



ALAMEDA COUNTY HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY  
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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City Council Committee on Community Economic Development  
Oakland City Hall  
1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza  
Oakland, CA 94612  
Via e-mail: [jbrunner@oaklandnet.com](mailto:jbrunner@oaklandnet.com)

**RE: Army Base Community Jobs Agreement and Air Quality and Environmental Recommendations**

Chairperson Brunner and members of the Committee on Community Economic Development:

The Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) is writing to share our comments and recommendations regarding the Oakland Army Base Community Jobs Agreement (Agreement) and Standard Conditions of Approval/Mitigation Measures (SCA). As the agency responsible for protecting the public health of Alameda County residents, our department analyzes public health impacts of planning processes for consideration in decision-making. **I write to express our gratitude and support of the Standard Conditions of Approval and Community Jobs Agreement with recommendations.** We commend City of Oakland staff for their collaboration with a vast array of stakeholders on this Agreement – robust democratic processes like these are what lead to healthy communities.

While the following environmental recommendations may not be included in the Agreement, we will continue to work with City staff to ensure that they are addressed:

- ***create an air quality improvement plan with goals, quantified mitigations, monitoring, and an enforcement plan. This plan should be created and monitored through a stakeholder advisory group to the City Council or some other form of a public process.***

In order to maximize public health benefits from this development, we also recommend considering provisions which would:

- ***relieve job applicants of reporting past convictions on initial employment applications;***
- ***extend the same high-quality job opportunities to all prospective employees, including temporary or seasonal hires;***
- ***and affirm a commitment to a collaborative public process, similar to the process that has been used to develop this current agreement, should conditions change and the contract need to be amended.***

## **Environment**

Given that there are existing public health concerns<sup>1</sup> and CEQA analysis shows air pollution from the project is cumulatively considerable, it is imperative that actions be taken to ensure that environmental conditions in West Oakland do not further deteriorate during and after the Oakland Army Base development. We are pleased that a number of recommendations made by ACPHD and West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project are being considered for adoption in the Community Benefits and CEQA Standard Conditions of Approval/Mitigation Measures. These include the air quality monitoring, diesel emissions reduction plan, the truck management plan and consideration of climate change impacts.<sup>2</sup> We believe that including these are vital to ensuring diesel emissions reductions and health protections.

While conditions, mitigations and air quality monitoring have been prescribed in the Agreement and SCA, we recommend stronger accountability measures and ongoing public participation. The City should create a plan for improving air quality in West Oakland and a process to ensure community engagement in developing and implementing the plan. The plan should address interim and long-term pollution reduction goals and targets, timelines for implementation, pollution reduction strategies, quantification of the reduction measures, air monitoring and reassessment, an enforcement plan and strong community engagement. This creates the mechanism and process for air quality and environmental issues to be raised and addressed. ***ACPHD recommends the City create an air quality improvement plan that includes a public process for plan development and implementation and an OAB environmental stakeholder advisory group that provides ongoing consultation to City Council. We look forward to continuing discussions about this with City staff.***

## **Jobs**

The Alameda County Public Health Department strongly supports the Community Jobs Agreement and recommends its adoption. We appreciate the public process used in its development, and believe the number of jobs that would be created by the planned redevelopment of the Oakland Army Base would provide a substantial economic boost for the region, and Oakland in particular. Employment status is fundamental to economic well-being, and gainful employment provides access to resources that promote good health.

Job-quality also has a direct impact on health. Jobs that offer low wages, little or no benefits and lack upward mobility or job security can take a toll on physical and mental health. The objectives outlined in the proposed Community Jobs Agreement help ensure that the Oakland Army Base Redevelopment creates local, high-quality jobs, by including specific values and targets for living wage and "local-hire" requirements, as well as number of apprenticeships for both phases of development and operations. This precedent-setting agreement also calls for the construction of a Jobs Center that will provide residents with resources related to jobs, training, and available services, as well as provide a place for employers to interface with prospective employees.

There is more that could be done to secure potential benefits of this agreement for all potential employees, especially our most vulnerable residents. We recommend that any agreement consider provisions which would:

- Remove barriers to employment for people with past convictions. This population faces unique and seemingly insurmountable barriers to employment. Often, these barriers are unrelated to the applicant's

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<sup>1</sup> People living in West Oakland breathe in three times more diesel particles than other Bay Area residents, contributing to high rates of diseases influenced by environmental exposures, such as cancer and asthma. West Oakland residents experience 2.5 times greater lifetime cancer risk than Bay Area residents in general and 80% of this excess cancer risk is attributed to diesel trucks. West Oakland residents have one of the highest rates of asthma hospitalization in Alameda County – two times the average – and West Oakland children under five years of age are hospitalized for asthma at a rate 2.7 times higher than the county.

<sup>2</sup> See ACPHD's recommendations for Air Quality and Environmental Health Standards to Strengthen the Standard Conditions to Protect Health, January 18, 2012, and ACPHD's comment letter to CEDC on April 24, 2012.

job qualifications. This Community Benefits Agreement provides the City of Oakland a rare opportunity to ensure that people with convictions are not unnecessarily kept from accessing job opportunities.

- Ensure that the same high-quality job opportunities are extended to all prospective employees, including temporary or seasonal hires. The misuse of temporary labor is an emerging issue nationwide and this Agreement serves as an opportunity to ensure that the temporary labor system is not abused at the former Oakland Army Base.
- Affirm the City of Oakland's commitment to a collaborative public process, similar to the process that has been used to developed this current agreement, that is responsive to the needs of Oakland residents should conditions change and the contract need to be amended.

Again, we applaud the Community Jobs Agreement for its contributions to ensuring high-quality jobs and ongoing efforts to improve the health of Oakland's residents.

Thank you for your leadership on these important issues, and for considering our recommendations for maximizing the public health benefits of this historic opportunity. We appreciate the collaboration thus far and look forward to continuing discussions with Council and staff on these very important issues. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Flournoy, MPH  
Deputy Director and Director of Planning, Policy, and Health Equity

cc: Councilmember De La Fuente;  
Councilmember Nadel;  
Councilmember Kernighan

