



#HealthyLA

June 5, 2020

LA City Budget Should Reflect Our Values: Defund Police, Invest in Housing Stability

Decades of racist policies, land use planning and disinvestment from LA's Black communities continue to have devastating effects today. Black residents are overrepresented in the homeless population, and continue to experience higher rates of unemployment. Our shameful history of racism has created a city where Black and Latinx communities still face the deepest inequities.

Healthy LA coalition, a [diverse network of more than 320 organizations](#), coalesced to propose concrete solutions to the many hardships low-income communities of color are experiencing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with racial justice at the core of our platform and policy solutions. Our coalition stands firmly in solidarity with the [Movement for Black Lives](#), [Black Lives Matter - LA](#), and [People's Budget LA](#) in demanding a significant reduction to the city's police budget and reinvestments into programs that uplift communities of color. We strongly support the sustained protests against police brutality, systemic racism, and unjust murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade and countless others.

Nothing demonstrates a government's priorities and values more than its budget. In the adopted budget, 54% of the city's unrestricted revenues are allocated towards the Los Angeles Police Department, including raises to officers, while simultaneously reducing the budgets of dozens of other city departments that vulnerable Angelenos depend on during the health and economic crises. This is immoral and unconscionable. The Council motion that proposes reallocating between \$100 million and \$150 million from the police budget to be reinvested in communities of color impacted by policing is a start, but assuming all of this money comes from the unrestricted revenues, it still leaves over 50% of the budget allocated to the police. More must be done. Our city must adopt bold, well-funded and well-staffed programs to prepare for the inevitable threat of evictions and displacement that struggling families will face when temporary tenant protections expire after emergency orders are lifted.

This is why we not only firmly oppose increased spending on police but we also demand that the budget allocate robust resources for housing stability and social safety net programs that serve low-income communities and communities of color, in addition to [universal aid and crisis management, affordable health care, community safety, mental health services, and supportive housing for the homeless](#). This cannot be done while LAPD is utilizing over half of the unrestricted funds that should be going into services for constituents.

Our communities were already facing the nation's worst housing and homelessness crisis before the COVID-19 pandemic, and now we may face evictions and homelessness on a scale

we have never seen unless the City Council acts boldly and quickly for housing justice. If we want impactful outcomes that will address the needs of the most vulnerable Angelenos, we need deep and systemic changes to how we approach the budget. Our elected decision makers must show leadership through their commitment to ensure that LA recovers, rebuilds, and heals from its history of racist policies by committing to restore and increase funding for housing stability programs.

In a letter to [City Council](#), Healthy LA included the following demands:

- 1. Acquisition and Rehabilitation.** We demand the city acquire and rehabilitate 1,500 multi-family and 500 single family homes for affordable housing and fund community land trusts.
- 2. Eviction Defense.** We demand the city fully fund and implement a Right to Counsel and Eviction Defense Program immediately.
- 3. Social Housing.** We demand the city pilot a social housing program.
- 4. Affordable Housing.** We demand the city build 1,000 affordable housing units.
- 5. Supportive Housing.** We demand the city provide services for 10,000 units of supportive housing.
- 6. Tenant Protections.** We demand the city fully fund HCID and exempt from hiring freeze to ensure the enforcement of existing tenant protections.

LA must not repeat history by further harming Black and brown communities, whether through aggressive law enforcement or through the neglect and underfunding of services and housing. As our city moves forward from this current moment, we urge the Council to listen to the community as it raises its voice today, and then begin the work of transforming the structures that have disenfranchised communities of color for far too long.

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Healthy LA Coalition includes over 320 housing and economic justice advocates, worker centers, labor unions, service providers, religious congregations, affordable housing developers, public interest lawyers, and public health organizations. Learn more about Healthy LA [here](#).

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