neuter will significantly reduce the costs at OAS and best serve the community. Other local cities including San Francisco and Berkeley have found a subsidized spay/neuter program to be so cost effective that they have offered to pay people a nominal amount to have their pets spayed or neutered.

We are fortunate that as of September 2006, there is approximately \$54k available within the City General Funds for spay/neuter activities. The Mayor's Office should direct OAS to work with community groups to implement a spay/neuter program that builds on existing community programs such as the Last Litter Program. The planning phase should be carried out the first quarter of 2007 and the program should begin operation by March/April 2007. There is an existing network of community-based rescue groups that are ready to partner with OAS in the development and implementation of this program. Many of these rescue groups have extensive experience in promoting spay/neuter activities within local communities and already play an important role in helping the city deal with animal problems. Currently rescue groups remove over 1000 animals annually and find homes for them at no cost to the city. In addition, OAS should establish ties with non-animal related community groups (ie: community centers, youth groups, schools, etc) to promote their involvement in the Spay/Neuter initiative.

TOPIC 5

Question

RECOMMENDATION 1

Background

Proposal

RECOMMENDATION 2

Expedite full staffing of Oakland Animal Services (OAS).

Full staffing and training at Oakland Animal Services is critical to maintaining humane conditions for the thousands of animals who come through the Shelter, adequately assisting the public on-site, and resolving the high number of incoming calls regarding animal issues from the community.

The Mayor's Office needs to give full and visible support by directing the Department of Human Resources to expedite the hiring of a new Director of Animal Services, as well as staffing of other positions within OAS. Once the Director is in place, the Mayor's Office needs to support the creation of job descriptions appropriate for successful Shelter operation. All budgeted, open positions must be filled with qualified persons as soon as possible. We need hiring of the OAS Director to be the priority for HR, to provide necessary leadership for progress at the Shelter, and proper training of staff. In addition, the position of Shelter Operations Manager (or Deputy Director) should be created and financed. Finally, we hope for a funded position of Investigator assigned to Oakland's high number of unprosecuted animal abuse cases.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Background

Outside Evaluation of Oakland Animal Services

OAS has challenges on many levels, both systems-wide and due to the complexity of the Oakland community. Serving a city with a high level of crimes against animals and rampant pet over-population, OAS has many issues that historically have not been addressed.

Proposal

An outside evaluation by an organization with expertise in effective management, animal care, and community education should provide a five-year plan for OAS. The "No-Kill Solutions" or The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), or similar organization, could offer OAS such an evaluation. An outside professional evaluation could provide a customized, comprehensive evaluation in animal care and policy, including everything from animal handling to client service. For example HSUS reviews extensive background documentation from the agency, seeks comments from the community about it, visits the site with a team of experts to see it first-hand, and then develops short- and long-term recommendations for improving the agency's operations and animal care. This evaluation would inform a longer-term plan to transform the Oakland Animal Services into a model city agency that provides better service to the community and to the animals. The city investment in an outside evaluation would ultimately be cost-effective through having a more effective and efficient agency. The Mayor's Office should include a budget line item in the 2007-2008 that would finance this proposal.



Improvement of Quality of Life for Animals at Oakland Animal Services

Many animals are housed at OAS for many months at a time, easily becoming depressed or “cage crazy” due to under-stimulation.

Providing toys, beds, and collars for the animals can help comfort the hundreds of animals at the Shelter in a given day. Having music projected throughout the shelter helps calm animals, increasing their chances of being adoptable. Information about local animal rescue groups should be promoted through Shelter bulletin boards. The public’s accessibility to information on animals at the shelter could be improved by such measures as more frequent website updates, postings of lost/found animals online, and online access in the OAS lobby for Shelter visitors. The Mayor’s Office should provide the modest amount of \$100.00 per month to fund these measures and should provide an additional 25 Kanuba dog beds so that every dog in the shelter has a bed in which to sleep.

STRATEGY 4 Background

Proposal

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City Government



TOPIC 6 **Museums, Libraries, Oakland History, Oakland Identity**

Question **How can the quality of life and documentation and dissemination of Oakland multicultural history and identity be enhanced through its libraries, museums, and other public displays?**

RECOMMENDATION 1 **Special Report on African-American Museum and Library.**

Background

To strengthen AAMLO's role as an important cultural institution in this city by increasing community access and involvement, expanding the scope of the exhibits offered and strengthening efforts to preserve cultural treasures within its archives.

