



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Edward D. Reiskin
City Administrator

FROM: Alexa Jeffress
Director, Economic &
Workforce Development

SUBJECT: **Small Business Support
Recommendations**

DATE: June 13, 2022

City Administrator Approval

Date: **Jun 21, 2022**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive A Report And Recommendations From The City Administrator On Implementation Of The Recommendations From The 2017 Small Business Roundtable Task Force, Including An Update On What Actions Have Been Taken In Line With The Recommendations Regarding Small Business Support And Services; And An Update On The 2015 Resolution In Support Of Worker Cooperatives In The City Of Oakland

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the April 24, 2022 Rules and Legislation Committee, the Committee requested an informational report along with recommendations associated with small business support from: 1) 2017 Small Business Task Force; 2) 2015 Worker Cooperatives; and 3) the 2021 Economic Recovery Plan.

This informational report provides a summary of the three sets of recommendations from these efforts, shares updates on steps that the City of Oakland (City) has taken to implement these ideas and makes additional recommendations for how to support small businesses moving forward. A summary chart of the findings and recommendations of these reports can be found in **Appendix A**.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

In conjunction with the Progressive and Equitable Business Tax measure proposal that is being recommended for the November 2022 Ballot, the City Council has requested to receive an informational report that summarizes the implementation of recommendations associated with

small business support from: 1) the 2017 Small Business Task Force 2) the 2015 Worker Cooperatives Resolution¹; and 3) 2021 Economic Recovery Plan².

Listed below is the summary of the three requested small business activities over the past seven years:

1) 2017 Small Business Task Force

In 2017, the City Council established a Small Business Task Force (Task Force). The 2017 Small Business Task Force was the first of this series of cross-sector, multi-agency business collaborations in Oakland. The Oakland Chamber of Commerce joined 13 business owners, City Councilmembers, and the Mayor's Office to meet in four Task Force meetings and multiple sub-committee meetings to discuss the issues affecting local and small businesses. Their findings and recommendations were reported to the Community and Economic Development (CED) Committee on April 11, 2017³. The CED Committee continued the item, and it was not presented to City Council for formal action⁴.

The 2017 Small Business Task Force presented ten (10) short-term and long-term recommendations which are listed below:

1. Re-establish a Small Business Commission
2. Recharter, Revamp & Retool the Business Assistance Center
3. Small Business Data Collection, Analysis and Insight
4. Small Business Marketing Campaign
5. Improve Permitting Process for Small Businesses
6. Craft Public Safety Strategy for Small Businesses
7. Subsidies and Financial Support
8. Build Equity into City's Business Improvement District (BID) Strategy
9. Commercial Rent Planning & Stabilization
10. Workforce Development Programs

While the City Council did not take formal actions on the Task Force recommendations, the recommendations were generally captured and woven into: the City Council adopted 2018-2021 Economic Development Strategy,⁵ which included a report out of implementation activities; the Economic Recovery Plan and additional recommendations, which are discussed below, Specific highlights of ongoing City activities are discussed under the Policy Alternatives section of this report.

2) Resolution to Support Cooperatives

¹ <https://oakland.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2392277&GUID=5CD0A79C-4386-48FA-B5C5-F163EA101C7E>

² https://cao-94612.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Economic-Recovery-Plan_FINAL.pdf

³ <https://oakland.legistar.com/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=543395&GUID=23360046-A4AE-442C-8ECE-A032E5FDF68D&Search=>

⁴ <https://oakland.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3011199&GUID=F7E9A370-752C-49B9-8621-7A0E586123AC&Options=&Search=>

⁵ <https://www.oaklandca.gov/projects/economic-development-strategy>

On September 08, 2015, the City Council approved a resolution supporting the development and growth of worker cooperatives⁶.

As referenced in the Council Resolution, the Business Assistance Center provided referral services and collaborated with organizations supporting the development and formation of worker cooperatives. The Economic & Workforce Development Department (EWDD) continues to provide referral services to Project Equity⁷ for business ventures who are interested in formation of a worker cooperative.

3) Economic Recovery Plan

Building on the foundation established by the work of the Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council (OERAC)⁸ and the COVID-19 Racial Disparities Task Force⁹, EWDD developed the 2021-2022 Economic Recovery Plan. The Economic Recovery Plan is meant to serve as a blueprint for achieving short-term goals to create a more equitable and inclusive economy.

The Economic Recovery Plan was distributed to City Council on September 15, 2021¹⁰ and identified 5 core areas of recovery focus which are:

1. Priority 1: Financial Readiness and Stability – Equitable Small Business Support - Connecting small Oakland businesses to ongoing federal, state, and local recovery funding sources, focusing on Black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC)-owned businesses who had the greatest barriers to successful applications.
2. Priority 2: Equity in Contracting and Grant Making - Integrating vendor assistance and supporting the interdepartmental City effort to increase racial and gender equity in local business contracting and grantmaking.
3. Priority 3: Social Cohesion--Youth Engagement and the Creative Economy - Investing in social cohesion through Cultural Affairs programming such as the Neighborhood Voices grant program and strengthening the creative economy.
4. Priority 4: Growing Demand and Investment - Growing local demand, developing targeted business attraction strategies and positioning Oakland for industrial innovation and investment.
5. Priority 5: Workforce Development - Increasing the number of adults and youth in Oakland's Workforce Development Board and citywide job training programs, continuing to target ZIP codes with the highest unemployment rates.

