

The City of Oakland is working every day to strengthen community safety for our residents, small businesses and visitors. In just the last few weeks, we have expanded foot patrols in commercial districts citywide and partnered with business groups to encourage public space activation that brings visitors to our businesses and promotes safer communities. In the coming weeks, we will disburse grants for community ambassadors, safety programs, and small business assistance.

Community safety is a citywide challenge and every department has a role to play. We are actively partnering with businesses, nonprofit groups, state and regional governments to reduce crime.

The City of Oakland values its longstanding relationships and engagement with the business community and will continue its dedication to engagement and constructive collaboration to address these issues.

Recent actions to support safer communities include:

- Effective September 16, the Oakland Police Department has increased the number of walking officers in merchant corridors to add higher visibility and support.
- The City's Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD) just launched Activate Oakland, a \$400,000 investment to support up to \$10,000 per community event or activation that brings people together, drives foot traffic and patronage while creating an inviting and welcoming experience in Oakland's commercial districts. [Applications](#) launched on September 14 and will support events occurring after October 24, 2023.
- By November, EWDD will award \$1M to support community driven public safety initiatives in high traffic commercial areas during the holiday shopping season. These funds will support security personnel, community ambassadors, cameras, and additional infrastructure to enhance public safety.
- The City secured state commitment to help Oakland fund new automated license plate readers
- The City partnered with California Highway Patrol to expand traffic enforcement efforts
- The City is directing \$2.5 million to improve the 911 response system
- The City restored funding for Department of Violence Prevention grants, including programs that support youth employment

In addition, the Thao Administration has prioritized major investments in community safety:

- Doubled funding for MACRO, which responds to non-emergency calls
- Funded six new police academies
- Pushed continual recruitment for 911 dispatch officers to allow us to fill long-standing vacancies

And the City continues to support small businesses, including a number of new and ongoing programs that work directly with small businesses to promote safer communities and economic growth. Most recently:

- In September, EWDD received a \$550,000 grant from the Local Immigrant Integration and Inclusion (LIIG) from the California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GoBiz) to provide targeted support to Oakland's micro-enterprise and small businesses, with a focus on immigrant and women-owned businesses.

## **Business Support Services and Resources**

- **Expanded and updated Façade and Tenant Improvement Program (FTIP)**, administered by EWDD relaunched in late 2022 with \$2.9 million in funding available to businesses city-wide, with no match requirement and with \$50,000 reserved especially for emergency response window repair due to vandalism. In early 2023 EWDD announced awards of \$2,500 each to 20 window grant recipients, and \$25,000 each to over 100 small businesses for needed upgrades including safety infrastructure, security cameras, lighting paint, signage, and more. In the recent budget, Council approved additional funding of \$400,000 for this program, which will soon allow more businesses to start work including safety improvements to their businesses.
- **Neighborhood Business Assistance program** supports existing and new businesses to navigate the City's permit process, answers questions, provide technical assistance, and referrals for all types of services a small business owner or entrepreneur requires to succeed.
  - Provides free, one-on-one small business support for entrepreneurs and business owners with 30 minute in-person appointments in six locations throughout the City, as well as through email and phone.
  - The 30-minute consultation appointments can be booked online or by calling (510) 238-7398 or by completing a consultation request via our [online form](#).
  - Inquiries submitted by phone, email and the online form receive responses within two business days.
  - **On-the Job Training** provides companies with subsidies for hiring and retaining local area job seekers.
- **The City of Oakland's BID program** supported by EWDD provides staff support and technical assistance to the 11 existing business and property-based assessment districts, as well as technical and limited funding assistance to renew and establish new business and property-based assessment districts. Annually, EWDD staff supports the BIDs to leverage over \$8 million in private funds and \$400,000 in City funding to provide enhanced services that augment the City's baseline services:
  - 55 Ambassadors that provide regular safety patrols and cleaning services
  - Cultural events and festivals that increase foot traffic
  - Direct small business support

## **Community Response Partnerships**

The Business Development Division of EWDD partners with the Neighborhood Services Division and the City Administrator to address public service needs in targeted high-need commercial areas, including illegal dumping, code enforcement, commercial

burglaries, and graffiti. The interdepartmental working groups include City and agency service staff, businesses, property owners and community organizations that meet regularly and collaborate on public and private interventions to prevent and recover from crime.

Our cross-sector, multi-service approach has focused City resources to:

- Improve safety procedures and responses for managing the areas around major entertainment venues
- Improve coordination on the usage of security camera footage between businesses, City Enforcement teams and the Oakland Police Department
- Hold regular business association monthly meetings with City services on 7<sup>th</sup> St in West Oakland (active since Sept 2022)
- Support businesses in Little Saigon to regain community control of Clinton Park
- Launch a Downtown business forum to explore the challenges and opportunities of an Entertainment District

Ongoing regular EWDD-supported meetings with Oakland's merchant groups and business associations to enhance coordination and support from the City as well as focus listening and amplification of the business community's voice:

- Monthly BID Alliance meetings with Business Improvement Districts and Chambers
- Monthly Small Business Council meetings

### **Additional City Supported Safety Resources**

EWDD is working to enhance communication with our small businesses and business community around safety, and the resources that are available – both privately and publicly for them to prevent crime and also recover from crime.

- City of Oakland's **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)** program. Read our [guidelines here](#).
- Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils
- Neighborhood Service Coordinators
- Merchant Watch services and support
  - Free crime prevention assessments and recommendations for businesses
  - Adopt a Spot guidance and support
  - Free one-time graffiti removal
- EWDD is also planning a Business-led public safety communications campaign in partnership with Visit Oakland with funding from City Council.