Proposal

Create a task force composed of community members, library members and other museum professionals to examine ways in which AAMLO can be strengthened.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Recommendations to strengthen and broaden the marketing and public communications of Oakland's museums, libraries, cultural and historical institutions, and foster collaboration between them.

Improved efforts to market to Oakland's own citizens will have a ripple effect on the City's image. Reaching our own population more effectively, across all cultural and economic groups, will build a positive image of Oakland and help its cultural institutions reach more participants.

Specific means of implementation would include:

- Oakland's Marketing Division and its contractor, the Oakland Convention and Visitors' Bureau, should provide specific and explicit resources to cultural institutions.
- Foster collaboration between city and community organizations and institutions, to strengthen all of them and to promote the City's cultural identity.
- Increase the use of KTOP for the above rationale, and diversify its programming.
- Streamline the process by which Marketing Division acquires and disseminates publicity and assists in social marketing
- Expand outreach.
- Establish an online database of cultural institutions and organizations, and a hard-copy directory.



Enhance and increase the focus on youth by museums, libraries, and cultural institutions.

It is essential that youth learn more about the multicultural history of Oakland’s citizens as a means of fostering understanding, tolerance and pride of self and community. It is recommended that the following coordinated, collaborative steps be taken In order to achieve these goals.

This proposal would be implemented by means of four distinct initiatives: First, the Oakland Public Library would augment its One City, One Book program, which has previously focused on an adult audience, to become “One City, Two Books.” This would be expanded the program to encompass two related titles, one for adults and one for children. Second, Youth Advisory Boards would be created for Oakland’s libraries, museums and cultural institutions to ensure a youth perspective influences their decision-making process. Third, these same institutions would collaborate with Oakland Unified School District in the creation of interrelated curriculum, exhibits, and enrichment opportunities, creating a comprehensive, city-wide program. Lastly, libraries, museums and other cultural institutions would broaden outreach efforts to include creating partnerships with existing youth empowerment organizations in order to better disseminate multicultural history.

Oakland’s history, heritage, and multiethnic identity becomes the focal point in the City’s libraries, museums, organizations, tour programs, house museums and other cultural institutions.

By furthering current efforts and adding new initiatives, we can foster a clearer sense of Oakland’s cultural riches and its distinctive identity, both among citizens and among the wider Bay Area community.

Specific means of implementation would include:

- Use tour programs to provide educational experiences, visitor activities, and focus attention on Oakland’s rich multicultural heritage.
- Increase visibility of tours run by community groups
- Provide city staff release time for expanded volunteer coordination for the libraries.
- Use historic buildings and house museums of Oakland to foster a sense of cultural identity.
- Increase exposure to exhibits by utilizing more locations for public displays.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Background

Proposal

RECOMMENDATION 4

Proposal

RECOMMENDATION 5
Proposal

City of Oakland Cultural Complex

The need for a large cultural complex to house many small struggling museums and cultural institutions in Oakland is evident. Many of these organization continually seek funding for funds to pay rent and other expense from the City of Oakland. The use of a large, possibly historical, building would serve the purpose of preservation of the building, such as the Kaiser (old Oakland Auditorium), and provide space for small non-profit organizations. Such a multi-complex to house under one roof small cultural/museum organizations to facilitate networking and sharing of expertise/equipment would strengthen these organizations. The City’s existing policy initiatives of supporting small, non-profit arts and cultural institutions and organizations will be enhanced.

TOPIC 7
Question

Civil Service Commission

How can the Civil Service Commission operate most effectively?

RECOMMENDATION 1

Raise awareness and enhance the visibility of the Civil Service Board and its work with the public, City employees at all levels, and the City Council.

Background

The Civil Service Board performs a critically important task for the City, yet operates largely below the radar screens of the public and even City Staff. It meets only once a month, and those meetings are often cancelled. Unlike Council Committees and other City committees, its meetings are not televised on KTOP. Employees need to have more awareness of the provisions of the rules. Raising awareness of the Board and its activities will make it more difficult to circumvent the Civil Service system.

Proposal

The Mayor’s Office can work with the Personnel Director and the Civil Service Board to implement the following actions:

- Maintain an updated Civil Service Board website in the publicly accessible section of the City of Oakland website.
- Include in the website a current and accurate copy of the Civil Service Rules; Board agendas and minutes; names and photos members of the Board, with terms and bios; any studies performed by the Board.
- Publish hard copies of Board agendas and minutes.
- Provide all City employees a copy of the Civil Service Rules and include a segment on the Rules in new employee orientations.
- Include articles about the Board, its members, and Civil Service Rules in City publications for employees.
- Provide press releases when new Board members are appointed.
- Televisе Board meetings on KTOP.