Oakland's focus on small and local businesses over the years enabled an immediate response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Since March of 2020, EWDD staff have supported nearly 3,600 workers, small businesses, vendors, artists, and non-profit organizations suffering economic hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic with grants, protective equipment, technical assistance, and other support programs.

⁶ <https://oakland.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=4017326&GUID=93C248E2-B52E-4EB0-B410-3BEA197AD1BA>

⁷ <https://project-equity.org/>

⁸ https://cao-94612.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Final-ERAC-Report_feb26-web-small_2021-02-26-213536.pdf

⁹ <https://www.oaklandca.gov/news/2020/local-leaders-announce-covid-19-racial-disparities-task-force>

¹⁰ <https://cao-94612.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Info-Memo-Economic-Recovery-Plan-2021-22.pdf>

The Economic Recovery Plan expands on the 2017 Task Force and suggestions for improving regulatory services and increasing cohesion. Specific highlights of ongoing City activities that tie into Recovery Plan recommendations are discussed under the “Analysis and Policy Alternatives” section below. These recommendations advance the Citywide priority of **housing, economic and cultural security**.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Small business support recommendations over the past seven years have highlighted areas of business concern, which include but are not limited to: public safety, illegal dumping/public space cleanliness, homeless encampments, City permitting, land/rent costs, attracting and retaining qualified employees. Recently, in April 2022, the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce relaunched the Oakland Small Business Council, which included data gathered through a survey from Oakland small businesses and highlighted many similar focus areas, including the need for enhanced website support and business technology, marketing, workforce and staffing issues, public safety and access to capital¹¹. Business and workforce support programs are necessary to keep Oakland’s economic vibrancy and employment opportunities for Oakland residents.

The following discussion highlights a number of City programs and activities that have been undertaken to address the issues raised by the business community and outlined above.

1. Recharter, Revamp & Retool the Business Assistance Center

EWDD’s Business Development Division launched the Remote Business Assistance Center pilot in September 2021, now called the Neighborhood Business Assistance program¹². A key service of the Neighborhood Business Assistance program is to bring City business services to the community such as assistance with permitting. Since September 2021, City staff have held free, thirty-minute one-on-one appointments for entrepreneurs and business owners at the following five neighborhood libraries, which were selected based on suitability of available City facilities, anticipated interest within the business community and equitable access for previously under-served neighborhoods.

- West Oakland
- 81st Avenue
- César E. Chávez
- Golden Gate
- Eastmont

In January 2022, a 6th location in the Dalziel Building in Downtown Oakland was added and has proven to be among the top-serving locations.

In 2021, survey respondents in the Neighborhood Business Assistance program identified as 80% African American, 60% female, and 90% Oakland residents. Demographics gathered through the survey demonstrate that the program is reaching entrepreneurs and business owners who identify as BIPOC and women. By making appointments available in the neighborhoods, we can deliver services in historically underinvested areas of East Oakland and

¹¹ <https://www.oaklandchamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Oakland-Chamber-Small-Business-Council-Re-Launch-pptx-1.pdf>

¹² <https://cao-94612.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Neighborhood-Business-Assistance-Program-Update.pdf>

West Oakland and address digital barriers by offering in person rather than virtual support. Through staff and partnerships with business support organizations, the City has been able to offer in- person assistance in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Assistance in other languages is provided using the City's over-the-phone interpretation service.

Interested businesses can visit: www.oaklandca.gov/bizhelp to schedule a free appointment.

2. Data Collection, Analysis, and Insight

Recommendations from the OERAC restated the need for small business data, updating the focus of the 2017 Task Force. Recommendation 4.5 specifically said "Government should invest resources in gathering real time qualitative and quantitative race and ethnicity data related to this crisis and use the Racial Equity Analysis methodology to center those who are most impacted to effectively target recovery policies." The OERAC also specified the need for "focused, ongoing and participatory research to assess the immediate survival needs of businesses, their post-crisis stabilization, and the impact of new programs on their revenues."

In developing the Economic Recovery Plan, City staff engaged the business community through one-on-one conversations and an online survey during the first and second quarters of 2021, which received more than 1,100 responses. In addition to the OERAC, ten business service organizations, including Oakland's multicultural chambers of commerce and Visit Oakland, 48 small businesses (72 percent owned by people of color and 64 percent women-owned) and three community service organizations across the city (East, Downtown, and West Oakland) contributed their ideas for the Plan. Despite outreach by staff and partners, many business owners reported a lack of contact and support.

