

**Final CARES Act Report
City of Oakland**

1. **Department Name:** OPW

2. **Introduction/ Program Overview:**

The Department of Public Works/Bureau of Environment administered \$400,000 in CARES Act funding to support workforce development for neighborhood beautification and homelessness. To mitigate the spread of the Coronavirus, local community-based organizations received CARES Act funds to aid their work supporting the unsheltered and medically fragile populations of Oakland.

3. **Name of program:** Operation COVID-19 Mitigation

4. **Type of program:**

- a. **Direct Grants/ Cash Assistance**
- b. Technical Assistance/ Services
- c. Procurement/ Materials
- d. Facilities Modification
- e. Other: Explain

5. **Category of programming/ population served:**

- a. Artists and Cultural Arts
- b. Housing Security
- c. **Homelessness**
- d. Food Security
- e. **Health/Safety/ Public Facilities**
- f. Small Business and Non-Profit Support
- g. Wifi/ Digital Access
- h. **Workforce**
- i. Other: Explain

6. **Description of program**

Describe the program in a brief narrative

- Goals/purpose of program
- If relevant/applicable, include
 - Program partner(s)
 - Program selection criteria

Many areas of Oakland with the highest cases of COVID-19 are also areas known to experience high rates of illegal dumping. Unhoused individuals face unique risks of contracting the virus when exposed to illegally dumped materials at or near encampments, especially when offenders discard used PPE along with trash. To mitigate the further spread of COVID-19 in such areas, the Beautification Council sought to expand its “micro-cleaning and sanitization” program

recently piloted through Alameda County and Oakland Public Works' Illegal Dumping Task Force.

The Beautification Council, an Oakland community-based organization, implemented ***Operation COVID-19 Mitigation*** with a \$175,000 CARES Act grant to provide micro-cleaning and sanitization to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in encampments identified by the City for maintenance and sanitation service. Beautification Council crews, consisting of stipend workers selected from encampments themselves, performed the micro-cleaning and sanitization to complement Oakland Public Works' Homeless Encampment Enhanced Garbage Service.

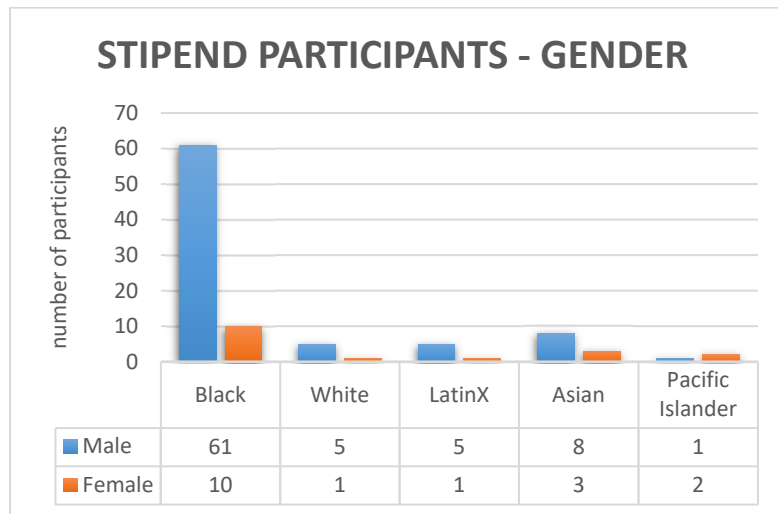
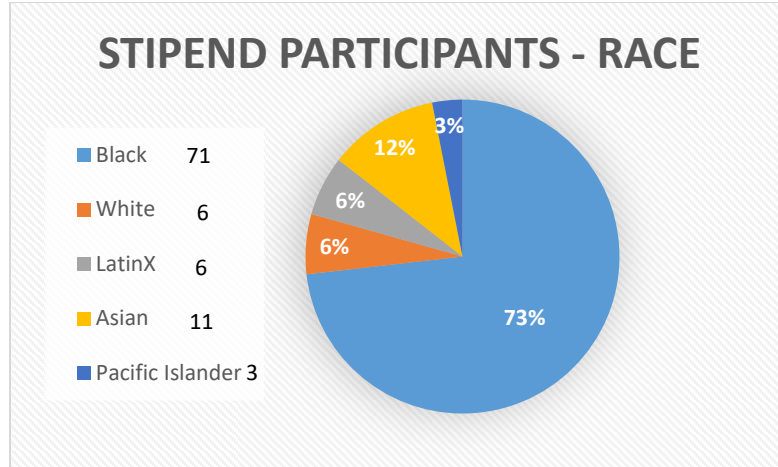
Upon Oakland Public Works' Enhanced Garbage Service crew removing the bulk of the waste material at a dump site, the Beautification Council crews micro-cleaned the area by removing pieces of waste left behind (i.e. face masks, rubber gloves, needles, diapers, etc.), then sanitizing and disinfecting the area using hydrogen peroxide, an EPA-approved disinfectant for COVID-19. Staffing included a Hazmat and Safety Subject Matter Expert, a Homeless Communications Working Liaison, Working Coordinator/Project Manager, and an Operations Manager along with a stipend labor force of hard-to-employ and unhoused Oakland residents. A Life Skills Coach was later added to support the stipend workers.

7. **Summary of Outcomes** *Describe what the program or funding accomplished.*

- 97 unhoused residents from Oakland encampments performed clean-ups and received stipends from CARES Act funds.
- Participating unhoused residents received life skills coaching and workforce training.
- 52 encampment locations were cleaned and micro-cleaned one or more times in the 10-week project.
- Crews sanitized encampment areas with CDC-approved disinfecting agent – Hydrogen Peroxide
- See [webpage link](#) for “before and after” picture gallery

If relevant/applicable include:

- *# of people or organizations served*
- *Description of population served*
- *Pie chart showing demographics of population served – race, gender, income levels*
- *Pie chart showing geography served by zip code or neighborhood*



8. Assessment/ Lessons Learned

Describe how goals of program were met or not. For example:

- What were the successes?
- Would you do this program again if more funding is received?
- What would you do differently?
- How will the learnings from this program inform your team or department’s work beyond the CARES Act funding?
- Summary of any survey results -- if applicable

Operation COVID-19 Mitigation was a resounding success. In the 9-10 weeks that grant recipient Beautification Council worked within homeless encampments, the popularity of the encampment clean-up stipend program grew exponentially. The Grantee developed mission-critical relationships with influential unsheltered residents living in the encampments. There were also key lessons learned on what can and cannot be accomplished within the scope of cleaning encampments. OPW/BOE gained valuable insights on how the City may approach

encampment cleaning in a humane, holistic fashion that may also encourage encampment residents be more receptive to the City's homeless support services.

Should more funding become available, this program would be proposed to receive funding.

9. High level summary of biggest lessons

- “Cherry-picking” of grant recipients to receive grant funding may be problematic as they may not be able to meet Federal grant requirements
- Keep grants at larger amounts. Hard to get responses from grantee with smaller grants
- Better clarity around Fed's grant guidelines at the onset
- Establish post-program reporting requirements in advance