



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Elizabeth Lake
Interim City Administrator

FROM: Sofia Navarro
Deputy City Administrator

SUBJECT: Encampment Management and
Abatement Operations

DATE: July 21, 2026

City Administrator Approval


Betsy Lake (Jul 9, 2026 21:20:22 PDT)

Date: Jul 9, 2026

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report On The City of Oakland's Encampment Management And Abatement Team Operations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This informational report summarizes the operations of the City of Oakland's Encampment Management and Abatement Team (EMAT), administered by the Office of Homelessness Solutions (OHS) within the City Administrator's Office. The report describes: how EMAT assesses, prioritizes, and carries out encampment interventions; how outreach and services are delivered ahead of any abatement; how operations are coordinated across City departments and external agencies; and the results achieved to date in calendar year 2026.

Through the reporting period, EMAT scheduled 79 operations citywide, of which 78 were executed and one was cancelled. The work spans four intervention types — deep cleanings, partial closures, full closures, and hygiene/garbage services — and is delivered consistent with the City's 2020 Encampment Management Policy (as updated in 2026), the terms of the Miralle settlement, and the racial equity commitments embedded in the Homelessness Strategic Action Plan (HSAP). This item is informational; no City Council action is requested.

City Council
July 21, 2026

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The EMAT (formerly the Encampment Management Team or EMT) was formally established as an interdepartmental team under the City's 2020 Encampment Management Policy. The policy mitigates public health and safety impacts while balancing the interests of housed and unhoused residents, does not criminalize homelessness, designates high- and low-sensitivity zones, applies a racial equity lens throughout implementation, and directs the team to lead with available shelter services.

In 2026, the policy was updated. Vehicles and recreational vehicles (RVs) were removed from the encampment policy scope, with the Oakland Police Department (OPD) and the Department of Transportation (DOT) now handling vehicle towing pursuant to the California Vehicle Code / Oakland Municipal Code. The update also added standard operating procedures and dashboards, established No-Return Encampment Zones, and directs the team to make reasonable efforts to lead with available shelter services. Provisions that remain unchanged include the commitment not to criminalize homelessness, compliance with the Miralle settlement (weather considerations, property storage requirements, and notice provisions), seven-day notices, and the high- and low-sensitivity zone framework.

Operations also occur within the current federal legal framework. The 2018 decision in *Martin v. Boise*, which had barred closures where no adequate shelter was available, was overturned in 2024 by *City of Grants Pass v. Johnson*, which held that local public-camping and sleeping bans do not violate the Eighth Amendment even when shelter availability is insufficient. Oakland's approach continues to lead with services and shelter notwithstanding this expanded enforcement latitude.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

This section describes EMAT's operational model and year-to-date performance.

EMAT Operational Interventions

EMAT carries out four types of action at encampment sites:

- **Deep Clean** — comprehensive cleaning and sanitation of a site to address public health concerns.
- **Partial Closure** — targeted removal of the sections of an encampment that present immediate safety risks, while the remainder of the site is maintained.
- **Full Closure** — complete site closure with coordinated outreach, property storage, and relocation support.
- **Hygiene Units and Garbage Runs** — ongoing delivery of portable hygiene services and waste collection to active sites.

Services and Outreach

Operation Dignity (OD) serves as the primary outreach provider for encampment operations, and coordinates with the City’s Community Homeless Services team within the Human Services Department and with County health and human service agencies. Outreach begins two to six weeks before any abatement and follows a structured timeline: initial outreach and needs assessment in weeks one and two; ongoing service coordination and referrals in weeks two through four; notice of closure or partial abatement accompanied by continued outreach in weeks four through six; and full team mobilization at the time of abatement. This sequence is designed to maximize service connections and shelter offers before any site action and to satisfy the notice and engagement requirements of the *Miralle* settlement.

Coordination and Operational Priorities

EMAT coordinates weekly with City Council offices and with the Oakland Fire Department (OFD), OPD, the Oakland Public Works Department (OPW), and the Oakland Parks, Recreation and Youth Development Department (OPRYD). The team also consults monthly with external agencies — including Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), Union Pacific Railroad, and Caltrans — and coordinates with the East Bay Regional Park District and other special districts. Operations are prioritized by citywide construction projects; protection of critical infrastructure; administrative priorities; high-sensitivity zones; and the abatement of illegal or environmentally hazardous conditions.

Year-to-Date Operations

EMAT scheduled 79 operations citywide during the reporting period. Of these, 78 were executed and one, which was a decommissioning of a safe RV site and handled by the provider, was cancelled. The distribution of executed operations by intervention type is shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Executed Operations by Intervention Type

Action Type	Total	Share
Closure	57	73.1%
Deep Clean	14	17.9%
Partial Closure	5	6.4%
Closure & Deep Clean	2	2.6%
Total Executed	78	100%

Closures represented roughly three-quarters of executed operations, with deep cleans the next most common intervention.

Operations by Council District

Operations were distributed across all seven Council Districts, with the highest concentration in Council District 3. The district-level distribution and the mix of actions taken are shown in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Operations by Council District

District	Operations	Actions
District 1	5	3 Closure, 2 Partial Closure
Districts 1 & 3	1	1 Closure
District 2	15	12 Closure, 3 Deep Clean
District 3	28	15 Closure, 8 Deep Clean, 3 Partial Closure, 1 Closure & Deep Clean, 1 Deep Clean & Closure
District 4	2	2 Closure
District 5	7	6 Closure, 1 Deep Clean
District 6	10	8 Closure, 2 Deep Clean
District 7	10	10 Closure, 1 Cancellation; not counted (provider performed)
Total	78	Citywide, all districts

Council District 3 accounted for the largest share of operational activity, driven by the presence of historically large encampments and sustained efforts in previous Encampment Resolution Fund (ERF) project areas. Council District 2 similarly experienced high levels of activity, reflecting its location within the Oakland Alameda Access Project (OAAP) operational footprint and ongoing work in areas previously supported through ERF investments.

