



CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Ashleigh Kanat
Director, Economic & Workforce
Development Department

SUBJECT: Corridor Safety Ambassador
Grants

DATE: October 3, 2025

City Administrator Approval


Jestin Johnson (Oct 22, 2025 15:58:39 PDT)

Date: Oct 22, 2025

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution 1) Awarding Grants For The 2025-2027 Corridor Safety Ambassador Program To Non-profit Organizations Black Cultural Zone, Downtown Oakland Association, Laurel District Association, Jack London Improvement District, Oakland Chinatown Improvement Council, Spanish Speaking Unity Council Of Alameda County, Inc, And Trybe Inc. For The Fiscal Years 2025-2027 In An Amount Set Forth In Table 1 For A Total Amount Not To Exceed Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000) To Immediately Enhance Safety Ambassador And Personnel And Safety Programs Throughout The Program Year In High Priority Neighborhood Business Corridors Including The Chinatown, Dimond, Downtown, Elmhurst, Laurel, Little Saigon, Havenscourt, Hegenberger, And Fruitvale Business Corridors And To Establish A Community Of Practice Linking City Services And Training For Safety Ambassadors And Personnel; And

2) Authorizing The City Administrator To Negotiate And Enter Into Grant Agreements With Grantees For Fiscal Years 2025-2027 With Authority To Extend The Terms Without Increasing The Amount Of The Grant Awards

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the roll-out of Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 Corridor Safety Ambassador grants and the reported effectiveness of the Corridor Safety Ambassador Program (Program) as a business support and crime mitigation strategy, the adopted FY 2025-27 Biennial Budget allocates \$2.0 million toward Corridor Safety Ambassador grants to support key business corridors across the City of Oakland (City).

City Council
November 4, 2025

The proposed resolution would support programs in several of Oakland's high priority commercial districts, serving a large sector of the City's visitors, commercial and business groups, and residents alike. Community-initiated programs, like this Corridor Safety Ambassador program, help build safer, more welcoming, and thriving business corridors, and include streetscape improvements, public safety personnel, and community ambassadors as some of the ways to bring community members together, build communication networks, and draw critical mass to the City's business districts as a deterrent to theft and property crime.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Community ambassadors were recommended in the City's 2021 [Reimagining Public Safety \(RPS\) report](#). Recommendation # 60 stated, "Create a civilian Community Ambassadors program to respond to non-violent, non-mental-health incidents: 1) in Oakland's public spaces, namely public parks, facilities, streets/sidewalks; and 2) to respond to non-emergency calls focused on residents' and business corridors' quality of life challenges." Community Ambassadors are one of several tools to address the business community's and residents' primary concerns regarding safety in the City's business corridors. Ambassadors are part of a holistic strategy, and they can play a variety of roles that support a comprehensive sense of safety and wellbeing, from providing a welcoming presence on the street for residents, visitors and shopkeepers to conflict de-escalation. Ambassadors are a community resource to bridge a communication and service gap between neighborhoods and beat officers and street patrols. However, Ambassadors alone are insufficient to address more complex drivers of business and property crime. Therefore, this initiative aims to provide communities with the resources to address specific needs through activities that are customized for the commercial corridors' community assets, resources, and capacity.

In FY 2023-24, the City Council appropriated \$1,000,000 to establish the Corridor Safety Ambassador Program to support community-led clean and safe initiatives in the City's high and highest priority areas, including the Downtown, Fruitvale, and Hegenberger business corridors. During the first year of these programs, all community partners reported various degrees of success with community driven interventions, from further building out safety communications and infrastructure within the Greater Downtown community, to providing wellness checks and escorts to promote safety in the Fruitvale and Hegenberger areas. Providers reported a number of outcomes that promote safer business corridors and increased commercial activity (see **Exhibit A: FY 2024-25 Impact Reports**).

The program continued the following year with a \$450,000 appropriation in FY 2024-25, extending into the Laurel and Dimond business corridors to provide safety and cleanliness support for the holiday shopping period and to deepen community-driven corridor safety initiatives.

On June 11, 2025, the City Council approved \$2,000,000 in the FY 2025-27 Biennial Budget to continue the Ambassador Program. The Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD) staff is tasked with implementing the Ambassador Program, guided by a data-driven, equity-based approach that prioritizes areas of need and opportunities to build capacity.

On September 7, 2025, EWDD released an informal Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking responses from community partners with successful, community driven models operating in

areas of the City that exhibit higher than average crime statistics compared with other business corridors/police beats, and higher than average incidents of dumping, abandoned vehicles or presence of homeless encampments.

Community partners were selected based on the following:

- 1) evidence of effectiveness in each area
- 2) capacity to participate in the Community of Practice, and
- 3) ability to leverage additional investment in the Ambassador Program

Table 1 summarizes the recommended grantees, not-to-exceed grant amounts, and the business corridors in which the grantees operate.