RECOMMENDATION 2

Background

Proposal

Improve the effective operation of the Board by securing better attendance and assuring expertise in personnel matters.

The task force learned that meetings are too often cancelled for lack of a quorum. This has also been historically true, based on the experience of one task force member. The Personnel Department keeps track of meetings cancelled and reasons. Board members are busy professionals and will inevitably have conflicts. On the other hand, at present, the meetings only occur once a month. Recent Council reports on Civil Service Board activity show several cancellations in each period, "for lack of business," but some of those cancellations might also have been for lack of a quorum.

The Mayor's Office would:

Place strong emphasis on a commitment to attendance before recommending an individual for a Board appointment.

- Replace as soon as possible any member who resigns or whose term ends.
- Appoint members who have expertise in personnel, labor relations, employment law or other related areas. (Note: the current Board is well-qualified.)

And would work with the Personnel Director and Civil Service Board to implement:

- Providing meals and/or stipends to Board members.
- Scheduling Board meetings twice a month, or at least reschedule meetings to replace any cancelled for lack of a quorum. (For training, and see suggestions on additional research duties in Proposal 3.)
- Regular seminars (open to City staff and the public) for the Board on various Rules and background issues, such as the current laws on disability and sexual harassment.

Feedback and Assessment Data

The Civil Service Board is charged with providing effective oversight to prevent discrimination, corruption, nepotism and conflicts of interest. Its oversight impacts the quality of the City's workforce, which is essential to the effectiveness of City government. Yet, the Board has no way to assess the results of its actions. The actions described below are examples of what could be done in the way of reports back to the Board (and the Mayor and Council) that could help the Board determine whether course corrections are necessary.

The Mayor's Office should work with the Personnel Director and the Civil Service Board to determine what reports would be useful and how often they should be provided. Below are some examples:

- Regular reports on ethnicity and gender of employees by classification and department.
- Regular reports on disciplines and terminations (probationary and non-probationary), including placement on hiring (eligibility) list, classification, length of service, reason for discipline. These reports should include any other information necessary for the Board to evaluate the effectiveness of candidate searches, hiring procedures, and job descriptions, including minimum qualifications.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Background

19

City Government



- Regular reports of City positions not covered by Civil Service, by position and department, with justifications. (This relates to recommendation number 5.)

RECOMMENDATION 4

Promote the Board’s independence by hiring a part-time personnel consultant to assist the Board in reviewing job specifications, hearing officer decisions, and other matters.

Background

The Civil Service Board is supposed to oversee the actions of the Personnel Department, yet the Personnel Department (and the City Attorney) provide staff support for the Board. There is likely an institutional bias – Personnel, the agency that prepares material for the Board – has a (legitimate) interest in having its work approved.

Proposal

An independent consultant would assure that a Board does not become or appear to be a rubber stamp for Personnel. We have no evidence that the current board is not sufficiently independent, and in fact there are two Personnel Managers currently on the Board to provide independent expertise. However, this may not always be the case. The Mayor’s Office should work with the City Administrator, the Civil Service Board and Personnel to present a proposal to the City Council to approve such a position.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Bring more positions under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Board.

Background

Over the years, the City has used part-time temporary workers to fill full-time positions and has increased the use of part-time and other exempt employees. Unions have negotiated the conversion of some part-time, unbenefited positions to full-time or “permanent part-time” benefited positions in some contracts, but the overall trend is still toward the excessive use of temporary, unbenefitted positions. This trend undermines union gains and costs the City in training, hiring, and level of expertise. This happens despite the Civil Service mandate that exceptions need to be justified and limited. The more employees hired under Civil Service, the fewer opportunities for favoritism, nepotism, and cronyism, and the more assurance of hiring based on merit.

Proposal

Steps necessary to the implementation of this proposal include:

- The Mayor’s Office should set a clear standard that the City of Oakland workforce needs to be permanent, full-time (or “permanent part-time”), within the system of Civil Service classifications. This is primarily a budget issue, and can be accomplished in that context.
- Regular reports provided to the Civil Service Board and the Council would track the numbers of temporary part-time and otherwise exempt positions and employees.
- Civil Service Board to improve oversight in the area, demand strong rationales for exceptions, and demonstrate results.

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- Civil Service Board to improve oversight in the area, demand strong rationales for exceptions, and demonstrate results.

