

**From:** Long Beach Accountability Action Group [mailto:updates@laag.us]  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 6, 2020 4:20 PM  
**To:** CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>  
**Cc:** Mayor <Mayor@longbeach.gov>; City Manager <CityManager@longbeach.gov>  
**Subject:** This blog post will act as our comments on the budget hearing Sept 8 2020

**-EXTERNAL-**

here is the post <https://www.laag.us/2020/09/why-budget-and-budget-process-is-broken.html>

**Long Beach Accountability Action Group "LAAG"**

A California Non Profit Association | Demanding action and accountability from local government

[main LAAG website](#) | LAAG on [Twitter](#)

"The most important political office is that of the private citizen". - Louis D. Brandeis

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**From:** Sarah Monson [mailto:info@sg.actionnetwork.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 8, 2020 9:59 AM  
**To:** CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>  
**Subject:** Make Long Beach a leader & Adopt the People's Budget

**-EXTERNAL-**

Monique De La Garza,

Honorable Mayor, City Council and City Manager,

This letter is to urge you to adopt the people's budget and put Long Beach at the forefront of diversity, inclusivity, and equity. Please do not ignore this letter. There is plenty in there you have already heard, so much so maybe it has fallen on deaf ears by this point. Instead, read it this time thinking about the marginalized in our community, not just the percentage of our community who lives above the margin and will continue to with or without this budget. Think about the proportion of our community that without this budget, will continue to suffer, will continue to be disenfranchised. Pass this budget for them and our entire community. Long Beach has lost its ranking as one of the top most diverse cities, which is what I love the most about the city my family lives in. I want to raise my white children in a city where we can hold our heads high because ALL children in our city receive equal access to EXCELLENT education, not just the city leftovers. Because all families in our community have equal access to GOOD and safe housing, quality healthcare and leadership that lives and breathes all things Long Beach. Enough with insufficient bandaid fixes to real systemic issues. Let's be leaders in our state, and even in our country about what an equitable, diverse, healthy city looks like. Please read on, and hopefully through a filter of those most in need.

For the past two years, the People's Budget campaign has forced conversations and action for equity and justice in the Long Beach city budget. Because Black, Latinx, Cambodian, Filipino, White, and other members of the community came together, Long Beach started reversing historic patterns of disinvesting in communities of color. From language access funding, to a youth strategic plan, to universal legal representation for immigrants, the people have proven we know how to make our communities safe and healthy.

Today, we are at a critical juncture in our city's history and our nation's history. Amid a global pandemic and uprising, we are all bearing witness once again to systemic oppressions driven by racism, capitalism, and white supremacy. Whether it is police criminalizing and committing direct violence on Black bodies or greedy developers gentrifying our neighborhoods and displacing our neighbors, our communities have had enough. Now is the time for BOLD change that puts Black lives at the center and reduces harm in every way, prioritizes communities first, invests in real essential services, and reimagines community safety.

As a multicultural and multigenerational alliance, we are asking that you adopt the People's Budget for Fiscal Year 2021. Black Lives Matter, and all our communities cannot wait any longer.

#### DIVEST FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Defund the Long Beach Police Department to end their pattern of targeting low-income communities of color and criminalizing poverty. Policing is not the answer to our schools' and communities' most pressing needs, including jobs, housing, homelessness, health, and immigration. When we divest from police, we redirect resources so that Black, Indigenous, and people of color can live successful lives.

#### REINVEST IN BLACK LIVES AND COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Reallocate funds and direct additional resources on an on-going basis to community-led priorities that create health, opportunity, community, and justice:

-Reimagined community safety without police terror and grounded in restorative justice and Black Empowerment:

--Invest in Black family unification, community-led crisis response, violence reduction, and prevention strategies that are outside of the police;

--Provide reparations to Black/African American people from the war-on-drugs era and to victims and their families of racial profiling and police violence;

--Prioritize families directly impacted by the war on drugs in all social and economic opportunities, especially in the equitable ownership of cultivation and distribution in the cannabis industry.

--Invest in community-led restoration events to support stronger connections among neighbors.

**Affordable and Supportive Housing:** Establish a dedicated source of funding for supportive housing with wrap-around supportive services for residents experiencing or on the brink of homelessness.

**Right to Counsel for All Renters:** Establish a Right to Counsel to provide legal resources and representation to renters in need regardless of immigration status, effectively reducing evictions, preventing homelessness, preserving affordable housing, and stabilizing communities.

**Citywide Rental Housing Division:** Establish a Rental Housing Division within the Development Services Department to communicate with both tenants and landlords, issue legal bulletins and updates, enforce renter protection laws, centralize information and forms, and administer a citywide Right to Counsel program for renters.

**Community Health Councils:** Establish funding for neighborhood-based Community Health Councils to implement community-led crisis response for mental health, safety, and well-being emergencies.

**Job Training:** Prioritize free job training and job opportunities for Black residents, regardless of their background or education level. Revise the City's Project Labor Agreement by requiring an independent jobs coordinator, re-defining who qualifies as a Disadvantaged Worker, and adding penalties for noncompliance, so that Black residents actually benefit from these union jobs subsidized by the City.

**Language Access:** Dedicate adequate staff to implement the City's Language Access Policy (LAP) in full 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. Provide Spanish and Khmer interpretation without advance request at all City Council and Charter Commission meetings. Provide community based organizations who work with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) residents ongoing stipends to conduct outreach about the policy.

Senior and Youth Programming: Increase funding for senior and youth development programs and supportive services through community-based organizations, community centers, public libraries, and parks in historically disinvested neighborhoods. Initiate the implementation of the AARP Liveable Cities Initiative that the City committed to over two years ago and has yet to implement.

Universal Legal Representation for Immigrants: Renew and increase funding to the Long Beach Justice Fund to provide free universal legal representation to immigrant residents facing deportation regardless of their background.

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 towards a Long Beach that is safe and healthy for all.

Do the right thing, adopt the People's Budget.

Sarah Monson