

MRP Workgroup on Discharges Associated with Homelessness

Online Meeting via Microsoft Teams

April 1, 2020

Meeting Summary

Name	Affiliation	Email Address
Luisa Valiela	EPA R9	Valiela.luisa@epa.gov
Mitch Avalon	CCCWP	Mitch.avalon@pw.cccounty.us
Beth Baldwin	ACCWP	bethb@acpwa.org
Chris Sommers	EOA/SCVURPPP	csommers@eoainc.com
Val Blakely	City of Fremont	vallakely@fremont.gov
Kara Kelly	City of Oakland	Kkelly@Oaklandca.gov
Kristin Hathaway	City of Oakland	khathaway@oaklandca.gov
Kirsten Struve	SCVWD	kstruve@valleywater.org
Liz Neves	City of San Jose	Liz.neves@sanjoseca.gov
Chelsea Thompson	City of Petaluma	cthompson@cityofpetaluma.org
Jose Gomes	Mountain View FD	Jose.gomes@mountainview.gov
Becky Haworth	City of San Pablo	BeckyH@sanpabloca.gov
Amanda Booth	City of San Pablo	AmandaB@sanpabloca.gov
Will Stockyard	MCSTOPPP	Wstockard@marincounty.org
Derek Beauduy	R2 Water Board	Derek.beauduy@waterboards.ca.gov
Elyse Heilshorn	R2 Water Board	Elyse.heilshorn@waterboards.ca.gov
Joseph Martinez	R2 Water Board	Joseph.martinez@waterboards.ca.gov
Imtiaz-Ali Kalyan	R2 Water Board	Imtiaz-ali.kalyan@waterboards.ca.gov
Zach Rokeach	R2 Water Board	Zachary.rokeach@waterboards.ca.gov
Keith Lichten	R2 Water Board	Keith.lichten@waterboards.ca.gov

Summary of Workgroup Discussions

After going over the meeting agenda, Keith Lichten began the meeting by discussing the draft framework document on addressing water quality impacts associated with homelessness. The draft framework outlines the Water Board's goals in working with municipalities, Caltrans, and other stakeholders to address waste discharges associated with homelessness that contribute to exceedances of water quality objectives. Participants recommended that the framework document include the effects of encampments on habitat degradation, physical damage to stream banks, and impacts to beneficial uses. Keith mentioned these are important, but may not be addressed in the Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit (MRP), which is focused on the MS4. Additional water quality issues associated with homelessness that were brought up included: discharges of raw sewage into creeks, sediment degradation, burying and incineration of trash, pesticides, and disposal of hazardous wastes.

Some suggested edits to the draft framework section on "goals/proposed outcomes" include more language on possible enforcement requirements. Participants recommended using the term "control measures" instead of "practices" to be consistent with the MRP. Participants also suggested that new

MRP language on homelessness should have a clearly defined nexus with the existing direct discharge program offset.

Workgroup participants mentioned that they would like to see the workgroup discussions continue at a frequency of every 4 to 6 weeks. Water Board staff agreed.

Water Board staff inquired about whether there were/are other ongoing efforts to address water quality issues associated with homelessness. Kirsten Struve (Valley Water) mentioned that the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) are working on water quality issues associated with homelessness and suggested collaborating with them, if possible. Chris Sommers (SCVURPPP) mentioned that, so far, countywide discussions on homelessness have been limited – he’s aware of a just a few discussions that have occurred between Caltrans and Santa Clara County. He further stated that the topic has also been brought up periodically at BASMAA trash committee meetings.

Amanda Booth (City of San Pablo) stated that she appreciates the workgroup discussions but requested that in the future, the meeting agenda and material is sent to the homelessness workgroup participants well in advance of the scheduled meeting date in-order to provide sufficient time for internal discussions, and to foster a more productive workgroup meeting.

Presentation – City of Oakland – Kristin Hathaway

Kristin Hathaway (City of Oakland) gave a presentation on measures the City is implementing to address homelessness. Kristin discussed how the City of Oakland is committed to ending homelessness as its goal. As a preferable option to managing homeless encampments, the City is directing substantial resources into affordable housing with the aim of getting those who are willing into housing. Oakland has noticed a connection between encampments, trash generation, and illegal dumping. Illegal dumping often may be done near encampments, but not necessarily by the people occupying the encampments. Kristin described some of the actions Oakland is taking to address water quality impacts, such as cleaning encampments, providing sanitary services, providing managed sites for RVs, and targeting encampments within 500 feet of waterways. She also described the launch of a campaign called Oaktown Proud that is mostly focused on bringing public awareness to trash and illegal dumping.

Next steps

Following Kristin’s presentation was an open discussion. Among the items discussed was a proposal by Water Board staff on whether municipalities would be interested in making a presentation to the homelessness workgroup on limits (they foresee) toward implementation measures, as well as whether municipalities would be interested in developing a draft list of practices that they would like to see in the MRP itself, or in guidance documents.