In 2021, the Department of Revenue included a question on the Business License Renewal form requesting race and gender data of the business owner. An estimated 30-40% of businesses owners provided an answer. EWDD is working with the Department of Revenue to improve data collection methods including exploring models for partnering with on-the-ground BIPOC business associations to increase the response to the demography question. This work also includes identifying the data to map local business corridors, businesses, employers and representatives in majority Black and Brown neighborhoods.

3. Marketing Campaign

Between May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2022, the Think Oakland First marketing campaign has encouraged residents to shop locally and help Oakland's economy recover. The campaign included focused social media placements in late Spring. Staff secured Visit Oakland as the sponsor for the first-ever holiday window decorating contest for merchants. About 2 dozen merchants from across Oakland participated and nearly 700 votes were cast. Holiday season marketing placements generated 206,000 social media impressions, 1 million digital ad impressions, 23 million outdoor impressions and 827,000 print impressions as well as generated \$48,000 in earned media placements.

A key success was the adoption of #ThinkOaklandFirst by multiple partners, including BIDs. In support of Visit Oakland's Restaurant Week, staff secured outdoor billboard placements that provided more than 12 million impressions for the 10 day-long promotion supporting the restaurant industry. In the spring, EWDD brought together Community Kitchens and the Metro Chamber for the Town Love social media campaign to introduce the Dining for Justice program in time for Valentine's Day.

4. Improve the Permitting Process

Early this year, the Planning and Building Department (PBD) opened online permits to residents and businesses at <https://www.oaklandca.gov/services/online-permit-center>. Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing applications, solar installations, zoning clearances, re-roofing permits and several others are available online. In November 2021, PBD launched two new record types that allow applicants to apply for nearly all other project categories. The new online permitting system will improve efficiency, since staff will no longer have to transcribe information from applicant submittals, and increase transparency, as the applicant will receive a record number that can be used to track the project. Furthermore, having information recorded directly allows PBD staff to utilize the software's workflow and reporting functionalities to more quickly assess issues with permit processing.

In August, PBD rolled-out the first round of "project landing pages" to assist applicants with their projects at <https://www.oaklandca.gov/services/get-started-on-your-project>. The goal is to have landing pages for common project types that will enable an applicant to see all of the requirements for a given project and to be able to move from that page to either submitting their application directly in Accela, or to create an appointment with PBD staff using Qmatic, the customer queuing and management platform, as appropriate.

In addition to the project landing pages, PBD recently created an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) page to provide greater visibility into ADA requirements under the Building Code at <https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/americans-with-disabilities-act-ada-compliance>.

5. Public Safety Strategy

City staff launched the Neighborhood Enhanced Service Teams (NEST) program to focus interdepartmental services on Police Beats with high levels of gun violence. In 2021, staff engaged 700 residents through in-person conversations, and about 2,500 other homes received a packet with information about City services from various City departments, including workforce and business resources. At the direction of the City Council, staff also created an Abandoned Auto Task Force to develop and implement recommendations for reducing the number of abandoned autos on the streets of Oakland.

In addition, multiple departments are currently collaborating on commercial corridor pilot project focused on blight elimination (illegal dumping, abandoned vehicles, graffiti removal, public market activation, private commercial building investment) in West Oakland off Peralta Street.

Lastly, following Council direction in Resolution No. 88717 C.M.S., as amended and adopted on June 24, 2021, staff is supporting development of an equipment grant for security cameras in District 6 and District 7 which is currently under review by the Privacy Advisory Commission.

6. Subsidies and Financial Support

In response to the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020, following direction from City Council, EWDD administered a number of Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act-funded grant and other programs to support individuals, businesses, and organizations at risk of displacement. More than 2,200 individuals, businesses,

and organizations at risk of displacement received nearly \$17.5 million in emergency funds through City CARES Act-funded grant programs.¹³

In July 2020, EWDD received \$550,000 from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) to recapitalize the City's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). This funding directly addresses the OERAC's Recommendation 4.5 to recognize "the structural barriers to capital for Black-owned and other POC owned businesses and design programs to address them." The City has partnered with the Feed the Hunger Fund to offer loans up to \$100,000 at low- and no-interest to Oakland's small business community.

Recently, on June 7, 2022, the City Council authorized staff to amend the Façade and Tenant Improvement Program (FIP/TIP) to facilitate equitable access to available funding for small businesses and property owners to make improvements to their commercial storefronts.

7. Building Equity into the City's BID Strategy

City Council authorized \$175,000 in the FY 2021-2023 biennial budget to provide support for BID formation in Council Districts 4, 6, and 7. EWDD is currently interviewing BID consultants to provide advice and guidance for all stages of merchant organizing along key commercial corridors in these districts. The Request for Proposals (RFP) was advertised in Spring 2022; a consultant will be selected who has competency in providing technical assistance to BIDs and organizing strategy to business associations and corridor champions.

