



CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT


TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Liam Garland
Director, Public Works

SUBJECT: Caltrans Community Cleanup and
Employment Pathway Grant

DATE: April 10, 2026

City Administrator Approval


Jestin Johnson (May 5, 2026 19:48:36 PDT)

Date: May 5, 2026

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That the City Council Adopt A Resolution Authorizing 1) The City Administrator To Accept And Appropriate Grant Funds In An Amount Not To Exceed Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000) From The California Department Of Transportation Community Cleanup And Employment Pathway Grant Program (CCEP) And To Execute Related Grant Agreements; 2) Waiving The City Of Oakland's Advertising And Competitive Request For Proposals/Qualifications Requirements For The CCEP-Funded Services; 3) Amending City Council Resolution No. 89762 C.M.S. To Increase The Agreement With The Youth Employment Partnership, Inc. By Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000) For A Total Contract Amount Not To Exceed \$2,125,000; 4) Amending City Council Resolution No. 89761 C.M.S. To Increase The Agreement With The Lake Merritt Institute By Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) For A Total Contract Amount Not To Exceed One Million Two Hundred Twelve Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,212,500); And 5) Adopting Appropriate California Environmental Quality Act Findings

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Oakland (City) has received a \$300,000 grant from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Community Cleanup and Employment Pathway Grant Program (CCEP). The proposed action is to accept and appropriate the CCEP grant and waive competitive solicitation requirements for the Youth Employment Partnership, Inc. (YEP) and the Lake Merritt Institute (LMI), with each implementing components of the CCEP grant. YEP will be implementing an expanded Team Oakland program, extending their work beyond the summer months, and LMI will be implementing expanded cleaning work around Lake Merritt.

The actions implemented under these programs will expand litter cleanup, graffiti removal, and public space beautification across Oakland, with a particular focus on Lake Merritt and neighborhoods with the highest environmental burdens. The program will also provide year-round, paid job training and employment for youth and young adults facing barriers to employment, including justice system-impacted individuals, at-risk youth, and those experiencing housing insecurity. Participants will receive training in environmental stewardship, workplace safety, teamwork, leadership, and community engagement. The initiative is expected

to produce cleaner public spaces, improved water quality, increased neighborhood safety, and expanded access to workforce opportunities for underserved communities.

REASON FOR URGENCY

The City was notified on February 18, 2026, that it was awarded \$300,000 from Caltrans' CCEP. CCEP implementation milestones began April 15, 2026, and timely City Council approval is needed to authorize CCEP applications, agreements, and partner roles, and to initiate recruitment and training of youth participants to meet the implementation period of April 15, 2026, to July 30, 2027 (grant agreement ends November 1, 2027).

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The Caltrans CCEP provides competitive funding to local agencies—including federally recognized tribal governments—for litter cleanup, graffiti removal, and public space beautification. Projects are paired with public education and community engagement initiatives to promote long-term stewardship and prioritize underserved communities.

A central component of the CCEP is creating employment pathways through partnerships with workforce development organizations or existing City employment programs. These partnerships connect justice system-impacted individuals, people experiencing homelessness, at-risk youth, and other vulnerable populations with paid transitional employment and training in litter abatement, landscaping, and environmental stewardship.

Since 1993, YEP has operated Team Oakland, a Citywide employment and environmental education program that provides job readiness training and paid employment to Oakland youth. Participants perform litter abatement, graffiti removal, illegal dumping cleanup, and weed abatement in public rights-of-way, while supporting volunteer cleanups, special events, and park and creek restoration. They also conduct outreach to local merchants on waste disposal options and City-supported cleanup opportunities.

In 2023, the City Council adopted Resolution [89762 C.M.S](#) authorizing a three-year professional services agreement, from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2026, with YEP to implement the Team Oakland program in a contract not to exceed amount of one million one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$1,125,000), with an option to extend the contract for two additional years through June 30, 2028 for an additional amount not to exceed three hundred seventy-five thousand dollars per year (\$375,000) for a total amount not to exceed one million eight hundred seventy-five thousand dollars (\$1,875,000). If authorized, the CCEP funding would add an additional two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) to the YEP contract for a new, total not to exceed amount of two million, one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars (\$2,125,000). The previously authorized contract time extension will cover the CCEP grant implementation period.

According to YEP's Final Report for the summer of 2025, YEP's Team Oakland youth completed over eleven thousand hours of programming from June through August, including employability training, stewardship education, community field trips, litter abatement, park restoration, graffiti removal, and outreach to local businesses and merchants. Over this three-month period, Team Oakland crews removed an estimated 3,876 bags of trash and green waste

from Oakland neighborhoods, streets, sidewalks, and parks, totaling approximately 56,790 pounds of litter and waste from public spaces.

