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CALIFORNIA



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April 21, 2022

The Honorable Budget and Finance Committee
c/o Mandy Morales, Legislative Assistant
200 North Spring Street, Room 395
Los Angeles CA 90012

RE: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT COMMENTS ON THE MAYOR'S
PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022-23

Dear Honorable Members,

The Emergency Management Department (EMD) appreciates the opportunity to comment on Mayor Eric Garcetti's FY 2022-23 Proposed Budget. While we recognize the City's continued fiscal challenges due to the sustained COVID-19 pandemic and other factors, we are incredibly grateful for the consideration given to the department as outlined in the budget.

The past year has tested EMD's ability to deliver much-needed services in the areas of emergency preparedness, response, and recovery as it continues to coordinate the City's response to COVID-19. While we are currently at day 779 of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activation for this global pandemic, the department remains committed to respond to additional simultaneous emergency incidents and pre-planned events. As a result, EMD continues to make progress in strengthening its capabilities as it strives to ensure a safer and more resilient Los Angeles.

Emergency Management Department

The continued support of the City Council Budget and Finance Committee, the Office of the City Administrative Officer, and the Mayor's Office have made a significant impact on EMD's ability to hire talented staff and rebuild the department as it works to expand planning, response, and recovery programs. The department has recently filled two (2) Emergency Management Coordinator II vacancies which were restored last year, and has hired three (3) Emergency Management Coordinator I positions in support of day-to-day emergency operations and EOC activations. We are appreciative of the regularization of several key positions in the FY23 proposed budget, and look forward to continuing to work with our partners in the Personnel Department to fill our remaining vacancies as quickly as possible.

Looking to FY 2022-23, EMD remains extremely concerned about the potential for a confluence of events in conjunction with the ongoing pandemic, such as a major brushfire, earthquake, cyber event or civil unrest which could occur at any time. Along these lines, maintaining the functionality of the EOC and all technology necessary to support the City government in its emergency response are critical priorities in the coming year. EMD's operational readiness relies heavily on ensuring the EOC facility is capable of supporting the public safety departments in communications and resource deployment as it responds to emergencies and special events.

Emergency Operations Fund

In addition to our departmental budget, EMD is responsible for the Emergency Operations Fund (EOF) account, which supports the EOC facility for EMD, Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), and Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD). Maintenance of funding for technology and related upgrades in the EOF account is of utmost importance in FY23. We are deeply appreciative of the funding approval for the Bi-Directional Amplifier (BDA), which is critical for ensuring that LAPD and LAFD radio communications equipment functions within the building, and Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for Everbridge, which ensures the cybersecurity of the system used for emergency notifications to the public as well as internal City Department employee recall during an emergency.

Efforts are currently underway to replace vital end-of-life equipment in the EOC facility that is critical to the City's coordination in emergency activations. It is estimated approximately that \$2.3 million in upgrades are necessary to bring the facility to current standards. We look forward to addressing the badly-needed upgrades in the Training Room with the proposed FY23 allocation, and in the Management and Media rooms with prior year funds. While the department understands the need for offsets related to the BDA and MFA, the reduced proposed Contractual Services Allocation from \$321,777 to \$163,441 will limit EMD's ability to make significant progress in addressing additional upgrades needed to prevent critical failures within other key portions of the facility. The department respectfully requests your reconsideration of the proposed amount.

Additionally, EMD requests your re-evaluation of the total allocation for the Revolving Fund for Undeclared Emergencies to support after-hours localized incidents that impact Angelenos and require immediate support in the form of emergency housing, feeding, etc. Many of these tragic situations, such as the 27th Street explosion, become longer-term issues while others (such as barricaded suspect operations that result in damage to neighboring units) are of shorter duration; however, they are increasingly frequent. While the \$50,000 currently proposed will be extremely impactful in the very short-term, it is likely to be quickly exhausted in an incident of slightly larger scale.

In planning for the upcoming hearings, 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 are incredibly grateful to the Mayor, the Budget and Finance Committee, and the City Council for your continued support of EMD's mission of promoting a culture of readiness. If you have questions about this memo, please contact me directly at 213-280-1324.

Sincerely,



CAROL P. PARKS
General Manager

CC: Matt Szabo, City Administrative Officer
Sharon Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst
Raoul Mendoza, Budget Director, Office of the Mayor
Reuben Wilson, Deputy Mayor of Public Safety