



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Floyd Mitchell
Chief of Police

SUBJECT: OPD 2025 DNA Backlog Reduction
Program

DATE: October 7, 2025

City Administrator Approval


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

Date: 10/22/2025

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution: 1) Authorizing The City Administrator To Accept And Appropriate Grant Funds In An Amount Not To Exceed Three Hundred Four Thousand And Ten Dollars (\$304,010) From The U.S. Department Of Justice, Office Of Justice Programs, Bureau Of Justice Assistance, For Implementation Of The FY (Fiscal Year) 2025 DNA Capacity Enhancement For Backlog Reduction (CEBR) Program For The Oakland Police Department (OPD); And

2) Waiving The Competitive Request For Proposal/Qualifications (RFP/Q) And The Local/Small Local Business Enterprise Program Requirements For The Purchases Of DNA Typing Supplies From: (A) Qiagen For Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000), (B) Promega Corporation For One Hundred Eighteen Thousand Four Hundred Fifty-Six Dollars (\$118,456), (C) Nichevision Forensics, LLC For Forty Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$40,250), (D) Life Technologies Corporation For Thirty-Three Thousand Five Hundred Fifty-Four Dollars (\$33,554), (E) Hamilton Company For Twenty-Three Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$23,550), And (F) Aurora Biomed Inc. For Thirteen Thousand Two Hundred Dollars (\$13,200).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Adoption of this proposed resolution will allow OPD to accept the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction grant of \$304,010, which will fund the purchase of DNA typing supplies and annual maintenance of DNA analysis instruments and equipment. The OPD Crime Laboratory (Crime Lab), with these grant funds, will be able to decrease the biological evidence analysis turnaround time and the backlog of cases. This resolution also calls for waiving the City's Advertising and Competitive Bidding Requirements because of the need to purchase specialized laboratory-validated DNA typing equipment, reagents, and supplies available only from specific vendors.

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

DNA Forensic Analysis is a cornerstone of modern law enforcement investigations. DNA is the hereditary material found in nearly every cell in the human body. Body fluids such as blood, semen, and saliva can be left behind at a crime scene. Evidence collected from crime scenes is submitted for DNA analysis for the purpose of trying to identify the type of body fluid and origin of the biological material. The DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction (CEBR) Program is a formula grant created by the DOJ/OJP/BJA to assist laboratories that conduct DNA analysis.

The aggregate amount of FY 2025 funds expected to be awarded to eligible applicants from each state was based on a determination by the BJA and then distributed among the eligible applicants within the State, of which \$304,010 was allocated to OPD.

The goal of the program is to improve DNA laboratory infrastructure and analysis capacity so that DNA samples can be processed efficiently and effectively. The program also provides continuing education courses and training associated with DNA analyses required by rules governing the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), as well as funds to analyze backlogged forensic DNA casework samples. Improvements are necessary and critical to reduce current DNA backlogs, prevent future increases, and to help the criminal justice system reach its full potential in the utilization of DNA technology.

Backlogged case requests from homicides, sexual assaults, robberies, assaults, and property crime cases will be enrolled into the FY 2025 DNA Backlog Reduction Program. The eligible DNA profiles obtained from evidence in these cases will be entered into CODIS. DNA profiles entered into CODIS have resulted in an approximate seventy-three percent hit rate.¹ This will assist not only Oakland Police Department investigators, but also the Alameda County District Attorney, and other law enforcement, prosecutorial, and judicial agencies in the surrounding area.

DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction Program History

The City Council previously authorized acceptance of backlog grant funds almost every year for the last 19 years. The last five Council-adopted resolutions are listed below.²:

- [Resolution No. 90447 C.M.S., dated October 1, 2024](#)
- [Resolution No. 89892 C.M.S., dated September 19, 2023](#)
- [Resolution No. 89459 C.M.S., dated November 1, 2022](#)
- [Resolution No. 89011 C.M.S., dated February 1, 2022](#); and
- [Resolution No. 88358 C.M.S., dated November 10, 2020](#).