Table 1: Commercial Corridor Safety and Ambassador Grant Awards

Commercial Corridor Safety and Ambassador Grants (\$2,000,000):		
Grantee	Individual Not-to-Exceed Grant Amount	Business Corridors Served
Black Cultural Zone Community Development Corporation (4533653), <i>a Nonprofit Corporation</i>	\$400,000	Elmhurst, Havenscourt, Hegenberger
Downtown Oakland Association (3117656), <i>a Nonprofit Corporation</i>	\$300,000	Uptown/Downtown Arts and Entertainment District
Laurel District Association (2592345), <i>a Nonprofit Corporation</i>	\$300,000	Dimond, Laurel
Jack London Improvement District (3615695), <i>a Nonprofit Corporation</i>	\$300,000	Greater Downtown
Oakland Chinatown Improvement Council (4795540), <i>a Nonprofit Corporation</i>	\$100,000	Chinatown
Spanish Speaking Unity Council of Alameda County, Inc. (527967), <i>a Nonprofit Corporation</i>	\$300,000	Fruitvale
Trybe Inc. (3623859), <i>a Nonprofit Corporation</i>	\$300,000	Little Saigon, San Antonio
Total Not-to-Exceed Grant Amount	\$2,000,000	

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

The proposed resolution would support programs in several of the City's high priority commercial districts. Community-initiated interventions like this Corridor Safety Ambassador program, help build safer, more welcoming, and thriving business corridors. These combine

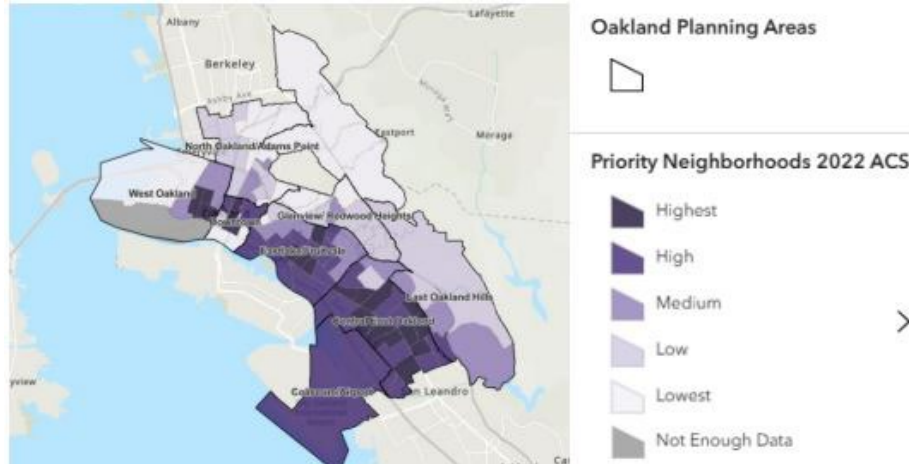
streetscape improvements, public safety personnel, and community outreach to establish a consistent presence on the corridor as a deterrent to business and property crime.

The Corridor Safety Ambassador grants have been focused on City business corridors that have a high concentration of businesses and are located in the City's high and highest priority neighborhoods. To inform funding recommendations for FY 25/26 and FY26/27, staff reviewed (A) the racial equity analysis, (B) crime and 311 call data, and (C) corridor economic conditions, as discussed below. Funding allocation recommendations (Section D) were made by council district and vary based on responses received, program plan, and capacity to implement in each district.

A. City Racial Equity Framework

The City's Equity Framework combines City Service data to measure racial disparities at smaller, more localized geographies such as by Council District and neighborhood. In these areas, a racially equitable strategy prioritizes allocation of resources into the communities most affected by historic harm¹. Analytics for the City's 2024 General Plan Update Environmental Justice Element identified Oakland's 48 Environmental Justice Communities with disparities in the levels of air, water and ground pollution. These areas of the City lack access to basic essentials and are more vulnerable to climate transition. This analysis closely aligns with the Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT) Geographic Equity Toolbox shown in **Figure 1**. Both datasets include the identification of Oakland communities with high numbers of residents that are low-income, rent burdened, disabled, 65 or older, low-educational attainment and lower rates of internet in the home.

Figure 1: City Priority Neighborhoods, 2022



¹ Identifying business corridors in underinvested neighborhoods prioritizes communities that have not benefitted equally from previous waves of economic prosperity. The Bay Area Economic Institute's 2024 report titled "Racial Equity in the Bay Area" reinforces the finding in the City's Equity analysis that, "... geography strongly shapes access to opportunity. Historical exclusion of communities of color from education, employment, and homeownership has led to their concentration in neighborhoods with limited access to public services, quality schools, and economic mobility."

Figure 2 locates the City's business and employment corridors based on City Business License Application and CA State employment data in 2023. Many of the City's key business corridors are also located within priority areas as identified by the Equity Toolbox and the Environmental Justice Element.

