



Councilmember Janani Ramachandran
Oakland District 4

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Additional Proposed Budget Amendments from Councilmember Ramachandran District 4

Date: June 22, 2023

To: Oakland City Council and Members of the Public

From: Councilmember Janani Ramachandran, District 4

Subject: Additional Proposed Budget Amendments from Councilmember Ramachandran

Dear Council Colleagues and Members of the Public,

I want to express my deep appreciation for the amendments proposed by Council President Bas' team, and their incorporation of much our fellow Councilmembers' budget priorities despite the steep fiscal challenges. Many of her team's proposed amendments already capture my own proposed amendments, including:

- Restoration of **Department of Violence Prevention Contracts**,
- Restoration of **Cultural Affairs Grants**, and
- Funding for **Community Safety Ambassadors** in commercial corridors.

I therefore want to draw your attention to four specific expenditures that are not currently referenced in the Council Presidents' proposal, and some complementary proposed expenditures. They have all been discussed in advance with our Finance Team. Please note that all of these were proposed amendments were discussed on the dais at the June 14th Council meeting.

Additional Proposed GPF Expenditures (not currently referenced in the Council Presidents' proposal)

- **OPD Grant Writer:** \$46,733 in FY 23-24 (due to estimated 6 months hiring time) ; \$202,762 in FY 24-25
 - Note there is a complementary offset proposed by OPD making this a cost-neutral request (see below).
- **OPRYD Director:** \$297,074 in FY 23-24 (due to estimated 6 months hiring time) ; \$617,440 in FY 24-25
 - Note that this is the projected cost if the merger of HSD & OPRYD, and the merger of Homelessness Services and HCD were not to occur.
- **PEC Investigator:** \$56,512 in FY 23-24 (due to estimated hiring time); \$234,970 in FY 24-25
 - Note that there are two GPF tabs in my budget spreadsheet, one option that includes this PEC investigator, and option one that does not.

Additional Proposed GPF Reductions (not currently referenced in the Council Presidents' proposal)

- *Freeze Vacant OPD Crime Analyst:* \$179,675 in FY 23-24; \$194,887 in FY 24-25
- *CPRA Estimated Vacancy Savings from recent staff departures and hiring delays:* \$297,074 in FY 23-24
- *DVP Estimated Vacancy Savings from DVP Director Recruitment:* \$146,376
- *Measure Z balance:* \$163,852
- *Slightly Reduce O&M for Cyber Security:* \$488,991 or \$197,509
 - Note that these numbers vary due to the inclusion of a PEC investigator in one GPF tab calculation, and without this position in the other.

Additional Proposed Measure Q Expenditure (using existing Measure Q Balance)

- **2.0 FTE Tree Worker:** \$74,376.50 in FY 23-24 (due to estimated 6 months hiring time) ; \$161,469 in FY 24-25

Note on Opposition to Proposed Mergers

As detailed in my presentation at the June 14th Council meeting, there are several reasons why I am opposed to the merger of OPRYD with Human Services, and the merger of HCD with Homelessness Services. These are concerns that are echoed by letters and public comment from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, former staff and city leadership, numerous community-based organizations, several leading Oakland agencies providing support to seniors, among others.

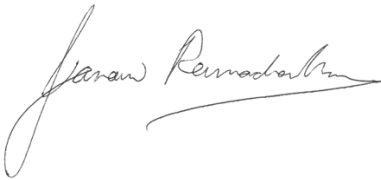
I do not believe that Council has been provided with sufficient information to move forward with a proposed merger in a way that maximizes efficiency, impact and fiscal considerations. I am more than open to re-visiting these proposals once a developmental study has been put forth to us. Given the tragic escalation of Oakland's homelessness crisis, I am specifically interested in exploring the possibility of a standalone Homelessness Department, given our clear need to streamline spending of our limited homelessness dollars, and the need to establish a clearer channel of communication and partnership with Alameda County.

It is important to note that the merger of OPRYD and Human Services has already been studied in recent history, and was ultimately not implemented. If a merger of these departments is to occur, Council deserves a clear understanding of what circumstances may have changed since the last study. Especially during a time that requires fiscal prudence, it is unwise to take actions that have not been properly analyzed nor vetted. This could put us down a path of increased, rather than decreased costs, which the City has clearly seen before in other department re-organizations in recent years.

As detailed in my budget spreadsheet, the cost incurred by not pursuing the mergers in this budget cycle is relatively small, and I have identified offsetting expenditures.

Attached is a balanced budget spreadsheet, as well as PowerPoint presentation that was shared on the dais at the June 14th Council meeting accompanying my presentation that provides brief reasoning behind these proposed amendments.

In Community,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Janani Ramachandran". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Janani Ramachandran
Oakland City Councilmember District 4