

Communication from Public

Name: Sarah Bowers

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Comments for Public Posting: Dear Councilmember Raman and LA City Council, I'm writing as a constituent of LA's District 4 to give public comment on the proposed upcoming budget. I'm writing as someone that has researched and written my graduate thesis on unarmed crisis response (see <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2882135551> for my thesis). Ample research shows that the majority of 911 calls are non-life threatening and can be answered and responded to by non-police. This is crucial since police can blatantly kill people without reprimand or accountability, as is evidenced by the sham of a police oversight commission consistently not holding police accountable for their violence against Angelenos that need care not death. In Mayor Bass' proposed 2024-2025 budget, the Mayor does not increase funds to expand, evaluate, or centralize dispatch for the city's emerging set of unarmed crisis response services. The budget proposes to carry over remaining unappropriated funds from last budget year (\$13.2 million) into this upcoming budget year. Some of this can be used to ensure that current programs – CIRCLE and UMCER most notable among them – continue their work this upcoming year. At this juncture in its commitment to unarmed crisis response, we believe that the City of LA needs to: Fund the capacity to draft plans and infrastructure changes for centralizing dispatch for emergency management/crisis service, so that unarmed crisis response services might be leveraged by call operators and emergency responders with more frequency and regularity WHILE creating efficiencies for a city currently running multiple types of services, including different dispatch protocol for each Evaluate all current unarmed crisis response services, which (at the moment) serve different needs, populations, and geographies, and operate with different practices and systems; data is currently not being collected across these services in a way that would help the city make decisions about the quality and efficacy of services being offered LA Forward has worked with several council offices and city agencies to estimate that an evaluation could cost about \$2 million and first steps toward the centralizing of dispatch could cost an initial \$1 million at the research and planning stage. Therefore, while we appreciate \$13.2 million in roll-overs from 2023-2024 budget, we need to see this growth of our city's commitment to comprehensive and accessible unarmed crisis

response – not stagnation. We support an additional \$3+ million in city funds as a down payment toward building a comprehensive unarmed crisis response system for our city — a system that centralizes dispatch so that residents can get the help they need as quickly as possible, and a system that is grounded in quality services that we know through evaluation really helps people. Thank you for your attention to this issue, and we hope you're able to make this relatively small adjustment for the betterment of our communities. Sincerely, Sarah Bowers