Figure 2: Oakland Business and Employee Corridors, 2023



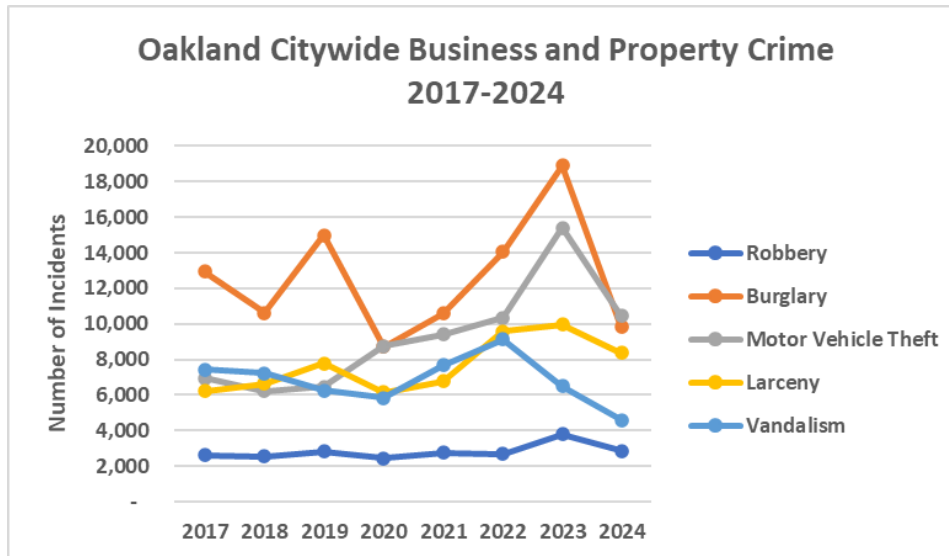
B. Crime and 311 Service Date Trends

Businesses in Oakland faced challenges with rising crime beginning in around 2020, which was compounded by the economic setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. While overall crime has trended downward between 2023 and 2024 (and continuing into 2025), crime in the business corridors in priority neighborhoods is persistent. Business and Property crime, in particular, affect the viability of the City's business corridors, and are often correlated with illegal dumping, abandoned autos, and graffiti.

Citywide Trends

Figure 3 tracks data from 2017 through 2024 from the Oakland Citywide Annual Crime Report from the Oakland Police Department (OPD).

Figure 3: Oakland Police Department Annual Crime, 2017-2024



OPD's Annual Citywide Crime Report, 2017-2024

Commercial Burglaries, which are especially impactful to businesses, are a subset of Burglaries generally. While Burglaries overall saw substantial reductions during the past five years, the overall decrease masks that *Commercial* Burglaries were up by 7% during the same period despite a 25% reduction between 2023 and 2024. Of equal impact is Vandalism. While this data is not in the Annual Crime Report, Oakland Police Department (OPD) worked with EWDD to create a dataset for the City's Business Corridors. Vandalism, which decreased Citywide between 2022 and 2024, is still cited as a major concern by businesses as they replace locks, windows, and doors that have been smashed. In 2024, the number of Vandalism incidents Citywide were down 30% from 2023 and down 38% from 2017.

Corridor Crime Trends 2019-2024

Oakland's Priority Business Corridors, where the Ambassadors operate, also experienced some reduction in crime between 2023 and 2024. However, several categories increased over the five-year period between 2019-2024. Business and Property crime incidents including Burglary, Robbery and Motor Vehicle Theft, remain higher in the City's Priority business corridors than Citywide. As stated in the City's strategies, business corridors experiencing disparity in safety and services should be a focus for City resources.

Figure 4 analyzes OPD data at the Business Corridor level. The percentage change in the number of incidents can be seen during the five-year period, revealing specific impacts in these Priority corridors. Commercial Burglaries are particularly concerning. Vehicle crime is still persistent and still showing some increases, particularly in the Uptown Arts & Entertainment District.

Figure 4: Priority Business Corridors, Percent Change Between 2019-2024

	Beat 19X Clinton and San Antonio	Uptown Arts & Entertainment District	Fruitvale	Hegenberger	Laurel
Five-Year Percent Change in Number of Incidents					
Robbery	43%	-62%	27%	25%	317%
Burglary					
Auto	-31%	-49%	-41%	-66%	-52%
Residential	53%	300%	54%	200%	N/A
Commercial	433%	300%	200%	633%	286%
Other	-42%	-70%	25%	-64%	N/A
Motor Vehicle	20%	196%	81%	-7%	-12%
Larceny					
Grand Theft	11%	-67%	-79%	36%	-65%
Petty Theft	-9%	-49%	14%	-18%	-23%
Vandalism	-28%	-26%	3%	-5%	-40%

Corridor 311 Service Requests 2019-2024

Ambassador programs in some areas use a community building approach to establish trust, engage businesses and residents, and build local stewardship efforts in partnership with City services. Cleaning up trash and addressing illegal dumping in the business corridors, improving streetscapes and open spaces, and managing the public realm is a way to improve perceptions of the area while building community trust and engagement in a variety of activities.

The business corridors in Priority Neighborhoods experience higher than average environmental impacts which reinforce lower economic opportunity. The evidence for this can be seen in the location and concentration of the City's 311 complaints.

In 2024, the City recorded 92,165 service requests into the 311 system. More than a quarter (28%) of the service requests were for Illegal Dumping. Another 20% of service requests were for Abandoned Autos. The next most common categories are as follows:

- Parking (7%)
- Building Maintenance (6%)
- Street sweeping (4%)
- Electrical and lighting and graffiti (3%)

Service requests dating back to 2019 demonstrate this same order every year. Illegal Dumping is the highest category of requests every year, ranging from 30-40% of total requests annually. Abandoned Autos continue as the second category and make up about 20% of Citywide Service Requests each year, around 20%. Illegal Dumping has increased by 20% in the one-year period between 2023-2024 but decreased 11% across the five-year period from 2019. Abandoned

Auto Service Requests increased 8% over the one-year period and increased 2% over the five-year period.

In the Priority business corridors identified above, the profile of Service Requests mirrors the Citywide order but with higher numbers of incidents over a longer period of time.