Chris Sommers stated he’s aware of a few large agencies and people working on the homelessness issue and that coming up with ideas to the proposals made above may take some time. He further stated that according to his understanding, a few municipalities may not have a homelessness issue to deal with at all. To that end, he mentioned it would be important to gain an understanding applicability (with respect to the new permit requirements). Water Board staff agreed that additional thought needs to go into the applicability criteria. Chris Sommers also inquired about the basic/minimum level of implementation requirements. Water Board staff stated that minimum level of implementation requirements would hopefully get teased out/developed through these workgroup meetings. Water Board staff agreed that discussion of the minimum requirements should include information about the existing level of resources available to permittees. In addition, there should be consideration of opportunities to set expectations consistent with the scope of the problem. Mitch Avalon (Contra Costa County) stated that the

homelessness issue can't be solved via stormwater only and that the City of Oakland's success in address the issue may be owed to the availability of funds and the political willpower. Water Board staff agreed and recognized that homelessness comprises a much broader set of issues. While there's benefit to and need to work on those issues, the Water Board is necessarily focused on the water quality impacts associated with homelessness. Water Board staff noted that new permit language could provide a benefit by helping to push against a lack of political will.

Water Board staff inquired about what topics the workgroup group would like to see covered at future workgroup meetings; attendees mentioned that understanding the applicability of new stormwater permit requirements, with respect to homelessness, was important. Water Board staff agreed and mentioned staff's intention to develop a bullet-point-level draft framework of permit expectations for discussion at the next workgroup meeting. Water Board staff also mentioned that as a water quality agency, they are interested in addressing the homelessness issue as it relates to both direct discharges to receiving waters, and water quality impacts resulting from transport through MS4 systems. While the MRP and MS4 stormwater permits specifically address concerns relating to MS4 discharges, opportunities exist to work with permittees on issues beyond discharges to/from MS4 systems.

Luisa Valiela (U.S. EPA) mentioned she would like to see the workgroup, through discussion of new permit language, foster opportunities for collaboration between municipalities and Caltrans; Water Board staff agreed. Water Board staff also noted that Caltrans has supported Oakland's implementation of community cabins in Caltrans leased ROW and would like to know more about opportunities for coordination with various municipalities.

I. Next Steps and Action Items

- Meet every 4-6 weeks.
- Water Board staff will send out a doodle poll to set the next workgroup meeting.
- Water Board staff will send out the meeting summary of this meeting.
- At the next workgroup meeting, Caltrans will provide an update on the latest from their internal homelessness task force.
- The City of San Jose may also provide a presentation on measures they have implemented to address water quality issues associated with homelessness
- Water Board staff requested that workgroup members bring case studies to discuss at the next workgroup meeting (Water Board to send out an email with that request).
- Water Board staff will draft a permit language framework for this workgroup.

San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board

Homelessness Workgroup

Problem Statement

The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board recognizes homelessness in the Bay Area as a pressing societal and environmental concern. This concern includes the potential water quality-related issues associated with homelessness. Discharges from homeless encampments and vehicles used as temporary or permanent shelter can contribute to water quality degradation, and have the potential to cause or contribute to violations of applicable water quality standards. This can result from discharges including human waste and trash to storm drains, creeks and riparian areas, and other surface waters, including the Bay. Homelessness is also tied to the human right to water, as people experiencing homelessness often lack proper access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation services.

The workgroup will foster collaboration among the Water Board, local municipalities, Caltrans, and other stakeholders with the goal of addressing water quality impacts associated with homelessness by identifying sources of impacts, understanding current management practices, and identifying and promoting practical solutions.

Goals/Proposed Outcomes

- Identify potential water quality impacts associated with homelessness, including existing data and related information around those impacts (e.g., water quality sampling data, creek cleanup data, maps and censuses of existing encampments).
- Identify practices to address those impacts, including practices already being implemented by Bay Area municipalities, or more broadly (e.g., San Diego sidewalk cleaning guidelines).
- Develop a minimum set of expectations for those practices, to be incorporated into the Water Board's Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit (MRP) when it is reissued (reissuance anticipated by June 2021).
- Coordinate with State Water Board staff regarding language in the statewide small and non-traditional MS4 NPDES permit, when it is reissued.
- Identify partners necessary for the successful implementation of those practices (e.g., sanitary sewer agencies, Caltrans) and include in the practices establishing a framework for that communication.
- Consider whether the minimum expectations may be considered a plan of implementation sufficient to address, over time, municipal causes or contributions to violations of applicable receiving water quality standards pursuant to MRP Provision C.1.
- Identify barriers to implementing practices and consider opportunities to address them.
- Identify opportunities for beneficial coordination with ongoing efforts around homelessness that are focused on other issues (e.g., provision of housing and social services) and consider approaches to that coordination.
- Identify whether, and under what circumstances, water quality monitoring may help characterize the problem and assist solutions. Set expectations regarding that monitoring.

