



# THE PEOPLE'S BUDGET LONG BEACH

## THE LONG BEACH PEOPLE'S BUDGET PROPOSAL - FY 2023

The Long Beach People's Budget Coalition believes and acts on a central principle—that Black Lives Matter. When we invest in Black lives and the healing and restoration of the Black community from generational, persistent systemic harms, we ALL win. To this end, the City budget and all public budgets must serve as reparations to Black and Indigenous people and communities. As a multiracial, multilingual, and multigenerational alliance formed in 2018, the People's Budget Coalition stands in solidarity with the Black and Indigenous communities and is committed to actively deepening that solidarity for the liberation of all peoples.

The still-ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the systemic violence of poverty and policing are daily reminders of institutionalized oppressions driven by racism, capitalism, and White supremacy—and underscore the need to fundamentally reimagine community safety and wellness. The City of Long Beach, however, has done the opposite. Of the nearly \$136 million the City has received from the federal American Rescue Plan Act, the City has egregiously spent a large portion on police salaries, benefits, and overtime, instead of on communities in need. Long Beach must stop using any current and future federal COVID recovery dollars toward police and instead invest in community-led safety and Black liberation.

**The People's Budget Coalition calls on Mayor Robert Garcia, all nine City Councilmembers, and City Manager Tom Modica to:**

- (a) adopt the People's Budget for Fiscal Year 2023,**
- (b) establish a zero-based budgeting process to fundamentally reprioritize spending,**
- (c) structurally reform the city budget process so that it centers co-governance with marginalized communities; Black people, Indigenous people, people of color, immigrants, youth, and older adults who are most impacted by budget decisions must co-lead and make decisions to shape the entire City budget and budgeting process. Black Lives Matter and all our communities cannot wait any longer.**

### 1st: DIVEST FROM THE LONG BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

**Defund the Long Beach Police Department to end their pattern of systemic violence: targeting low-income communities of color, criminalizing youth and poverty, and separating families.**

American Policing—born from slave patrols—is not the answer to our communities' most pressing needs, including the restoration of historical systemic harms as well as affordable housing, jobs, health, and community care. Divest from policing and reduce the number of cops on the force, since salaries, benefits, and overtime account for the vast majority of the police budget. Ban surveillance technologies like license plate readers and facial recognition technology that are laden with racial bias, as they are often used against Black people and inaccurately identify Black faces, especially those of Black women, and are too often used to target social justice activists and undocumented people. Charter a citizens' police oversight commission with subpoena and disciplinary authority.



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## 2nd: REINVEST IN BLACK LIVES, COMMUNITIES OF COLOR, AND MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

Honoring the recognition that racism is a public health crisis, the City must redirect resources to basic needs and community-led priorities that create health, opportunity, community, and justice so that Black people, Indigenous people, people of color, and all people can thrive.

### 1.) Long Beach Black Reparations Fund and Black-Led Community Agency (\$197,000,000):

Establish a Long Beach Black Reparations Fund to seed a Black-led Community Agency that will provide a pathway to full reparations, which requires a systemic accounting, acknowledgement, and repair of past and ongoing systemic harms, monetary compensation to individuals and institutions led by and accountable to Black communities, and an end to present-day policies and practices that perpetuate harms rooted in the history of anti-Black racism. The Black Community Agency will coordinate with the City to ensure the City invests proactively in the holistic, supportive, grassroots community-based leadership and strengthening of self determination that Black Long Beach residents deserve. Specifically, the Black Community Agency will engage, build and plan with local Black community—especially individuals who have been impacted by the war on drugs, are system-impacted (currently or formerly incarcerated individuals or their family members), or have experienced violence, specifically police violence—to identify, prioritize, vet, fund, and evaluate non-carceral, non-punitive approaches to community safety and well being, grounded in transformative justice and Black community empowerment and autonomy. Focus areas include:

- Black Healing - Establish healthy, generative, stable bodies and living conditions for Black people, including trauma-informed healing supports and community health services for people recovering from experiencing or witnessing violence, abuse, and/or harmful intergenerational interactions with violent U.S. systems, especially police and mass incarceration.
- Black Capacity-Building - Enable Black community-led development of intercommunal trainings and presentations within Black community to strengthen historical background and social context regarding the need for Black-led and Black-centered self-determination through: leader fellowships; financial infrastructure; technical and other professional and legal assistance; and Black ownership of residential, commercial, and religious lands and recreational spaces. Those closest to the harm, including Black-led grassroots groups, will lead the efforts to help uplift family reunification.
- Black Re-entry - Fund, support, and prioritize Black formerly incarcerated community members with educational and workforce development, training programs, and pathways that include entrepreneurship grants, employer hiring incentives, subsidized and transitional employment opportunities (i.e. “earn and learn”), worker cooperatives, and business models (traditional and non-traditional) operated by formerly incarcerated people. Champion Black business ownership in the cannabis industry and allocate 75% of all cannabis tax revenue directly to Black economic development.
- Black Youth Opportunities - Establish space and opportunities for Black joy, youth development, enrichment, cultural affirmation, employment, health, and wellbeing programming and funding (non-carceral, non-punitive, non-related to police). Include support for systems-impacted youth (reentry and/or foster youth) especially their continued education and access to employment opportunities. Identify the barriers that specifically prevent Black youth from overall success, safety, and opportunity. Coordinate with and fill gaps between City, County and other agencies.