- Parking complaints are three of the top four service request categories in the Uptown Arts and Entertainment District in 2024.
- Illegal Dumping is the second most common Service Request in all Ambassador areas doubling the number in 2024 from a steady number of complaints the previous three years.
- In OPD Beat Area 19X, Illegal Dumping is consistently the highest number of complaints, every year, more than double the next category, Abandoned Autos. This number has remained steady over the five-year period and comprises the 2nd highest number of Service Requests.
- Fruitvale's highest numbers of service requests are Abandoned Autos in 2024, the highest number of requests every year since 2019. Parking Enforcement jumped in 2023 and has been the second highest Service Request in 2023-2024. Illegal Dumping is the 5th most common Service Request after Homeless Encampments, which jumped five times the 2023 numbers in 2024.
- Hegenberger consistently reports Abandoned Autos, Illegal Dumping and Homeless Encampments as the top three Service Requests. Homeless Encampment Service Requests increased by 77% in the five-year period between 2019-2024 and 6% over the one-year period.

C. Economic Conditions by Business Corridor

While the need for continued investment in each of the Business Corridors is justified above through crime and 311 call data, each Corridor has important economic assets and activity to protect and support. The selection of each Corridor for Ambassador grant funding also required demonstrated community capacity within the Corridor.

District 2: Community of Practice/Little Saigon/San Antonio/Beat 19X

Trybe Inc. currently provides corridor safety and ambassador services in the Clinton Park/Little Saigon and San Antonio neighborhoods (Beat 19X). As part of this program, Trybe Inc. will implement and maintain those services in the highest priority neighborhood of Beat 19x, and will also lead the peer learning and training model design and facilitation, referred to as the Community of Practice, wherein Trybe Inc. will convene, co-train, and provide a working training guidebook that aims to document promising practices and skills training for corridor safety ambassadors.

The curriculum design includes the following topics:

- Calming and de-escalation skills training
- Community engagement skills including direct outreach, relationship and trust building
- Beautification: picking up trash, graffiti abatement, 311, power-washing, trimming trees

- Community Improvements: garden, outdoor fitness equipment, chess/ play tables, gazebos, benches, respite areas, walking paths
- Outreach and Education: making contact with neighbors, patrons, businesses, city staff, visitors, and all general public to establish a safe, pro-social, and welcoming environment of peace and community
- Education of all stakeholders and visitors on community agreements and general safe practices for the area
- Technical skills: pallet jack/forklift/liftgate, driving trucks, ladder safety
- Safety: CPR/First-Aid, Traffic Safety (how to set up proper traffic signs and how to be an effective signaler)
- Scenario and experiential training: responding to people in mental health crisis, arson, human trafficking
- Administrative skills: using computers, email, data/reporting, and Google Suite
- Resource Navigation and ongoing training for the ambassador team

District 3: Downtown

Within District 3, Downtown Oakland plays an important role in the City's economy, serving as a regional employment center, transit hub, civic and cultural center, and visitor destination. This District is home to 73,684 employees and 8,812 businesses. The Uptown Downtown Entertainment District has 270 businesses and 2,860 employees. Hotel, retail, and office uses, as well as arts, entertainment, and personal services all generate significant fiscal benefits for the City. Economic activity in Downtown Oakland also generates tax revenues that support municipal services for Oakland residents throughout the City. Residents, visitors, businesses, employers, employees, arts and events patrons also pay a variety of taxes and fees. Greater Downtown, within District 3, is home to many areas with concentrations of arts and cultural uses, including Jack London Square, Chinatown, Northlake, the Uptown Arts and Entertainment District, Koreatown/Northgate, and the Black Arts Movement and Business District (BAMBD). Beginning in 2023, Oakland is seeing a slow but significant resurgence of new businesses, including restaurants and entertainment venues owned by a diverse cross-section of Oakland residents and entrepreneurs.

District 4: Dimond/Laurel Business Corridors

District 4 has 5,520 business and 12,753 employees. The Dimond business district is comprised of independently owned businesses (Farmer Joe's, La Farine, Bombera) and franchises (Peet's Coffee, CVS, Safeway) concentrated along a two-block radius surrounding the intersections of Macarthur Blvd and Fruitvale Avenue. The business corridor is also a busy transportation hub serving residents in the adjacent Oakmore, Glenview, and Lincoln Highlands neighborhoods. A series of business closures and long-term vacancies increased in 2023 due in part to increased

property crime. The Dimond Improvement Association, a volunteer led community group convenes monthly to coordinate and implement a variety of activities including monthly community clean ups, and production of the annual Oaktoberfest, a family friendly two-day festival along the Fruitvale/Macarthur business corridor.

The Laurel business district has 75 businesses and 517 employees that make up the Business Improvement District's local economy. Located on Macarthur Blvd, from 35th Avenue to High Street, the Laurel is an important business district that serves eastern neighborhoods as well as the District 4 area in the Laurel, Allendale, Redwood Heights neighborhoods to the east, the Dimond District to the north and the Maxwell Park neighborhood to the south.

The Laurel Business Improvement District implemented a safety ambassador program during the 2023-2024 holiday shopping season. The program results included a 27% decrease in property crime and a 31% decrease in violent crime during the course of the program from December 1, 2023 to January 15, 2024. The Laurel District Association will continue to administer the ambassador grants for both the Dimond and Laurel business districts in coordination with the Dimond Improvement Association to build on the results of the most recent ambassador awards.

