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April 15, 2019

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Re: Measure Z Public Safety Meeting

Dear Public Officials:



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As all of you no doubt know, Measure Z, enacted by the voters in 2014, includes the following accountability provision:

Joint Meetings of the [Safety and Services Oversight] Commission and City Council:

The City Council, the Commission and other public safety-related boards and commissions shall conduct an annual joint special public informational meeting devoted to the subject of public safety. At each such meeting, the public, Commission and City Council will hear reports from representatives of all departments and the Chief of Police concerning progress of all of the City's efforts to reduce violent crime.

In the first four years since the law became effective, the City has ignored this provision and failed to comply. After unsuccessfully urging several members of the City Administrator's office and elected officials to schedule the required meeting, we finally began appearing before the Safety and Services Oversight Commission, which in response began taking steps to get the event scheduled. We have been advised that the first meeting is planned for the evening of April 30, although no public announcements have yet been made.

We are pleased that the City has scheduled this public meeting. From the beginning, Make Oakland Better Now! strongly supported Measure Z. We were one of several organizations that advocated for the measure to be placed on the November 2014 ballot. We argued for many key elements of the measure while it was being written and campaigned for it during the election season.

We believe this meeting is essential for the Oakland community, as an opportunity to see the progress of Measure Z, to know its implementation is transparent and inclusive, and for the public to be informed about all the City's efforts to reduce violent crime. We are aware that coordinating a meeting of this breadth and importance is not easy. It's not easy to manage schedules, limited resources, and other bureaucracy.



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Make Oakland Better Now! wants to offer our views on what should take place both in connection with this month's meeting and in connection with those in future years.

Who should participate in the meeting?

At a minimum, to comply with the law and adequately inform the community, Oakland should have the following persons, commissions, committees and others actively participate in the meeting: the Chief of Police; members of Police command staff; the Mayor; the Safety and Services Public Safety Oversight Commission; the Police Commission; the City Council Public Safety Committee; City Council President; key staff from the Police Inspector General's office; Oakland Unite Executive Director; leaders of the Safety Impact Table of the Youth Ventures Joint Powers Authority; Executive Director of the Department of Race and Equity; key staff from the Community Police Review Agency; current interim leadership staffing for Operation Ceasefire; and other key participants in reducing crime and improving public safety.

We realize this involves many people, but they are necessary if the City is to comply with the requirement that the meeting involve all "public safety-related boards and commissions" and "representatives of all departments...concerning progress of all of the City's efforts to reduce violent crime."

What subjects are of critical importance?

We believe discussion of the following issues is essential. There are a number that specifically concern the Oakland Police Department:

- The Oakland Police Department's goals for reducing violent crime in Oakland, strategies for doing so, timing and plans to make information about those strategies and their impact available to the public.
- Steps the OPD is taking and will it take in the future to increase clearance, reduce residual arrests, end implicit and explicit officer bias, and publicly show the impact of its steps.
- The OPD Inspector General's office's audit of the Executive Force Review Board as to past years' reporting of uses of force, public reporting concerning that audit,



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and improved posting of Inspector General reports on line, current and up to date.

- Steps that will be taken to improve the functioning of the Operation Ceasefire program following changes in its leadership.

Other topics highlight the work and collaboration of different City departments, community leaders, and nonprofits:

- The City's current community policing strategies and policies, and the information available to determine the extent to which they are working successfully.
- The activities, projects and strategies of the Youth Ventures Joint Powers Authority and Safety Impact Table related to violence reduction, and programs for providing knowledge to the public about the activities, projects and strategies that have succeeded
- The City's efforts to undertake a community poll to evaluate police / community relations, the results, and future plans for polling and responding to the results in the future.
- Status of hiring a Director of the City's Department of Violence Reduction.
- City plans to fully staff the Police Commission and Citizens' Police Review Agency, and timing of these plans.
- Strategies of the Oakland Police Department, Mayor and City Administrator to end Federal Court oversight over the police department, including timing and making related information readily and publicly available.

Publicity for the upcoming meeting:

This meeting was designed as part of Measure Z to substantially improve transparency and increase public knowledge concerning all strategic elements and their impact. It is cause for great concern that only fifteen days from the event, it does not appear on the City Council's meeting schedule, or on the announcements on the SSOC's web page, and that as far as we know, there have been no public announcements or community reach-out activities.

As an organization, we are committed to help bringing attention to this meeting and inviting members of the community. But more can done by the City. We believe this



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meeting needs far more than just posting on the City Council's website. It should be the subject of as much publicity as possible, beginning almost immediately. This should range from press releases, to council member newsletters, to local outreach throughout Oakland. This is the something that needs to start at once.

Future meetings:

We urge the City to budget for and begin planning the 2020 meeting now. These Measure Z events should encourage as much public involvement and education as possible. Holding the meeting in Council chambers on a weekday evening might not reach a wider audience, and we urge the City to consider a larger venue out in the community and scheduling the event on a weekend morning and/or afternoon. We also urge the City to prioritize publicity and start outreach months in advance.

Moving forward, we hope this meeting becomes an integral and meaningful part of the discussion of Measure Z and public safety in Oakland.

Sincerely,

The Make Oakland Better Now! Board