Operational Results

Representative before-and-after results from the reporting period illustrate the public-health and right-of-way outcomes of EMAT operations, including 31st Avenue between International Boulevard and East 12th Street (May 2026), the Lake Merritt Channel (April 2026), and the former Greyhound site at 20th Street and Castro (May 2026). Photo documentation for these sites is maintained by EMAT.

RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS

This agenda item supports the **Oakland Strategic Plan (2025–2028)**. In April 2025, the City Council approved five Strategic Priorities as part of its three-year Strategic Plan: Streamline Operations; Foster Cross-Department Collaboration; Enhance Communication & Coordination; Optimize Workforce Management; and Align Budget with Citywide Priorities. This item supports the Strategic Priorities to *Foster Cross-Department Collaboration* and *Enhance Communication & Coordination*. EMAT is by design an interdepartmental function, coordinating the City Administrator's Office, OPW, OFD, OPD, DOT, OPRYD, and the Planning and Building Department alongside external partners including BART, PG&E, Union Pacific Railroad, Caltrans, the East Bay Regional Park District, and Alameda County health and homeless agencies, as well as monthly consultation with each Council office. This item is not specifically tied to an

individual task identified in the Strategic Plan; staff is bringing it forward as an informational update on operations. Staff will include this item in the next biannual update to Council on the Strategic Plan.

This item also advances the **Homelessness Strategic Action Plan (HSAP)**, specifically its Encampment Management pillar, which directs the City to respond to unsheltered communities in a manner that promotes health and wellness, and connects to the HSAP pillars for Access and Coordination, Interim Housing, and Permanent Housing through the outreach and shelter pathways that precede and follow site interventions.

Finally, this item relates to the **Encampment Abatement Policy**, which will be implemented following this report. The policy formalizes the standards, escalation criteria, notice requirements, and No-Return Encampment Zone framework under which EMAT carries out abatements, building on the 2020 Encampment Management Policy and its 2026 update. The operations described in this report reflect the practices the Encampment Abatement Policy will codify, and adoption of the policy will provide a consolidated, transparent basis for prioritizing and conducting future encampment operations citywide.

FISCAL IMPACT

This item is for informational purposes only and does not have a direct fiscal impact or cost. EMAT operations are carried out using existing, appropriated departmental resources within the Fiscal Year 2025–2027 Biennial Adopted Budget across the City Administrator's Office, OPW, OFD, OPD, DOT, and partner departments; this report does not request a City Council appropriation.

Staff notes one operational cost consideration for Council awareness: reductions in OPW (Keep Oakland Clean and Beautiful) and OPD overtime have constrained EMAT field operations to Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., where the team previously had flexibility to operate on select Fridays and into the early evening. This constraint affects operational throughput but does not change the City's current appropriations. Any future City Council direction that would expand EMAT capacity, scope, or hours could carry fiscal implications; should that occur, those costs would be identified and presented separately, and future year funding would be included in the proposed annual budget and subject to Council approval of annual appropriations.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

Encampment operations are preceded by structured outreach to affected residents, conducted by Operation Dignity in coordination with Community Homeless Services and Alameda County health and human service agencies, beginning two to six weeks before any abatement. This sequence is designed to connect individuals to services and shelter and to engage the residents most directly affected — populations that are disproportionately Black and low-income — before any site action occurs.

EMAT also maintains weekly consultation with each Council office and engages neighborhood residents, businesses, and community-based organizations through that process and through the City's OAK 311 intake system, which routes constituent reports to the appropriate departments. Because this is an informational report on existing operations rather than a proposed policy action, no additional outreach was deemed necessary beyond the standard City Council agenda noticing procedures.

COORDINATION

EMAT is an interdepartmental function. Operations are coordinated across the City Administrator's Office, OPW, OFD, OPD, DOT, OPRYD, and the Planning and Building Department, and with external partners including BART, PG&E, Union Pacific Railroad, Caltrans, the East Bay Regional Park District, and Alameda County health and homeless agencies. This report was prepared by the Office of Homelessness Solutions in coordination with these departments and partners. This report has been reviewed by the Office of the City Attorney and the Budget Bureau.

RACE AND EQUITY

The 2020 Encampment Management Policy requires a racial equity lens throughout implementation, reflecting that unsheltered homelessness in Oakland falls disproportionately on Black residents and other communities most impacted by racial disparities. EMAT applies this lens by leading with outreach and available shelter services, complying with *Miralle* settlement protections (notice, property storage, and weather considerations), and not criminalizing homelessness.

Staff did not complete a separate Racial Equity Impact Analysis for this informational report. Going forward, the following data will be tracked to measure the short- and long-term impacts of encampment operations: operations and intervention types by Council district and location; outreach contacts and resulting service and shelter connections; and re-encampment patterns. The forthcoming Encampment Abatement Policy will further formalize these equity measures, and staff will consult the Department of Race and Equity as that policy is implemented.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report On Encampment Management Operations.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Cupid Alexander, Chief Homelessness Solutions Officer, at (510) 914- 4569.

Respectfully submitted,

Sofia Navarro

[Sofia Navarro \(Jul 9, 2026 14:03:40 PDT\)](#)

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Attachments (1)

A: Presentation