

OAKLAND MAYOR SHENG THAO DELIVERS STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS WEEKS BEFORE RECALL ELECTION

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Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao delivered her State of the City address at a City Council meeting on Tuesday evening, laying out her administration's accomplishments over the last year and outlining how she intends to continue the progress during the rest of her term. Thao boasted about where the city has improved in the last year since her previous city address, saying that the change is "nothing short of inspiring." The post Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao Delivers State of the City Address Weeks Before Recall Election first appeared on Post News Group.

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By Magaly Muñoz

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Her 2023 city address was filled with acknowledgments of her administration's failures, including not securing funding for retail crime prevention, loss of businesses, risk to public welfare and much more, but this year's speech focused on her accomplishments.

There was also no mention of the recall she is facing in a few short weeks or the FBI raid on her home in June.

Thao dedicated the majority of her 2023 speech talking about her priority on public safety. She had fired the former Oakland Police Chief LeRonne Armstrong eight months prior. She then became the face of the rising crime the city was struggling to manage.

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But at her speech Tuesday night, she celebrated the hiring of current chief Floyd Mitchell, who joined the department this spring, and the reinvestment into the Ceasefire program to prevent violent crimes.



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"I can tell you today that crime is down," Thao said.

Homicides in particular are down nearly 30% from 2023. One hundred and twenty people were killed last year, but OPD data shows that there have only been 66 homicides to date.

Robberies and burglaries are also seeing a significant decrease by 24% and 54% respectively this year. In 2023, robberies were up 38% and burglaries up by 23%, a statistic that many did not let Thao forget.

Now, Thao said that business owners are seeing fewer break-ins and "less broken glass on the streets."

The mayor also mentioned the substantial investments into public safety technology, such as the 290 Flock cameras installed all around the city to catch offenders. According to the Flock Safety portal, there have been over 55,000 hits to date for wanted vehicles.

Thao announced that the city is working with the Federal Aviation Administration, the Oakland Privacy Advisory Commission, and the Police Commission to facilitate a "first-responder droning program" that will allow for faster response time for Priority One calls. The drones would send live feed information to first responders to assist in their aid.

The mayor also mentioned the efforts to clean up the streets by clearing 250 homeless encampments, cleaning illegal dumping and parked vehicles, and adding new infrastructure to keep streets safe for everyone.

Aside from public safety, Thao celebrated the recent sale of the Oakland Coliseum, which is set to bring in \$125 million for the city, \$110 million available in this fiscal year.

But this deal is anything but smooth sailing. In recent weeks, questions have risen about the legitimacy of the sale and whether the funds will come in on time so that the city does not have to cut funding to essential public safety departments. The mayor's team and the buyers have assured the public that all payments will be made when promised and no cuts will be made.

Acknowledgements to the various sports investments did not stop at the Coliseum. The Oakland Ballers moving into Raimondi Park and the Oakland Roots playing at the stadium next season were also points of economic progress for Thao.

The Bay Area will also be home to a new WNBA team, the Valkyries, and will see events from NBA All Stars to the 2026 Super Bowl, and the Men's Fifa World Cup in the next few years. Thao said she will make sure that Oakland is involved in these key events in order to secure revenue from visiting tourists.

"Our challenges are great, but our people are greater," Thao said.



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There are no comments yet.