

# **LAPD PLAN OF ACTION**

**BOOK II:  
FOR THE LOS ANGELES THAT COULD BE**

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# LAPD PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE LOS ANGELES THAT COULD BE

## AWAKENING TO THE PROMISE

Although people here, when asked where they live, identify more with their neighborhoods – Brentwood or South Los Angeles or the Valley and so on – it is the City as a political unity that will shape the future of every one of its neighborhoods and, in so doing, the life of every resident. As the City of Los Angeles fares, so does each of its people, regardless of race, country of origin, economic status, or home location.

Today, there is no issue before Los Angeles, and therefore before every resident regardless of community, of greater importance than public safety. Despite significant reductions in crime in 2003, Los Angeles still had one of the highest violent crime rates in America last year, ranking 24th among the 244 cities reporting to the FBI.<sup>1</sup> Also, Los Angeles today is one of the top three cities in America targeted by terrorists, an emphatic warning by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.<sup>2</sup> Every person who has a stake in the future of Los Angeles (and that is everyone who lives, works, invests, or visits here) needs to understand and accept the fact that public safety is an essential condition for cities to flourish – and to realize that the corollary is equally true. Without public safety, cities languish and decline.

It is the intent of this *Book II: LAPD Plan of Action for the Los Angeles that Could Be* to awaken the people of Los Angeles, as a single polity, to appreciate the very real threats of violent crime and international terror, understand what the Los Angeles Police Department needs in resources to protect them proactively from these threats, recognize the certain gain from delivering these resources, and embrace the imperative that this be done quickly.

- Needed are more police officers to take back the streets for the law-abiding and secure sustained low levels of crime in every City neighborhood.



- Needed is 21st Century technology that will deliver greater policing effectiveness in the fight against 21st Century crime and terrorism.
- Needed is for the whole community to come together to support their police with the resources they need to drain the swamps of gangs that are sucking young people by the thousands into lives of crime, destruction, and death – and once and for all excise this cancer on the civic body.

The LAPD is one of the few cultural artifacts that confer common identity on the enormous and complex place that is Los Angeles. Its badge is a world-recognized cultural icon of the City. But this badge can be much more than that. It can be the shield behind and around which a new city is born. A city where children no longer have to step around drug dealers and gang lookouts to go to school. A city where no young person thinks he has to carry a gun to be safe or feel important. A city where all live as one community without fear and for the common good. A city where businesses prosper, people have good-paying jobs, and the tax base grows. The men and women of the LAPD are among the most professional law enforcement agents in the world. Given the support they need in human and material resources, they can deliver on this vision: Los Angeles can be the safest big city in America, as Mayor James K. Hahn aspires. And it will be, if its people have the will and resolve.



## **FACING UP TO THE THREAT**

Los Angeles has made important strides in recent years. But that progress could quickly unravel with a crippling one-two punch from gang violence and terrorist attack. These are serious threats, a combination unique to Los Angeles. And Angelinos ignore them at their peril.

### **GANG VIOLENCE IS A CANCER ON THE CITY**

Too many of the City's residents live under the shadow of gang violence, held hostage in their neighborhoods like prisoners of war. Too many are consumed daily by the fear that a stray bullet might end their lives. Police officers enter gang-infested neighborhoods at great risk, sometimes targeted by assault rifles with laser sights.

There are 416 known gangs with about 45,000 gang members active in Los Angeles today, many engaged in criminal activities.<sup>3</sup> Countywide, there are about 80,000 gang members, “gang-bangers” who let no municipal boundary restrict their marauding.<sup>4</sup> Despite the crime declines in 2003 and First Half 2004, the City is still gripped by deadly violence, much of it gang precipitated.

- The City of Los Angeles averages more than one homicide and six people shot each day.<sup>5</sup>
- There have been 3,444 gang-related killings from January 1993 through August 2004.<sup>6</sup>
- In 2003, 50.3% of the 514 homicides in Los Angeles were gang-related.<sup>7</sup>
- In First Half 2004, gang-related homicides in the City increased 21.4%.<sup>8</sup> Through October 9 this year, 58% of homicides were gang-related.<sup>9</sup>

Residents of South Los Angeles, Pacoima, Boyle Heights, Echo Park and other gang-infested neighborhoods live in constant fear for their lives. Mothers place children in bathtubs to shield them from the crossfire.

- In October 2004, a 68-year old grandfather taking his grandchildren out for a morning walk, and another innocent bystander, were caught in crossfire between warring gangs in South Los Angeles.<sup>10</sup>
- In April this year, a 4-year old girl in a car seat was critically injured in South Los Angeles after she was struck in the head by a stray bullet from a drive-by shooting. A pedestrian was also injured.<sup>11</sup>
- In July this year, a 6-year old girl exiting a 7-Eleven where she had gone for ice cream, was shot in the head and killed by a man with a rifle in the parking lot. “She just closed her eyes and fell to the ground,” her uncle, who was accompanying her said.<sup>12</sup>

And the sanctuary that homes provide is no longer inviolate.

- Last December, a stray bullet in South Los Angeles killed Laudelina Salazar Garcia, 39, while she was decorating her Christmas tree. The two gunmen were firing back at a drive-by shooter.<sup>13</sup>



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**“OH GOD. EVERY TIME I HEAR OF  
SOMETHING HAPPENING, I’M ON THE  
PHONE ASKING, ‘IS MY BOY ALL RIGHT?  
IS MY BOY ALL RIGHT?’”**

“Getting Away with Murder  
in South L.A.’s Killing Zone”  
– *L.A. Times*, January 1, 2004

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**“TIRED OF ALL THE VIOLENCE EVEN A  
MOTHER’S TEARS AND PLEAS CAN’T STOP,  
WHEN THE POWER OF THE GANG IS  
STRONGER THAN ONE MOTHER’S LOVE.”**

– “Rival Gangs’ Mothers Unite For Peace”  
*The L.A. Daily News*, May 5, 2004

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**“AS SOON AS I GO TO THAT SCHOOL,  
THEY’RE GOING TO KNOW WHO I AM.  
THEY’RE GOING TO KILL ME. I’M SCARED.  
I’M REALLY SCARED.”**

*“Students Fear transfer to Rival Turf”  
— L.A. Times, March 31, 2004*



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**“HER FIVE-YEAR OLD SON KEEPS ASKING  
‘WHERE IS SHE? WHERE IS MOM?’  
EVEN THOUGH HE WAS RIGHT THERE  
WHEN SHE WAS SHOT.”**

*“Errant Bullet Shatters L.A. Family”  
— L.A. Times, December 17, 2003*

- Earlier this year, a gunman shot into the front door of a home, striking a six-year-old girl and her ten-year-old brother inside.<sup>14</sup>

Gangs target young people with few options and pull them into the violent nexus of guns and drugs. Too many of the City’s youth have lost their lives to entrenched gang culture, whether it is because they have embraced the ethos of gang violence, or because they have struggled to avoid it.