Practices Under Discussion (initial list)

- Map and take censuses of homeless encampments or problem areas adjacent to creeks and/or waterbodies.
- Develop collaborative programs and agreements between municipalities, non-profits, Caltrans, etc., aimed at reducing homelessness and eliminating associated water quality impacts.
- Develop and implement plans to collect and remove trash from unmanaged encampments.
- Develop and implement programs such as hygiene centers that can provide access to showers and restrooms (sanitation services), portable water, syringe collection boxes, laundry, and emergency services.
- Improve access to emergency shelters, social services, clean drinking water, sanitation services, and affordable housing.
- Develop and implement innovative programs/solutions such as voucher programs for proper disposal of RV sanitary sewage, provision of mobile pump-out services, providing mechanics to help make broken RVs mobile, establishment of designated RV “safe parking” areas on Caltrans and municipality property, temporary or transitional shelters on public properties (such as Caltrans’ program of low-cost leases to non-profits to establish tiny house communities in leased areas), etc.
- Procure grant funding and participate in aid programs aimed at alleviating homelessness (e.g., Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention, https://www.bcsb.ca.gov/hcfc/aid_program.html)
- Implement encampment trash (litter bag) collection pilot programs: working with other City departments and community partners, municipalities could provide litter bags and conduct regular or on-call pick-ups from encampments, vehicle parking areas, etc.
- Provide and maintain used syringe collection boxes in City parks or other public spaces.

Next Steps

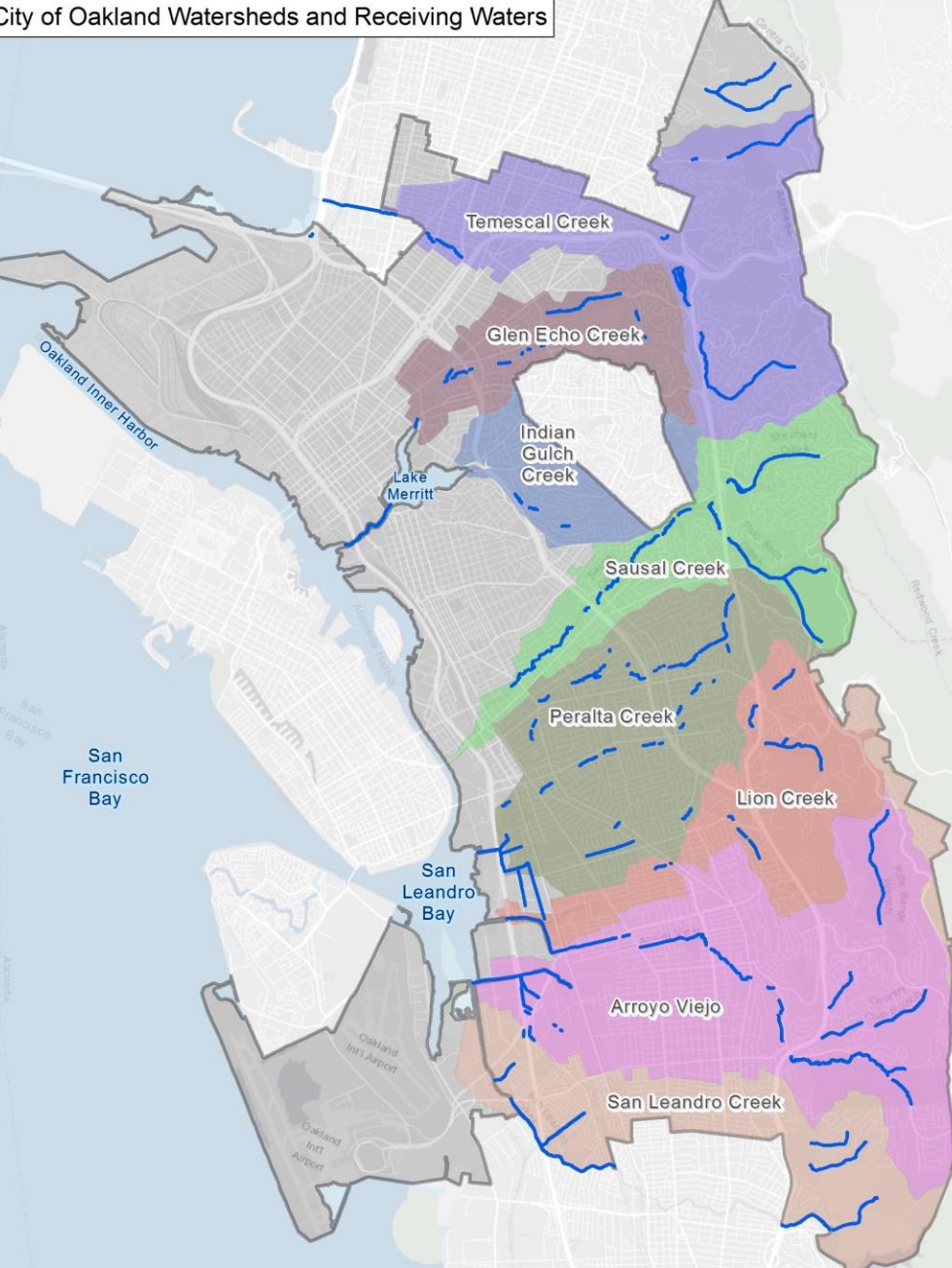
- Continue workgroup discussions every 4 to 6 weeks.
- Explore funding opportunities, resources, and collaborators.
- Drive collaboration between Caltrans and municipalities.
- Develop draft language for MRP 3.0.


