

CITY OF OAKLAND



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Date: January 12, 2021
To: Members of City Council and Members of the Public
From: Vice Mayor Kaplan
Re: Adopt A Resolution Urging The National Park Service To Initiate An Exploratory Survey To Analyze The Appropriateness Of A National Park Or Monument In Locations Throughout The Greater San Francisco Bay Area Dedicated To The Black Panther Party And Urging President- Elect Joseph R. Biden To Utilize The Results Of The Exploratory Survey To Establish Such A National Park Or Monument In The Bay Area And Other Locations

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

I encourage you to support a resolution that would urge the National Park Service to initiate an exploratory survey to analyze the appropriateness of a National Park or Monument in locations throughout the Greater San Francisco Bay Area. This resolution would also urge President- Elect Joseph R. Biden to utilize the results of the exploratory survey to establish such a National Park or Monument in the Bay Area and other locations. There is no national recognition for the thousands of men, women, and young people who served within the Black Panther Party or for the social programs that were created by the Party, many of which still exist today as governmental programs. National recognition is an appropriate acknowledgement for the thousands of people who dedicated their lives to feed families in their communities, educate their children, provide free medical services, and train a generation of organizers, academics and politicians, and fight for a freer world.

In 1966, Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale founded The Black Panther Party (the Panthers or the Party). Originally called the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, it was established in response to wide-spread poverty, lack of economic and educational opportunities, and police oppression faced by the African American community in Oakland, California. Throughout the 1960's and 1970's the Panthers became a national force for social change, empowering a new generation of African Americans to seize political power, partnering with other disenfranchised communities around the country, and demonstrating that the legacy of slavery and racial oppression still prevented so many from experiencing the promise of prosperity and equality that is the foundation of the American dream.

The Black Panther Party is part of Oakland's identity, history and legacy and is home to the largest population of former Party members. While the City of Oakland is the birthplace of the Black Panther Party, the City played an important role in the establishment, growth and popularity of the Black Panther Party and there were countless Oakland residents that were members of the Black Panther Party as well as allies. Oakland's distinction as the Party's

founding City provides a sense of pride for previous and current residents and is often displayed in contemporary art, music, literature and clothing. The first Black Panther Party Office (currently the home of the It's All Good Bakery) was located at 5622 Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

We should commemorate the Black Panther Party, a rich and historic aspect of Bay Area and Oakland history, by urging the National Park Service to establish a National Park or monument in the Party's honor in the Bay Area and other locations. I ask you to join me in this effort.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Kaplan", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Vice Mayor Rebecca Kaplan
Oakland City Councilmember At Large

City Council
January 12, 2021
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