- Since 2002, at least 1,563 of the City’s youth were shooting victims; 449 of these were children below the age of fifteen.<sup>15</sup>
- In several instances, young men have been killed specifically because they have refused to join a gang.<sup>16</sup>
- The Grape Street Crips, to compel a reluctant 15-year old boy to join their gang, showed him a videotape of eleven gang members raping his 13-year old sister. He joined the next day fearing, if he did not, the gang would kill her. As one gang member said, “kids have no choice but to belong.”<sup>17</sup>
- On October 9th, 2004 a fourteen-year-old boy riding his bicycle was killed in South Los Angeles, shot repeatedly as he begged for mercy. The murder appeared to be gang-related, though the boy had nothing to do with gangs. The boy was “hunted” and shot down like a deer, said Detective Rudy Lemos of the 77th Street Area station. “There’s a turf war going on in the neighborhood. Some people decided to do what they call ‘work.’ Hunt someone down. Just to let their rivals know they’re still around.”<sup>18, 19</sup>

Paralyzed with fear of gang retribution, law-abiding residents in gang-dominated neighborhoods will not cooperate with the police. Witnesses to gang-related homicides will not testify in court, despite a standing offer of \$25,000 for information leading to a murder conviction. This silence, in effect, enslaves these people to gang tyranny.

## METASTASIS

Gangs have been characterized as a cancer – a tumor on the civic corpus. Like a cancer left unchecked, the urban terror of Los Angeles gangs – and it is domestic terrorism – is spreading to parts of the City once thought safe, penetrating into the suburbs and even rural areas at an alarming rate.<sup>20</sup>

New gangs first engage in property crimes, studies show, and then move on to violent crimes including homicides as they grow in size and notoriety.<sup>21</sup> And this is not simply a case of gang-on-gang violence.

- On September 9, 2003, three Taft High School students were shot by gang members in a drive-by shooting near the school's campus; the victims were waiting for the bus.<sup>22</sup>
- On April 3, 2004, a University of Southern California student was shot multiple times and killed at an intersection less than a quarter of a mile away from his downtown apartment.<sup>23</sup>
- On May 25, 2004, a sailor on leave from duty in the Persian Gulf visited a nightclub not knowing that it was a gang hangout. As the sailor was leaving, a gunman walked up and fired at least 30 shots killing him. LAPD Detective Rudy Lemos of the 77th Street Area station, who was on the scene, commented to the *Los Angeles Times* that the victim "was probably safer in the Middle East than he was here."<sup>24</sup>

No Los Angeles resident is safe as long as gang violence continues unabated. But too many in "safe" neighborhoods close their eyes to the threat mistakenly believing it is a gang-on-gang problem that can be contained to certain sections of the City. But residents of City areas once considered havens from violence are being attacked in increasing numbers as gangs and other violent criminals expand their territory of criminal operations.

- The San Fernando Valley is thought to be safer than South Los Angeles and other sections where gangs cluster; yet in September 2003, the Devonshire Area in the Northwest part of the Valley recorded more homicides that month than any other of the 18 LAPD geographic Areas.<sup>25</sup>

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**"GANG VIOLENCE IS LIKE A SLEEPING TIGER. WHEN THIS TIGER AWAKENS, IT'S GOING TO EXPLODE, AND MANY COMMUNITIES ARE NOT PREPARED FOR IT."**

– Chief William J. Bratton



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**“...THE GANGS OF L.A. WILL NEVER DIE,  
JUST MULTIPLY...”**

– Rap lyric from *Colors*

- Even though the number of shooting victims citywide fell 18% in 2003 compared to 2002, the number of victims shot in the San Fernando Valley increased 2% during that time period. Although there were several clusters of shootings, the shooting locations were spread throughout the Valley.<sup>26</sup>
- Gang crime in the Pacoima area increased 37% between October 2001 and March 2004. Gang-related crime in Panorama City increased 33% during the same period.<sup>27</sup>

Homicides and shootings are the most egregious of violent crimes, but robberies are committed more often, and for the victims can be very frightening. Robbery is commonly perceived as “street-level” crime. But even more invasive than being robbed on the street is being robbed while in your own home.

Home-invasion robberies increased 4% in 2003 over the previous year.<sup>28</sup>

- At a national conference on gang crime held in Los Angeles in January 2004, representatives from twelve major police departments throughout the country agreed that an increase in home invasions, particularly committed by Asian gangs, constitutes a significant trend in gang violence today.

### **GANGS ARE TARGETING THE POLICE**

Too often, LAPD officers monitoring gang activity have been met with hails of bullets. Many of these shooting incidents have been unprovoked. Often, gangs make no distinction between police and gang rivals in protecting their turf.

- In 2003, 87 LAPD officers were shot at in 40 separate incidents throughout the City. This was an increase of 29% citywide. Twelve of these shooting incidents were from high-powered rifles using 7.62mm cartridges, ammunition typically associated with AK-47s and similar illegal weapons. In total, 144 gunshots were fired at LAPD officers in 2003.<sup>29</sup>
- In First Half 2004, 36 LAPD officers were shot at in 16 separate incidents throughout the City. This was a 6% increase citywide compared to First Half 2003, but an 80% increase in South Bureau alone due to a flare-up of violence at the beginning of the year.<sup>30</sup>



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**“...SO I’LL WALK LIKE A GIANT  
PO-LICE DEFIANT...”**

– Rap lyric from *Colors*



- Earlier this year, 30 year-old Police Officer Ricardo Lizarraga was shot and killed by an active gang member, the first LAPD officer to be shot and killed in the line of duty since 1998.