CITY OF OAKLAND


Homeless Encampment Management



Kristin Hathaway
Oakland Public Works Department
Watershed and Stormwater Management Division
April 2020



 Creek/Channel
(Receiving Water)

 Oakland Boundary

Data Sources:
Roads: Alameda County
City Boundaries: Alameda County
Receiving Waters: City of Oakland; NHD
Background: World Light Gray
Canvas Base

0 0.3 0.6 1.2 Miles



- ▶ Oakland population: 390,724
- ▶ Density of 7,003 per square mile
- ▶ Watershed
 - ▶ 15 major creeks
 - ▶ 30 tributaries
 - ▶ Lake Merritt
 - ▶ Estuary

City of Oakland

2019 EveryOne Counts

Homeless Point-in-Time Count & Survey

Every two years, during the last 10 days of January, communities across the country conduct comprehensive counts of people experiencing homelessness in order to measure the prevalence of homelessness in each local community.

The 2019 Alameda County EveryOne Home Point-in-Time Count was a community-wide effort conducted on January 30th, 2019. In the weeks following the street count, a survey was administered across Alameda County. In the city of Oakland, 660 unsheltered and sheltered homeless individuals were surveyed, in order to profile their experience and characteristics.

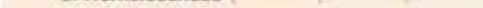
Homeless Census Population



Sheltered/ Unsheltered Population



Duration of Current Episode of Homelessness



What Might Have Prevented Homelessness



Primary Causes of Homelessness



How New Money Should Be Spent



Sheltered/Unsheltered Population by City



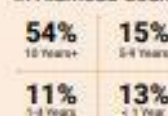
Unsheltered Population by Location



Residence Prior to Homelessness



Length of Time in Alameda County

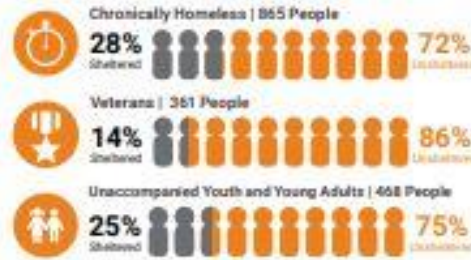


- ▶ City of Oakland homeless population half of all homeless in Alameda County
- ▶ Homeless increased from 2,761 to 4,071 in span of two years
- ▶ 79% are unsheltered
- ▶ >50% have been homeless for > 1 yr

Household Breakdown



Subpopulations



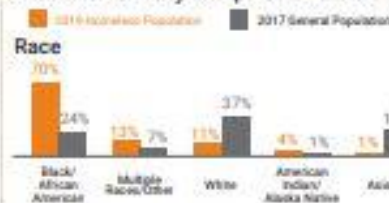
Age



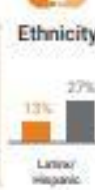
LGBTQ+ Status



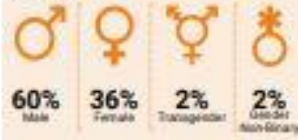
Race and Ethnicity Compared to General Population



Ethnicity



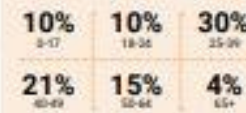
Gender



First Episode of Homelessness



Age at First Episode of Homelessness



Not Interested in Housing



Health Conditions*

Current health conditions reported by survey respondents:



Disabling Conditions

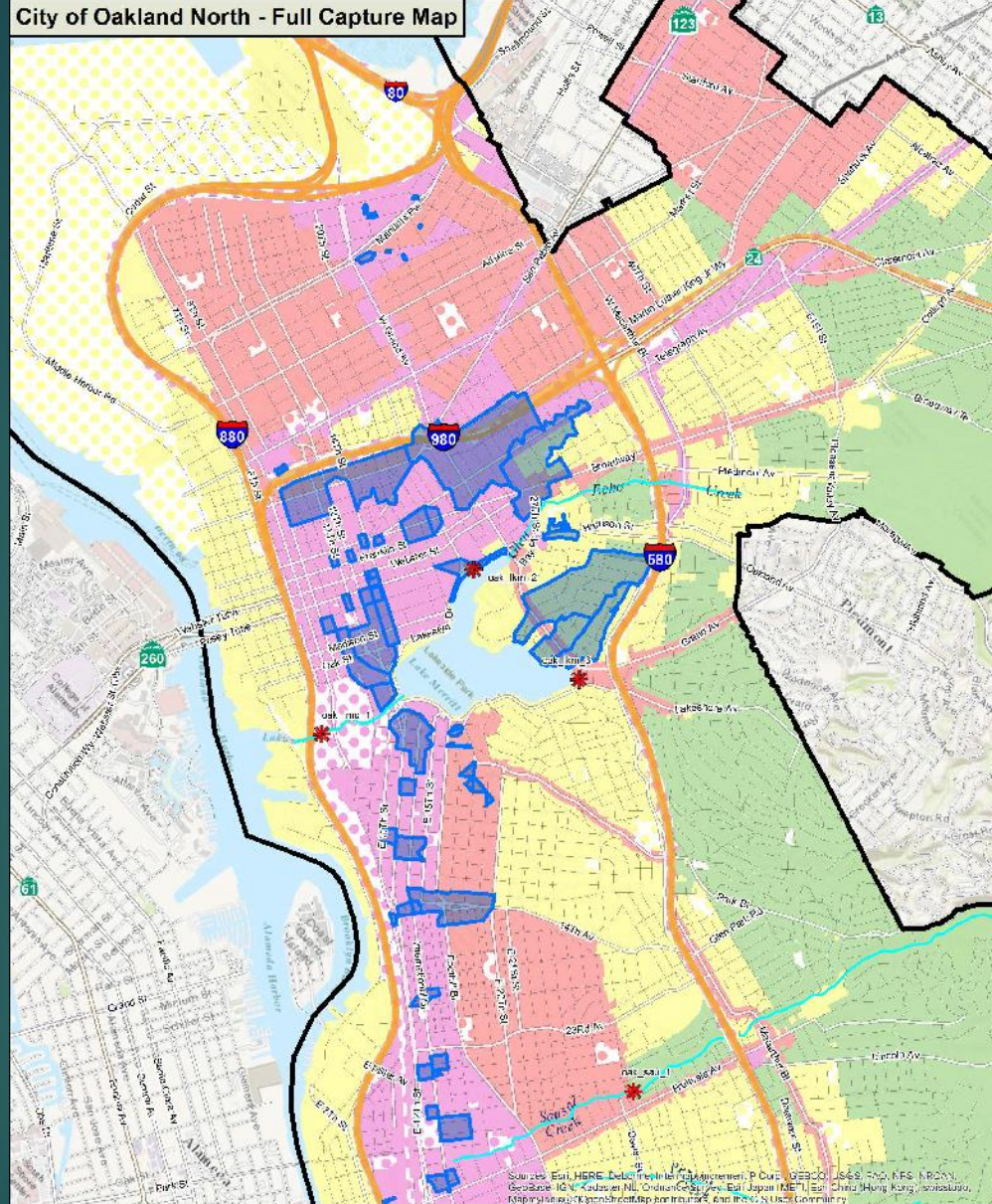
38% of survey respondents reported having at least one disabling condition.



A disabling condition is defined by HUD as a developmental disability with ADD, or a long-term physical or mental impairment that impacts a person's ability to live independently, but could be improved with stable housing.

- ▶ Only 2% of people surveyed not interested in housing
- ▶ 70% of homeless population Black/African American compared to 24% of Oakland's total population
- ▶ 60% of homeless population male
- ▶ 35% have mental health conditions

