



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Sofia Navarro
Interim Director, Economic
and Workforce
Development
Department

SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL – Fiscal Year 2023-
24 Corridor Safety Ambassador
Grants

DATE: October 12, 2023

City Administrator Approval

Date: Oct 13, 2023

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator to Award Grant Agreements For The 2023-2024 Corridor Safety Ambassador Program To Non-profit Organizations Jack London Improvement District, Spanish Speaking Unity Council of Alameda County, Inc. And Black Cultural Zone Community Development Corporation For The Fiscal Year 2023-2024 As Set Forth In Table 1 To This Resolution For A Total Amount Not To Exceed One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) To Immediately Enhance Security Ambassador and Personnel And Safety Programs During The 2023 Holiday Shopping Season And Throughout The Program Year in High Priority Neighborhood Business Corridors Including The Downtown, Hegenberger, And Fruitvale, Commercial Corridors.

REASON FOR SUPPLEMENTAL

At the October 10, 2023 Community and Economic Development Committee meeting, the committee requested that the questions asked at the meeting be included in a Supplemental Report.

OVERVIEW

As detailed in the [Agenda Report](#), on June 26, 2023, the City Council allocated \$1,000,000 for the Community Ambassadors and Safety Improvements for Business Corridors for Fiscal Year 2023-24 (FY 23-24). These funds are to be awarded through the Business Development Division of the Economic Workforce and Development Department to support Corridor Safety activities in Oakland's Downtown, Hegenberger, and Fruitvale commercial corridors.

City Council
October 17, 2023

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Q.1. For clarity, describe the process that the staff went through to identify the three business corridors, not just an ambassador program, clarify the safety measures and potential ambassador programs that are being identified today.

Staff's process as outlined in the presentation and the staff report was quite simple. There is citywide demand for commercial corridor safety support, yet there are only finite resources (\$1,000,000) this fiscal year. Staff was not directed to move these dollars to certain neighborhoods. Rather, to maximize impact of the limited funds, staff looked at lessons learned through last year's investment in Shop Safe and saw that with an investment of funds targeted in a particular district at a particular time, these interventions made some impact. To identify the targeted neighborhoods for the FY 23-24 funds, staff first applied an equity lens, which the City is required to do, to identify the highest priority corridors, which led to Downtown, Fruitvale, Hegenberger. Staff also looked at the crime data, and the impact of the business and commercial crime, which shows an increase in property crime, particularly in those neighborhoods. Staff also looked at organizations that were ready to deploy safety interventions. The three identified corridors had organizations that are ready with interventions to stand up and deploy. Finally, staff looked at the potential to leverage the funds. For example, the Port of Oakland will support the effort to secure the Hegenberger Corridor, and in the Downtown, the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber has also committed to matching or at least raising another \$250,000. Being able to leverage those private investments was also a factor.

Q.2. Will ambassadors be coordinating with the Department of Violence Prevention (DVP) and with Oakland Police Department (OPD) for emergency situations. As we have heard from the public, ambassador programs are different, but they do not actually engage with violent crime?

Yes, staff will be coordinating with DVP and OPD. Our goal is not to duplicate efforts but to enhance them. We will be in conversation to coordinate and align our services to ensure that there is connection and coordination between those two departments and others.

Q.3. Were any ambassador programs or safety programs cut in any part of the city?

No, no ambassador programs were cut in any part of the City.

Q.4. What is this funding specifically for and will there be an evaluation on the outcomes from these funds?

In terms of the activities, each community has a portfolio of priorities that they have been developing. The scopes of work in the grants will outline the activities, the partnerships, the partners. In Downtown, for example, staff is working with five different communities and about 100 stakeholders. Some of their activities include working with Mr. Ersie Joyner's company, Ingenious Tactical Solutions, to conduct an assessment of the Downtown technology and networks to amplify communications. There will be about 300 cameras in the Downtown by the end of next year. How those will be coordinated and communicated both with law enforcement and amongst the different stakeholders in the community is one of the questions the Downtown would like to answer. Other Downtown communities have ambassador programs and would

extend them to fill gaps; for example, in Uptown/Downtown/Nighttime Economy the current shift end at 8:30 or 9:30 p.m. and the ambassador program could be extended to 3 a.m., when events end at the Fox and the Paramount. In the Fruitvale, the activities were developed with the merchant community, Council Member Gallo, and the Unity Council, building on the safety networks already in place and the Merchant Public Safety Committee. With the Black Cultural Zone in the Hegenberger corridor, there is a network of ambassadors that will work along the Hegenberger Loop. Each community has their take on what a safety ambassador would do in their community.

Each grant will require reporting and an evaluation of the outcomes. Staff will work with each community to develop impact metrics against the baseline (see response below regarding the baseline). With these metrics, staff will have more opportunities to course correct or grow and invest in successes, and partner with investors to deepen and invest in these programs.

Q.5. Will there be a baseline looking at a change in the number of incidents that occur over the same time last year? How will that be coordinated.

Staff chose several metrics to establish a baseline of services, including crime data, response time to 311 reports, vacancy rates, which are telling of a commercial corridor's vibrancy, and the number of engagements with the business community. The Black Cultural Zone tracked this data and reported over 500 contacts with the business community identifying three key priorities around safety, cleanliness, business services and engagement. Those would be helpful metrics to determine the impacts of this program as examples of how to measure success of this program.

Q.6. Can you detail outside of the ambassador program what are some of the other safety measures we are looking for infrastructure investments and safety measures.

Staff is in conversation in the Hegenberger corridor to use private security to augment OPD patrols, existing ambassadors, community engagement, and 311 reporting. Other safety measures include investing in securing areas by installing rollup doors, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessments and other methods where there is the most commercial crime, rental car companies, hotels, gas stations. Other communities would like to coordinate security camera networks and coordination with law enforcement.

Q7. Why is the Downtown area receiving \$500,000 or twice as much funding versus the other Corridors? Is \$1,000,000 enough for an ambassador program?

While \$1,000,000 is not nearly enough to stand up a robust, multi-pronged, community safety program, \$1,000,000 in targeted communities can provide critical public safety assistance. Community ambassadors are one tool, part of an array, and a spectrum of how you secure a corridor. Community ambassadors can help build capacity in the corridor, someone to work with the business community to support and connect with City services, but also serve as an advocate. Community ambassadors can also help with de-escalation, reporting, and being a helpful presence on the street. A long-term solution is coordination among City services, restoring baseline City services, not allowing for corridors to see double digit increases in property and violent crime. While \$1,000,000 is not enough to solve public safety, it is enough to

deter crime during particular times of the year that are critical for high revenue generating corridors.


The Downtown area has significantly grown since the last General Plan Update, and the geography has expanded from KONO to Jack London Square. Downtown has seen an increase of 5,000 residents and has important economic bases and a nighttime economy; the restaurants, bars and venues that are asking for support to continue to draw events to Oakland. While the cultural district in the Fruitvale is a tourist destination and Hegenberger is a highly traveled Gateway into Oakland, the Downtown was selected to receive more funding due to the higher density of residents and businesses and its importance to the City's economy.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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For questions regarding this report, please contact Cristy Johnston Limon, Deputy Director, Economic and Workforce Development, (510) 238- 6193.

Respectfully submitted,



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