The most vicious gang members not only prey upon law-abiding residents, they target LAPD officers charged with protecting these residents because of who they are and what they represent.

- On December 4, 2003, a man using an assault rifle equipped with a laser sight fired into the hood of an LAPD police car with two officers inside disabling the vehicle with one shot. This frightening new tactic eliminates a tactical safety maneuver for officers, trained to drive away if under fire, and places them in a deadly situation. Had the assailant's weapon not jammed, the officers might not be alive today. No suspects have been apprehended in this case.<sup>31</sup>
- California Highway Patrol Officer Thomas J. Steiner was gunned down at random in late April 2004 apparently by a teenage boy to impress a street gang.<sup>32</sup>

Too few in number and lacking technological tools to give them an edge, LAPD officers are highly vulnerable targets of gang violence. The people of Los Angeles have good reason to worry about the safety of these men and women they depend on to protect them.

## FEAR AND PUBLIC RESPONSE

Indeed, some Angelinos are concerned about crime. In 2002, a *Los Angeles Times* poll found that 24% of City residents felt unsafe in their neighborhoods; 20% felt less safe than five years before.<sup>33</sup>

Many residents who can afford it have resorted to gated communities, private security details, and home alarm systems.

According to *The Economist*, and cited by the National Center for Policy Analysis, the ratio of security guards to police officers in California was four to one in 1997, the latest year for which statistics are available. (Numbers are not tallied for the City but the ratio is likely to be at least the same and probably higher.)<sup>34</sup>




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**“...AN ATTACK ON AN OFFICER IS AN ATTACK  
ON ALL OF US.”**

– William Lockyear  
California Attorney General

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**“AS LONG AS IT’S NOT A MIDDLE CLASS  
PROBLEM, NO ONE WILL CARE.  
IT’S STILL A CRIME-FREE CITY...  
FOR RESPECTABLE PEOPLE.”**

– Dudley in *LA Confidential*



In 1997, \$90 billion dollars was spent on private security nationwide, compared to only \$40 billion dollars on police. That relationship is no doubt the same in Los Angeles given its size, high crime incidence, and low number of police officers relative to most other large cities.<sup>35</sup>

Residents of "The Crown," a community of townhouses in Burbank, are seeking to gate off their community to provide increased security, despite protests from groups representing the hundreds of bikers and joggers who travel through Canyonback Road each week to get to 20,000 acres of public parkland on the other side. This is just one example of residents outside but near the City's boundaries being adversely affected by the spread of crime.<sup>36</sup>

It is ironic that many people seem more willing to invest in private security patrols and systems that do nothing to deal proactively with the crime problem, than to invest in their police who do. Every resident of Los Angeles, not just those who cannot afford private security, should expect, demand, and support the LAPD's need for the resources required, both human and material, to effectively protect every City neighborhood.

## THE THREAT OF TERRORIST ATTACK PERSISTS

Los Angeles is the world's entertainment capital. It is a great commercial hub supplying much of the West with goods and services. The conjoined ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, through which move half the nation's trade, are the busiest in the nation. As an iconic world city and America's second largest, Los Angeles is in the crosshairs of international terrorism and a major security concern. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has stated that a future terrorist attack of possible 9/11 magnitude or greater is all but certain. And chillingly, Homeland Security has identified Los Angeles as one of the nation's top three terror targets.

- An Al-Qaeda operative was arrested at the Canadian border in December 1999 as he tried to bring explosives into the country to bomb Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) on the millennium New Year's Eve.<sup>37</sup>

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**THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WARNS THAT  
LOS ANGELES IS ONE OF THE TOP THREE  
TERROR TARGETS IN AMERICA.**

- Federal authorities in May 2002 revealed a possible plot by terrorists to attack the World Cruise Center and the Vincent Thomas Bridge in the Port of Los Angeles.<sup>38</sup>
- Air Flights from Paris to LAX were canceled at Christmas 2003 because of “no show” passengers who were under close federal scrutiny for possible terrorist plots.<sup>39</sup>
- Al-Qaeda’s operations chief, captured by the U.S., told interrogators that the group had planned an attack on the Library Tower in Los Angeles on the heels of the 9/11 terror strikes. The attack was aborted mainly because the decisive U.S. response to 9/11 disrupted the organization’s plans to proceed. “We talked about hitting California as it was America’s richest state, and bin Laden had talked about economic targets,” he said.<sup>40</sup>
- On July 29, 2004, the FBI issued a warning for Los Angeles and other parts of the Southwest about possible terrorist attacks by Al-Qaeda based on an analysis of intelligence.<sup>41</sup>



Los Angeles is among the cities in America at highest risk of terrorist attack.<sup>42</sup> LAX, the world’s fifth-busiest airport, is considered California’s number one terrorist target.<sup>43</sup> These facts argue strongly for the resources the LAPD needs to prevent and disrupt terrorist acts, and if ever called upon, to swiftly and forcefully respond to terrorist attack.

The stakes for the people of this city, as well as for the LAPD, are high.



# ASKING TOO MUCH FROM TOO FEW FOR TOO LONG

## UNDER-STAFFED AND OVER-STRETCHED

Policing the City of Los Angeles has always been a stretching exercise. The LAPD has never had more than 10,000 officers to police nearly 470 square miles with a population over 3.8 million, a ratio of officers per capita and per square mile that is far lower than in most other large American cities.

Over the last fifty years, the number of LAPD officers per 1,000 residents has never exceeded 2.5, the present ratio, which is only marginally higher than in 1950 when crime was much lower.<sup>44</sup>

By comparison, America's other largest cities – New York City, Chicago, and Philadelphia, have twice the number of officers per capita. And Los Angeles has far fewer officers per capita than many smaller cities with high crime such as Washington D.C., Baltimore, St. Louis, and Detroit.<sup>45</sup>

When compared by land area, Los Angeles also ranks behind all of these cities in officers per square mile.