City of Oakland North - Full Capture Map



Legend

Trash Generation Category

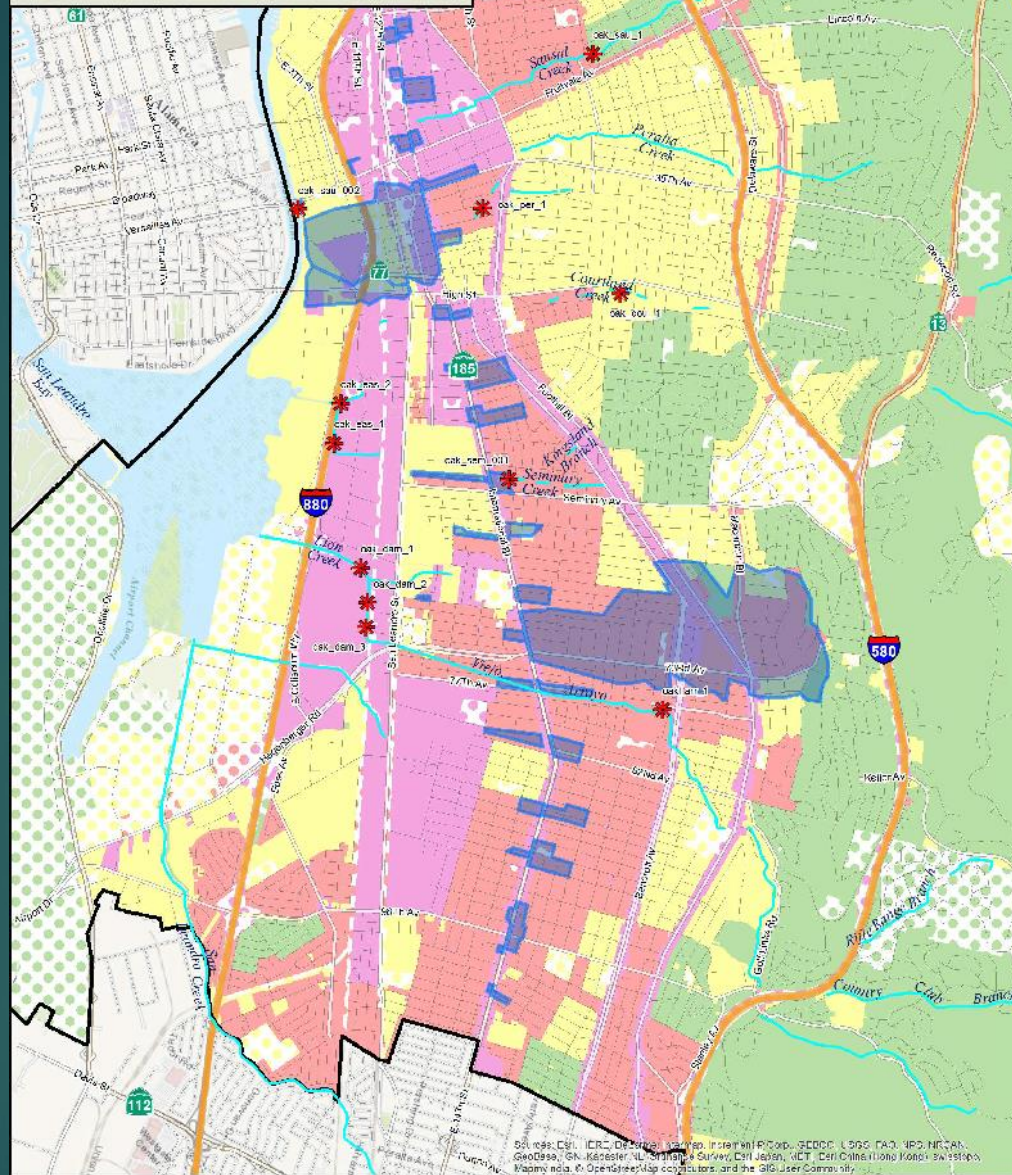
- Low
- Moderate
- High
- Very High

- Creek/Shoreline Hotspot
- Full-Capture Location
- Trash Full Capture
- Non-Jurisdictional (Dot color = Generation Category)

- Streets
- Freeway
- Creeks

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

City of Oakland South - Full Capture Map



Legend

Trash Generation Category

- Low
- Moderate
- High
- Very High

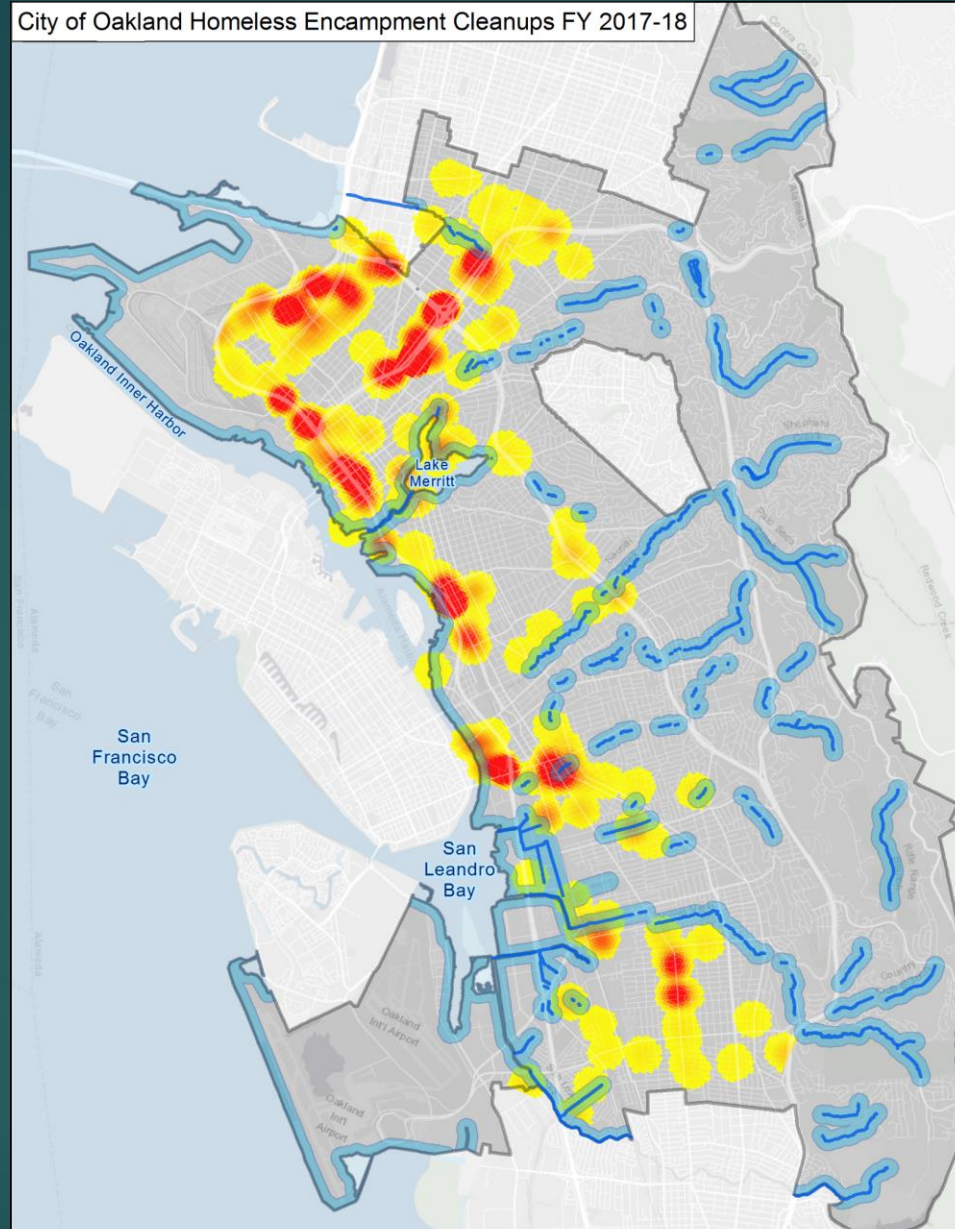
- Creek/Shoreline Hotspot
- Full-Capture Location
- Trash Full Capture
- Non-Jurisdictional (Dot color = Generation Category)