District 5: Fruitvale Business Corridor

The Fruitvale/International Boulevard commercial area, anchored by the Fruitvale BART Station, the Fruitvale Transit Village, and various commercial areas located in the District have emerged as an important cultural and commercial center for the Bay Area's Latinx community. The Fruitvale BART station is the 4th busiest BART station in the East Bay with an average of 80,000 monthly trips. The Fruitvale Transit Village, developed by The Unity Council, acts as an important mixed-use, transit-oriented development linking the BART station to International Boulevard.

District 5 hosts 5,386 businesses and 11,983 employees, while the Corridor alone hosts 141 businesses and 1,037 employees. The Fruitvale business district offers Latinx-oriented goods and services, authentic Mexican and Central American cuisine and a cultural destination celebrating Latinx culture, goods, and services. The District also features widely attended cultural events such as Día de Los Muertos, which draws as many as 80,000 people per year. In addition to its retail and restaurant offerings, a distinguishing feature of the District is its rich network of social services, including health centers, schools, and social service organizations, which serve as major employers, draw additional customers to the area, and provide services that help stabilize the surrounding community. Specifically, health and service agencies employ approximately a quarter of the workforce in this area. The three largest non-profit organizations in this area serve more than 40,000 people per year.

Districts 6 and 7: Elmhurst/Havenscourt Business Corridors

Located in Districts 6 and 7, the Elmhurst and Havenscourt business districts experienced significant disruption due to the construction of the Bus Rapid Transit project along International Blvd as well as the COVID-19 Pandemic. In addition to business disruption and displacement, the International Blvd. business corridor also exhibited an increase in 311, crime, and vacancies, which negatively impact the surrounding community. In Police Area 5, 2024 Annual

data show Commercial, Residential, Other Burglary, and Larceny increasing over the five-year period of 2019-2024. Violent crime decreased by double digits between 2023-2024. The most recent Annual Crime report for Police Area 6, the Elmhurst Business Corridor, shows a 15% increase in Commercial Burglary between 2019-2024. Robbery incident reports are up 4% over the five-year period, although nearly all reported violent crime is down in line with Citywide averages. Organizations such as the Havenscourt Neighborhood Association, the Area 5 Neighborhood Council and various community-based organizations continue to advocate for City service support, capacity building, and community engagement through the City's Ambassador Program.

District 7: Hegenberger Business Corridor

The Hegenberger commercial corridor serves as an entry point for visitors to Oakland and includes the Airport Business Park. The corridor hosts 247 businesses and 2,710 employees, making the Hegenberger Corridor a major economic engine for the SF Bay Area. Creating a safe and vibrant commercial district that services the thousands of visitors, business owners and operators in the area is critical to support the region's economy and continued growth.

Some of the highest increases in burglary and commercial crime in the city occurred within the Hegenberger business district, and have affected the leading employment sectors including hospitality, car rental, gas stations, construction and manufacturing and business owners and operators. These stakeholders identified several priorities including police presence, faster response times, business attraction, private security patrols, and safety ambassadors to create a safer business environment conducive to the increased activity expected during the holiday travel and shopping season.

D. Proposed Grant Allocations

Based on the analysis in the section above, staff issued an informal request for proposals seeking responses from established corridor safety and ambassador service partners. Based on the analysis in section above and guided by the proposed funding allocation by council district, this proposed initiative aims to provide communities with the resources to address specific needs through activities that are customized for the commercial corridors' community assets, resources, and capacity. The proposed resolution would enhance Community Ambassador and Security Programs in time for the holiday shopping season by making the following grant awards.

- A **\$400,000 grant** to the **Black Cultural Zone Community Development Corporation (BCZ)** to implement a layered model of public safety personnel to secure the Hegenberger corridor between the Airport and 73rd Avenue, and to expand operations into the Elmhurst and Havenscourt business districts.

For the Hegenberger commercial district, OPD, Alameda County Sheriff's Office and the California Highway Patrol have advanced coordinated law enforcement efforts to address crime hot spots. OPD has commenced installation of the City's Automated

License Plate Readers (ALPRs) through the FLOCK camera system. These resources complement and will add another layer of support for the Black Cultural Zone, which is an organization that since 2022 has successfully piloted a Corridor Ambassador initiative, recruited and deployed dozens of corridor ambassadors to provide a presence along several business corridors, engaged with business owners, facilitated contact with City services, and reported making over 500 business contacts on everything from support with 311 reports of illegal dumping and service requests to access to business consulting services during the short pilot period (November 2022 - January 2023) (Resolution No. [89484](#)).

In the Hegenberger corridor, BCZ in partnership with trusted messengers and violence interrupters in East Oakland, will deploy a multi-layered community engagement strategy and public safety initiative which leverages relationships with a network of trusted ambassadors, CREW, influencers, interrupters, and messengers. BCZ will also engage with community-based private security/safety patrols, involve members of the East Oakland Small Business Alliance and other Commercial Corridor business and property owners, and will coordinate with City Agencies and entities, including the Department of Violence Prevention. The goal is to engage and unify all stakeholders, expedite appropriate responses, and address public safety and quality of life concerns along the major commercial corridors in East Oakland bounded by Hegenberger/73rd Avenue, MacArthur/Foothill, 98th Avenue, and Doolittle. Building on the success of the BCZ Community Ambassador funding through the 2022 Shop Safe initiative, through this past year, BCZ will once again recruit, stipend, train, and deploy Community Safety Stewards and coordinate with public and private entities in a collaborative, multi-agency approach to secure the corridor during one of Oakland's highest travel seasons.