8. Commercial Rent Planning & Stabilization

In partnership with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area (LCCR), the City provided commercial lease negotiation assistance to small business owners since 2020. Lease negotiation webinar recordings and the presentation slides are available in multiple languages. Free one-on-one consultations on commercial leases are offered through LCCR's Legal Services for Entrepreneurs program.¹⁴

9. Workforce Development Programs

During the COVID-19 pandemic, EWDD's Workforce Development Division delivered services online. The Division conducted three virtual jobs fairs, operated "Rapid Response" services online for laid off workers, and launched Metrix, a new free online job training platform in multiple languages with CARES Act Funds¹⁵. Unemployed and underemployed Oakland residents can also access the City's network of America's Job Center of California (AJCC), supported by federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds, and youth aged 16-21 interested in summer employment can access paid work experience. Visit <https://oaklandca.gov/wdb>.

With additional funding from City Council in the recently adopted budget, Workforce staff is working to increase the number of adult jobseekers trained through Oakland Workforce Development Board-funded training programs and supporting job training and placement in fast-growing industries including Healthcare, Construction, IT, and Hospitality, consistent with the

¹³ City of Oakland Overview of CARES Act Expenditures, https://cao-94612.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/21-0402-CARES-Act-Info-Memo-with-attachments_2021-04-03-004652.pdf

¹⁴ <https://lccsf.org/get-assistance/legal-services-for-entrepreneurs/>

¹⁵ <https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/free-online-courses-help-you-prepare-to-get-back-to-work>

current Local Workforce Development Plan¹⁶. EWDD also hired an Executive FUSE Fellow for fiscal year (FY) 2021-2022 to complete an asset mapping and evaluation of all city-wide adult and youth employment programming to align strategies and identify opportunities.

10. Equity in Contracting

EWDD is supporting the interdepartmental effort, led by the City Administrator's Office and Department of Workplace and Employment Standards¹⁷ to increase access for local BIPOC and women-owned businesses and nonprofits to participate in government contracts. With funding support authorized by City Council, in 2021 the City has launched a one-year construction contractor support program in partnership with Oakland based Construction Resource Center for technical assistance and mentorship program. In addition, with funding support from a federal EDA grant, an additional contractor support program will be launching shortly with support services provided by Merriweather & Williams Insurance Services.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations represent initial thoughts on how to expand on the the various recommendations as outlined above.

1. Re-establish a Small Business Commission

If dedicated revenue is established for business support programs associated with the proposed equitable tax measure, establishment of an advisory body providing input on funding program design, intent, eligibility, and equity criteria, could support program transparency and implementation. It is estimated that 0.25 full time equivalent (FTE) staffing would be needed to support a new commission.

2. Expand the Business Assistance Center to Add Bilingual Capacity

As outlined above, the Business Assistance Center has been modified and rebranded as the Neighborhood Business Assistance program and provides services in multiple neighborhoods throughout Oakland. It currently serves as the primary small business support program and has limited staffing. Additional staffing resources with language and cultural capacity would enhance this program to provide broader business engagement and technical support. An expanded program would have staffed language capacity in Cantonese, Spanish, and Vietnamese with potential future support in Farsi and Korean given our growing business communities. To expand the business support offerings, this program would need one (1) additional FTE bilingual Urban Economic Analyst II.

3. Expand Business Data Collection with Funding for Community Partners

Robust business baseline data collection is a necessary part of the City's overall performance management, equitable program design and implementation. As stated above, EWDD is working with the Department of Revenue to gather business demographic data through the business license renewal process. Voluntary data collection has resulted in an estimated 30-40

¹⁶ <https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/2021-24-local-plan>

¹⁷ <https://oakland.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4687703&GUID=801D3210-5843-4408-9046-511339A501CF&Options=&Search=>

percent response rate from licensed businesses. It is anticipated that City staff will need to partner with ethnic chambers and business support organizations to gather more complete demographic information about our business community. In addition, a data scientist position would support ongoing data collection and analytics for business data intelligence. Estimated resource for this expanded effort is one (1) FTE Data Analyst II/III and \$150,000 for stipends to community partners to assist with gathering data.

4. Marketing Campaign

A new position dedicated to implementing a robust marketing strategy and additional funding would build on the successful launch of Think Oakland First and respond to businesses call for marketing support, as the current staff member's focus is divided between public information, business support and marketing tasks. Additional funding could be used to engage a consultant to work with marketing partners such as Visit Oakland, the chambers of commerce and BIDs to develop a cohesive, year-round consumer-focused marketing campaign to reflect Oakland's diverse commercial districts. Staffing and resources would include one (1) FTE Marketing Program Coordinator for citywide coordination and \$500,000 for an annual marketing contract.

5. Permitting Navigation Support

EWDD staff have been working to establish a pilot Business Ombudsman Program in partnership with Planning and Building Department (PBD), the Oakland Fire Department (OFD), the Oakland Public Works (OPW), and OakDOT to help businesses with permit navigation and issue resolution. This targeted customer service enhancement program would work cross departmentally in conjunction with the re-imagining the permit center effort. To advance this program, EWDD would establish a one (1) FTE shared position with PBD at the Planner II/III or Urban Economic Analyst II/III position level. An interim solution would be to re-establish the previously designed Open Counter software application at an estimated cost of \$70,000 until the launch of the new zoning tool in Accela.

