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MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR &
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: David Ferguson
Director, OPW

SUBJECT: 2020 Team Oakland Contract
Performance Update

DATE: March 2, 2021

City Administrator
Approval

Date: Mar 2, 2021

INFORMATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On March 27, 2020, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 88082 C.M.S., authorizing a three-year extension with the Youth Employment Partnership (YEP) to implement the Team Oakland Program from June 30, 2020, to June 30, 2023. The Resolution requires staff to provide an annual contract performance update to Council. This informational memorandum provides a summary of the Team Oakland activities completed in 2020 and staff's evaluation of YEP's performance.

BACKGROUND

Oakland Public Works (OPW) launched Team Oakland in 1993 as a citywide employment and environmental education program for Oakland teens to decrease summer idleness with a structured work and training curriculum to develop positive work habits, encourage anti-littering norms, and educate them about the environmental issues impacting their communities. In 2019, Team Oakland piloted the Student Ambassador Program, a part of Oakland Public Works larger Oaktown PROUD (Prevent and Report Our Unlawful Dumping) anti-dumping campaign, to train high school students to develop and present an anti-dumping and littering campaign to their student peers and to their broader community.

UPDATE

Team Oakland fully integrated the Student Ambassador Program into its programming in 2020, in an effort to emphasize the outreach component while continuing to strengthen environmental awareness and career development opportunities.

Led by 13 Team Leaders, 96 Oakland teens joined Team Oakland in 2020. Nearly all of the Team Members identified as a youth of color and primarily resided in low-income Oakland neighborhoods. Team Members participated in eight core activities: litter & illegal dumping abatement; Oaktown PROUD education and advocacy; COVID-19 safety awareness and training; leadership training; environmental stewardship training; employment training; special environmental projects; and dynamic field trips.

In all, Team Oakland removed 3,823 bags (~72 tons) of trash and green waste primarily from West Oakland, Inner East, Central East, and Deep East. While cleaning up neighborhoods, Team Members also engaged in outreach to local merchants and community members to educate them on affordable services to properly dispose of waste, illegal dumping reporting, and how to obtain City support for volunteer cleanups. In the process, Team Oakland distributed thousands of Oaktown PROUD fliers, held hundreds of conversations, and had scores of neighborhood stores display Oaktown PROUD posters in public-facing windows throughout Oakland. In addition, the Program's eight Student Ambassadors produced an outreach video aimed at stoking civic pride and eradicating illegal dumping and blight and conducted weekly community outreach. Lastly, in response to COVID, Team Oakland delivered Oakland ReOpening Guide posters and Flex Streets Initiative fliers to support businesses as they transitioned to physically distanced customer service models. The youth also engaged in a successful signature collecting campaign to support the City's grant application for the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act recovery assistance funding.

Team Members received 1,902 hours of training for job readiness and employability. Training topics included job application and interview techniques, professional communication, conflict management, and financial literacy. OPW also provided training on race and equity, government, public speaking, and persuasive communication, etc. Lastly, the program offered nine field trips and special projects in 2020 at locations such as the Bottoms Up Community Garden, City Slicker Urban Farm, Gardens at Lake Merritt, and Peralta Hacienda, where the Team Members learned about urban gardening and food sustainability. They even took a ferry ride on the San Francisco Bay where their leaders engaged them in an in-depth discussion involving watershed protection. The special projects also included fire fuel management projects with support from the Oakland Fire Department and OPW Park Services.

In 2020, Team Oakland continued to advance the City's racial equity outcomes through valuable job training and employment for Oakland youth of color, mostly from low-income neighborhoods, and through increased cleanups and outreach about City services to flatland communities. This was accomplished despite a myriad of challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Adaptations that YEP had to make included:

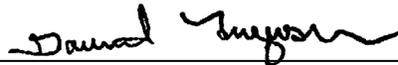
- Developing a COVID-19 protocol to establish healthy behaviors;
- Improving sanitation infrastructure and providing personal protective equipment;
- Reducing team unit sizes and redesigning orientation, trainings, and field activities to ensure proper social distancing; and
- Adjusting program schedules to complete all desired activities in a truncated season.

Furthermore, as a result of OPW Environmental Stewardship Program's staffing shortages, YEP added the responsibility of field trip planning and coordination on short notice. YEP also created a three-week transition plan for the Team Members following the end of the planned fieldwork to allow for uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 restrictions and if/when the youth would return to school.

In the end, YEP successfully delivered a program that improved the participants' job readiness and employability. The participants also agreed that Team Oakland increased their environmental literacy and enabled them to be more forceful advocates for the environment and their community.

Pre- and post-program surveys showed that 86% of the respondents positively changed their perception in regard to the five measured categories: litter; illegal dumping; environmental awareness; neighborhood pride; and recycling. Most importantly, many felt more empowered to do something about these issues as a result of their time on Team Oakland.

Respectfully submitted,



DAVID FERGUSON
Interim Director, OPW

For questions, please contact DEIDRE MARTIN, ACTING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM SUPERVISOR, at (510) 238-7073.