

Your Community Impact Statement has been successfully submitted to City Council and Committees.

If you have questions and/or concerns, please contact the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment at NCsupport@lacity.org.

This is an automated response, please do not reply to this email.

Contact Information

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The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(14) Nay(1) Abstain(0) Ineligible(0) Recusal(0)

Date of NC Board Action: 06/10/2020

Type of NC Board Action: Against unless Amended

Impact Information

Date: 06/11/2020

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 20-0600

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Summary: See attached CIS.

**EAGLE ROCK
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

Executive Committee

Jesse Saucedo, President
Richard Loew, Vice President
Sylvia Denlinger, Treasurer
Andrew Jacobs, Communications
Lisa Karahalios, Secretary

**CITY OF
LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA**



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**LETTER/COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT REGARDING MAYOR'S PROPOSED
FY 2020-21 BUDGET, COUNCIL FILE 20-0600**

Sent via email

June 11, 2020

The Honorable Members of the Budget and Finance Committee
c/o Office of the City Clerk
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Email: clerk.budgetandfinancecommittee@lacity.org

Re: The Mayor's Proposed Budget, Council File 20-0600

Dear Councilmembers Krekorian, Price, Koretz, Blumenfield, and Bonin,

The Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council (ERNC) writes to express our deep concern regarding the Mayor's Proposed Budget for the Fiscal Year 2020-21, [Council File 20-0600](#), and urges you to revise the budget so that it reflects the values of our community. **At this critical time of converging health, economic, and racial justice crises, our city budget should be increasing funding for the vital social services on which so many Angelenos depend, not cutting those services to offset raises for police officers.** The ERNC approved this letter after a Brown Act noticed special public meeting was held on June 10, 2020, with a quorum of 15 board members present and by a vote of 14 yes, 1 no, and 0 abstentions.

We appreciate that the City Council and the Mayor appear to be moving in the right direction on this issue with the recent commitment to cut at least \$150 million from LAPD's budget to reinvest back into disadvantaged communities and communities of color. The fact remains, however, that even with this cut, the LAPD budget will still consume over 50% of the City's unrestricted revenues for the coming fiscal year (excluding pensions and healthcare) —unless you take further action now. All City departments—including LAPD—must share the pain of the necessary budget due to COVID-19 proportional to their size and percentage of the budget.

Moreover, the LAPD makes up 17.6% of the City's overall \$10.5-billion budget, a figure that also does not include police pensions and healthcare, according to City budget officials. The ERNC also has major concerns about the Proposed Budget in light of the fact that the City Council and Mayor Garcetti have collectively failed to propose, endorse, or implement any meaningful pension and healthcare reforms for the LAPD. Moreover, with the shadow of the outrageous abuse, waste, and fraud perpetuated through the LAPD's Deferred Retirement Options Program (DROP), which has yet to be significantly remedied or permanently ended (as the ERNC has previously advocated in two Community Impact Statements submitted in 2018), any proposal to increase or maintain LAPD pay is a slap in the face to Angeleno taxpayers under the current circumstances.

The Mayor's Proposed Budget cuts \$230 million in services, weakening vital programs that many Angelenos rely on and imposing furloughs on nearly 16,000 city workers while simultaneously increasing LAPD officer pay by \$144 million. While the newly-announced \$100-150 million cut to LAPD's budget has the potential to mitigate the effect of these raises, the Mayor's Proposed Budget still cuts City investments in housing programs by 9.4%, job programs by 8.9%, and homelessness programs by 6%—despite the great need created by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Even before COVID-19, roughly one in three renters in Los Angeles spent more than half their income on housing, and there were over 36,000 unhoused people in our City. The pandemic will only make matters worse. Over half of Angelenos are now unemployed following the massive job losses stemming from COVID-19. And economists predict that many of the recent layoffs will be permanent. Without bold action from the City, more Angelenos will become severely rent-burdened or fall into homelessness.