6. Craft Public Safety Strategy for Small Businesses/ Increase Subsidies and Financial Support

To support public safety strategies for small business, staff should continue to pilot the commercial NEST program with cross-departmental impact teams. Staff will track and monitor costs associated with teams and establish cost structure for implementation of key commercial areas. To expand this program, staff would develop a grant funding program in conjunction with the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Program. This initiative could start with a \$500,000 CPTED Grant Pool, that could be added as enhanced funding to the recently modified FIP/TIP program.

Another expansion program would be to establish program design for a pilot pop-up program to enhance vacant spaces for commercial entrepreneurship, with \$250,000 in initial funding for a Pop-Up Project pilot.

7. Expand Support for Merchant Organizing and BID Development

Finally, staff should expand their efforts to support the BID program, focus on early-stage commercial corridor merchant organizing and provide technical support through enhanced business communication of local, regional, and state programs along with scheduled business informational sessions to share business data, regulations, and best practices. By unfreezing an existing Urban Economic Analyst IV position in EWD, this individual could provide additional

support to current staff and assist with the creation of a new Small Business Commission, as discussed in item 1 above.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the Council accepting the informational report.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

The most recent small business consultation process, the Economic Recovery Plan, gathered information from 1,100 Oakland businesses through surveys during the pandemic, and the convening of the Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council. In addition to the surveys, 10 business service organizations, including Oakland's multicultural chambers of commerce and Visit Oakland, 48 small businesses (72 percent owned by people of color and 64 percent women-owned) and three community service organizations across the city (East, Downtown, and West Oakland) contributed their ideas for the Economic Recovery Plan.

COORDINATION

In addition to EWDD, information for this report was provided by the Planning and Building Department, Finance Department, and the City Administrator's Office.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: The implementation of the 2017 Task Force and those of the Economic Recovery Plan will promote equitable economic development in Oakland and work to support existing Oakland small businesses by connecting them to ongoing funding sources and support programs, making government contracting and grantmaking more equitable, investing in social cohesion, growing demand for goods and services offered in Oakland, attracting new businesses that create good jobs and nurturing Oakland startups.

Environmental: Encouraging local employment, business ownership and local spending can reduce vehicular emissions. Increasing local retail sales and investment through building purchases will also generate additional sales tax and real estate transfer tax to support the City's Equitable Climate Action Plan (ECAP).

Race & Equity: The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on Oakland's economy, and the impacts fell heavily on BIPOC communities and on women, worsening existing disparities. The overall goal of EWDD programs continue the focus of the Economic Recovery Plan-- a more equitable and inclusive economy that works for all Oaklanders, with an emphasis on closing race and gender disparities and helping BIPOC- and women-owned small businesses and lower-wage workers recover from the pandemic.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive A Report And Recommendations From The City Administrator On Implementation Of The Recommendations From The 2017 Small Business Roundtable Task Force, Including An Update On What Actions Have Been Taken In Line With The Recommendations Regarding Small Business Support And Services; And An Update On The 2015 Resolution In Support Of Worker Cooperatives In The City Of Oakland.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Shawnee Keck, Urban Economic Analyst III at skeck@oaklandca.gov or (510) 238-5566.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

A: Appendix A Small Business Support Recommendations 2015-2021

Appendix A Small Business Support Recommendations 2015-2021

2017 Small Business Task Force	Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021	Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council 2021	Economic Recovery Plan 2021
Financial and Technical Support to Businesses			
<p>R1 Focus on ongoing full-lifecycle support for the existing small business community</p> <p>Connect established business owners with newer/prospective entrepreneurs in structured mentorships</p>	<p>Support female tech entrepreneurs</p> <p>Expand support programs which help female entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs of color to other sectors and entrepreneurs of color</p> <p>Strengthen business networks for people of color</p> <p>Encourage low-income residents to participate in banking and financial empowerment</p>	<p>R1.2 Provide financial support to small business recovery, particularly BIPOC businesses.</p>	<p>1. Financial Readiness and Stability – Equitable Small Business Support</p> <p>Support small businesses in getting capital-ready to shrink racial and geographic gaps in access to stimulus, grant funding and other financing.</p>
<p>R3: Create Detailed Directory of Small Business Support Service This will serve as a tool to help communicate to partners where overlap and gaps exist, and provide</p>	<p>Raise awareness of business support services in low-income neighborhoods</p>	<p>R4.2 Expand equity programs and support industry efforts to reduce disparities</p>	<p>the City should work to increase capital flow to BIPOC and women-owned small businesses and build their support networks</p>