Lake Merritt has been listed on the State of California's 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies since 1999 for trash and low dissolved oxygen, requiring the city to reduce litter and improve water quality. The Clean Lake program, managed by LMI, supports these regulatory obligations through trash removal, water quality monitoring, and technical assistance. According to LMI's [Impact-Trash Report](#), LMI removed approximately 111,630 gallons of pollution, demonstrating the ongoing need for expanded, structured cleanup and stewardship efforts.

In 2023, the City Council adopted Resolution [89761 C.M.S](#) authorizing a three-year professional services agreement, from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2026, with LMI. Its purpose was to implement the Clean Lake program in a contract amount not to exceed six hundred ninety-seven thousand and five hundred dollars (\$697,500) with an option to extend the contract for two additional years, from 2026-2028, for an additional amount not to exceed two hundred thirty-two thousand and five hundred dollars (\$232,500) per year for a total amount not to exceed one million, one-hundred and sixty-two thousand, five-hundred dollars (\$1,162,500). If authorized, the CCEP funding would add an additional fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to the contract for a new total not to exceed amount of one million, two-hundred and twelve-thousand, five hundred dollars (\$1,212,500).

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Planned implementation of the CCEP grant program will advance existing city programs, including Adopt-A-Spot, Team Oakland, the Clean Lake program, and the Keep the Town Clean Initiative by expanding Team Oakland from a summer-focused program to year-round operations in partnership with the LMI. This transition will provide youth and young adults with consistent paid environmental workforce opportunities, integrate crews into ongoing service schedules, and strengthen program impact while prioritizing neighborhoods with high environmental burdens and limited access to green jobs.

The CCEP program will serve youth and young adults ages 18–25 who face employment barriers, including housing insecurity, limited work experience, or justice involvement. Participants will receive job training, environmental education, and hands-on experience in environmental monitoring, community outreach, workplace safety, teamwork, leadership, and public speaking. Through the combined expertise of LMI and YEP, participants will build practical skills in watershed health, stormwater management, habitat protection, and water quality monitoring.

Youth crews will conduct weekly litter pickup, graffiti removal, and neighborhood beautification in high-need areas across Oakland, including storm-drain corridors, underpasses, and communities with elevated CalEnviroScreen 4.0 scores. Crews will track collection volumes, sort recyclables, and report metrics to the Environmental Stewardship Unit to support data-driven program oversight. Crews will also conduct community outreach on the impacts of illegal dumping and promote available resources, including bulky waste drop-off services. In addition, crews will carry out basic water-ecology and wetland preservation activities at Lake Merritt, including debris removal, storm drain inlet cleanup, and water testing and monitoring.

By combining pre-employment training, subsidized work opportunities, and civic engagement, the program equips participants with first-time job exposure, technical skills, and workforce readiness, establishing a replicable model for equitable environmental workforce development programs in Oakland.

Policy Alternatives

1. Do Not Accept the CCEP Funding:
Declining funding would prevent expansion of litter abatement, graffiti removal, and youth workforce development services. Oakland would continue operating at current levels and forgo state resources targeted for underserved communities.
2. Accept the CCEP Funding but Conduct a New Procurement:
A new procurement would delay program launch by six to twelve months and jeopardize the City's ability to expend funds within the grant terms. YEP and LMI already facilitate these services under active Council approved contracts and meet all CCEP requirements.
3. Use City staff to conduct litter abatement and beautification instead of YEP and LMI.
This would provide greater direct City control over staffing and service delivery. However, it would also result in higher personnel costs; longer onboarding/hiring timelines and does not provide transitional jobs to youth facing employment barriers as required by CCEP. This conflicts with CCEP workforce development goals and would reduce eligibility for grant-funded activities.

Recommended Action: Accept CCEP funding, waive standard procurement requirements, increase YEP and LMI contract funding. Leveraging existing agreements ensures continuity of service, immediate deployment of crews, and lower costs.

WAIVER RATIONALE

The City requests a waiver of the advertising and solicitation requirements for services funded through the CCEP. This waiver is justified because YEP/Team Oakland and LMI are existing partners with proven expertise in environmental stewardship, litter abatement, public space beautification, and workforce development for youth and young adults facing employment barriers.

