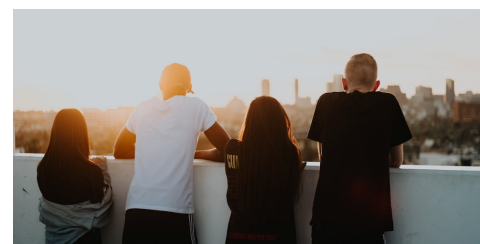
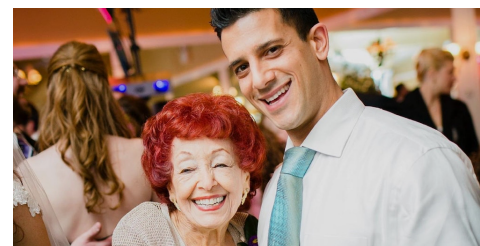


# The People's Budget

## Los Angeles 2020-2021

PEOPLES  BUDGET  LA  
[peoplesbudgetla.com](http://peoplesbudgetla.com)



June 15, 2020  
2nd Edition

## INTRODUCTION

The People's Budget LA Coalition has undertaken an urgent public process of participatory budgeting to solicit input of Angelenos on their priorities for the city and how they would like public resources to be spent. This project emerged rapidly and in direct response to the secretive, undemocratic process and draconian spending plan introduced by Mayor Eric Garcetti, and left unchallenged by City Council. Now, we present our updated People's Budget based on over 24,000 survey responses.

Since we put out our original budget in late May, an ongoing national uprising has occurred in response to police murders, with many Black-led organizations mobilizing huge numbers of people with the main demand of "defund the police" — including a BLM-LA protest that got thousands of people to show up outside the mansion of Mayor Garcetti. The Mayor and certain City Councilmembers have responded to this pressure with a proposal for cuts to LAPD between \$100-\$150 million; our document shows that this is not nearly enough.

This report updates our findings and presents a People's Budget alternative to the Mayor's proposed 2020-21 budget. **Our document and data both reveal a clear referendum: invest in universal needs (e.g., housing security, public health/health care, mental health and wellness, etc.) and divest from traditional forms of policing.**

Here's a summary of our methodology and results:

- Tens of thousands of people were engaged in the drafting of the People's Budget. This includes 24,426 Angelenos who took our survey, which was distributed by over 50 organizations; 3,300 participants who engaged in our participatory budgeting process in real time on May 24, 2020 (via Zoom and Facebook Live); over 10,000 viewers who have watched that session after-the-fact; and thousands more who have dialogued with us on social media and in other forums.
- The top priorities for investment include housing, public health and healthcare, child and youth development, food security, public transportation, and environmental justice.
- The top priorities for divestment include parking enforcement, police and policing, and the City Attorney's Office.
- The People's Budget allocates just 1.64% of general funds to law enforcement and policing - far less than one-tenth of the 54% given to the LAPD in the Mayor's proposed budget.
- The People's Budget allocates the largest amount of money to Universal Aid and Crisis Management (45.61%), followed by Built Environment (27.61%), then Reimagined Community Safety (25.06%), and finally Law Enforcement and Police (1.64%). These categories are further defined below.

**We implore the Los Angeles City Council to take action and adopt a budget that aligns with the priorities of the people who they have been elected to represent.**



