

CITY OF OAKLAND



CITY HALL • 1 FRANK H. OGAWA PLAZA • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612

Date: March 15, 2022

To: Members of City Council and Members of the Public

From: Councilmember Fife, Vice Mayor Kaplan, Pro Tem Thao, and Council President Bas

Re: **Resolution Establishing Objectives To Scale Up And Make More Visible The City Of Oakland's Youth Summer Jobs Program**

Dear Colleagues and Members of the Public,

Oakland residents are facing numerous issues, including growing economic inequality as wages have stagnated while the cost of living continues to rise, leaving Black, Brown, Indigenous, Asian and other historically marginalized families in very difficult economic straits. These same communities have also historically lacked access to meaningful employment opportunities, especially young people in the flatland neighborhoods. The City of Oakland has sought to address the issue of youth unemployment through the Summer Youth Employment Program, which places young people ages 16-21 in various paid positions to give them an opportunity to gain work experience that will prepare them to join the workforce while earning wages to help them meet some of their needs. This resolution establishes objectives to scale up and make more visible the Summer Youth Employment Program by: (1) seeking state funding, leveraging private sources, and prioritizing additional allocations during the mid-cycle budget amendment process; (2) better integrating the administration, funding, contracting, and coordination of the program; (3) creating a robust outreach plan to help popularize the program; and (4) expanding City of Oakland positions for youth to summer and year-round work.

Oakland's Summer Youth Employment program relies on various fund sources such as the General Purpose Fund, the Measure HH Fund, discretionary allocations from the Council, and private and philanthropic contributions, leading to inconsistent levels of investment when the level of need has continued to increase. This has resulted in fluctuating youth participation over the years. Additionally, the current structure of the program is decentralized and relies heavily on contracting out to agencies for youth services, making it difficult to assess progress and impact. Furthermore, the involvement of several in-City and outside entities in program functions, make it increasingly complicated and can contribute to limited accessibility for communities most in need.

This resolution outlines ways to better streamline the program by establishing a website that is specifically dedicated to the administration of the program and contains clear information for young people hoping to find employment, a central repository listing all employment opportunities for young people a part of the program, potential employers, and other private entities that seek to support the program financially. The resolution also recommends a robust outreach effort to disseminate information about the program and available positions through social media advertisements, physical mailers and postings, print and broadcast media outlets, and partnering

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community-based organizations to ensure the most underserved and under-resourced communities have access to the program.

Moreover, in advancing this program, our resolution seeks to expand the City's role as an employer by using the Summer Youth Employment Program as a pathway to year-round employment, including developing apprenticeship programs in City departments to create pipelines to permanent, full-time positions within the Offices of the City Council, Parks and Recreation and Youth Development, Department of Transportation, and Fire Department etc.

Summer jobs are not only a means to earn money but can serve as a tool to address public safety concerns and build connections between young people and their community. A recent [study](#) of youth summer jobs programs in major cities such as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago, found that summer jobs programs significantly reduce participants' risk of committing crimes. The findings in the study align with the City of Oakland's own work to reimagine public safety that underscores that crime prevention starts with creating the conditions for true safety, including providing real opportunities for those who would not otherwise have them.

To accomplish the objectives related to streamlining and expanding the Summer Youth Employment Program, this resolution calls on the City Council to consider prioritizing funds for the program during the mid-cycle budget amendment process and for the City Council, City Administrator, and appropriate city staff to coordinate with our lobbyists to conduct outreach to our state representatives to bring in additional funds.

We respectfully request your support for this resolution.

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