Requiring a new competitive solicitation would delay program implementation, would risk compliance with CCEP timelines, and could disrupt year-round operations that provide paid employment and training opportunities for youth. Maintaining these partnerships ensures continuity, effectiveness, and timely delivery of services, maximizing the impact of CCEP funding while prioritizing neighborhoods with high environmental burdens and limited access to green jobs

RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS

OAKLAND STRATEGIC PLAN

This agenda item supports multiple Strategic Priorities outlined in the City's Strategic Plan (2025–2028). Specifically, the project aligns with the following priorities:

- **Optimize Workforce Management:** The expansion of YEP's Team Oakland and LMI's Clean Lake programs provides year-round, paid employment and skills training for youth and young adults facing barriers to employment. By creating structured workforce development pathways, the City strengthens its investment in resident capacity-building and enhances long-term workforce readiness.
- **Align Budget with Citywide Priorities:** Acceptance of CCEP funding leverages State resources to expand environmental cleanup programs without requiring additional local funds, ensuring that City budgeting aligns with strategic priorities while maximizing program impact.

This agenda item is not directly tied to a specific task identified in the Strategic Plan but supports these priorities by delivering measurable workforce and environmental outcomes consistent with City goals. Staff will include this item in the next biannual Strategic Plan update to Council.

EQUITABLE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

The project directly supports the City's 2030 Equitable Climate Action Plan (ECAP), which guides Oakland's climate actions with an emphasis on equity, environmental justice, and resilience. Activities such as litter abatement, storm-drain cleanup, graffiti removal, and watershed stewardship promote cleaner, healthier public spaces, particularly in neighborhoods with high CalEnviroScreen 4.0 scores, thereby reducing environmental burdens in frontline communities.

Relevant ECAP Actions supported by this program include:

- **A-6: Expand and Protect Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity** – The project contributes by maintaining clean public spaces, storm drains, and Lake Merritt, which supports urban ecological health and biodiversity.
- **CR-2: Expand and Protect Tree Canopy Coverage** – While the project does not plant trees directly, it improves the surrounding environment of public green spaces and supports long-term green infrastructure planning.
- **CR-3: Rehabilitate Riparian Areas and Open Space** – Cleanup and beautification of Lake Merritt and associated storm-drain corridors help maintain riparian health and functional open space.
- **CL-5: Establish the Oakland Climate Action Network to Support Inclusive Community Engagement on ECAP Implementation** – The project engages youth and young adults from historically underserved communities in hands-on environmental stewardship, which advances community-led climate action and equitable participation.

No elements of the proposed project conflict with ECAP guidance.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

The below recommended actions support economic development and workforce priorities by creating both direct and indirect benefits for Oakland residents and communities:

- **Jobs and Workforce Development:** Implementation of CCEP will expand the Team Oakland program to provide year-round employment and environmental workforce training for youth and young adults ages 18–25 who face barriers to employment, including justice-impacted individuals and those experiencing housing insecurity. Participants gain skills in workplace safety, environmental monitoring, leadership, and public engagement.
- **Business and Community Support:** Through outreach to local merchants and public space beautification, the program improves neighborhood conditions and enhances the commercial environment along high-priority corridors. Cleaner public spaces can support local business activity and reduce spillover costs associated with illegal dumping and litter.
- **Place and Community Investment:** Expanded Team Oakland and Clean Lake program operations contribute to neighborhood revitalization, increased safety, and improved public infrastructure, particularly in communities with limited access to green spaces and high environmental burdens.
- **Arts and Culture Support:** While not directly focused on arts programming, the project supports community engagement and volunteer participation, which strengthens social cohesion and neighborhood identity.

Overall, the project advances City goals across workforce development, equitable environmental stewardship, and neighborhood improvement, making it fully aligned with the Strategic Plan, ECAP, and Economic Development Action Plan priorities.

FISCAL IMPACT

The CCEP will require City Council appropriation of \$300,000 for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. CCEP funds will be deposited and appropriated as follows:

\$50,000 funds will be deposited and appropriated into the California Department of Transportation Fund (2140), Clean Lake Contract Project (1001514), Environmental Services: Environmental Remediation Organization (30683), and Sustainable Oakland Program (SC26).

\$250,000 funds will be deposited and appropriated into the California Department of Transportation Fund (2140), Youth We Mean Clean Program Project (1001685), Environmental Services: Environmental Remediation Organization (30683), and Sustainable Oakland Program (SC26) as shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Project Appropriation

Fund Source	Organization	Account	Project	Program	Amount
2140	30683	54919	1001685	SC26	\$250,000
2140	30683	54919	1001514	SC26	\$50,000
Total Project:					\$300,000

The City will provide a total of \$25,138 in matching funds from multiple sources as shown in **Table 2**. Of this amount, \$11,138, will consist of already budgeted staff time and existing personnel resources dedicated to program oversight, coordination, and implementation. These funds are allocated within the following funding code: Recycling Program Fund (1710), Environmental Services: Environmental Remediation Organization (30683), DP300 Administrative Project (1000010), and Sustainable Oakland Program (SC26). The remaining \$14,000 will be provided by the City through funding allocated for staff and operational costs associated with the Youth We Mean Clean Project. These funds are budgeted within the following funding code: Recycling Program Fund (1710), Environmental Services: Environmental Remediation Organization (30683), Youth We Mean Clean Project (1001685), and Sustainable Oakland Program (SC26).