2017 Small Business Task Force	Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021	Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council 2021	Economic Recovery Plan 2021
<p>guidance about how they might meet small/local business needs more effectively</p> <p>Have/maintain a directory of partners working in Oakland to help serve small businesses, including detailed information about services offered by each</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Develop a roadmap for small businesses to help educate small business entrepreneurs about these processes o Perform warm handoffs to City departments or third-party organizations for small/local business customers o Push information to customers, leveraging existing channels and/or creating new methods where gaps exist <p>R6: Subsidies and Financial Support Evaluate direct subsidies:</p>			<p>Partner with CDFIs, Business Service Organizations (BSOs) and community-based organizations to build awareness and provide pre-application technical assistance to BIPOC and women-owned small businesses to apply for specific Federal/ State/Local incentive programs</p>
	Investigate new funding sources	Prevent predatory operations that exploit financially	<p>Grow Oakland's Revolving Loan</p> <p>Bridge loans – low- or no-interest loans until</p>

2017 Small Business Task Force	Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021	Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council 2021	Economic Recovery Plan 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Business Tax rebates o Sales Tax rebates o Enterprise Zone-like credits o Facade and Tenant Improvement grants o Infrastructure/Commercial Stock modernization, retrofit grants 	<p>and policy tools to spur land and property development</p> <p>Pilot new funding models for public safety and public realm improvements</p>	<p>vulnerable business operators and property owners</p>	<p>longer-term loans come through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▣ Emergency microloans >\$10K <p>Forgivable loans > \$5K</p> <p>Low-interest loans for growing enterprises, focus on women and BIPOC owners</p>
Business Assistance Center			
<p>BAC should be a 'help-desk' for small/local business,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Be the first call made by small/local businesses when facing a question or problem o Maintain a record of all contacts by small/local business customers throughout business lifecycle o Continuously improve our understanding of small/local business needs, o Perform warm handoffs to City departments or third-party organizations for small/local business customers 	<p>Business Assistance Centers re-positioned as a first call contact</p>		<p>Pilot remote Business Assistance Centers to serve more businesses in the flatlands and grow trust in City business services.</p>

2017 Small Business Task Force	Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021	Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council 2021	Economic Recovery Plan 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Identify common bottlenecks within internal City processes o Assess performance of partners, and make this information available to those partners and the public o Advocate within the City bureaucracy for the needs of their small/local business customers o Hold rotating office hours in all Oakland districts - identify centrally-located businesses or organizations in each district which could donate space for this use o Physical location of the Business Assistance Center should be inviting for small business customers (an office with racks of pamphlets does not meet this qualification) o Small/local business website and other tools should emphasize self-service capability wherever possible 			

2017 Small Business Task Force	Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021	Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council 2021	Economic Recovery Plan 2021
Assistance with City Services			
<p>R5: Provide support for small/local business customers to help navigate permitting processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Record all requests for information and support by small/local businesses used to improve staff organization and process o Create a formalized aging and escalation process to be used when permits fall into an exception state o Assign one or more escalation caseworkers who are able to navigate the various departments and requirements, to ensure o Prompt and clear communication to customer o Clear timelines for completion of key tasks on the part of both parties (customer and City staff) o Advocacy for the small/local business customer at all levels 	<p>Review and streamline policies and processes for all business-government interfaces</p> <p>Review the real estate development permitting process with recommendations to reduce costs and delays</p> <p>All processes are streamlined</p> <p>Issue planning and building permits more quickly 65% of all planning and building permits are issued within one day</p> <p>Provide business information digitally</p> <p>A multi-lingual portal, which contains all permitting, licensing and business services information, is published</p>		<p>Support businesses through the permitting process.</p>

2017 Small Business Task Force	Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021	Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council 2021	Economic Recovery Plan 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Assistance with identifying cross-departmental or third-party solutions, facilitating reasonable exceptions, and bringing together required personnel for approval o Ensure adequate staffing in the various departments responsible for granting permits o Consolidate permit process where applicable o Provide for increased self-service by applicants o Measure performance of third party service <p>Advocate within the City bureaucracy for the needs of their small/local business customers</p> <p>Help business faced with compliance issues to come into compliance (create/assign funding for this)</p> <p>R2 Develop a roadmap for small businesses to help</p>	<p>Improve business satisfaction rates with City support and services</p> <p>Business satisfaction with City assistance and services is 90%</p>		

2017 Small Business Task Force	Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021	Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council 2021	Economic Recovery Plan 2021
<p>educate small business entrepreneurs about these processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Perform warm handoffs to City departments or third-party organizations for small/local business customers working in Oakland to help serve small businesses, including detailed information about services offered by each 			
Identify and Support BIPOC Owned Businesses			
<p>R2 Use existing data about small businesses (from Business License and other sources) to help build a customer directory and target outreach to improve customer awareness</p>		<p>R 4.2 Gather data and conduct racial impact analysis to name disparities in industry sectors</p> <p>4.5 Support ongoing participatory research on the needs of black-owned businesses. Support research on the needs of Black, Indigenous and other POC-owned businesses owners during and post-COVID</p>	<p>Incorporate social cohesion as an economic development strategic goal with clearly defined outcomes and metrics.</p> <p>Continue to work with the Revenue Department to gather disaggregated race and gender demographic business license data and track revenue increases for Oakland’s BIPOC and women-owned businesses.</p>

