

CORRESPONDENCE



June 14, 2021

To the Pasadena Mayor and Members of City Council,

We, the undersigned members of the Pasadena Tenants Union are writing today to express unequivocally our deep disappointment in and absolute rejection of the proposed 2022 City budget.

It should go without saying, and yet bears repeating, that the past year has seen events unprecedented in our lifetimes. A global pandemic has ravaged our community, especially the working class. Hundreds have died as a direct result of Covid-19. Thousands are still out of work and deeply in debt to their landlords, or creditors they borrowed from to pay their landlords. Hundreds, right here in our own community, face eviction when the Covid-19 eviction protections are lifted.

On top of this, we've seen a striking response to police abuse and murder from communities around the United States over the past year. Right here in Pasadena, one year ago, we protested against the Pasadena Police Department's killing of Anthony McClain. On the heels of the murder of George Floyd by the Minneapolis Police Department, our own Anthony McClain was shot in the back by Pasadena Police Officer Edwin Dumaguindin. According to all the evidence we have, and against repeated claims by the Chief John Perez, this was an unjustified killing. Unjustified killings are murder. And yet the City of Pasadena and the Pasadena Police Department have not taken responsibility for this murderous act.

And still, in the face of all of this, the City has the audacity to propose a \$1.7 million increase to the police budget, bringing the total to nearly \$93 million dollars. This, while other cities around us are reducing their police budgets and investing in non-violent responses to calls for service that do not require a gun. While some have defended this increase as a "status quo budget," we are confident that this is not the defense you think it is. If we have learned nothing else from the pandemic over the past year, we know we can no longer do "status quo."

This budget proposal reveals that city leaders are out of touch and out of step with the community, which has a clear-eyed assessment of our needs and the perils of disregarding them. We stand with the many others, from clergy to community groups, who have pointed out the obvious: the budget does not represent the values and priorities of Pasadena residents. We need deeper investment in housing, services for youth and seniors, parks, and other public services.

The police currently possess by far the largest portion of the budget. Across the county, for the past 30 or more years, police departments have used police misconduct to argue for budget increases. This strategy has failed to address police abuses of power, and has in fact exacerbated the problem.

We implore you to reject this budget. If, as Chief Perez says, the budget increase is for “the youth” and crime prevention programs, increase funding for youth programs and other social programs. Providing more stable housing, more services for youths and seniors, and better public services will reduce crime. The police department will merely chase the crimes that result from your failure to prevent them.

Sincerely,
Pasadena Tenants Union

<u>Name</u>	<u>Council District</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Council District</u>
Ryan Bell	CD 6	Jennifer Taylor	CD 4
Francesca Ponce	CD 7	Fernando Villafuerte	CD 7
PJ Johnson	CD 4	Kaveh Naeeni	CD 2
Liberty McCoy	CD 5	Ana Derby	CD 2
Aaron Markowitz	CD 1	Sean Pike	CD 7
Abdullah Farooq	CD 2	Kate Leitch	CD 7
Charles Xu	CD 1	Lorinda Dajose	CD 7
Michelle White	CD 5	Breana Neal	CD 3
Ashay Naren Patel	CD 7	Caroline Ely	CD 7
Ada Ramirez	CD 3	Kathya Ortega	CD 4
Jane Panangaden	CD 1	Brynn Holbrook	CD 7
Cai Tong Ng	CD 7	Martha Kriley	CD 4
Joanne Long	CD 4	Luka Dowell	CD 7
Brigitte Rooney	CD 1	Jennifer Palmer	CD 6
Peishi Cheng	CD 7		
Milan Roberson	CD 2		
Ali Cataltepe	CD 7		
Matthew L Sorrenti	CD 6		
Christine Tringali	CD 4		
Román Corfas	CD 7		
Dongyi Lu	CD 3		
Susi Curri	CD 4		
Nathaniel Sagman	CD 1		
Roger White	CD 4		