

BLACK LIVES MATTER LONG BEACH



TO: Mayor Robert Garcia, City of Long Beach City Council Members, and
City Manager Tom Modica
VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

FROM: Black Lives Matter Long Beach, CA

DATE: July 13, 2021

RE: Long Beach Police Department Budget Allocations

Dear Mayor Garcia, City Council Members, and City Manager Modica:

This year you are rapidly moving millions of City dollars away from our community — which is deeply suffering from an intersection of public health crises of racism and COVID19 — to fund new police department initiatives.

We have spent years, and namely all of 2020, very clearly articulating that residents do not support additional funds being grossly thrown at poor policing programs. We do not support funding a department bystander intervention training, nor Facial Recognition Technology and license plates readers. Instead, we support funding the real work and people that actually provide care in our city: community psychologists, supportive service providers for housing, the City's Health Department, community groups, youth organizations, and H.O.O.D. Councils who do the real work to prevent intercommunity violence and health risks.

The people of Long Beach demand investment in our vision for a safer, healthier, happier city. The City's budget reflects the values of our community, and we have spoken.

DIVEST FROM THE LONG BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

Defund the Long Beach Police Department to end their constant racist violence, abuse of our low-income residents, criminalization of youth and poverty, and separating families. Stop depleting our city budget with massive police surveillance tools that continue to harm our community under the false guise of Racial Reconciliation.

The following list of LBPD funding requests that are supported by elected and other city leaders tell us that there is no genuine commitment to cure and end racial harm.

1. **License Plate Readers** - criminalizing people for exercising their American rights to protest
2. **Facial Recognition Technology** - countless studies have shown that FRT criminalizes Black people
3. **Active Bystander for Law Enforcement (ABLE)** - What happened with past tens of millions of dollars that LBPD received for training? This request is a testament to poor policing, mismanagement of resources, and the clear inability to adequately train. NO more money under the false guise of "training".

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4. **Gun Violence** - The shrill request by LBPD for more money to beef up the department absolutely ignores the predictable socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. Now is a time for mending and building better, not exacerbating societal ills. There are many Black-led cultural and community based organizations that can be sought out for resources to help people and communities be healthy and thriving.

REINVEST IN BLACK LIVES AND IMPACTED COMMUNITIES

Honoring the recognition that racism is a public health crisis means you must immediately reallocate funds and direct additional resources to community-led initiatives on the front lines of responding to the impact racism has on our residents.

INVEST IN THE PEOPLE OF LONG BEACH

- Invest in community-led crisis response programs and the alternative emergency response teams called for in the City's Racial Equity and Reconciliation Report.
- Provide reparations to Black people as well as victims and their families of racial profiling and police violence prominent during the war on drugs era.
- Prioritize Black business ownership in the cannabis industry, including but not limited to cultivation, production, and distribution. Cannabis tax revenue dollars should be allocated directly to the Cannabis Social Equity Program and the Health Department, instead of to the General Fund. All funding from cannabis taxes must be redistributed toward the restoration of wealth opportunities stolen by the war on drugs and mass incarceration, and in turn, provided directly to impacted Long Beach families and communities.
- Increase the Health Department budget specifically for family reunification and reentry programs, Black infant mortality, mental health, homelessness services, and other programs to address systemic needs beyond equity toward liberation.
- Invest in Black community-led residential, commercial, and recreational spaces and programs to support stronger connections among neighbors and small businesses.

City of Long Beach, if you continue to increase funding and influence of the Long Beach Police Department, then you PROVE to the residents of our City - who plainly asked that you defund LBPD and invest in community care - that your claim of working towards reconciliation is indeed false.

The people of Long Beach imagine a future here together where we can all live long, satisfying, healthy, and meaningful lives. Divest from the Long Beach Police Department. Reinvest in Black lives and impacted communities. Invest in the people of Long Beach.

We demand that you adopt the People's Budget Long Beach.

Sincerely,

Black Lives Matter Long Beach