- A **\$300,000 grant** to the **Downtown Oakland Association** to provide ambassadors for the Uptown Arts and Entertainment District for up to 52 evening events to support safety and boost the nighttime economy.
- A **\$300,000 grant** to the **Jack London Improvement District (JLID)**, representing the Oakland BID Alliance and the Downtown Corridor Safety Taskforce, to sustain and expand the existing safety network, enhance public safety, and support other community-driven initiatives in coordination and alignment with EWDD and citywide safety goals.

For the Downtown commercial district, JLBID, on behalf of the Downtown Corridor Safety Taskforce stakeholder communities is proposing to prioritize technological investments to develop a robust and coordinated public safety network, lighting and streetscape improvements, increased ambassador presence and coordination with law enforcement and the business community, and potentially, a series of improvements that aim to create spaces for positive patron engagement and a venue management approach to address crowd flows, engagement, and interactions that create positive experiences for the general public, including young people and families.

- A **\$300,000 grant** to the **Laurel District Association** to support safety initiatives and provide safety ambassadors/security guards in the Dimond and Laurel business corridors.

In the Dimond and Laurel Districts, the Laurel District Association will deploy security guards who will also act as ambassadors, patrolling MacArthur Blvd, Fruitvale Ave, Dimond Ave, 35th Ave, and High St during daylight and overnight hours as determined by community input.

- A **\$100,000 grant** to the **Oakland Chinatown Improvement Association** to support public safety patrols and enhance safety ambassador staffing for community events.
- A **\$300,000 grant** to the **Spanish Speaking Unity Council of Alameda County, Inc.** to implement safety initiatives in the Fruitvale Village and International Boulevard business corridor.

In the Fruitvale District, Peralta Services Corporation, a social impact subsidiary of The Unity Council, has provided community ambassador services in the heart of the Fruitvale neighborhood, working to keep it clean and safe. This area includes the perimeter of the Fruitvale BART Plaza (a major transportation and cultural hub in East Oakland), and East 12th street and International Blvd from Fruitvale Ave to 37th St. Ambassadors provide foot patrol services during business hours, de-escalate situations when possible and report any safety issues they encounter. The Unity Council will provide ambassadors to build on Peralta Services Corporation's work and will coordinate with City cleaning services as needed as well as connect community members to resources to include social and financial support services, career and resource fairs in the area, and events.

- A **\$300,000 grant** to **Trybe Inc.** to design and implement the Community of Practice, and to provide safety ambassadors in the Clinton Park area of Little Saigon, including E.12 Street and International Boulevard business corridors and 19X police beat.

In the Clinton Park and Little Saigon area, Trybe Inc. will sustain its corridor safety and ambassador services along the E12th Street to Foothill Blvd business corridor, and between 6th Ave to 11th Ave, as well as continue providing services in the 19X police beat. Trybe Inc. will also convene, facilitate and train the Community of Practice, the cohort of ambassadors and service organizations that will be sharing promising practices as they deploy community driven ambassador services throughout the nine business corridors in this program, and extending this training and resource sharing citywide.

In summary, Corridor Safety/Ambassador grants will:

- Immediately expand safety, security, and Community Ambassador programs used in high priority neighborhood shopping and travel areas through the holidays and throughout the program year.

- Provide grants to implement community-specific initiatives and infrastructure improvements that support safety, network and community building goals.
- Sustain a citywide community of practice, leveraging City service support and training for ambassadors to establish a baseline understanding and relationship with OPD, MACRO, 311 and City services and programs to support business corridor organizing and service delivery.
- Respond to and advance community driven activities to build thriving, resilient business corridors across several Oakland neighborhoods.

These grants will complement multi-agency efforts led by the Business Development team, which convenes OakDOT, OPD, Fire, Code Enforcement and other key departments to steward operational enhancements including high-visibility patrol presence in commercial areas during key shopping times and enhanced coordination with commercial district ambassadors and security, including regular coordination meetings and shared communications devices.

Approval of the recommended action would help to advance the Citywide priority of **holistic community safety** by providing up to \$2 million over two years of investment into high priority areas to support safety efforts.

FISCAL IMPACT

The two million dollars (\$2,000,000) in funding for these grants are available as part of the FY 2025-27 adopted budget, with one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in each Fiscal Year, in General Purpose Fund (1010), Economic Development Organization (85411), Third Party Grants Account (54912), Business Creation, Attraction, Retention, & Expansion Program (SC11). Funding may ultimately be reallocated across Business Corridor Community Ambassador Project (1007109), 1010 Ambassador- Downtown Project (1007627), 1010 Ambassador-Fruitvale Project (1007554), 1010 Ambassador-Hegenberger Project (1007555), 1010 Ambassador-Diamond-Laurel Project (1007556), 1010 Ambassador-Trybe Project (1007628), and potentially other Projects to be determined (TBD).

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

EWDD Staff have been working across multiple City departments including OPD, OakDOT, Department of Disability, and the City Administrator's Neighborhoods Office to address business corridor safety concerns, including responding to safety concerns citywide, and leading and facilitating merchant and resident coordination and collaboration efforts in high priority neighborhoods in Diamond, Downtown, Fruitvale, Hegenberger, Laurel and Little Saigon, in addition to administering the City's Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), including the Laurel District Association, and most recently, the Havenscourt Neighborhood Association, and the Oakland Chinatown Improvement Council.