- Streets
- Freeway
- Creeks

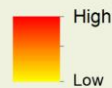
0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



City of Oakland Homeless Encampment Cleanups FY 2017-18



Volume of Trash Removed

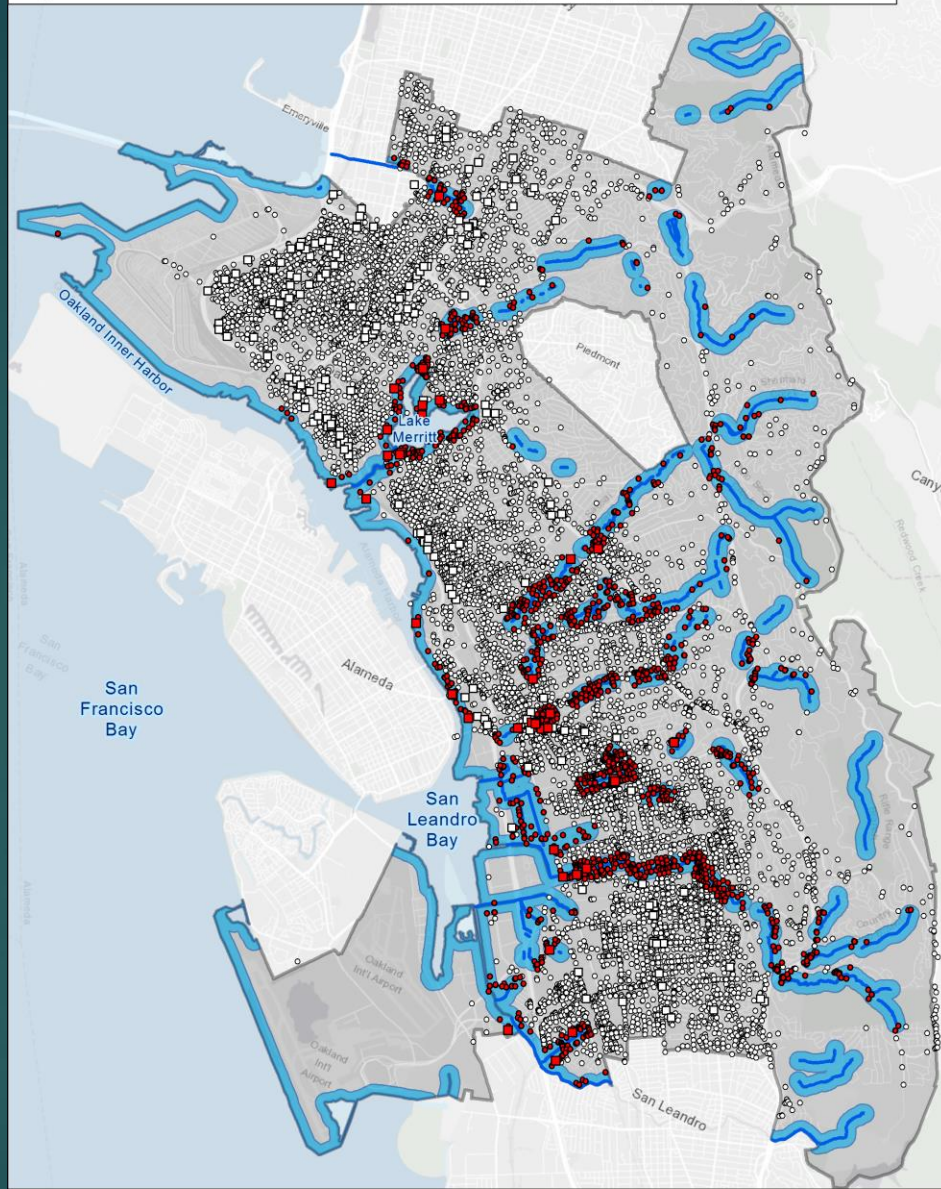


- Within 500' of Receiving Water
- Creek/Channel (Receiving Water)
- Oakland Boundary