## THE PEOPLE'S BUDGET

### THE PEOPLE'S BUDGET PRIORITIES

**45.61%**

Universal Aid and Crisis Management

**27.61%**

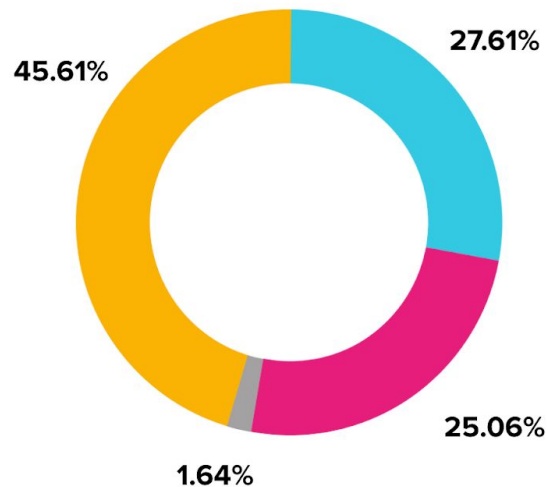
Built Environment

**25.06%**

Reimagined Community Safety

**1.64%**

Law Enforcement and Policing



### SPENDING AREAS

#### UNIVERSAL AID AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

The Universal Aid and Crisis Management funding category supports the basic needs of Angelenos like housing, food, healthcare, economic assistance and emergency relief. Both survey participants and those participating in our participatory budgeting session emphasized universal aid and crisis management as their top priority, with a particular focus on housing.

This funding area includes funding for long-term housing, renter support and emergency housing, food assistance, support for those seeking work, support for small businesses, providing public health care, offering youth development programs and supporting youth centers, fighting the impacts of climate change and ensuring our city's environment is protected. This area also includes emergency preparedness for natural disasters like earthquakes and fire as well as the public health disasters.

#### THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Built Environment funding category focuses on our city's physical infrastructure like public transportation, libraries, parks, public works and the fire department. Based on our survey results, these are essential public goods for Angelenos.

**REIMAGINED COMMUNITY SAFETY**

Participants were also committed to reimagining community safety and building and resourcing restorative justice practices that enable strong communities without law enforcement presence or intervention. The Reimagined Community Safety funding category supports a community-led safety model including investing in mental health and harm reduction approaches. Rather than funding police that bring violence and harm into our communities, Reimagined Community Safety invests in communities themselves to determine what they need and to offer them support in executing those programs.

Specific initiatives that could be included in this category are family counseling, restorative justice programs, reparations to victims and their families, community-led crisis response programs, gang prevention/intervention/recovery without police involvement, and domestic violence prevention/intervention/recovery without police involvement. This category also includes building stronger connections among neighbors through investing in community-led events.

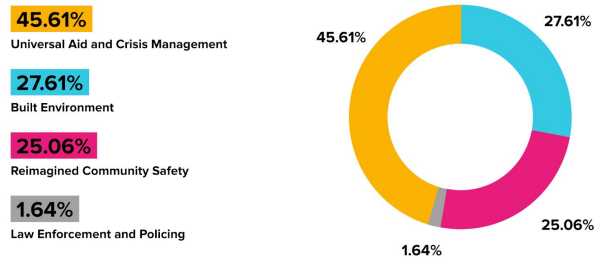
**LAW ENFORCEMENT**

The law enforcement category included all traditional approaches, including police, City Attorney, and traffic enforcement. Across all demographics of survey respondents, this was ranked as the lowest priority for spending.



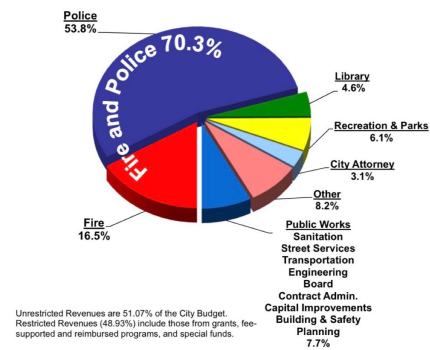
## COMPARISON WITH THE MAYOR'S BUDGET

### The People's Budget



### The Mayor's Budget

2020-21 PROPOSED BUDGET  
UNRESTRICTED REVENUES (\$5.4 Billion)



### The People's Budget Allocations

|                                     |        |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Universal Aid and Crisis Management | 45.61% |
| Built Environment                   | 27.61% |
| Reimagined Community Safety         | 25.06% |
| Law Enforcement and Policing        | 1.64%  |

