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RENEWING AND RESTORING OUR CITY

City Council Completes 07-08 Budget, Expands Reserves, Protects & Expands Services, Emphasizes Safety

In a marathon session that concluded with a late-afternoon unanimous “aye” vote, the Los Angeles City Council completed and approved the 07-08 Budget today. The \$6.79 billion budget, \$113.8 million (1.7%) greater than the current Fiscal Year’s budget, was proposed by the Mayor and adopted with amendments by the City Council. Its passage includes the creation of an historic commitment to the Reserve and Emergency Funds, the protection and expansion of city services, and an emphasis on public safety.

“Working together, my colleagues have produced a budget that delivers the services Angelenos care about, protects our communities, and shores up our finances,” said Council President Eric Garcetti. “I’m proud of the work done by this council.”

"Through collaboration with the Mayor's office and with the utmost cooperation of the CLA, CAO and all City departments, I am confident that we now have a plan that should help us weather all likely fiscal difficulties," said Councilmember Bernard Parks, who chairs the Council's Budget Committee. "We made few but very necessary changes to the proposed budget. The budget will maintain the Reserve Fund to meet our financial policies and there will be a greater focus on increased funding for libraries, youth development, and public safety."

"The City Council took a historic step today, by approving a budget that both reduces our City's deficit, while expanding anti-gang programs and putting more cops on the street," said Councilwoman Wendy Greuel. "We carefully looked over this budget to ferret out all of the waste and pork and ensure that we are maximizing the public's hard-earned tax dollars."

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“The Budget and Finance Committee worked very hard to develop a solid, well thought-out budget that maintains basic and critical services while demonstrating our commitment to fiscal responsibility,” said Councilwoman Jan Perry, Assistant Council President Pro Tempore. “And, I am particularly pleased that as a City we have renewed our commitment to our homeless population by once again supporting our year round emergency homeless shelter services.”

“I want to commend the Mayor, my Council colleagues, and the Budget and Finance committee for their recommendations on this year's City budget,” said Councilman Dennis P. Zine, chair of the Personnel Committee. “This year's budget, while tight, preserves services needed for the citizens of Los Angeles.”

“This was a tough budget year,” said Councilmember Bill Rosendahl. “I am pleased that we were able to be fiscally responsible while protecting and, in some cases, even expanding vital city services, especially public safety.”

Below are several of the key decisions and changes approved by the City Council via its committee and full-council review of the budget before its passage today.

- **Reserve Fund.** The Reserve Fund is now 4.6% of the General Fund, nearer than ever to the Financial Policy goal of 5%
- Included in this is the setting of the **Emergency Reserve Account** at 2.75% of General Fund.
- **Public Safety.** The revised budget sets aside funds for \$6.6M in police overtime and other public safety contingencies. It contains \$1.3M to purchase new tasers for the LAPD. It funds the opening of new fire stations 36 and 67. It adds funds for gang prosecutors, neighborhood council legal support, the School Safety Prosecutor program, the Family Violence Prevention Project, the Community and Emergency Response Teams, and the fire department's Worker's Comp safety program. It extended the Heli-Tanker lease to fight brush fires.
- **Homelessness.** The city's year-round homeless shelter program was continued.
- **Quality of Life.** 26 miles of sidewalk repair were added, as were funds for tree trimming and illegal sign removal. An additional \$1 million was found for library materials.
- **Planning a Livable City.** The completion of eight ongoing community plans and three new community plans has been funded.
- **Government Openness and Outreach.** An ombudsman position will be created in the City Clerk's office to do outreach to neighborhood councils. A system to help the public track council motions will be introduced.
- **Restoration of Griffith Park.** Funds were set aside for the repair and restoration of Griffith Park, including the prevention of mudslides.

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