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**MAYOR RON DELLUMS ANNOUNCES NEW OAKLAND PARTNERSHIP
THAT ADDRESSES YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND GRAFFITI ABATEMENT
ALONG OAKLAND'S MOST VISIBLE CORRIDORS**

OAKLAND – Due to an overwhelming demand from local business groups and the residential community to address blight in their neighborhoods, the City of Oakland's Redevelopment Agency is launching a new partnership with two local non-profit agencies to hire and train teams of young adults to abate graffiti along key corridors in the City's redevelopment areas.

To achieve the two-fold goal of youth training and graffiti abatement, the Redevelopment Agency has partnered with Cypress Mandela Training Center, Inc. (CMTC) and Youth Employment Partnership, Inc (YEP). These local non-profits specialize in providing workforce training to Oakland's at-risk youth while they work to complete GEDs, certification programs and various other requirements necessary to earn employment in the construction trade.

"This innovative approach tackles two of Oakland's most pressing issues intrinsic to public safety—job training and blight abatement—with one creative, holistic approach," said Mayor Ron Dellums. "I am proud of our city's partnership with the non-profit community to simultaneously serve our residents - especially our youth - and businesses at a time when we are striving to achieve our vision of Oakland as the Model City."

According to Gregory Hunter, Deputy Director of Redevelopment and Economic Development, "This is a very promising opportunity for our youth and the Redevelopment Agency. New partnerships are being formed that promote youth workforce training and help keep our streets clean. I call it a win-win situation."

Arthur Shanks, Director of CMTC, and Michele Clark, Director of YEP, have recruited qualified young adults from their programs to participate in this supervised graffiti abatement initiative. The selected trainees will be working along International Boulevard, San Leandro, West Grand Avenue, San Pablo Avenue, Adeline and other prominent corridors. The program will focus specifically on providing the trainees work experience on community revitalization projects and classroom training in pre-employment issues, environmental topics and leadership. The program is funded by the Oakland City Council, which approved \$75,000 for workforce training and graffiti abatement services in the West Oakland and Coliseum Redevelopment project areas.

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