Parking

What parking policies are most beneficial to Oakland Businesses and Residents?

Oakland Comprehensive Parking Plan of 2007

Oakland's parking policies, programs and processes appear to many citizens to be in disarray and lacking in clear purpose (other than as revenue generation for the City's general fund). Moreover, there is a pervasive perception that parking problems continue regardless of city efforts to resolve them. Much of this problem is tied to city government's traditional hierarchical structure in which actions are undertaken incrementally (piecemeal), often in a reactive mode, by city departments that do not communicate nor plan together. This type of policy-making, coupled with administrative rule-making and process development, produces public policy that is disjointed and lacking in a foundation of purpose, design, and cohesiveness. This problem is compounded over time, particularly when the City rarely undertakes any type of administrative strategic planning. Oakland's parking policies are an example of this decision-making environment. The purpose of assembling the components of overall parking policy and practices is to provide a framework for the implementation of parking strategies and policies that are coordinated, appropriate, effective, and that respond to the needs of the public.

The Parking Task Force recommends that within the first six months of office, the Mayor undertake a comprehensive review of all components of Oakland's parking policies and programs. The purpose of this recommendation is to create the Oakland 2007 Comprehensive Parking Strategy.

Outcomes of this recommendation are:

1. To create the first city-wide strategy for public and private parking in Oakland
2. To establish a clear purpose for each parking program, why the program exists and who it benefits
3. To review existing programs and procedures to determine effectiveness
4. To foster closer working relationships between various city departments responsible for parking related programs
5. To identify inefficiencies and cross-purposes with other city programs and parking policies
6. To inform the public on the city's parking strategy and programs and engage the public where appropriate

This six-month process would be launched by a planning consortium made up of city staff, residents and merchants. The consortium would analyze current conditions related to the city's approach to parking, produce findings and make recommendations for changing how the city establishes and maintains parking policies and programs. The outputs of the six month review are to present the strengths and weaknesses of current city policy and practices, consider the fullest range of options available, and make specific recommendations and action steps for the Mayor and his administration.

TOPIC 8

Question

RECOMMENDATION 1

Background

Proposal

TOPIC 9

Structure of City Government

Question

How should City government be structured to work most effectively?

RECOMMENDATION 1

Background

Curtail City Council Direction of City Staff

The general public, unfortunately, has a less than favorable attitude about the accountability, efficiency and effectiveness of City government; they also have a misconception about the true power/authority of the Mayor's Office, particularly with the "Strong Mayor" charter amendment that was enacted over four years ago. This task force's recommendations are an attempt to strengthen the power of the Mayor, develop strategies that increase citizen participation, hold City employees more accountable and enforcing (already existent) measures that prevent City Council members from abusing their powers as it relates to City staff. Finally, this task force fully believes that with the enactment of their recommendations the City would function more effectively.

Proposal

Current City Charter law (section 218, Non-interference in Administrative Affairs) prohibits City Council members from directing City staff in their work. City staff members report that City Council members and their staff regularly overstep the bounds of what is legal without any consequences for their actions. It is recommended that the Mayor and City Administrator meet and develop a plan to address problems with City Council members and Council staff directing City staff, and that they meet with the City Council as soon as possible to make it clear that the current administration will be adhering to the City Charter about City Council direction of City staff. Communication between City Council members/staff and City staff is important and not to be discouraged. The issue is that this communication often crosses the line between information/questions and real direction of staff, given the power dynamics. The process should include protection for employees reporting violations, as well as due process for alleged violators.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Background

Enhanced citizens' participation in Oakland's budget process

Currently the majority of citizens are unfamiliar with the budget process and do not have any idea as to how they can play a more effective role, by way of input, into the budget process; other than having 1-2 minutes to express themselves at Council meetings after Council has (for all intents and purposes) adopted the budget. In addition, because of the financial technicalities, citizens are left out in the budget process.

Proposal

This recommendation is to engage and involve as many citizens as possible to provide early input in the City's budget process. In the new Model City approach citizens can be sufficiently educated, at the grassroots level, and can give early input on how the City's monies are to be spent. Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils, NCPC'S, are staffed by 17 Neighborhood Service Coordinators. This service infrastructure is in place and can be utilized for a broader citizen engagement and participation in many aspects of policy-making, including budgeting. This approach also fulfills the broader vision of City Resolution 72722, Community Policing.



