

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Services Not Sweeps, Park Equity Alliance, People's Budget LA  
**Date Submitted:** 11/18/2021 08:01 AM  
**Council File No:** 20-0190  
**Comments for Public Posting:** We support the health and safety of our park rangers, city staff, and park users and recognize that our city's parks are an essential source of physical activity, recreation, and community space for many Angelenos, including families, children, and older adults. The signing coalition of organizations urge the City Council to represent a large majority of their constituents, organizations, and experts and vote no on CF #20-0190 when it comes to a vote of the full council. The signing organizations encourage the City Council to remember commitments they made after the George Floyd uprising and invest in alternative approaches to ensure community safety at parks such as increased programming, jobs and design improvements. Park Equity Alliance (contact: aHingorani@advanceproj.org) People's Budget LA, (contact: people@peoplesbudgetla.com) Services Not Sweeps (contact: contact@servicesnotsweeps.org)

**Joint statement from Services Not Sweeps, People’s Budget LA, and the Park Equity Alliance RE: CF # 20-0190 – Armed While On Duty / Park Rangers / Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) / Section 63.41 / Amendment**

On November 9, 2021 the LA City Council Arts, Parks, Health, Education, and Neighborhoods Committee voted on a motion to arm park rangers. This motion will move forward in the legislative process as it was supported by Councilmember Joe Buscaino and John Lee.<sup>1</sup> Councilmember Mike Bonin was the only vote of dissent. Councilmember Bonin joined hundreds of Angelenos that wrote and called in to the committee to express their opposition to arming LA’s park rangers. Angelenos want City Council to reimagine public safety and feel that this is the opposite of those demands and further marginalizes communities that disproportionately are victims of police violence including Black people, other BIPOC, and the unhoused.

“Parks are not meant for people to be roaming the parks with guns, whether they have ‘ranger’ in front of their name or not. I’m a mother of three children. I go to parks to get away from the violence of society. I’m a black mother of three black children who see guns on officers as threats to their lives.” Dr. Melina Abdullah, founder of Black Lives Matter LA, emphasized to the committee. Pete White, of LACAN, pointed out how Los Angeles “rhetorically supports gun control, yet simultaneously attempts to arm up every public servant possible.” In 2016, all present council members [voted yes to support federal legislation to strengthen gun control](#) acknowledging, “gun violence continues to be a serious problem throughout the United States, with over 30,000 people killed each year by firearms and countless more injured.”

The *LATimes* [Editorial Board](#) stated, “We don’t want armed rangers patrolling parks where all kinds of people, including homeless individuals, children, pets and others are passing time innocuously for the most part. No one wants a confrontation between an armed park ranger and an agitated individual — homeless or otherwise — who is refusing to obey a park rule. Imagine the ways that could go wrong. It’s also counter to the direction in which the city has been appropriately moving. City officials are trying to figure out more creative ways to provide public safety without using armed officers, and the last thing they should do is arm a new group of officers.”

[The Prevention Institute](#), a nonprofit that works to improve community health and well-being across the nation, [wrote to council last April](#) that, “arming of Park Rangers runs counter to ongoing collaborative efforts to prevent violence (in its various forms) confronting men and boys of color, by further saturating our communities and public spaces with firearms. Decades of research has continually demonstrated that more firearms in a community merely increases the likelihood of shootings, putting Park Rangers and patrons at greater risk of harm.”

We support the health and safety of our park rangers, city staff, and park users and recognize that our city’s parks are an essential source of physical activity, recreation, and community space for many Angelenos, including families, children, and older adults. The signing coalition of organizations urge the City Council to represent a large majority of their constituents, organizations, and experts and vote no on CF #20-0190 when it comes to a vote of the full council. The signing organizations encourage the City Council to remember commitments they made after the George Floyd uprising and invest in alternative approaches to ensure community safety at parks such as increased programming, jobs and design improvements.

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People’s Budget LA, (contact: [people@peoplesbudgetla.com](mailto:people@peoplesbudgetla.com))  
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<sup>1</sup> [Councilmembers Buscaino and Lee have accepted maximum donations, a cumulative total \\$5,500](#), for their most recent or ongoing campaigns from the Los Angeles Airport Peace Officers Assn. PAC who represents park rangers.