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		<p>Commit resources to gathering the quantitative and qualitative data needed to center equity and target resources effectively</p> <p>Recognize the structural barriers to capital for Black owned and other POC-owned businesses and design programs to address them</p>	
Contracting and Procurement			
		<p>Foster business partnerships to boost the recovery of BIPOC-owned businesses through purchasing contracts and equity investments</p> <p>Waive or defer other business fees such as ABC liquor license fees</p>	<p>R2 Equity in Contracting and Grant Making</p> <p>Develop targets to close disparities in grants and contracting throughout City government and continue to evaluate departmental processes to</p> <p>Support the interdepartmental effort to increase access for local BIPOC and women owned businesses and nonprofits to participate in government contracts.</p> <p>Deploy U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)</p>

<p>2017 Small Business Task Force</p>	<p>Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021</p>	<p>Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council 2021</p> <p>4.3 Close the digital divide for businesses and workers. Build on the successes of #OaklandUndivided and #OakWIFI by raising funds to close the digital divide for workers and small businesses Identify business owners and workers who lack an online presence/ internet access and connect them to resources</p>	<p>Economic Recovery Plan 2021</p>	<p>remove barriers for small/ local BIPOC and women-owned businesses.</p>	<p>grant and the Council-directed Construction Resource Center (CRC) Grant to provide training for 60-70 local contractors over a two-year period. Track outcomes. Work with the IT Department to identify funding for and develop a public directory of local businesses that is compatible with iSupplier.</p> <p>Partner with DWES to provide technical assistance for Minority Business Enterprises/Woman Business Enterprises (MBEs/WBEs) to become certified.</p> <p>Bring a recommendation for program changes to City Council by Fall</p>
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2017 Small Business Task Force	Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021	Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council 2021	Economic Recovery Plan 2021
			<p>2021 to the Façade and Tenant Improvement grant program to remove access barriers and close racial disparities.</p>
Support for Creative Businesses			
<p>Review cabaret and other assembly use permitting requirements, also evaluate other arts and entertainment uses which could be located outside retail districts</p>	<p>Create a program to encourage the tenanting and re-use of vacant properties</p> <p>Publish a portfolio asset management plan</p> <p>Develop a Cultural Arts plan</p> <p>Support arts and culture organizations to stay and grow in Oakland</p>	<p>R1.3 Sustain Oakland's artist and cultural organizations.</p> <p>Explore flexibility in permit and public safety fees for cultural organizations to reopen using outdoor space safely</p> <p>4.1 Increase space available for businesses and cultural activities.</p> <p>Consider a temporary use category in the City Planning Code to allow ongoing flexibility and prevent long-term vacant storefronts</p>	<p>R3 Engage BIPOC youth and cultural arts voices in recovery planning and strengthen internal and external partnerships to increase social cohesion and community resilience.</p> <p>Expand the Neighborhood Voices grant program to support arts and culture through 2022.</p> <p>Encourage and track applications from specific ZIP Codes which rank high in Oakland's Community Stressors Index.</p> <p>Develop a creative economy business focus by identifying and formalizing a partnership with one intermediary arts organization to provide business support for cultural organizations.</p>

<p>2017 Small Business Task Force</p>	<p>Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021</p>	<p>Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council 2021</p>	<p>Economic Recovery Plan 2021</p>
		<p>Align with the State’s home-based kitchen laws and work with local food vendors to legalize operations</p>	<p>Support the expansion and development of community markets that provide opportunities for vendors, artisans, artists, and makers.</p> <p>Support three new community markets and develop infrastructure to grow additional spaces.</p> <p>Streamline the special events process to encourage more arts, youth and other cultural events and remove barriers for BIPOC-led groups.</p> <p>Work with the Planning & Building Department (PBD) to develop standard operating procedures and enhanced tools to help businesses</p>

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			navigate the permit process.
Investment and Marketing Support			
<p>R4: Engage in broad Marketing/PR strategy on behalf of small/local business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Council Members' newsletters should be included in PR campaign to deliver specific messages (calls to action, event publicity, calling attention to media components of the campaign, etc. 	<p>Develop propositions for business and investment attraction</p> <p>Compelling propositions are published and communicated to target businesses and investors</p> <p>EWD-BD</p> <p>Redesign economic development website</p>		
			<p>R4 : Growing Demand and Investment</p> <p>Execute an expanded city-wide shop local marketing campaign to encourage consumers to spend their dollars locally.</p> <p>Develop a business attraction strategy focused on industrial lands.</p> <p>Run an expanded "Think Oakland First" year-round marketing campaign to encourage consumers to shop locally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a business attraction proposal to attract, grow, and stabilize core businesses in targeted locations. • Position Oakland for industrial innovation and expanded local manufacturing. <p>Improve</p>