Data Sources:
Cleanups: City of Oakland
Roads: Alameda County
City Boundaries: Alameda County
Receiving Waters: City of Oakland; NHD
Background: World Light Gray
Canvas Base

0 0.3 0.6 1.2 Miles





- Within 500' of Receiving Water
- Creek/Channel (Receiving Water)
- Oakland Boundary

Homeless Encampment Cleanups

- Within 500' of Receiving Water
- >500' from Receiving Water

Illegal Dumping Cleanups

- Within 500' of Receiving Water
- >500' from Receiving Water

Data Sources:
 Cleanups: City of Oakland
 Roads: Alameda County
 City Boundaries: Alameda County
 Receiving Waters: City of Oakland; NHD
 Background: World Light Gray
 Canvas Base

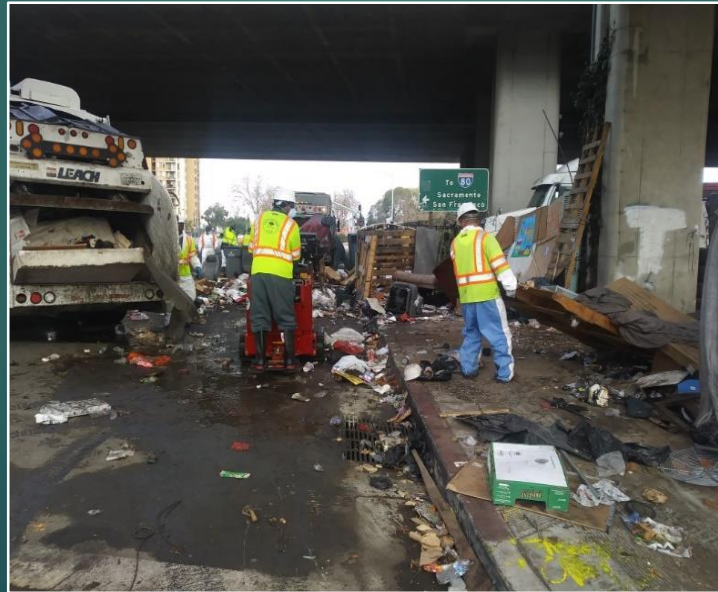
0 0.3 0.6 1.2 Miles



WHAT IS OAKLAND DOING?

TRASH REMOVAL

- ▶ Illegal dumping abatement
- ▶ Homeless encampment cleanups
- ▶ Environmental Enforcement Officers (EEOs)
- ▶ Full Trash Capture
- ▶ Direct Discharge Plan



WHAT IS OAKLAND DOING?



HOMELESS SERVICES

▶ Community Cabins

- ▶ 1st at 6th & Castro - December 2017 (closed after one-year lease expired)
- ▶ 2nd at 27th & Northgate - May 2018
- ▶ 3rd at Lake Merritt - October 2018
- ▶ 4th at Miller Ave - January 2019
- ▶ 5th & 6th both at Mandela - July 2019
- ▶ 7th at Oak Street @ 6th Street - January 2020

▶ 4 Managed Recreational Vehicle (RV) Sites

Located in East, Central, and West Oakland for up to 150 RVs with secure parking, sanitary facilities, and garbage services.

- ▶ 711 71st Avenue across from Coliseum BART ([Opened in 2019](#))
- ▶ 3499 Beach Street (connected to the double Community Cabin site at 3401 Mandela)
- ▶ 3801 East 8th Street near High Street and I-880
- ▶ 11 4th Street

WHAT IS OAKLAND DOING?

HOMELESS SERVICES

- ▶ More transitional and permanent affordable housing, including for very low-income residents, funded by Measure KK (City of Oakland) and Measure A1 (Alameda County).
- ▶ Recent passage of Measure Q – 30% of \$21 million annually for homelessness
- ▶ Interdepartmental Encampment Management Team. Coordinated approach to providing services to unsheltered residents - prioritizes those most in need and increased the numbers of outreach workers and housing navigators working directly with people on the streets.
- ▶ Expanded number of winter shelter beds and extended year-round.
- ▶ Expanded housing navigation and street outreach.
- ▶ Secured a large youth rapid re-housing grant.
- ▶ Invested in anti-displacement, rent arbitration, eviction prevention, and critical prevention efforts.
- ▶ Offered financial incentives for Oakland-based landlords to rent to Section 8 voucher holders.
- ▶ Mayor Libby Schaaf participates in:
 - ▶ 14-city group, “Mayors and CEOs for U.S. Housing Investment” that aligns business partners with local governments to seek federal money for affordable housing and homeless services.
 - ▶ Governor Gavin Newsom’s homelessness task force to advise on solutions to address the state’s homelessness epidemic.
 - ▶ Big 11 Mayors in California which is advocating for direct allocations to their cities of state HEAP (Homeless Emergency Aid Program) funds. Oakland is receiving \$8.6 million to address unsheltered homelessness.