Staff convenes a monthly online inter-agency workshop with the above-named City departments to steward, facilitate and implement solutions in close concert with the Uptown/Downtown Arts and Entertainment Working Group, which includes venue operators such as the Paramount Theater, The Fox Theater, Oakland School for the Arts, and the multitude of business owners and operators, commercial landlords, residents, business leaders and associations. These

efforts have significantly addressed the impacts of the shifts in the type, timing, and impacts of increased nighttime business activity and resulting spikes in property and violent crime.

In addition to our team's inter-agency coordination efforts, the Metropolitan Chamber and its membership, have been convening a diverse group of stakeholders since February of 2023 that represent small business owners, arts, education, developers, BIDs and CEO's – the goal is to have a strong cross section of business interests to ensure better coordination of efforts which in turn results in better coverage, better communication, and better outcomes. This group continues to meet, coordinate and advance community driven safety activities and solutions and meets regularly with City staff to communicate their needs and priorities. The Jack London Improvement District is a key partner to integrate these community driven solutions into a cohesive strategy that addresses, daytime and nighttime safety investments.

The Unity Council has also been an instrumental collaborator, participating and collaborating with Merchants Public Safety Committee, business operations and Ambassadors to develop a set of community informed solutions, in addition to coordination with law enforcement and with Staff. Staff attend the Merchant Public Safety meetings in the community and continue to be in communication on responses to ongoing concerns.

COORDINATION

The Budget Bureau and Office of the City Attorney were consulted in the preparation of this report and resolution, as well as the Department of Race and Equity.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: The proposed grants support community driven initiatives and interventions to create safe and welcoming spaces for residents, workers and visitors alike to enjoy during the busy holiday events and shopping season in Oakland's high priority commercial corridors, located in the Chinatown, Dimond, Downtown, Elmhurst, Fruitvale, Havenscourt, Laurel, Hegenberger, and Little Saigon neighborhoods. These corridors play a critical economic and cultural role in Oakland's vibrancy and in the visitor experience, particularly during the holiday shopping and travel season. It is expected that these grants will preserve if not enhance economic activity, retain jobs and support safer business operations during a critical time for the business community.

Environmental: The proposed grants in part support community driven streetscape improvements, which shift the psychology of a space, lead to less illegal dumping, and combined with safety personnel, benefit the environment and can be used effectively as crime prevention strategies by altering how people engage in and move about the physical environment.

Race & Equity: This initiative centers on the urgency from the Oakland business community and residents in high priority neighborhoods, defined as communities with disproportionate

concentrations of Black, Asian, Latinx and Indigenous, or low-income households. City policy also monitors Priority Neighborhoods where residents are affected by disparities in economic and health outcomes. In addition to these impacts, the Priority business corridors continue to experience a disproportionate increase in crime. In the current year, these have trended downward, in part due to more coordinated efforts. It is critical to sustain services to support this downward trend, particularly in communities which increasingly house businesses that have been disproportionately impacted relative to other parts of the City.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution 1) Awarding Grants For The 2025-2027 Corridor Safety Ambassador Program To Non-profit Organizations Black Cultural Zone, Downtown Oakland Association, Laurel District Association, Jack London Improvement District, Oakland Chinatown Improvement Council, Spanish Speaking Unity Council Of Alameda County, Inc, And Trybe Inc. For The Fiscal Years 2025-2027 In An Amount Set Forth In Table 1 For A Total Amount Not To Exceed Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000) To Immediately Enhance Safety Ambassador And Personnel And Safety Programs Throughout The Program Year In High Priority Neighborhood Business Corridors Including The Chinatown, Dimond, Downtown, Elmhurst, Laurel, Little Saigon, Havenscourt, Hegenberger, And Fruitvale Business Corridors And To Establish A Community Of Practice Linking City Services And Training For Safety Ambassadors And Personnel; And

2) Authorizing The City Administrator To Negotiate And Enter Into Grant Agreements With Grantees For Fiscal Years 2025-2027 With Authority To Extend The Terms Without Increasing The Amount Of The Grant Awards

For questions regarding this report, please contact Cristy Johnston Limon at 510-238-6193.

Respectfully submitted,


Ashleigh Kanat (Oct 21, 2025 16:54:30 PDT)

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Exhibit (1):

A: FY24-25 Program Impact Report

EXHIBIT A FY24-25 Program Impact Report

Downtown Safety Taskforce

The past Downtown Corridor Safety Grant are catalysts for additional investment; a “force multiplier” much like the technology infrastructure itself. Property owners have collectively provided tens of thousands of dollars of matching funds or expanded their systems to provide public right-of-way coverage to contribute to the system.

The following table summarizes the amplification of existing systems and the addition of new infrastructure that the 2023/2024 grant has made possible, on which the additional funding will expand:

	Current Installation Sites	Current Networked Cameras	New Installation Sites	Additional Networked Cameras	Additional Camera Views	Total Networked Views
Chinatown	12	32	5	+ 26	+ 41	73
Jack London	1	2	6	+ 40	+ 58	60
KONO	7	76	2	+ 9	+ 12	88
Uptown Downtown	20	200	0	0	0	200
	38	310	16	+ 75	+ 111	421

Fruitvale Business Corridor

The Safety Ambassadors program in the Fruitvale District community, managed by Peralta Service Corporation (PSC), aimed to ensure safety and foster a positive environment for customers, merchants, and vendors. Ambassadors engaged actively in various duties aimed at enhancing community comfort and security throughout their tenure.