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			occupancy of vacant industrial sites by 10% over one year.
Small Business Organizing			
<p>R1: Charter Small Business Commission</p> <p>Identify communications strategies which ensure that our small/local businesses are both heard by and hear from us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Partner with Visit Oakland, Oakland BID Alliance, and other external agencies where appropriate <p>Ensure that all City policies, contracts and procedures consider the impact on the small business community and local economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Spearhead the development of a comprehensive small business strategy, including clear definitions of small and/or local business for the purposes of this strategy 	Encourage the creation of additional business improvement districts		<p>Streamline and clarify the BID creation and renewal process and support the new BIDs and merchant organizations in the flatlands.</p> <p>Assess the feasibility of a cannabis BID or partnership organization.</p> <p>Attract new firms to Oakland's industrial areas and increase the number of good jobs for local residents by 250 by 2025.</p>

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<p>Assess whether BID structure can be adjusted to better represent the needs of the small/local business community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Perform direct outreach to the small/local business community, leveraging existing channels and/or creating new methods where gaps exist 			
<p>Create, evolve, or reinforce partnerships which can meet the needs of our small/local business community</p>			
<p>Create ongoing relationships with existing merchant associations and other groups within each district</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Facilitate communication between merchant groups and other associations through hosting events or attending meetings or events where these groups already meet o Respond to requests from small business organizations 			

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(trade groups, local merchant associations, etc.) to attend their gatherings to make relationships, collect and provide information			
Workforce			
<p>Many small/local employers have hired staff from various workforce development and training programs, but success (employee retention) rates are low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Clients of these programs often require a higher level of supervision, which requires that businesses have strong supervisors/managers and HR oversight, which is out of reach for many small operations o Businesses have a strong desire to fill open positions, and many business owners are values-driven to offer employment to those who might need an opportunity, 	<p>Help local businesses to hire local trainees</p> <p>Oakland businesses are supported to hire local residents with 60% of businesses repeating participation.</p> <p>additional residents are employed in local businesses</p> <p>Provide job training for Oaklanders</p> <p>Oaklanders access city-funded job training services</p> <p>EWD-WD Provide Oaklanders with industry recognized credentials</p> <p>50% of adult participants in city-funded training programs receive an industry recognized</p>	<p>Invest in gathering racial disparity data by sector.</p> <p>Each industry should address the racial disparities in its workforce and work with the City to remedy, rehire and train workers to equal employment.</p> <p>Coordinate with cities on recovery planning that names disparities and focuses on increased mobility, security and wealth for low-wage workers</p> <p>Target workforce services to Oakland ZIP Codes with the highest unemployment °</p>	<p>Upskill and reskill low-wage workers who have been displaced or are at high risk of displacement to reduce racial disparities in unemployment. Provide expanded opportunities for Oakland's youth to find good local jobs.</p> <p>Increase the number of Earn and Learn opportunities and job placements for Oakland youth.</p>
<p>Expand Year-Round and Summer Youth Employment Program, continuing to prioritize Black, Latinx, Native American, and Pacific Islander youth residing in East Oakland, Fruitvale, and West Oakland.</p> <p>Include new placements in cultural arts organizations and engage the Youth Commission in Youth workforce program planning and design.</p> <p>Increase the number of adult jobseekers trained through Oakland Workforce Development Board-</p>			

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<p>but cannot do so if those employees cannot perform adequately, or create a resource drain on staff and managers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of support for employees exiting these programs post-hire is insufficient, and subsidized wages for a short period of time do not adequately offset the complexity of these engagements for small employers 	<p>credential within one year EWD-WD</p> <p>Provide pathways from training into work for Oaklanders 70% of adult participants in city-funded training programs get a stable, middle income job EWD-WD</p> <p>Provide work-based learning opportunities to young Oaklanders young people undergo work-based learning annually</p> <p>Expand the use of Workforce training programs for blight reduction</p> <p>New training positions are added in blight reduction and public infrastructure maintenance</p>	<p>Expand safe childcare and learning options for Oakland youth.</p> <p>Ensure unemployed workers have continuous health coverage.</p> <p>Analyze and report on wage and hiring disparities</p> <p>Businesses and Non-profits to close training and wage gaps</p> <p>Oakland's youth are at protests making a clear call for justice and equitable investment in their communities and futures. Economic recovery and rebuilding efforts must engage and include Oakland youth to share their survival stories and hopes for the future.</p> <p>Identify sectors with growing hiring needs</p>	<p>funded training programs in 2021-2022 from 100-150 to 300. Target programs to support job training and placement in fast-growing industries including Healthcare, Construction, IT, and Hospitality, consistent with the current Local Workforce Development Plan.</p> <p>Identify funding and create a marketing campaign to increase awareness and use of Oakland's three American Job Centers of California (AJCCs), targeting ZIP Codes with the highest unemployment rates.</p> <p>Complete an asset mapping and evaluation of all city-wide adult and youth employment programming to align</p> <p>Market the Metrix online learning platform and address access barriers such as lack of computers, access to the internet, and digital literacy.</p> <p>Consider increasing youth wages above minimum wage for Summer 2022 and beyond.</p> <p>Explore and identify funding for a mobile AJCC for underserved communities with an emphasis on majority BIPOC communities in</p>

2017 Small Business Task Force	Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021	Oakland Economic Recovery Advisory Council 2021	Economic Recovery Plan 2021	deep East Oakland.	strategies and identify opportunities.
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