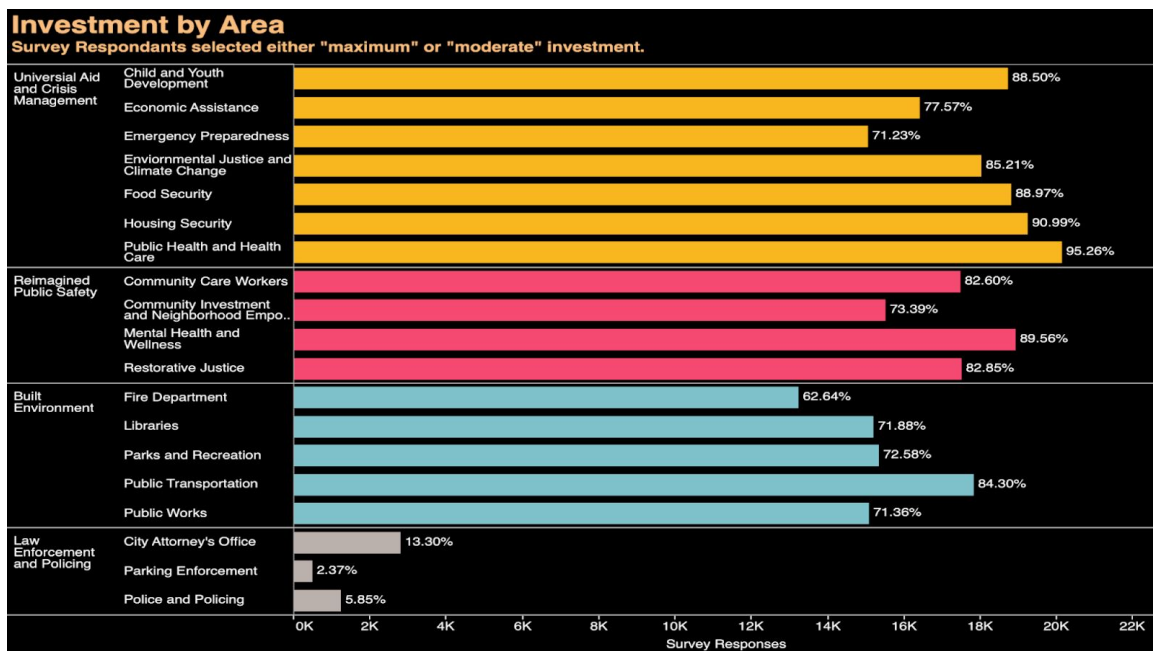
### The Mayor's Budget Allocations

|                    |       |
|--------------------|-------|
| Police             | 53.8% |
| Fire               | 16.5% |
| Other              | 8.2%  |
| Public Works       | 7.7%  |
| Recreation & Parks | 6.1%  |
| Library            | 4.6%  |
| City Attorney      | 3.1%  |

## TOP PRIORITIES FOR INVESTMENT

Top areas where People's Budget survey respondents wanted to see **investment** are:

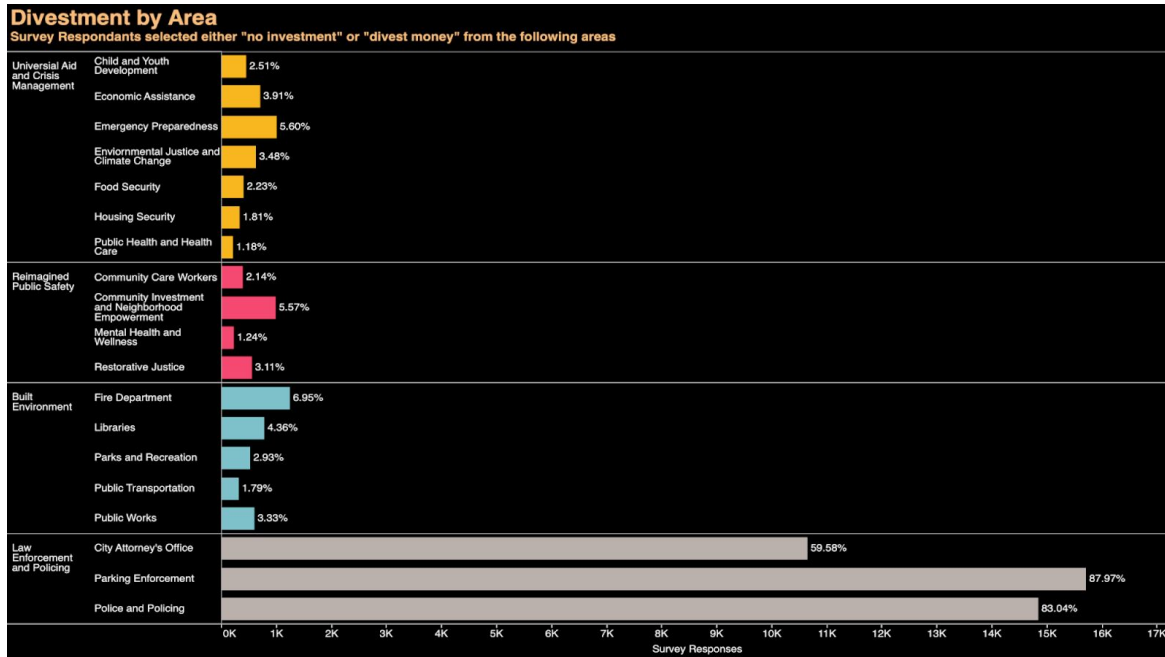
- **Housing Security**  
Ensuring people have housing and can stay in housing
- **Mental Health and Wellness**  
Supporting mental health needs with counseling and community-led crisis response
- **Public Health and Healthcare**  
Offering public healthcare and ensuring everyone can stay healthy
- **Public Transportation**  
Providing all Angelenos the ability to move around the city by making public transit free



## TOP PRIORITIES FOR DIVESTMENT

Top areas where People's Budget survey respondents wanted to see **divestment** are:

- Parking Enforcement
- Police and Policing
- City Attorney's Office

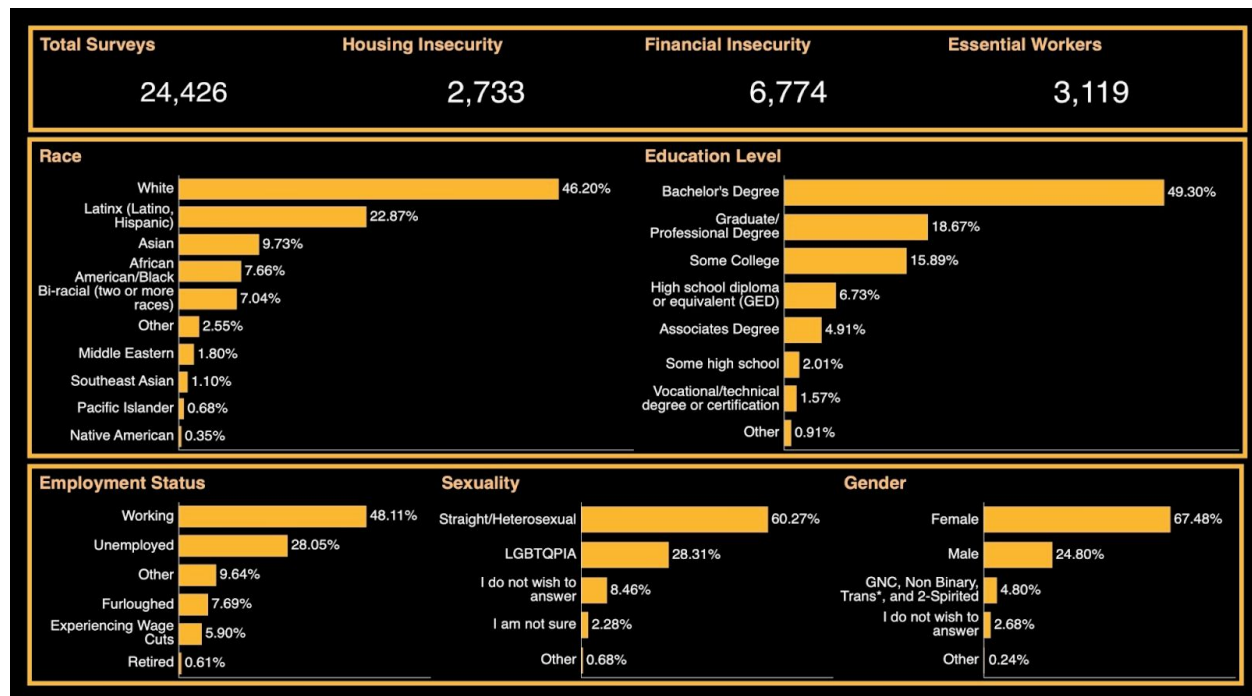




## PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

A survey was sent out by over 50 community organizations, with city-wide presence and representing neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles. The survey was also posted on more than 100 social media accounts and People's Budget LA's website. Responses were only accepted from residents of the City of Los Angeles who could identify their area of residence on an interactive map. Beyond the solicitation of survey responses, the coalition held a two-hour, online participatory budgeting session on Sunday, May 24, 2020 to share information about the city budgeting process and to gather public input. More than 10,000 people have viewed the session so far. Since then, our grassroots engagement has exploded: People's Budget LA has trended #1 in the U.S. on Twitter and our website has seen over 200,000 unique visitors to our website.

24,426 Angelenos responded to the survey, which was distributed by over 50 community organizations. Every council district has at least 300 respondents, and some have over 2,000 respondents. 3,300 participants engaged in our participatory budgeting process in real time on May 24, 2020 (via Zoom and Facebook Live), and over 10,000 viewers have watched that session after-the-fact. Since then, tens of thousands more have dialogued with us on social media and in other forums.



The survey data is available for exploration in a Tableau dashboard (linked at [PeoplesBudgetLA.com](https://PeoplesBudgetLA.com)).

## ADOPT A PEOPLE'S BUDGET

We believe that the government should be responsive to the needs, priorities, and demands of the people. There is clearly a wide chasm between the budget proposed by the Mayor (and directly or indirectly endorsed by the City Council) and the one envisioned by Los Angeles residents. The City Charter enables Council to pass or revise the Mayor's budget proposal or submit a new budget for implementation. In a democracy, the Council should listen to the will of the people and pass a People's Budget that centers the priorities that Angelenos have listed as central to them.

Under the leadership of BLM-LA, our fight for a People's Budget has engaged the residents of Los Angeles in a way that has likely never been done before. More people are paying attention than ever, and are willing to hold our politicians' feet to the fire. We have taken local politics by storm and our ideas have reverberated in cities across the country.

The \$100-\$150 million in cuts to LAPD proposed by some councilmembers and the Mayor are not enough; we will not be satisfied with crumbs. We are fighting for transformative change. We are fighting for the abolition of police and prisons. We are just getting started.

## ABOUT THE PEOPLE'S BUDGET LA COALITION

**The People's Budget LA is a coalition convened by Black Lives Matter-Los Angeles.** The coalition includes community organizations, faith leaders, parents, teachers, students, nonprofit leaders, and individuals from across Los Angeles.

Organizations who have signed onto the People's Budget LA initiative include:

|  |                                      |                                  |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Africa Town Coalition                              | Ktown for All                        | Students Deserve                 |
| Bend The Arc: Jewish Action, Southern California   | LA Defensa                           | Sunrise Movement LA              |
| Black Lives Matter-Los Angeles Community Coalition | LA Voice                             | TransLatina Coalition            |
| Crenshaw Subway Coalition                          | Labor/Community Strategy Center      | VyBe Local, LA Tenants Union     |
| Dignity and Power NOW                              | Los Angeles Community Action Network | Westside Local, LA Tenants Union |
| Ground Game LA                                     | March For Our Lives                  | White People 4 Black Lives       |
| The Justice Collaborative                          | People's City Council                | Youth Justice Coalition          |
|  | Stop LAPD Spying                     |                                  |
|  | Street Watch LA/DSA                  |                                  |