

LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT



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KAREN BASS
Mayor

April 21, 2023

The Honorable Budget and Finance Committee
c/o Office of the City Clerk
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, California 90012

Honorable Members:

The Committee requested comments on the Mayor's Proposed Budget and its impacts on the Los Angeles Police Department (Department/LAPD). We are grateful for the Mayor's Proposed Budget which places the Department on a path toward restoring services to create safer communities and provides the resources necessary to address the challenges of fighting crime. As of April 15, 2023, Citywide violent crime is down more than 11 percent with 30 fewer homicides and reductions in all other violent crime categories. Property crime year-to-day is also down more than two percent with an overall Part I Crime reduction of more than two percent. However, in comparison to our Pre-Covid statistics of 2019, violent crime is down three percent, homicides are up five percent and aggravated assaults have increased 10 percent. Additionally, with significant reductions in staffing levels across our sworn and civilian workforce we have experienced service delays and reductions ranging from extended wait times for 9-1-1 calls, reductions in uniform staffing resulting in longer response times to urgent and routine calls for service, as well as administrative backlogs in our fiscal operations and responses to public records requests and other critical responsibilities.

As requested by the Committee, the five most important things our Department will achieve with the allocation provided in the Mayor's Proposed Budget are as follows:

1. First, the opportunity to begin to rebuild the Department's ranks in both our sworn and civilian professional workforce while expanding diversity and equity to support public safety.

Our sworn staffing has fallen below 9,100, down more than 900 officers from 2019, the year that preceded the outbreak of COVID-19. Our civilian professional workforce has fallen well below 2,700, down more than 300 personnel from 2020. These workforce reductions have impacted the LAPD's capabilities across the organization with the significant decay in our response time in answering 9-1-1 calls as well as longer response times to urgent and routine calls for service in the field. Additionally, the reduced civilian workforce has created significant backlogs in fiscal operations, State-mandated responses to public record requests, and other administrative functions.

We are appreciative that the Proposed Budget calls for the City to restore the Department to over 9,500 officers by fiscal year-end including those returning as part of the Recall (Bounce) program. The Department's sworn hiring plan is critical to ensure that we continue to meet the seven-minute response time to emergency calls while also reducing response time to urgent and routine calls and increasing the visibility of officers in neighborhoods across the city.

The continuation and expansion of funding for recruitment of a diverse and equitable workforce is necessary to meet the sworn hiring plan. Investments in marketing as well as hiring incentives are critical to our success given the scarcity of qualified applicants in an extremely tight job market.

Additionally, we appreciate the opportunities to increase our civilian workforce with the additional funding provided for those in critical public safety classifications such as Police Service Representative (PSR) and Detention Officer. Additional PSRs will allow the Department to improve on its current 61 percent rate of answering all 9-1-1 calls within 15 seconds or less and get closer to the State standard of 90 percent. Added staffing in our Custody Services Division will allow the Department to reassign sworn personnel to critical field staffing.

The Department is also thankful for the five City Attorneys and two administrative staff provided in the City Attorney budget in support of LAPD's Professional Standards Bureau. These positions will help build trust in our disciplinary system and ensure accountability to both the City and the community.

Finally, the 10 positions added to the Personnel Department to support public safety background investigations will help speed candidates through the testing and background process to get sworn applicants into the Police Academy.

2. Funds provided for the Sworn Hiring Incentive in the Unappropriated Balance pending approval of the program by the City Council will allow the LAPD to remain competitive with surrounding law enforcement agencies in an extremely tight job market. The hiring bonus will complement the housing allowance provided by the Los Angeles Police Foundation to help offset the high cost of living in Southern California and attract the best and brightest to LAPD.
3. The Proposed Budget allows us to continue to direct alternative responses to mental health crises with the regularization of positions assigned to the Mental Evaluation Unit and continued funding for the non-law enforcement Call Redirection to Ensure Suicide Safety Program (CRESS) partnership with the Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center. The CRESS program has successfully directed those in crisis to appropriate mental health services that do not need law enforcement intervention. Redirecting these types of calls allows the Department to focus on its core mission of making Los Angeles a safer City. In 2022, the Department's Communications Division redirected more than 14,000 calls, including 5,164 calls to Urban Alchemy for the Crisis and Incident Response through Community Lead Engagement (CIRCLE) and 1,289 calls to Didi Hirsch.

Added staffing for the Department's Mental Evaluation Unit will expand the availability of Systemwide Mental Health Assessment Response Teams (SMART) to critical incidents involving persons experiencing a mental health crisis while also posing a risk of violence against others.

