



PEOPLES BUDGET LA

A coalition led by Black Lives Matter-Los Angeles

February 23, 2022

Mayor Eric Garcetti

City Administrative Officer Matthew W. Szabo

City Council President Nury Martinez

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RE: LAPD's FY 2022-2023 Budget Proposal

We are community groups writing to oppose LAPD's pending demand for a **\$213 million increase** to its operational spending for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. If approved, this would be LAPD's **largest ever funding increase**. Last November, the Board of Police Commissioners voted to approve this spending increase barely one business day after LAPD released its 687-page budget increase proposal to the public, severely limiting the ability of the communities who will be most harmed by this proposal to speak out against it.¹ This places the responsibility of confronting this dangerous proposal in your hands.

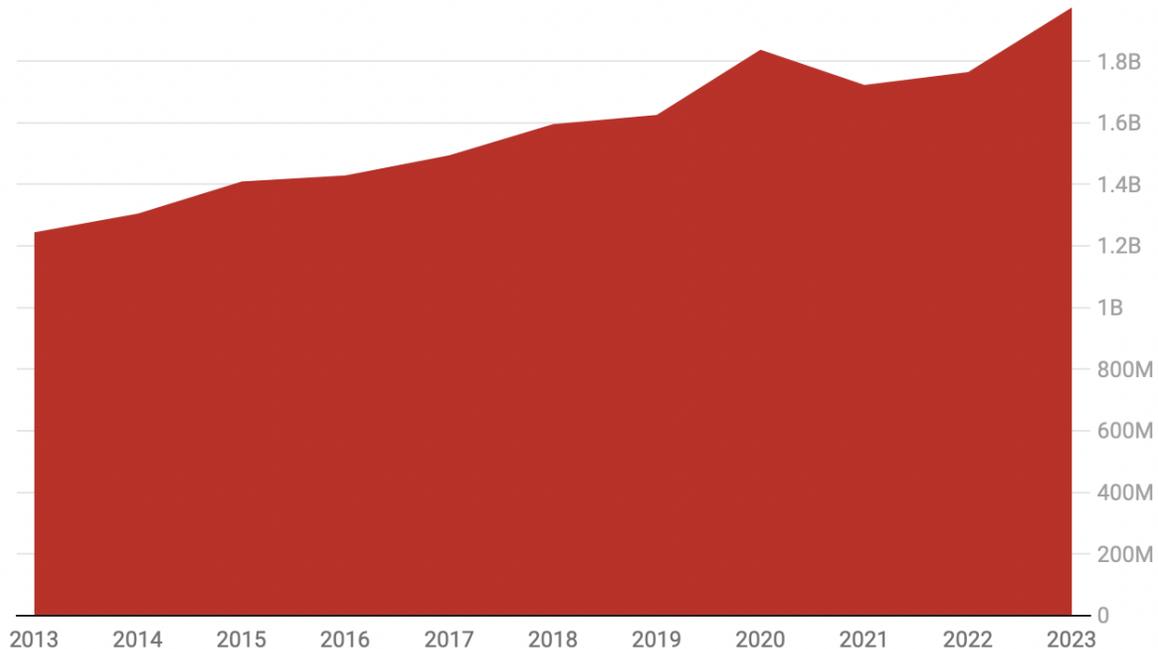
LAPD has already consumed over half the city's discretionary funding over the past decade, and this proposal will likely stretch the city's police spending well beyond \$3.3 billion. This demand for an increase to LAPD's budget is absolutely unacceptable at a time when our communities are united in calling to divest from the violence of policing. This increase to LAPD's budget would come at the cost of addressing the factors that perpetuate conditions of poverty, deprivation, and interpersonal harm in our communities. Every dollar spent by LAPD could

¹ See Chief of Police, Fiscal Year 2022-23 Proposed Budget (November 23, 2021), available at <https://lapdonlinestrgeacc.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/lapdonlinemedia/2021/11/112321.pdf>.

instead be used for housing, health care, education, and other investments that actually keep people safe and healthy.

LAPD's 2021 Budget Proposal

In November 2021, LAPD issued a demand for a \$213 million budget increase for 2022. If this proposal goes through, **LAPD's budget will have increased over 52% in one decade alone.**



Demands to divert LAPD funding are extremely widespread. In 2020, thousands of surveys and town halls conducted by People's Budget LA showed that our communities want under 2% of the city budget to be spent on policing. Likewise, a Loyola Marymount University study showed that **over 62.4%** of Angelenos support proposals to "redirect some money currently going to the police budget to local programs" and **36.7%** support proposals to "completely dismantle police departments and give more financial support to local programs."² These demands are even more popular in the communities that suffer the most from police draining all of the city's resources: **73.9% of Black adults** in Los Angeles support calls to redirect police funding. LAPD have been defying these calls for years.

As LAPD extracts so many resources from our communities, the public gets less and less safety in return. These are a few examples of this violent toll:

- Last year LAPD's annual killings reached a high of 18 people, despite years of police securing more funding for new trainings focused on de-escalation and use of force.

² Loyola Marymount University Center for the Study of Los Angeles, "Police Data Brief: 2020 Police and Community Relations Survey" at 8, <https://lmu.app.box.com/s/ty0uisxda3rah5browv9c46lj06zyok>.