Privacy Policy for Biometric Technology

¹ "Hit rate" is defined as that portion of cases with DNA profiles submitted to CODIS in which an association to a named individual or case-to-case (either solved or unsolved) is made to a DNA profile(s) in the database.

² The resolution accompanying this report lists all Council-adopted resolutions.

A list of technologies was introduced by the Crime Lab to the Privacy Advisory Commission (PAC) where both a Surveillance Impact Report and a Biometric Technology Use Policy for DNA Instrumentation and Analysis Software were provided to and recommended by the PAC. The City Council approved the Use Policy and via the adoption of [Resolution No. 88358 C.M.S.](#) on December 1, 2020.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Adoption of this resolution aligns with the citywide priorities of **holistic community safety and responsive, trustworthy government**. Violent crimes which occur in Oakland and surrounding areas cause trauma as well as negative economic impacts for victims and their families. The ability to solve crimes and close cases allows the victims to have closure and, in some cases, financial compensation. The funding from this grant provides the Crime Lab's Forensic Biology Unit with expanded means to examine and analyze over one hundred ninety-four DNA cases, which in turn will increase holistic community safety by providing investigative leads to apprehend violent individuals. The grant funding will further enable the Department to respond to these violent crimes and increase community trust of the Department. The Crime Lab will focus on four goals with the implementation of the FY 2025 DNA Backlog Reduction Program grant initiative:

Goal #1: Reduce Backlog

The analysis of the backlogged cases will include case evaluation, biological evidence examination and screening, DNA typing, technical review, and data entry into CODIS. A minimum of one hundred ninety-four (194) backlogged case requests will be analyzed using CEBR 2025 funded DNA typing reagents and supplies. The supplies include DNA extraction kits, quantitation kits, and amplification kits for DNA digestion and typing. The funding for these reagents and supplies will augment the limited crime laboratory budget, thus increasing our ability to examine more items ultimately reducing the backlog.

Goal #2: Purchase Service and Maintenance Contracts and License Upgrades for DNA Typing Software and DNA Typing Instruments

The Crime Laboratory will use grant funds to purchase annual service contracts for existing liquid handler robots, real-time polymerase chain reaction (PCR) quantitation, and genetic analyzer instruments and operating software, and for the purchase of annual contracts for the upgrade and maintenance of existing DNA typing software. Service contracts and licensing upgrades are vital to the laboratory's ability to generate DNA profiles in a timely manner. Thus, the ability to maintain and/or upgrade instruments and software will increase the capacity of conducting DNA typing on case samples.

Waiver of the multi-step solicitation process and the LBE/SLBE utilization requirements

Ordinance Nos. [13640 C.M.S.](#) and [13647 C.M.S.](#) require a minimum 50-percent (50%) Local Business Enterprise/Small Local Business Enterprise (LBE/SLBE) participation for all purchase of commodities, goods, and associated services for contracts valued at or over fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) when there are at least three certified business listed in the industry, trade, or profession that constitutes a major category of work. However, the Council may waive the City's LBE/SLBE requirements due to a lack or limited availability of

SLBEs or LBEs and because it is in the best interests of the City to do so.

Section 2.04.050.1.5 (Bid Procedure) explains that the City can make exceptions to its competitive bidding process when City Council finds and determines that it is in the best interest of the City. Purchasing DNA supplies and typing instruments from vendors other than those who manufacture DNA kits and instruments used by the Crime Laboratory would not be acceptable for this federal grant. The Forensic Biology Unit has conducted extensive validation studies as part of the selection process in determining which typing kits and instruments to implement in OPD's evidence processing scheme. The use of other products which have not been validated would hence violate the FBI DNA QAS; OPD therefore believes that waiving the competitive bidding process in this instance is in the best interest of the City. The Crime Lab must adhere to FBI DNA QAS standards to enter DNA profiles into CODIS for searching. The reagents to be purchased through this grant include DNA extraction kits (Qiagen), DNA quantitation kits (Promega), DNA typing kits (Promega), and typing software (NicheVision). These reagents, software, and hardware from these specific vendors have undergone rigorous validation studies, and no vendor substitutions are acceptable.