The safety ambassador program in the Fruitvale district served:

- 50,000 residents and 15,000 households, part of the Fruitvale and the International Boulevard primary trade area, the area is home to many young families with children.
- 8,000 daily passengers, The Fruitvale Village is next to the Fruitvale BART station which is the East Bay's 4th busiest station.
- 365 businesses and non-profit organizations, including 45 health, education, and human services organizations, 20 establishments specialize in personal and business services and over 200 retail storefronts and restaurants which the corridor houses.
- International Boulevard, a major road that attracts 50,000 vehicles daily, is particularly vulnerable to property crime.

Fruitvale Public Safety Survey

Between December 2023 and February 2024, fifty-three business owners were surveyed to assess their sense of safety as the grantee The Unity Council sought to increase public safety measures by hiring safety ambassadors to patrol the area.

In the pre-survey, business owners reported high levels of feeling unsafe and crime victimization. Nearly three quarters (74%) stated they did not feel safe during their business hours, and about two-thirds (68%) also indicated that their employees did not feel safe. Additionally, forty-two percent of business owners reported that they had been a victim of a crime near their business, and nearly two-thirds (62%) stated they had witnessed a crime occur against others near their business in the last three months. Their feelings of unsafety were exacerbated by a lack of police and safety ambassadors in the area, with two thirds (66%) reporting that they had not seen police or safety ambassadors in the area in the last three months. These safety concerns have also impacted their business sales with almost three-quarters (72%) of business owners indicating they experienced a decrease in sales in the last three months.

Twenty-four business owners were then surveyed again in June 2024 to assess the impact that hiring safety ambassadors between December 2023 and March 2024 had on their perceived sense of safety. According to the post-survey, business owners reported lower levels of feeling unsafe and crime victimization. Half (50%) stated they did not feel safe during their business hours, but nearly two-thirds (63%) indicated that their employees did not feel safe during their business hours. Furthermore, a third (33%) stated they had been a victim of a crime near their business, and about half (58%) reported they had witnessed a crime occur against others near their business in the last three months. These changes could potentially be attributed to the hiring of safety ambassadors, since there was an increase in business owners who indicated they had seen more police and safety ambassadors between December and March, from thirty-four percent to forty-two percent.

Business owners also indicated more positive sales outcomes. Twenty-one percent of business owners who completed the post-survey indicated they saw an increase in sales, compared to only eight percent of business owners who completed the pre-survey.

Hegenberger Business Corridor

Ambassador provider, Black Cultural Zone (BCZ) recruited, trained and deployed 40 Oakland residents that provided conflict resolution, de-escalation and service connections along the Hegenberger business corridor and surrounding streets.

BCZ reports the following outcomes:

- Ambassadors completed nearly 3,000 interactions with businesses and corridor visitors. This reflects their continuous outreach efforts, including weekly check-ins with businesses along their routes.
- Ambassadors provided valuable information on various resources and initiatives,

including: BCZ Events, Shop Safe Oakland program, COVID-19 safety protocols, Business Network Support Network (BNSN), Small Business Alliance resources, Oak 311 non-emergency services, Keep Oakland Housed programs, Safety Ambassador Program, Market Hall information

- Ambassadors identified and reported concerns raised by businesses, such as:
 - Business counseling need
 - Public safety issues
 - Issues requiring reporting via Oak 311 (e.g., trash, blight)
- Observations: During their walks, ambassadors documented key observations to inform future program actions, including:
 - Trash and illegal dumping
 - Public drug use
 - Crime activity

Building a Safer, More Connected Community: The Safety Ambassador program goes beyond simply walking the corridors. It fosters a collaborative environment where residents, businesses, and ambassadors work together to create a safer, more vibrant community.

Dedicated Ambassadors: Our dedicated team of Safety Ambassadors walks the designated areas, engaging with residents and local businesses. This interaction builds trust and fosters a shared sense of responsibility for public safety. Beyond these walks, ambassadors become trusted resources, providing residents and businesses with critical information, assistance, and general support daily.

Life-Changing Opportunities: The program's impact extends beyond safety. We've hired and trained several unemployed, underemployed, and hard-to-employ individuals. Many ambassadors expressed immense gratitude for the chance to contribute to their community and regain a sense of belonging. The program provides valuable skills and training, helping them reintegrate into the community and secure future employment.

Collaborative Problem-Solving and Community Vision: Bringing together safety ambassadors and neighborhood messengers fosters a space for residents to share ideas and develop a collective vision for their community. Our January 2024 meeting resulted in a range of "Visionary Ideas" for East Oakland's International Boulevard, addressing issues like youth development, abandoned vehicles, arts & culture, and education. These ideas showcase the community's diverse needs and aspirations, providing valuable insights for future planning and development initiatives.

Looking Forward: The program continues to operate successfully in the Hegenberger and International Boulevard corridor, with ongoing assessments confirming positive community feedback and sustained safety improvements. BCZ is actively planning year three, focusing on expanding safety walks and fostering deeper partnerships for a more vibrant and secure community.