- Several LAPD stations and jails were sites of deadly covid outbreaks as police defied mask and vaccine requirements.
- LAPD's own data shows constant and extreme racial disparities in who police stop and when stops escalate into further police violence.³
- Police use of force against unhoused people keeps rising, at the same time that nearly 1,500 people are estimated to have died on our streets from March 2020 to July 2021.⁴

LAPD's budget includes several spending requests that illustrate how little scrutiny LAPD ever faces in spending and how LAPD operates in deep defiance of the public's demands. For example, LAPD demands **\$18.4 million** in new funding for "reforms" from the George Floyd protests, including **\$4.13 million** just in technology, **\$461,850** in bullets to shoot at protest trainings, and a **\$100,000** protest snack fund.⁵ Using protests that loudly and clearly called to defund the police to expand LAPD funding in this way is a disgusting insult to the hundreds of thousands of people who took the streets last summer. This money grab is the absolute opposite of what our communities braved LAPD street violence to demand.

The post-protest "reforms" that LAPD is seeking a budget increase for include **\$4.1 million** earmarked for "Technology," supposedly to hire eight new officers who will permanently be tasked year-round with monitoring and preventing threats to "public order," including by use of new "technology to help the Department track and utilize their resources and analyze open source data to quickly provide intelligence." In March 2021, our organizations joined over 40 community groups in condemning this proposal, at the time coming from a report authored at City Council's request by Independent Counsel Gerald Chaleff.⁶ Our March 2021 letter warned that this proposal for new LAPD resources for "public order policing" was "a barely veiled effort to recreate the notorious Public Disorder Intelligence Division, which LAPD launched in reaction to the Watts Rebellion." We urge you to revisit that letter's detailed dissection of why this proposal is dangerous.

LAPD also seeks funding to expand its "community policing" strategies, which are nothing but cover for increased police violence. For example, LAPD demands **\$2 million** to expand its "Community Safety Partnerships" program and **\$463,500** for a "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

³ Black Lives Matter LA, Stop LAPD Spying Coalition, Los Angeles Community Action Network, and White People 4 Black Lives, LAPD Confirms Continued Criminalization, Harassment of the Black Community (November 2020),

<https://stoplapdspying.org/lapd-confirms-continued-criminalization-harassment-of-the-black-community/>.

⁴ Sam Levin, "1,500 unhoused LA residents died on the streets during pandemic, report reveals," The Guardian (Dec. 1, 2020),

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/dec/01/1500-unhoused-la-residents-died-on-the-streets-during-pandemic-report-reveals>.

⁵ See Stop LAPD Spying Coalition, Another "Reform" Proposal Expanding the Police State (September 27, 2021), <https://stoplapdspying.org/another-reform-proposal-expanding-the-police-state/>. The over \$18 million in "reform" spending which the Police Commission approved on September 31 and are addressed in the Stop LAPD Spying Coalition's September 27 letter appears on page 15 of the FY 2022-23 budget proposal.

⁶ Stop LAPD Spying Coalition, Letter to City Council About Chaleff Letter (March 16, 2021),

<https://stoplapdspying.org/letter-to-city-council-on-chaleff-report/>.

Package.” LAPD claims these programs will finally succeed in the decades-failed sham of “building trust” in policed communities. One need only look to LAPD’s killings in December in North Hollywood of a man armed only with a bike lock – instantly upon encountering him, with no verbal warning, hesitation, or de-escalation – along with a 14-year old girl behind him. The officer who stole these two lives, William Dorsey Jones, was a “community outreach” officer celebrated as a veteran of “community policing.”

Other line items in LAPD’s budget also reveal how LAPD treats city funding as a blank check. For example, LAPD demands **\$1.3 million** for a new “total containment” vehicle after they used their last one to destroy dozens of homes in a residential neighborhood in South Central. This brazen spectacle killed community members Auzie Houchins and Ramon Reyes and destroyed the homes of several dozen residents, many of whom remain displaced. The fact that LAPD is instantly trying to replace the vehicle after it catastrophically failed – and before a single officer has been named for their role in this incident, let alone disciplined – shows how little scrutiny they ever expect for their spending demands.

LAPD’s demand for a 12% budget increase is especially troubling after City Council’s recent approval of the Games Agreement for the 2028 Olympics, which requires the City to guarantee future funding for LAPD at an amount projected from the funding “provided by the City’s fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024.”⁷ This requirement means that LAPD’s proposed funding increases would need to be locked into a trajectory toward 2028, restricting the public’s power to redirect LAPD’s enormous spending.⁸ LAPD’s use of the Olympics to permanently expand police resources, equipment, and spending is exactly what happened with the 1984 Olympics, multiplying police violence against Black, brown, and unhoused people.

You have the power to both block this funding increase and move to restrict LAPD from using its vast resources for some of the dangerous ends that it previews in this budget proposal. We ask you to join the community in working to confront LAPD’s violent grip on city funding.

Sincerely,

Stop LAPD Spying Coalition

Los Angeles Community Action Network

Black Lives Matter LA

People’s Budget LA

Dignity and Power Now

⁷ See Games Agreement of the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games (November 17, 2021) at 7.7.2, available at https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2015/15-0989_rpt_cao_11-17-21.pdf.

⁸ See NOlympics LA, Insurance for Elites, But Not for LA (November 28, 2021), <https://nolympicsla.com/2021/11/28/insurance-for-elites-but-not-for-la-our-analysis-of-the-la-2028-olympics-games-agreement/>.

Union de Vecinos

La Defensa

Fight for the Future

MediaJustice

White People for Black Lives

Instituto de Educacion Popular del Sur de California (IDEPSCA)

People's City Council

Jewish Voices for Peace - LA

Restore the Fourth

Western Regional Advocacy Project

Mar Vista Voice

Street Watch LA

NOlympics LA

Ktown for All

Democratic Socialists of America - Los Angeles

National Lawyers Guild - Los Angeles

The Feminist Front

Anti-Racist Action - LA

Tiny Tech Zines

Reimagine Public Safety USC

California Coalition of Women Prisoners LA Chapter

Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE)

18 Million Rising