



# AGENDA REPORT

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**TO:** The Office of the Mayor and The  
Oakland City Council

**FROM:** Councilmember Charlene  
Wang, District 2

**SUBJECT:** Honoring ‘Co-Founders: The Musical’    **DATE:** July 22, 2025

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**ADOPT A RESOLUTION HONORING THE CREATORS OF ‘CO-FOUNDERS: THE MUSICAL’ FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OAKLAND’S CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE, AND FOR ADVANCING THE CITY’S VALUES OF INNOVATION, RACIAL JUSTICE, AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT THROUGH THE PERFORMING ARTS**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This resolution honors Ryan Nicole Austin, Beau Lewis, and Adesha Adefela, the creators of Co-Founders: The Musical, a critically acclaimed theatrical production with deep ties to Oakland’s creative ecosystem. The musical follows the story of two unlikely co-founders—a Black woman coder from Oakland and a privileged Ivy League dropout—as they navigate the tech startup world, exploring themes of racial and gender equity, power, ambition, and systemic bias.

The resolution recognizes their work as aligned with Oakland’s long-standing commitment to equity, innovation, and the transformative power of the arts.

## **BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY**

The City of Oakland has long been a hub for artists and creatives. In recent years, Oakland-born artists have captivated audiences worldwide. From Ryan Coogler's films to Too \$hort's music. The City of Oakland has, whenever possible, aimed to honor the creatives who call or have called Oakland home. This resolution continues the strong tradition of support from the Oakland City government and the city's creative community.

July 22, 2025

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact of adopting this resolution. The City of Oakland aims to uplift, when possible, the work of the city’s creative community. Adopting proposed resolutions, such as this one, reinforces Oakland’s commitment to fostering a healthy and productive environment for artists. By honoring the City’s rich history, the work and stories of Oaklanders past and present can inspire the next generation of local artists. Oakland is home to a diverse range of artists from across the artistic spectrum. By celebrating the rich history of Oakland artists, the city sends a message to potential artists and investors, declaring its commitment to supporting emerging talent in all forms. Thus, attracting more residents and businesses, such as those involved in filming and film production, including soundstage work, graphic design, wardrobe, set design, and film training.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

No public outreach was deemed necessary for this proposal beyond the mandated public notice requirements.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

***Economic:*** Arts and entrepreneurship are essential pillars of Oakland’s economy. This resolution honors the creativity and innovation that support commerce.

***Environmental:*** No adverse environmental impact is expected to result from adopting this resolution.

***Race & Equity:*** This resolution uplifts a work celebrating racial and gender equity in the technology sector.

## **ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**ADOPT A RESOLUTION HONORING THE CREATORS OF ‘CO-FOUNDERS: THE MUSICAL’ FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OAKLAND’S CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE, AND FOR ADVANCING THE CITY’S VALUES OF INNOVATION, RACIAL JUSTICE, AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT THROUGH THE PERFORMING ARTS**