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- Black-Centered Systems - Disrupt anti-Blackness that exist within Long Beach institutions and government, education, economic, political, and housing systems by supporting better navigation of and access to affordable housing, social services, physical and mental health, legal assistance, financial education, quality childcare, healthy food, and career pathways.
- Community-Led Crisis Response and Violence Reduction and Prevention - Support Black community-led crisis response unrelated to police or criminal enforcement and specifically involve individuals who may be currently experiencing mental health or substance use challenges, as well as peer supports and other health experts in order to reduce communities' reliance on first-responders. Enhance skills in conflict resolution, de-escalation, first aid, community building, and community health infrastructure.

### 2.) Tenant Right to Counsel - Housing Element Program 6.5 (\$3,000,000):

Fully and structurally fund the Long Beach Tenant Right to Counsel program to provide legal services, outreach, and education to Long Beach renters facing eviction, regardless of immigration status. To date, the Tenant Right to Counsel program has served nearly 400 Long Beach households, disproportionately Black, effectively reducing evictions and preventing homelessness. However, the ongoing need for eviction defense far outweighs the limited resources, given the 62% increase in homelessness since 2020 and the thousands of unjust evictions (or threats of) that are systemic to market housing in Long Beach. The City must structurally fund Tenant Right to Counsel, since COVID recovery dollars are temporary and grossly insufficient to address the persistent eviction crisis.

### 3.) Rental Housing Division - Housing Element Program 7.2 (\$3,600,000):

Establish and structurally fund a fully staffed Rental Housing Division within the Development Services Department to communicate with both tenants and landlords, monitor and enforce tenant protection laws, centralize information and forms, administer a tenant habitability program to mitigate substantial remodel evictions, and begin immediate research of rent stabilization models due by 2023.

### 4.) Community Land Trust (CLT) - Housing Element Program 6.8 (\$5,000,000):

Invest in the formation and acquisition of the first Long Beach community land trust (CLT) to create permanently affordable housing and community control and stewardship of land, removing land from the speculative real estate market. Recognizing that the first CLT in the United States was a Black-organized farm collective formed during the civil rights movement, CLTs play a critical role in stabilizing communities of color and countering market-driven gentrification and displacement.

### 5.) Ongoing Rental Assistance for Very Low & Low Income Households - Housing Element Program 3.1 (\$10,000,000):

Create a new structurally funded program for ongoing rental assistance for very low and low income households, which, given sky-high inflation and a looming recession, will provide a safety net for struggling renters, help keep families housed, prevent mass displacement, and stabilize our community. This program should be administered by the Rental Housing Division (demand #3) and tie in with local tenant protections.

### 6.) Older Adult Housing (\$1,000,000):

Hire five HUD-certified housing navigators specifically to serve older adults and to be located at Houghton Park, Silverado Park, Recreation Park, and the Long Beach Senior Center. These HUD-certified housing navigators are to be a component of a much-needed comprehensive older adult housing strategy, including a



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senior and disabled persons housing protections and coordination office, a loss prevention fund to keep seniors housed, a senior and disabled housing access program, and critical services and protections in every senior building, including resident service coordinators, and harassment prevention.

**7.) Multi-Service Center Satellite Office to Serve Unhoused Community - Housing Element Program 4.1 (\$3,000,000):**

Establish a satellite Multi-Service Center (MSC) more central to where the need is, to be located at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church. The Health Department and Homeless Services Bureau are grossly underfunded, the systems in place to assist unhoused people, who are disproportionately Black, via the current MSC are broken, and the needs are immediate. St. Luke’s Episcopal Church already has existing infrastructure of trust, support, and cultural competency in relationship with the unhoused community, driven by its decades-long faith mission to help people get back on their feet. This satellite MSC can address many of the challenges within the currently broken system, such as systemic barriers and anti-Blackness, in order to best humanely serve our unhoused community.

**8.) Language Justice (\$2,825,000):**

Dedicate adequate staff to fully implement the City’s Language Access Policy consistently throughout the city and finally create a culture of language justice. Permanently move interpretation and translation services in-house to provide faster and higher quality interpretation and translation for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) residents. Provide Spanish and Khmer interpretation at all City Council and Charter Commission meetings without having to make an advance request. Provide community-based organizations who work with LEP residents ongoing stipends to conduct outreach about the policy.

**9.) Long Beach Justice Fund - Universal Legal Representation for Immigrants (\$1,000,000):**

Allocate \$1 million to the Long Beach Justice Fund to provide free, comprehensive immigration support to immigrant residents facing deportation and other immigration proceedings, regardless of their background. Publicly funded deportation defense programs like the Long Beach Justice Fund keep families and communities together who are criminalized and targeted by policing and increased immigration enforcement.

**10.) Climate Justice (\$88,300,000): Fully fund the oil field abandonment reserves (\$74.3M):**

Increase investment in Long Beach Transit and the Long Beach Bike Share program to provide fare-free public transportation (\$14M) to support racial justice, street safety, public health, and greenhouse gas emission reduction goals.

**ADOPT THE PEOPLE’S BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023**

The City’s budget is a moral document that reflects our City’s values and priorities.

Adopting the People’s Budget is more than just a shift in the way the City has done business—it is a pathway to ending anti-Blackness and structural racism in the City, undoing historical disinvestment that has continued for generations, and moving us closer toward a Long Beach that is safe and healthy for all.

The People’s Budget campaign is led by Black Lives Matter Long Beach, Black Agency, the Housing Justice Coalition, Long Beach Residents Empowered (LIBRE), the Language Justice Campaign, the Invest in Youth Coalition, Long Beach Immigrant Rights Coalition (LBIRC), Long Beach Forward, Long Beach Gray Panthers, LA Voice, Long Beach Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE), Democratic Socialists of America - Long Beach (DSA-LB), Sunrise Movement Long Beach, and Showing Up for Racial Justice - Long Beach (SURJ - LB).