

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE



Date: April 21, 2021

To: The Honorable Paul Krekorian, Chair
City Council Budget and Finance Committee
Attention: Mandy Morales, Legislative Assistant
Office of the City Clerk

From: Aram Sahakian, General Manager
Emergency Management Department

Subject: **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT COMMENTS ON THE
MAYOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-22**

The Emergency Management Department (EMD) is in receipt of the Mayor's FY 2021-22 Proposed Budget. While we realize that the City continues to face fiscal challenges during this sustained response to the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic, we are grateful for the consideration given to the department as outlined in the budget. Additionally, the on-going support of the City Council Budget and Finance Committee has made a significant difference in EMD's ability to hire talented staff and maintain our planning, response, and recovery programs.

EMD is facing tremendous staffing challenges due to the loss of five (5) full-time emergency managers to the City's Separation Incentive Program (SIP) and other vacancies. Although two (2) of the Emergency Management Coordinator I positions have been approved for backfill, three (3) positions were deleted by the Managed Hiring Committee. EMD requests your support for the restoration of the following positions:

- Two (2) Emergency Management Coordinator II (Class Code 1702-2): these staff serve as division chiefs, 24/7 duty officers, and deputy directors for Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activations.
- One (1) Emergency Management Coordinator I (Class Code 1702-1, in lieu of an additional Assistant General Manager): there is a need for additional mid-level managers to support emergency operations and EOC activations.

Because of the lack of these positions, the department is currently operating at critical mass and is unable to staff prolonged EOC activations. This has become a reality as EMD continues to manage the COVID-19 activation, while responsible for responding to other ancillary events such as adverse weather, civil unrest, etc. Additionally, we are extremely concerned about the potential for other simultaneous events such as a major brushfire or earthquake, which could occur at any time. This would stretch EMD's staff resources to the breaking point posing a significant risk to public safety and the effective operation and leadership of the EOC.

In addition to our departmental budget, EMD has the responsibility to oversee the Emergency Operations Fund. The FY 2021-22 Proposed Budget includes an appropriation of \$51,000 for Office and Administrative expenses. We are requesting that this amount be increased to

a minimum of \$100,000 to cover the cost of EOC activation related expenses.

In planning for the upcoming budget hearings next week, we ask the Budget and Finance Committee to consider the aforementioned budgetary adjustments as a priority. There is no greater responsibility for the City of Los Angeles than to protect its residents and ensure that the City is ready to respond to and recover from all emergencies and disasters. We appreciate your continued support of EMD's mission to promote a culture of readiness. If you have questions about this memo, please contact me directly at 213-216-6210.

C: Ed Roes
Elaine Duong