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**“UNLESS THE ANOREXIC BLUE LINE OF  
THE LAPD STARTS FATTENING UP, THIS  
YEAR’S GOOD NEWS [DECLINE IN CRIME]  
MIGHT BE SHORT-LIVED.”**

– Commentary, “Hail to the Chief”  
*The L.A. Daily News*, January 2, 2004

## OFFICER RATIOS TO POPULATION AND LAND AREA SELECTED CITIES

	Officers	Per 1,000 Pop.	Per Sq. Mi.
New York City	39,779	4.96	128.8
Chicago	14,075	4.84	61.9
Washington D.C.	3,604	6.89	58.7
Philadelphia	7,400	4.87	54.8
Boston	2,164	3.63	45.1
Baltimore	3,350	5.07	41.4
Detroit	4,130	4.34	29.8
St. Louis	1,100	4.61	17.8
Los Angeles	9,241	2.41	19.7

Source: Officer totals from Labor Relations Information Systems, *Officer Wage and Benefit Survey*, 2002 except for L.A which is current budgeted strength; City land area from *World Almanac and Book of Facts*, 2000; Population from 2002 U.S. Census estimates.

Boston offers another eye-opening comparison.

- The City of Boston is approximately 48 miles square with a population of nearly 600,000. Its police department deploys about 160 police cars per watch per day.<sup>46</sup> The City of Los Angeles is 469.3 miles square with a population of 3.8 million. The LAPD deploys a similar number of police cars per watch citywide as does Boston,
- but all four LAPD geographic bureaus are larger than Boston both in land area and population;
- the Valley Bureau alone is over four and one-half times larger than Boston in land area; and three of the Valley Bureau's Areas are each larger in land area than Boston.

## LAND AREA AND POLICE FORCE SIZE SELECTED CITIES

	Square Miles	Officers
Baltimore	81	3,350
Boston	48	2,164
Cleveland	77	1,822
Manhattan, NYC	26	6,175
Minneapolis	55	902
Pittsburgh	56	1,036
San Francisco	47	2,227
St. Louis	62	1,489
<b>Total</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>19,165</b>
Los Angeles	469	9,241

Source: Officers – Labor Relations Information Systems, *Officer and Wage Benefit Survey*, 2002, except for L.A. which is current budgeted strength; City land area – *World Almanac and Book of Facts*, 2000.

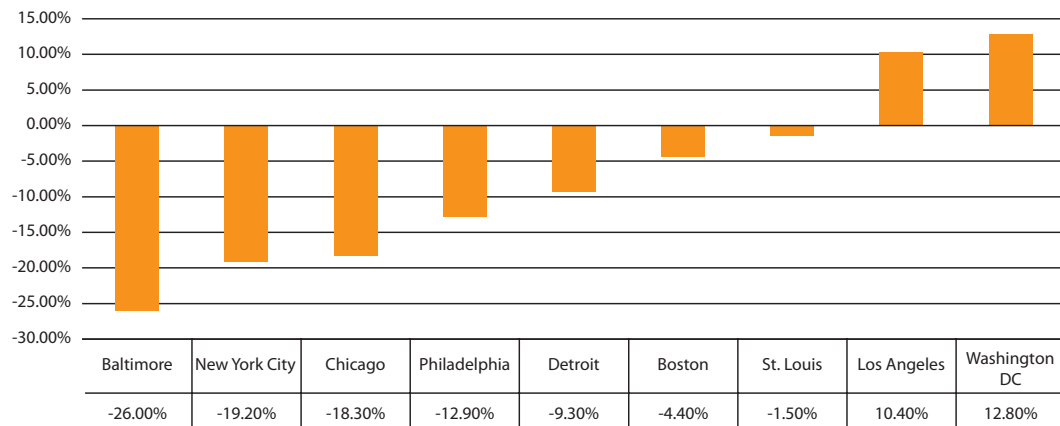
Perhaps most telling is this comparison. Los Angeles is equal in land area to all of the cities combined in the table at the left, including the borough of Manhattan.<sup>47</sup> But L.A. has fewer than half the police officers of all of these cities *combined*.

When placed on a map, this point is compellingly made.



While most other cities have benefited from declines in violent crime since 1999, violent crime in Los Angeles increased 10.4% between 1999 and 2002, as the table of selected cities below shows.

### PERCENT CHANGE VIOLENT CRIME 1999-2002 SELECTED CITIES



Source: FBI, *Crime in the United States*, 1999-2002.

Exacerbating this problem:

- Nearly 1,300 LAPD officers were unavailable for work on a typical day in September 2004, either recovering from medical injuries, sick, on leave to care for newborns, on military leave, relieved from duty, or on vacation.<sup>48</sup>
- The LAPD is authorized to have 3,580 civilian employees, yet the City has budgeted the LAPD to end FY04/05 with only 83% (or 2,981) of these positions, a situation analogous to sworn personnel.<sup>49</sup> Because of this, the LAPD has had to fill many of these critical support functions with sworn officers removing many from enforcement duties.
- Budgetary constraints and uncertainties limit the amount of overtime available and limit the promotions that can be made, reducing the operational and motivational flexibility of the Department.

## THE REVOLVING DOOR OF JUSTICE

Adding to the demands placed on a resource-strapped LAPD, and frustrating the Department's progress in reducing crime, has been the return of convicted criminals to the street before completion of their jail sentences.

- In the past year, Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca, forced by steep budget cuts to close county jails, has been releasing prisoners at a rate of up to 400 to 500 a day. Some of these offenders have served as little as 10% of their sentence.<sup>50</sup> As of late spring, more than 47,000 had been released early.
- An LAPD audit completed April 1, 2004 found that at least 73 inmates released since the beginning of the year had been rearrested within weeks, some within days, on charges as serious as kidnapping and assault with a deadly weapon.
- Manuel Castenado Banos, released after serving only a third of his 12-month sentence for felony domestic abuse, brutally beat and killed his girlfriend, Mary Cortez.<sup>51</sup>

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**“THERE WILL BE NO JUSTICE UNLESS  
THE SYSTEM THAT ALLOWED THIS CRIME  
TO HAPPEN IS REFORMED.”**

— Commentary  
*The L.A. Daily News*, April 19, 2004

The LAPD is in the process of teaming up with the Sheriff's Department and prosecutors to identify inmates with the highest potential for committing new offenses. The more serious offenders are being “red flagged” to prevent their early release. Although this will help, it will not solve the problem.