Comprehensive Neighborhood Services Initiative

The Purpose of this Initiative is to streamline and make more effective access to City services by taking advantage of current City structure and organizing techniques already in place.

Part One: Streamlining "virtual" and "physical" intake of citizens' inquiries by establishing a 311 call system.

Streamlining "virtual" intake of citizens' concerns/complaints is centered on the development of a 311 system to act as "front desk" for "non-emergency" calls and general inquiries. This phone system, modeled after the 911 Emergency systems, will in effect be the City's one-stop phone number. Individuals wishing to report a crime of a non-emergency nature, as well as individuals, who wish to make an inquiry to City services, would utilize this number to be connected to the right department, office, or agency.

Part Two: Processing of citizens' concerns and complaints, particularly the operation of the City's Service Delivery System (SDS) teams, and the relation of City staff and Councilmembers and their staff.

Councilmember requests, concerns, and projects should be channeled through the SDS Team lead person of the area in question to be brought up to SDS Team members. These SDS Teams should meet regularly (at least twice a month) and begin to develop and affirm a City culture that they have an obligation as a Oakland employee to work in collaboration with employees from other parts of the City and citizens from the community to resolve problems. We need to become a Problem Solving City. The SDS Teams themselves should be facilitated and organized by "Office of City Services"/"Department of Neighborhood Services" coordinators.

Part Three: Move all of the Neighborhood Services Coordinators (NSCs), both fiscally and by line-of-authority, from the City Administrators Office to the Mayor's Office.

The Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils (NCPCs) should be renamed. The NCPCs should move from a model of neighborhood watch/public safety organizing to general neighborhood organizing around general issues that the neighborhood is galvanized around, be they public safety, schools, environmental, economic development related, zoning and permitting, and others as is the vision of the Community Policing Ordinance (City Resolution 72722).

RECOMMENDATION 4
Background

Increase the Mayor’s salary

The current annual salary of \$115,372 for the Mayor of Oakland is not commensurate with the duties and demands of the office and is significantly lower than the salary and/or earning potential of all other top City officials.

Proposal

Already acted on by City Council.

RECOMMENDATION 5
Background

Empowering the Mayor: the veto

Under the current “Strong Mayor” system the Mayor cannot veto any proposal put forth by City Council, and can only ask Council to reconsider their vote; the Council need only to re-affirm its original action by the same majority of 5 or more votes. In addition, the Mayor’s can only exercise his “power” by breaking a tie vote of the Council.

Proposal

Without the power to veto, the citizenry cannot hold the Mayor accountable because of his inability to exercise the “power” of his office. He, in fact, is not necessarily being held accountable because of his inability to move his agenda forward. It is recommended that the At-Large Council seat be eliminated, or add an additional district seat to change the percentage required for an override. One other benefit of eliminating the position would be the savings of approximately \$1 million per year. Finally, it must be recognized that the Mayor is elected by all of the citizens to represent the total interests of the City, whereas the Council members are elected by a small percentage of the voters and in many instances have a parochial interest.

RECOMMENDATION 6
Background

Empowering the Mayor: ballot measures

Currently, only the City Council is allowed to put measures on the ballot, or the voters have to exercise the initiative process. This is often an expensive and exhaustive process.

Proposal

The recommendation calls for another alternative to placing measures on the ballot. The Mayor should be able to place measures on the ballot after they have been scrutinized by the City Attorney’s Office for legality and sufficiency.



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Bruce Cobbletick, *Oakland East Bay Garden Center*

Ann Hyde, *City of Oakland Public Works Agency*

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Gordon Piper, *City of Oakland Keep Oakland Beautiful Advisory Board*

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Kerry Jo Ricketts-Ferris, *American Society of Landscape Architects*

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Kemba Shakur, *Urban ReLeaf*

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Sarah Cohen, *Executive Director, Hopalong Animal Rescue*
Peter Hauer
Daria Kelly, *OAS Volunteer*
Willow Liroff, *OAS Volunteer*
Emily Rosenberg, *Oakland Dog Owner's Group*
Pam Smith
Kim Smith

MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES, OAKLAND HISTORY AND OAKLAND IDENTITY

Annalee Allen, *Pardee Home Museum*
Kim Anderson
Helen Bloch, *Oakland Public Library, Piedmont Avenue Branch*
Hattie Carwell
Linda Jolivet
Carolyn Mixon
Jenny Rockwell
Naomi Schiff, *Seventeenth Street Studios*
Jeffry Tibbetts, *International Toy Museum*
Jamie Turbak
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Great Things.™*