FISCAL IMPACT

The table below details how OPD will utilize the DOJ/OJP/BJA FY 2025 DNA Backlog Reduction Grant Program funds. **Table 1** lists the use of funding for technical supplies and procurement contracts.

Table 1 Use of Funding for Technical Supplies and Procurement Contracts

Budget Category	Amount
Technical Supplies	
DNA Typing Supplies (Qiagen)	\$75,000
DNA Typing Supplies (Promega)	\$118,456
<i>Total Technology and Supplies</i>	\$193,456
Procurement Contracts	
Software Upgrade and Maintenance (NicheVision Forensics)	\$40,250
Performance Maintenance (Life Technologies)	\$33,554
Performance Maintenance (Hamilton Company)	\$23,550
Performance Maintenance (Aurora Biomed)	\$13,200
<i>Total Procurement Contracts</i>	\$110,554
TOTAL	\$304,010

The \$304,010 in grant funds from the DOJ/OJP/BJA for the implementation of the FY 2025 DNA Backlog Reduction Grant Program shall be appropriated in the Federal Grant Fund (2112), Criminalistics Division Organization (102610), Criminalistics Division Program (PS05), in a Project Number (TBD). The grant starts on October 1, 2025, for a 24-month duration, and ends on September 30, 2027.

Fiscal Years	Fund Source	Organization	Account	Project	Program	Amount
2025-2027	2112	102610	TBD	TBD	PS05	\$304,010

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

No outreach was deemed necessary for the proposed policy action beyond the standard City Council agenda noticing procedures, because no new Departmental policy will be required in order to accept the grant funds.

COORDINATION

The Budget Bureau and the Office of the City Attorney were consulted by OPD on the production of this report as well as the accompanying resolution.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: There are no economic opportunities associated with this report.

Environmental: There are no environmental opportunities associated with this report.

Race and Equity: Provisions for continuing education and supplies funded by this grant will enhance OPD's ability to analyze biological evidence in criminal cases in a timelier fashion. The public safety for all Oakland residents and visitors is enhanced through greater OPD investigative capacity, with science-based methods which mitigates potential bias.

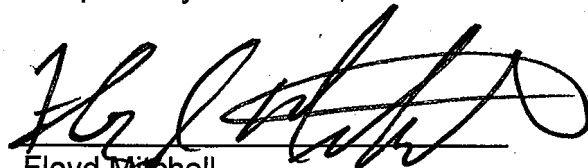
ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution: 1) Authorizing The City Administrator To Accept And Appropriate Grant Funds In An Amount Not To Exceed Three Hundred Four Thousand And Ten Dollars (\$304,010) From The U.S. Department Of Justice, Office Of Justice Programs, Bureau Of Justice Assistance, For Implementation Of The FY (Fiscal Year) 2025 DNA Capacity Enhancement For Backlog Reduction (CEBR) Program For The Oakland Police Department (OPD); And

2) Waiving The Competitive Request For Proposal/Qualifications (RFP/Q) And The Local/Small Local Business Enterprise Program Requirements For The Purchases Of DNA Typing Supplies From: (A) Qiagen For Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000), (B) Promega Corporation For One Hundred Eighteen Thousand Four Hundred Fifty-Six Dollars (\$118,456), (C) Nichevision Forensics, LLC For Forty Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$40,250), (D) Life Technologies Corporation For Thirty-Three Thousand Five Hundred Fifty-Four Dollars (\$33,554), (E) Hamilton Company For Twenty-Three Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$23,550), And (F) Aurora Biomed Inc. For Thirteen Thousand Two Hundred Dollars (\$13,200).

For questions regarding this report, please contact Bonnie Cheng, Supervising Criminalist, at (510) 238-3386 x4904.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Floyd Mitchell', is written over a horizontal line.

Floyd Mitchell
Chief of Police
Oakland Police Department

Reviewed by:

Dr. Sandra Sachs, Crime Laboratory Manager,
OPD, Criminalistics Division

Dr. Tracey Jones, Police Services Manager
OPD, Research and Planning

Prepared by:

Bonnie Cheng, Supervising Criminalist
OPD, Criminalistics Division Forensic Biology Unit

City Council
November 4, 2025