## FIGHTING CRIMES LIKE FIRES

The LAPD is struggling to hold off an inferno of criminal activity. As soon as the Department puts out one fire by mustering its scarce resources to respond to a flash point of violent crime, the violence jumps to a new location. Enforcement strength is oftentimes stretched too thin to provide an effective and consistent deterrent to crimes developing. The LAPD does not have the manpower to erect a firewall to keep the conflagration from spreading. The core issue here is a Los Angeles culture that asks the police to do too much with too little.



The outcome is a police department that behaves like a fire department, constantly moving from one problem to the next without ensuring that the initial conditions that led to the problem are addressed. It is a dynamic that allows the more clever criminals to prosper.

Some have posited that the crime reductions in 2003 and First Half 2004 were results of the Department “picking the low-hanging fruit.” Chief Bratton has warned that “additional significant, permanent, and citywide reductions in crime in the City of Los Angeles will be increasingly harder to achieve without the infusion of more resources.”

The LAPD currently works at full capacity and has produced the crime reduction successes of recent months. If the necessary resources are made available, as outlined in this Plan, further and dramatic reduction in crime will be realized. Los Angeles can become the safest big city in America. Every Los Angeles neighborhood can be safe. Without additional resources, a crime-reduction momentum will be difficult to sustain. Whether the public understands this or not is unclear. What is clear is that, in the past, the socioeconomic and cultural divisions within the City have prevented residents coming together to demand that the LAPD be given the proper support to mount a truly effective response to crime citywide and terrorist threats.

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**“THE PROBLEM IN THE STREETS IS THAT YOU HAVE ONE PATROL CAR GO THROUGH A NEIGHBORHOOD, AND WHEN A GANG MEMBER WATCHES IT GO PAST, HE KNOWS THAT ANOTHER CAR WON’T BE ALONG FOR ANOTHER TWENTY MINUTES, AND SO HE GOES AND COMMITS A CRIME.”**

– Deputy Chief Gerry Chaleff  
LAPD Consent Decree Bureau  
Former President,  
Los Angeles Police Commission

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**“I’M A NIGHTMARE WALKIN’, PSYCHOPATH TALKIN’  
KING OF MY JUNGLE, JUST A GANGSTER STALKIN’  
LIVIN’ LIFE LIKE A FIRECRACKER, QUICK IS MY FUSE  
VENDETTAS OF DEATH BACK THE COLORS I CHOOSE  
RED OR BLUE, CUZ OR BLOOD, IT JUST DON’T MATTER  
SUCKER, DIVE FOR YOUR LIFE WHEN MY SHOTGUN SCATTERS...”**

- Rap lyric from *Colors*



# A CHOICE BEFORE THE PEOPLE

Los Angeles is a city of second chances, a city of individualism and aspiration. It is a city where millions have come from many states and foreign lands to rediscover and reinvent themselves. It is a city defined by individual activity, not common effort. This dynamic has “fueled... an anti-urban ideal,” quoting William Fulton from his book, *The Reluctant Metropolis: The Politics of Urban Growth in Los Angeles*.<sup>52</sup> The result is a patchwork of communities whose identities are centered on the idea that they are “not Los Angeles.”

Again in Mr. Fulton’s words, Los Angeles today is a “huge metropolis in self-denial about what it is.”

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**“...THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS THAT ONCE CHARACTERIZED THE INNER CITY ALONE NOW AFFLICT ALL COMMUNITIES AND, TO A LESSER BUT STILL SIGNIFICANT EFFECT, ALL NEIGHBORHOODS...CRIME MAY RISE OR FALL DEPENDING ON THE YEAR OR THE PLACE, BUT IT STRIKES IN CITIES, IN SUBURBS, EVEN IN SMALL TOWNS WHERE, ACCORDING TO CONVENTIONAL WISDOM, IT HAS NO BUSINESS GOING. IN LOS ANGELES TODAY...THE CONTAINMENT POLICY HAS FAILED. THERE ARE NO SUBURBS HERE. THERE IS ONLY A MIRROR REFLECTING THE PATHOLOGY OF OUR SOCIETY INTO EVERY COMMUNITY.”**

*– The Reluctant Metropolis: The Politics of Urban Growth in Los Angeles*

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Indeed, there are no longer “cocoon suburbs” (as Fulton says) in fact, only in mind. And that reality means that Los Angeles needs to evolve attitudinally from a collection of disparate communities to a place that has common identity and common aspirations if it is to realize its full potential as a world-class city.

The fate of every community is tied inextricably to the fate of the greater community. This fact is not more self-evident than in the matters of protection from crime and terrorist threats. Given this, certain actualities must be faced:

- Los Angeles has too few police by every objective measure. This has allowed entrenchment of gangs and the violence they propagate, exerting a phenomenal negative impact on the City. In effect, it has spawned an arms race between the lawless and the police. There is very much an urban war in our midst. Do the people of Los Angeles

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**“THEY’RE FLYING THEIR COLORS, WE’RE  
FLYING OURS. I WANT THEM TO KNOW WHO  
THEY’RE DEALING WITH. THEY’VE GOT UZIS.  
THEY’VE GOT SHOTGUNS. THEY’VE GOT  
EXPLOSIVES...WE’VE GOT OVER 50,000  
GANGBANGERS OUT THERE.  
WE’RE BLEEDING FROM OPEN WOUNDS.”**

– Watch Commander in *Colors*

want a City where the police may need to carry machine guns to secure people’s safety? This cannot be where we really want to go.

- LAPD technology is antiquated, ad hoc, not integrated, and not secure. There is no connectivity that allows coordinated response to regional threats. This leaves our protectors, the police, deprived of timely intelligence in their contest with criminals and puts them at greater risk. This leaves the City’s people and assets highly vulnerable to catastrophic terrorist attack. Do the people of Los Angeles expect protection from 21st century threats with 20th century technology? This cannot be what we truly think.

The LAPD can continue with present resources to do what it has been doing, putting out crime flare-ups. In the past year and a half, it has shown that it can be a more assertive force while acting lawfully and in collaboration with the communities it serves. But with current manpower and technology, it is not reasonable to expect the Department to extinguish the spread of gang tyranny, or provide expanded counter-terrorism protection for this city.

Or, the people of Los Angeles can unite as one city and empower the LAPD to become what it needs to be, a properly staffed and resourced force, not only to protect people’s lives, but also to secure the people’s investments in housing, infrastructure, and commercial, civic, and cultural assets.