No new General Fund allocations are required, as the City's contribution reflects current staffing commitments incorporated into the approved budget.

Table 2: Project Funding Sources

Fund Source	Organization	Account	Project	Program	Amount
(1710) Recycling Program Fund	(30683) Environmental Services: Environmental Remediation Organization	51111	(1000010) DP300 Administrative Project	(SC26) Sustainable Oakland Program	\$11,138
(1710) Recycling Program Fund	(30683) Environmental Services: Environmental Remediation Organization	54919	(1001685) Youth We Mean Clean Project	(SC26) Sustainable Oakland Program	\$14,000
Total Project:					\$25,138

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

No outreach was deemed necessary for the proposed policy action beyond the standard City Council agenda noticing procedures. However, the services performed by the contractors will involve significant public engagement to promote volunteer participation and environmental education.

COORDINATION

Staff worked with the City Attorney's Office, Oakland Public Works' Fiscal Unit, the Budget Office, and the City Administrator's Office in preparing this report.

PAST PERFORMANCE, EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Both LMI and YEP have demonstrated consistent, satisfactory contract performance. Ongoing performance will continue to be monitored through established contract management practices, including regular communication with City staff, review and verification of monthly invoices and reports, field monitoring, and evaluation of environmental outcomes and community engagement.

RACE AND EQUITY

The recommended action was informed by the [Environmental Justice Element of the City's General Plan](#) and supporting processes, including the Environmental Justice Communities Map and the Primer on the Development of the Environmental Justice Communities Map (attached as Attachment A); which identifies neighborhoods experiencing the greatest environmental and economic burdens. These same neighborhoods often have limited access to green jobs and other workforce opportunities. By targeting cleanup efforts and workforce opportunities to these areas, the program directly addresses disparities in environmental conditions and employment access, providing both tangible environmental benefits and equitable workforce development pathways for historically underserved populations. The focus on justice system-impacted youth, individuals experiencing housing insecurity, and at-risk young adults ensures that the program reduces barriers to employment and increases opportunities for populations most affected by systemic inequities.

The expected outcomes of the recommended action include cleaner public spaces, improved water quality at Lake Merritt, enhanced neighborhood safety, increased volunteer engagement, and expanded access to workforce development. Program performance will be evaluated using quantitative metrics, including weekly volumes of litter and debris collected, number of graffiti removal actions completed, hours of paid youth employment, and the number of participants completing workforce training modules. Data will be collected by crew supervisors and reported to the Environmental Stewardship Unit to allow for ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Any unintended consequences, such as service overlaps or disruptions in high-priority neighborhoods, will be identified through weekly operational reports and addressed through schedule adjustments and stakeholder coordination.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

The activities authorized by this Resolution are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 (Existing Facilities), 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land), and 15309 (Inspections), each of which provides a separate and independent basis for CEQA compliance.

Jestin D. Johnson, City Administrator
Subject: Caltrans Community Cleanup and Employment Pathway Grant
Date: April 10, 2026

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That the City Council Adopt A Resolution Authorizing 1) The City Administrator To Accept And Appropriate Grant Funds In An Amount Not To Exceed Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000) From The California Department Of Transportation Community Cleanup And Employment Pathway Grant Program (CCEP) And To Execute Related Grant Agreements; 2) Waiving The City Of Oakland's Advertising And Competitive Request For Proposals/Qualifications Requirements For The CCEP-Funded Services; 3) Amending City Council Resolution No. 89762 C.M.S. To Increase The Agreement With The Youth Employment Partnership, Inc. By Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000) For A Total Contract Amount Not To Exceed \$2,125,000; 4) Amending City Council Resolution No. 89761 C.M.S. To Increase The Agreement With The Lake Merritt Institute By Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) For A Total Contract Amount Not To Exceed One Million Two Hundred Twelve Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,212,500); And 5) Adopting Appropriate California Environmental Quality Act Findings

For questions regarding this report, please contact Elena Bermeo, Program Analyst III, at ebermeo@oaklandca.gov or (510) 238-6259.

Respectfully submitted,



Liam Garland (May 5, 2026 10:25:09 PDT)

LIAM GARLAND
Director, Oakland Public Works

Reviewed by:

Kristin Hathaway, Assistant Director
Bureau of Environment

Brittney Jenkins, Manager
Environmental Services Division

Prepared by:

Elena Bermeo, Program Analyst III
Environmental Services Division

Attachments (1):

A: Primer on the Development of the Environmental Justice Communities Map

Public Works and Transportation Committee
May 12, 2026