



Boyle Heights

Neighborhood Council

Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council
2130 E. First Street, Suite 110
Los Angeles, CA 90033
Council File No: 20-0600

Date: January 24, 2021

RE: Reinvestment of Police Funds To Impacted Communities

Dear Mayor Eric Garcetti, CD 14 Councilmember Kevin De Leon, and Honorable Members of the Budget and Finance Committee

The Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council respectfully requests that defunded funds from LAPD be reallocated to Restorative and Transformative Justice Initiatives in Communities where systemic racism and oppression have gone unaddressed for far too long. The City of Los Angeles has a long history of aggressively over policing Black and Brown communities, oftentimes ending in the deaths or arrests of far too many. The Los Angeles County jail system is the largest in the United States holding more inmates in custody than all jails in 37 U.S. states¹. Evidence based programs across the world have proven to disrupt the school to prison pipeline and decrease the recidivism rate of those being released from the prison industrial system². Such research shows that community engagement is the foundation of successful reentry and/or that community integration will support those individuals to redirect the path they have started heading down. Engagement in community based social service providers coupled with workforce development will have a positive lasting effect on individuals needing additional support and community overall while reducing tax payer costs. On average, prison/jail incarceration costs taxpayers \$41,000-\$58,000 per inmate/per year vs less than \$2,000 per individual that has been served by community based social services programs³.

¹ "Los Angeles County Jail System By the Numbers," Los Angeles Almanac, last modified 2020, <http://www.laalmanac.com/crime/cr25b.php>.

² Dennis Schrantz, Stephen DeBor, and Marc Mauer, eds., "Decarceration Strategies: How 5 States Achieved Substantial Prison Population Reductions," *The Sentencing Project*, September 5, 2018, <https://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/decarceration-strategies-5-states-achieved-substantial-prison-population-reductions/>

³ Brandon Martin and Ryken Grattet, "Alternatives to Incarceration in California", *Public Policy Institute of California*, April 2015, <https://www.ppic.org/publication/alternatives-to-incarceration-in-california/>

The City of Los Angeles Inter-Departmental Correspondence dated December, 3rd 2020 addresses the Honorable Members of the Budget and Finance Committee on the reinvestment of Police Funds to Impacted Communities⁴. The author of said correspondence alludes to the fact that this reinvestment “could potentially include one-time pilot projects relating to the reimagining of public safety service delivery.”⁵ Although well intended in nature, this correspondence demonstrates that the City of Los Angeles and the elected officials involved with the relocation of funds are not prepared to make systematic changes within the communities that are impacted by their decisions. This memo demonstrates that these individuals are already failing our communities due to two reasons; 1) They believe or are under the impression that all of the issues our communities have been facing can be simply remedied by one-time pilot projects and 2) that by simply “reimagining” public safety our communities will feel satisfied with the end result.

Our communities deserve better than one-time pilot projects, our communities deserve systemic change through extensive programs that can provide annual and long term services. These services can include annual funding to restorative/transformational justice initiatives, mental health services and re-entry programming. It is also not simply “reimagining” public safety, it is actually making restorative/transformational informed decisions, holding folks accountable to human rights violations, and providing trauma informed services to those impacted by these systems. As of recent a Los Angeles Police Department memo has been causing mixed emotions about this budgetary cut as the memo states that as a result of these cuts “at least half a dozen specialized details will be disbanded completely: The Safer Cities Initiative in the Mission Area, units focusing on sexual assault, homeless outreach, burglary/cargo theft and animal cruelty, and the LA LIVE detail.”⁶ Los Angeles County's decision to reallocate funds should not be undermined by a memo leaked to stir the emotions of the community. This emotional response should instead demonstrate to the County that the folks that reside here are concerned about public safety issues such as homelessness, sexual assault, burglary and animal cruelty. Los Angeles should demonstrate to the rest of the United States that we are no longer going to be putting bandages on an open wound, instead we are going to be looking to the root of our problems.

The Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council requests that the County of Los Angeles and its elected officials reconsider their course of action in regards their Reinvestment of Police Funds To Impacted Communities by:

1. Creating a standing committee of restorative/transformational justice experts to establish a plan of action to address the systemic oppression and truly “reimagine” a fair and equitable justice system for communities of color.
2. Commitment to continue to create avenues of funding for community social services agencies.
3. Open the doors to work with community based social services agencies that have already been providing these services to communities of color such as: Projector Pastoral, Inner

⁴ City of Los Angeles, Reinvestment of Police Funds to Impacted Communities. By Richard H. Llewellyn Jr. and Sharon M Tso, CAO File No. 0220-05816-0000, Los Angeles, CA: City of Los Angeles, 2020, https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2020/20-0600-S83_rpt_CAO_12-03-2020.pdf accessed January 24, 2021.

⁵ City of Los Angeles, Reinvestment of Police Funds to Impacted Communities.

⁶ No Author, ” LAPD reassigning more than 200 officers, closing special units to meet budget cuts,” ABC 7, December 4, 2020, <https://abc7.com/lapd-budget-cuts-units-michel-moore/8482201/>.

City Struggles, Alma Family Services, Jovenes Inc, Latino Equality Alliance, Homeboy Industries, Community Coalition, Inside Out Writers, California Conference for Equality and Justice, The Center for Restorative Justice Works, Asian Pacific American Dispute Resolution Center, California Alliance, and additional community agencies as there are a plethora of other community based agencies that can support restorative/transformativ justice initiatives.

4. Provide Employment/training opportunities to individuals on the Police Department Force who want to learn from these initiatives and who have had no human rights violations on their records.

We look forward to a commitment from our elected officials to re-evaluate how we will work together to heal our communities and be a beacon of change for a better Los Angeles.

Best,

Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council