And these investments are great:

- Housing in Los Angeles County in 2003 appreciated a remarkable 21.6% with nearly every neighborhood benefiting from a significant one-year increase.<sup>53</sup>
- Over \$2 billion has been invested since 1999 in seven major civic and cultural real estate projects Downtown visible in such buildings as Staples Center, The Walt Disney Concert Hall, and the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels.<sup>54</sup>



- About \$2.2 billion in new development is planned for Downtown in the Grand Avenue Project regional center of offices, housing, a hotel, and retail; and in the Anschutz Entertainment Group's Convention Center Hotel, specialty retail, and housing adjacent to Staples Center.<sup>55</sup>
- Twenty-six major Downtown building transactions in 2002 and 2003 totaling over \$3 billion demonstrate one of the healthiest commercial real estate markets in the nation.<sup>56</sup>
- Between new and adaptive reuse construction, over 6,000 new residential units have been built or are being built Downtown since 1999 representing a major housing boom reclaiming the City's center.<sup>57</sup>
- The Metro Gold Line light rail first phase connecting cities from Los Angeles to Pasadena was completed in July 2003 at a cost of \$793 million; construction of the Foothill extension to Montclair now planned could begin as early as 2006.<sup>58</sup>
- Over \$235 billion in trade flowed through the L.A. Customs district in 2003 making it the largest international trade center in the U.S.<sup>59</sup>
- The Los Angeles-Long Beach conjoined port ranks first in the nation in terms of cargo tonnage and containers handled.<sup>60</sup>
- In 2003, 22.7 million people visited Los Angeles overnight spending \$11.3 billion.<sup>61</sup>

These investments – and many more could be listed – are the signs of rebirth. They signal, in the words of Chief Bratton, “a golden opportunity in the Golden State.” But the prize of urban renaissance is far from assured if the City remains known as much for gang violence as for its films and stars. If Los Angeles is to reach the tipping point beyond which positive momentum becomes irreversible, it must act, not as a collection of communities, but as one community with common aspirations and unified determination to protect its wealth, interests, and millions of people who can drive this city to uninterrupted record prosperity and cultural bloom.

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**“AND IF WE WANT TO KEEP IT DECENT, KEEP IT GROWING, THEN WE GOTTA THINK MIGHTY CLEAR HERE TODAY – AND WE’VE GOT TO HAVE THE COURAGE TO DO THE RIGHT THING, NO MATTER HOW HARD IT IS...ALRIGHT?”**

– Henderson in *High Noon*



# TAKING BACK THE STREETS OF LOS ANGELES

Continuing significant and permanent crime reduction progress with existing resources cannot be promised. Critical enforcement units such as gangs and narcotics are understaffed. The investigative case backlog is high. Crime analysis backlogs are high. Thousands of warrants go unserved. Counter-terror readiness is under-resourced. Technology is archaic and improvements ad hoc. Today, the world has radically changed, and with it, the demands and responsibilities placed on the LAPD. Tactical prowess alone is no longer adequate to meet emerging threats.

## THE NEED TO EXPAND LAPD FORCE SIZE

The argument for expansion is compelling. The largest cities in our nation with low ratios of officers per capita, with one exception, have experienced increases in violent crime in recent years. The largest cities with proper ratios have experienced significant reductions in crime during the same period. Although not a strict correlation because of other variables (more effective policing by LAPD is one example), the relationship between force strength and crime incidence cannot be ignored.

### TEN LARGEST U.S. CITIES RATIOS OF OFFICERS TO POPULATION COMPARED TO VIOLENT CRIME TRENDS

	2002 Population <sup>1</sup>	Officers per 1,000 People <sup>2</sup>	% Change in Violent Crime 1999-2002 <sup>3</sup>
New York, NY	8,084,693	4.96	-19.20%
Chicago, IL	2,938,299	4.84	-18.30%
Philadelphia, PA	1,524,226	4.87	-12.90%
San Diego, CA	1,268,346	1.68	-2.90%
Phoenix, AZ	1,404,938	1.98	0.20%
Dallas, TX	1,241,481	2.36	10.30%
Los Angeles, CA	3,830,561	2.47	10.40%
Houston, TX	2,040,583	2.70	16.00%
Las Vegas, NV	1,153,546	2.24	46.40%
San Antonio, TX	1,195,592	1.67	54.10%

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Census estimates.

<sup>2</sup>Ratios based on force size from Labor Relations Information Service,  
*Police Officer Wage and Benefit Survey*, 2002, except San Diego, courtesy of the SDPD,  
and Los Angeles which is current LAPD budgeted strength.

<sup>3</sup>FBI, *Crime in the United States*, totals do not include rape.

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**“I’VE BEEN SAYING RIGHT ALONG. WE OUGHT  
TO HAVE MORE DEPUTIES! IF WE DID, WE  
WOULDN’T BE FACING THIS NOW!”**

– Lewis in *High Noon*

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**IN MOST LARGE CITIES WITH THE PROPER  
RATIO OF POLICE OFFICERS TO POPULATION,  
CRIME IS DECLINING. IN MOST WITH LOW  
RATIOS, CRIME IS INCREASING.**

There is recent evidence from Los Angeles itself that increased force strength, when strategically deployed and relentlessly focused, drives down crime significantly.

- In late November 2002, LAPD implemented a crime suppression initiative in the City's most violent 31 reporting districts which fall within four Police Areas; 224 additional officers were assigned to this initiative. By May 28, 2003, when the initiative ended, violent crime had declined in each. On average: in the Southeast Area's four districts, -31%; in the Newton Area's nine districts, -22%, in the Southwest Area's 13 districts, -29%; in the 77th Street Area's five districts, -6%.<sup>62</sup> Of particular note, homicides in the 77th Street Area declined 57% during this initiative.<sup>63</sup>

### **12,500 LAPD OFFICERS ARE NEEDED IN TOTAL IF LOS ANGELES IS TO BE THE SAFEST BIG CITY IN AMERICA**

Needed are more police officers dedicated exclusively to suppression of criminal gang activity to free gang-infested neighborhoods, ensure "safe" neighborhoods are truly safe, and protect the City's youth who are its future.



Needed are more officers to better staff narcotics enforcement and warrants enforcement, police activities offering great promise for rapid and dramatic reduction in violent crime.