Additionally, dedicated funds for overtime details will be used to patrol within the vicinity of A Bridge Home (ABH) shelter sites and other areas with a direct nexus to Persons Experiencing Homelessness (PEH). The officers assigned will continue to conduct outreach and offer resources to connect PEH with services such as mental health assistance, housing, and partner service providers. In addition to ABH Special Enforcement and Cleaning Zones, the resources will be used to address quality of life concerns with a direct nexus to PEH as well as supporting CARE Plus operations that involve other City entities as well as non-profit/outreach providers. Personnel will deploy to these areas and provide enhanced education and enforcement of crimes with a nexus to homelessness and encampments working in concert with local Council offices and the Mayor's office.

4. Development of long-term strategies for large-scale events is bolstered through the six resolution authorities provided for the Strategic Planning Team. These positions will be instrumental leading up to such events as the 2024 Presidential Election and 2026 World Cup. This team will be responsible for timely after-action reporting and implementing recommendations following these events that lead up to the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic and Paralympic Games. These strategies will be guided by the recommendations from the three Safe LA After-Action Reports and will reflect the social, organizational, and municipal interests that comprise each event.
5. One of LAPD's essential functions is maintaining a vehicle fleet to facilitate Department operations ranging from uniform patrol to investigative work and specialized response. The Mayor's budget for fleet maintenance and life cycle replacement provided sufficient funding for the replacement of 831 vehicles of various configurations. While this funding is sufficiently below our request of 1,150 vehicles, given supply and vehicle preparation constraints the Department believes the provided funding strikes the appropriate balance.

Over the past decade, in conjunction with the City Administrative Officer, the Department developed several vehicle replacement plans to address the aging fleet that was historically funded for a year and then abandoned shortly after. Moving forward, it is the Department's desire to have a consistent vehicle replacement plan that will help ensure a more reliable and sustainable fleet. Currently 40 percent of LAPD's black-and-white vehicles meet and/or exceed the maximum replacement criterion of 100,000 miles and/or replacement life cycle of 10 years. The out-of-service rate for these vehicles is 20 percent, compared to last fiscal year's 14 percent. Vehicle out-of-service rates directly affect the number of officers LAPD can deploy. Breakdowns and traffic collision repairs, along with various compliance requirements, impact the maintenance and repair budget. Allowing the out-of-service rate to stay above the industry standard of six percent means more vehicles are unavailable and makes controlling variable costs more difficult. To

ensure the safety of our communities and our officers, the City must commit to a consistent vehicle replacement plan that is integrated within the annual budget process moving forward.

As requested by the Committee, a critical and essential change we would propose if additional funds are identified is an increase to the Department's sworn and civilian overtime accounts. The Department received additional funds for 2023-24 in its civilian overtime account; however, the entire increase is allocated to work performed with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA).

Overall, the Department received \$6.3 million less in the sworn overtime account in the 2023-24 Proposed Budget, a reduction from \$221.7 million to \$215.4 million. The proposed reduction in concert with existing obligations will not allow the Department to continue its Violent Crime Task Force (VCTF) initiative and will impact the success the Department has achieved in reducing violent crime by 11 percent since 2022. The value of VCTF hours in the current fiscal year is \$20.4 million.

An increase in civilian overtime would be used to meet operational needs for the following: 1) PSRs answering 9-1-1 calls; 2) Custody Services Division to meet staffing minimums; 3) Security Services Division, including additional staffing needs at City Hall; 4) the Office of Constitutional Policing and Policy to address the backlog of requests for public information; and, 5) Payroll processing at divisional and administrative levels to address challenges and backlogs which create litigation risks. The additional amount the Department included in its civilian overtime budget request late last year (\$1.2 million), reflected cost of living adjustments and operational demands that have only worsened over the succeeding months. Today, the Department is having to resort to additional overtime staffing for responsibilities identified above. It is anticipated these demands will continue until we are able to rebuild our civilian staffing levels over the course of 2023-24 and beyond. As such the Department is requesting an additional \$3.4 million.

The Department was unable to identify reductions in the Mayor's proposed budget to address this added funding for overtime expenditures.

The large number of Department vacancies impacts all five of our metrics above. Of our vacant positions, those assigned to the MTA and Fiscal Group invoicing and billing activities, along with the Commission Investigation Division, generate revenue. The Department is applying multiple strategies to fill these and other critical vacancy needs such as using Targeted Local Hire (TLH) and Bridge-to-Jobs classifications whenever possible, advertising positions internally and Citywide, requesting advanced step hiring when applicable, requesting updates to job bulletins to streamline the exam process, removing barriers during the application and background process, and using in-lieu classifications where appropriate. The Department exceeded its initial goal of TLH employees with 43 staff hired this fiscal year. Additionally, the Department implemented strategies to expedite hiring such as increasing the investment in advertising and marketing to expand candidate pools and attending recruitment and job fairs throughout the City.

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We look forward to discussing these and other issues with the Committee. If you have questions, please call Assistant Chief Dominic Choi, Director, Office of Support Services at (213) 486-8410.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Moore', with a stylized flourish at the end.

MICHEL R. MOORE
Chief of Police