We applaud the City's efforts to respond to the COVID-19 emergency: delivering meals to seniors, opening childcare centers for healthcare workers, purchasing personal protective equipment (PPE) for first responders, implementing a small business loan program, committing to providing rental assistance, and setting up testing sites, additional shelters, and more. These are the kinds of interventions Angelenos need at this critical and unprecedented time.

Sadly, the Mayor's Proposed Budget puts some of these very initiatives on the chopping block. The Department of Aging has reported that furloughs and office closures will directly affect seniors trying to enroll in meal services, many of whom do not have internet access and rely on staff to help them enroll in city programs via telephone. (CAO's May 19, 2020 Report on the Impact on City Services of the Furlough Program Included in the 2020-21 Proposed Budget, 7.) The Department of Economic Development anticipates that its cuts will cause delays in economic relief and related assistance to the thousands of workers and businesses impacted by the COVID-19 emergency. (*Id.* at 15.) The Department of Housing and Community Investment predicts that furloughs will reduce its ability to provide services to tenants, prevent poverty and homelessness, and create affordable housing. (*Id.* at 20.)

¹ "L.A. aggressively expanded the police force for 3 decades. Now, a political shift means cuts," June 4, 2020, *Los Angeles Times*, <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-06-04/lapd-budget-cuts-garcetti-protests-explainer>

In her opening remarks during the May 21, 2020 Council Meeting, Council President Nury Martinez said, “As we start the new fiscal year, it is important to keep in mind the people who need us the most right now—working families, those living in poverty, communities of color that have long been forgotten, seniors and children.” This budget balances itself on the backs of those very people—the most vulnerable among us—largely to offset a raise for LAPD officers. If officers simply received the same pay they did last year, the City could prevent two-thirds of these devastating cuts to critical services.

Some now will undoubtedly point to the recent civil unrest in our city as justification for the budget’s prioritization of law enforcement over social services. While we agree that public safety should no doubt be one of the City’s highest priorities, this is a moment for us to recognize that policing is far from our most effective tool to ensure public safety—and, in fact, for Angelenos of color—and especially black Angelenos—it can pose a mortal threat to their very lives. **This is a moment for us to recognize that investments in housing and job security, mental health care, and after-school programs are our best investments in public safety—and that they are also cheaper than police spending. By cutting these services, this budget will not make Angelenos safer.**

As Councilmember Ryu observed in his recent comments on the budget, “If we make cuts to departments and services that serve low-income and working families, we will be paying for those cuts for decades to come.” The Mayor’s Proposed Budget puts political expediency over the urgent needs of the Angelenos who are suffering most acutely in this time of crisis, and it will cost our city dearly if enacted without significant revision.

We understand that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in significant revenue shortfalls for the City and that cuts in spending must be made. **But we urge you, as our representatives, to rework the 2020-21 budget so that it meets the needs of this moment. Shift resources away from policing and direct them to vital social services. Invest in true public safety.** Budgets are moral documents that reflect our values. What kind of city cuts services and increases spending on law enforcement when its people are struggling to eat? What kind of city doubles down on policing at a moment when its deepest injustices are being exposed? What does that say about us? We need not take this path. Just one example of potential alternatives for the City Council and Mayor to consider in redirecting a portion of LAPD budget savings are reflected in the Healthy LA Coalition’s various housing-related proposals (included at this link [here](#)).

The COVID-19 outbreak and the murder of George Floyd, together, have laid bare many hard truths—about the fragility of our healthcare system, the vulnerability of the many Angelenos living paycheck to paycheck, the real threat that police pose to Angelenos of color on a daily basis. By taking an honest look at where we are, however, we are presented with an opportunity to improve upon the past instead of repeating its mistakes. It is in that spirit that the Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council asks you for a compassionate budget—and through it, for a more just, equitable, and humane Los Angeles.

Sincerely,

Jesse Saucedo
President
Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council

CC (via email only):

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Black Lives Matter Los Angeles

People's Budget LA Coalition

Healthy LA Coalition