Needed are more officers to ensure that every criminal case is quickly investigated and properly disposed so that career criminals are removed and kept off the streets.

Needed are more officers dedicated to stopping the trade and possession of illegal weapons to stem shootings of the innocent.

Needed are more officers to better staff the patrol function in order to put more police officers on the street for the proactive work of crime suppression, and to shorten response time to emergency 9-1-1 calls.

Needed are more officers to staff the three new Area stations now in construction or planning, so officers will not need to be transferred from other critical assignments for that purpose.



Needed are more Senior Lead Officers to engage with community groups to make certain that the primary community-policing tenet of problem solving through public/police collaboration becomes an institutionalized LAPD practice.

Needed are more officers to ensure that Los Angeles has an around-the-clock world-class counter-terrorism capability to respond to terrorist threats and simultaneous attacks on its people and assets.

Needed to take back the streets of Los Angeles is an increase in LAPD force size from the present budgeted strength of 9,241 officers to 12,500 officers.

Even with an expansion in force size to 12,500, a 35% increase over present budgeted strength, Los Angeles would still trail most other large cities significantly on ratios of officers to population and land area.

But the LAPD is not just any police department. Its inherent strengths that underpin its reputation as tactically the best police agency in America cannot be discounted. This is the LAPD, after all, that achieved seven straight years of dramatic crime reduction in the 1990s doing far more with far less than many other large city police department in the nation. Unsurpassed professionalism coupled with a long history of budget constraints has fostered maximum utilization of available resources and innovation in crime-fighting deployment and strategies. This operational productivity is again evident in the 2003 crime declines, declines that have continued through First Half 2004. But, as Chief Bratton has warned, additional and significant reductions in crime will be increasingly difficult to achieve without more resources. With a force size of 12,500 officers, even though force size ratios to population and land area would remain well below those of most other large cities with declining crime, the LAPD can and will deliver sustainable low levels of crime in every Los Angeles neighborhood.

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**WITH 12,500 OFFICERS, LAPD CAN  
AND *WILL* MAKE LOS ANGELES  
THE SAFEST BIG CITY IN AMERICA.**

#### **OFFICER RATIOS TO POPULATION AND LAND AREA**

	Officers per 1,000 People	Officers per Sq. Mi.
<b>Los Angeles with an LAPD force size of 12,500 officers</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>26.7</b>
New York City	4.9	128.8
Chicago	4.8	61.9
Philadelphia	4.9	54.8
Washington, D.C.	6.3	58.7
Baltimore	5.5	41.4
Detroit	4.3	29.8

Source: Officer totals from Labor Relations Information Systems, *Officer Wage and Benefit Survey*, 2002; City land area from *World Almanac and Book of Facts*, 2000; City population from U.S. Census estimates.

### AN OPPORTUNITY TO BEGIN FORCE BUILD-UP NOW

On the November ballot this year, voters will consider a measure to increase the sales tax on goods and services purchased in Los Angeles County by a half-cent on the dollar. Passage of this measure, requiring approval by two-thirds of the County's voters, would generate about \$560 million a year for public safety needs countywide. Benefiting from passage would be the District Attorney, the Public Defender, County jails, a new regional communications system, Sheriff's patrols in unincorporated areas, and police departments in 88 cities in the County (40 of which contract with the Sheriff's Department for police services). A primary beneficiary would be the Los Angeles Police Department. LAPD would receive about 29% of these new tax revenues, \$160 million annually beginning March 2005. Use of these revenues would be restricted to hiring and support of additional officers.<sup>64</sup>

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**VOTER APPROVAL OF THE SALES TAX  
INCREASE ON THE BALLOT THIS NOVEMBER  
WOULD PAY FOR NEARLY 40% OF THE  
3,260 ADDITIONAL OFFICERS NEEDED  
TO REACH A FORCE SIZE OF 12,500.**

It is projected that these funds would allow the LAPD to hire 1,260 additional officers. This would increase force size to 10,501, an increase of 14% over present budgeted strength. In addition to compensation for the additional officers, the costs of Department infrastructure changes to attract and support the new hires – recruitment, training, overtime, technology and equipment, facilities, vehicles, and 128 new civilian positions – would be covered.<sup>65</sup>

- The cost of this sales tax increase for each City resident would be between 11 and 18 cents a day, estimates the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Passage of this measure could help secure the dividend of economic prosperity experienced in other cities that would ensue from sustained low levels of crime and effective deterrence of terrorist activity.

If the sales tax increase is approved by County voters in November, the **1,260 additional officers** it would fund would be deployed principally to the 18 present and 3 new geographic Areas:

**750 to Area Stations** – additional officers to each of the 18 present Areas, and to staff enforcement and support positions in the new North Valley Station scheduled to open in spring 2005, and later to the new Valley and Mid-City Stations, with the exact number in each Area to be determined by service demand and crime incidence – this would allow Area Captains to provide

better patrol service for each Basic Car Area, allow Area officers at all ranks to be more proactive in preventing and solving crime problems in their neighborhoods, and enhance officer safety; the benefits would be increased police presence on the street and improved response time to calls for service.

**228 to Gang Enforcement** to suppress criminal gang activities begetting much of the violence now occurring in Los Angeles – deployed to LAPD Area commands based on gang-related crime incidence.

**168 additional Senior Lead Officers**, doubling their number and reinforcing the LAPD’s commitment to community policing, a critically acclaimed resource.

**64 to Narcotics Enforcement** to allow additional Buy Teams to support gang suppression initiatives.

And because of the high urgency of enhancing counter-terrorism preparedness,

**50 to increase staffing of the Critical Incident Management Bureau** to improve LAPD’s capability to quickly and effectively respond to terrorist threats and simultaneous attacks, as well as natural disasters.

In addition, passage of the sales tax increase would allow the Department to hire 128 civilian personnel who would be assigned primarily to those civilian positions now staffed by sworn officers, freeing these officers to return to enforcement duties.

If the sales tax measure is approved, First Assistant Chief James McDonnell, Director of the Office of Human Resources, will develop a plan for accelerating the recruitment and training processes, without lowering present high standards, that will allow this 1,260 officer build-up to be achieved in four years.

