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#LoveLife

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Date: December 21, 2021  
To: Members of City Council and Members of the Public  
From: Vice Mayor Kaplan  
Re: **Ordinance Amending the Oakland Municipal Code to Add Chapter 1.03 to Title 1, General Provisions, to Establish Procedures Designating Official Publications for City Advertising in Accordance with Charter Section 1205**

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Dear Colleagues on the City Council and Members of the Public,

I am asking my colleagues to adopt an ordinance to amend Oakland’s Municipal Code to establish procedures designating official newspaper publications for City advertising and public notices. As the American media landscape has changed dramatically in recent years and continues to shift, it is necessary that we adapt our noticing provisions to accommodate how Oakland residents consume news.

The American media landscape has changed dramatically in recent years and continues to shift in terms of print and digital use. According to a 2021 Pew Research analysis, the estimated total U.S. daily newspaper circulation declined 6% in the past year. However, from analyzing data provided by the Alliance for Audited Media, digital circulation in 2020 increased by 27%. Ensuring that official city notices are available in free, digital formats, therefore, is essential to accessibility. Additionally, the process outlined to designate multiple newspapers as our official City outlets offers an opportunity to include more local and culturally diverse newspapers, further promoting inclusivity and accessibility.

Prior to the passage of Measure R in 2020, the Oakland City Charter had not been amended since the late 1980s regarding the requirements for official newspaper designation. This designation is used for the purpose of publishing notice of pending ordinances, invitations to bid awards of contracts and leases, notices of intention to grant franchises, election proceedings and other matters that require public notice. Given the importance of ensuring access and disseminating this information, on March 3, 2020, Oakland residents approved Measure R, which amended the Charter to eliminate obsolete requirements for designation as the city’s official newspaper with 73.88% of the vote.

City Council  
December 21, 2021  
File # 21-0833

Building on Measure R, this ordinance proposes amendments to the Oakland Municipal Code to add Chapter 1.03 of Title 1 to establish procedures designating official publications for the City of Oakland. The ordinance calls for the creation of a City website that will publish, at no cost, any notices that would be published in an official newspaper. Additionally, the Council will designate via Resolution one or more newspapers as the city's official newspaper based on the following criteria: 1) any official newspaper must have a weekly circulation within the City of Oakland of at least 5,000; 2) at least one of the official newspapers must be available in digital and print formats; and 3) all official newspapers must possess a valid City of Oakland business license.

Join me in supporting this important and necessary legislation.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Kaplan", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Vice Mayor Rebecca Kaplan

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