



Stop LAPD Spying Coalition

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BY EMAIL

Dear city officials:

This letter is on behalf of the Stop LAPD Spying Coalition and other community groups who are working to research the Los Angeles Police Department's annual budget. As part of that work, we have sought to identify the programs, technologies, equipment costs, purchases, and other spending that comprise LAPD's vast budget. This accounting is essential for the public to understand how billions of dollars in city funds are being used, at a time when all other city agencies are being asked to scrutinize their budgets in order to make severe cuts to essential spending.

We have been unable in our research to obtain from either the LAPD, Police Commission, or Controller's Office any itemized accounting of LAPD's full budget. Instead, all these agencies have disclosed are LAPD's yearly budget requests to the City Council and the citywide adopted budget, which provides a broad overview of overall spending categories. While the yearly requests list the new spending items that LAPD proposes to add to the previous year's base budget, they provide no details about that base budget. All the public is able to know from these requests is how much LAPD tried adding to its budget each year. And while the adopted budget lists a few very general spending categories, it does not provide crucial details such as individual line items and explanations of purchases and contractual services.

The Stop LAPD Spying Coalition has tried for several months to obtain documentation of LAPD's full budget, including the base budget. In July 2020, we requested these records from Richard Tefank, Executive Director of the Police Commission, who shared the yearly budget requests and citywide adopted budget and explained that we would need to ask LAPD for any budget records beyond that. We then filed Public Records Act requests with LAPD (Request #20-6667) and the Controller (Request #20-7750) asking for LAPD's base budget. Neither

agency produced any records. Instead, both requests were quickly closed, with LAPD directing us to the Controller's Office, and the Controller's Office directing us back to LAPD. LAPD's response also stated that "the Department currently does not possess a system that tracks base budget information."

LAPD's base budget was over \$1.7 billion for the current fiscal year, nearly 90% of the Department's total General Funds spending. This is a vast sum of money, and it no doubt includes items that LAPD has not identified or justified in an annual budget proposal for several years. It is extremely alarming that neither the Police Department, Police Commission, or Controller has been able to share an accounting of those funds. This failure suggests either that city officials have no idea how LAPD is spending billions of public dollars, while every year approving increases of that spending, or your agencies are refusing to comply with the Public Records Act.

Like other city departments, LAPD is expected to announce new budget requests in the coming weeks. We believe it is critical for Angelenos to have an opportunity to understand LAPD's current spending before any requests for additional funding move forward. We thus ask again that your office provide an itemized accounting of LAPD's full budget, including the base budget that city officials will soon be asked to add to with even more public funds. Should you have any questions we can be reached at stoplapdspeying@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



Hamid Khan
Stop LAPD Spying Coalition

Cc:

Los Angeles Police Commission
Mark Smith – Inspector General, Los Angeles Police Department
Eric Garcetti – Mayor, City of Los Angeles
Ana Guerrero - Chief of Staff, Mayor of Los Angeles
Mike Feuer – City Attorney, City of Los Angeles
Nury Martinez – President, Los Angeles City Council
Paul Krikorian – Chair, Budget and Finance Committee, LA City Council