### MEETING HIGHEST STANDARDS IN THE BUILD-UP

Mindful of the warnings of the Christopher Commission in response to the Rodney King Incident and the LAPD Board of Inquiry into the Rampart Area Corruption Incident, recruitment background checks, and the training and supervision of new recruits resulting from this build-up, would be comprehensive and rigorous.



- The background check of every police candidate would continue to be thorough and uncompromising to ensure that recruits entering the Academy are of high caliber.
- A new model for Academy training and field training and supervision would be created to introduce new officers to crime-fighting duties under close supervision of experienced officers working in field enforcement teams.
- A strict supervisory ratio would be maintained as force strength grows.
- Recruitment efforts to attract minority and female candidates would be expanded to ensure that the Department as a whole continues to reflect the diverse population of Los Angeles.

### PHASED INCREASES IN FORCE BUILD-UP

If the sales tax measure is approved by County voters this November, crime reduction trends will be closely tracked against LAPD growth to 10,500 officers over four years. If acceleration in the rate of crime decline is not sufficient, or if officers are still stretched too thin to be safe enough, to achieve the goal of making Los Angeles the safest big city in America, Chief Bratton will work assiduously with Mayor Hahn and the Los Angeles City Council to find ways to finance a further expansion in phases until the 12,500-officer LAPD recommended in this Plan is achieved.

A LAPD force size of 12,500 sworn officers would allow, in addition to the deployment of the 1,260 additional officers the sales tax increase would fund detailed above, the deployment of:

**1,000 officers to Citywide Mobile Anti-Crime Task Forces** – deployed as crime conditions and Department priorities dictate, for:

**Gang Enforcement** – this would further augment initiatives to suppress criminal gang activities, deployed to LAPD Area commands based on gang-related crime incidence, and all dedicated to new programs such as gang prevention, gang intervention, and gang member rehabilitation.

**Narcotics Interdiction** – this would allow detectives to make cases against street sellers through relentless buy-and-bust tactics (there is only one Buy Team working the entire City today); to make cases against mid- and upper-level drug dealers, including gang enterprises, by infiltrating the distribution system; to allow for on-going training in surveillance without reducing officer presence on the street; and to enable the LAPD to increase its commitments to local, regional and federal task forces working to eradicate illegal drug commerce.

**Criminal Investigations** – this would eliminate the large case backlog detectives are now facing, improve arrest and case clearance rates, and expand focus on property crimes.

**Warrant Service** – this would greatly improve investigation and apprehension of wanted fugitives now numbering over 18,000.

**Firearms Enforcement** – this would allow a more dedicated focus on sellers and buyers of illegal weapons, as well as better collaboration with gang detectives and narcotics detectives to identify and eliminate the nexus between gangs, drugs, and guns.

**949 to Area Assignments** – additional officers to each of the 18 present Areas and the soon to open North Valley Area, and to properly staff the new Valley and Mid-City Stations now in the planning stage, with the exact number in each Area to be determined by service demand and crime incidence – this would allow Area Captains to provide *comprehensive* patrol service for each Basic Car Area, allow *all* officers at all ranks to be proactive in preventing and solving crime problems in their neighborhoods, and further bolster officer safety.

**50 to fully staff the Critical Incident Management Bureau** at a proper level – this would allow around the clock capability to ensure that the LAPD can quickly and effectively respond to terrorist threats and simultaneous attacks, as well as to natural disasters; to seek out and investigate all threats of any manner to the people of Los Angeles; to cultivate confidential informants for advance notice of terrorist activities; and to train all LAPD personnel thoroughly on response to the most likely critical incident scenarios.

A build-up to 12,500 police officers would not only deploy more enforcement strength to ensure that every City neighborhood safe, it would also build upon efficiencies in operations being achieved today through wider supervision, better collaboration among units, and streamlined processes.

A comprehensive workload and needs analysis will be developed to determine the specific deployment allocation of additional officers over the multi-year build-up to recommended force strength.

With or without passage of the sales tax increase this year, a significant increase in LAPD force size is needed if LAPD is to deliver on the goal of making and keeping Los Angeles the safest big city in America.

## **THE NEED FOR 21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGY TO FIGHT 21ST CENTURY CRIME**

21st Century threats demand 21st Century tools for effective response. The LAPD will identify and secure funding for technology essential for successful conduct of its mission as defined by Chief Bratton's three overarching priorities set forth in Book I of this Plan. Urgently needed is "enterprise" technology that updates and integrates LAPD databases and systems. Critically needed is integration of criminal justice information systems regionally. Strategically needed are the technological tools of modern crime-fighting. These technology needs are described fully in *LAPD Plan of Action: Book 1*.



The cost of bringing the LAPD into the 21st Century technologically is an investment that will likely seem high when reliable estimates are obtained based on detailed specifications and competitive bids.

But as with increased force size, it will be a small price for significant crime reduction, protection from terrorist threats, and greatly enhanced officer safety. And in fact, the estimated savings new technology would yield should more than offset its procurement cost.

### COST SAVINGS FROM NEW TECHNOLOGY

Updated and integrated technological systems in place in other large urban police departments have produced substantial savings, both in terms of actual money as the consolidated systems require less maintenance, and freeing the time of police officers to concentrate on enforcement duties.

The estimate of the savings of systems consolidation, most urgently needed, is \$19 million annually in labor/data entry, or the equivalent of 193 full-time officers based on a similar system implemented in Chicago.<sup>66</sup>

When the anticipated benefits of an estimated \$50 million investment in a paperless system and new investigative tools for detectives are included, estimated savings would be an additional \$67 million for a total of \$86 million annually.<sup>67</sup>

- Timesavings from a paperless system would reduce the amount of time officers spend completing reports from 33% to 10%, LAPD estimates, and equate to hiring an additional 500 full-time officers a year, or \$50 million saved.<sup>68</sup>
- Timesavings for detectives would equate to an additional 360,000 hours per year, the equivalent of hiring 173 full-time officers, or \$17 million saved.<sup>69</sup>

The above figures do not take into account savings from *Operation Archangel*, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security-funded technology that would allow rapid and coordinated police/fire/EMS response in the event of terrorist attack or natural disaster. This pioneering technology offers no precedent on which a reliable savings estimate can be based. But given the magnitude of loss in such emergencies, savings in property, not to mention lives, would be substantial.

### ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS PROPOSED TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES

Benefit	Near Term	Longer Term
Systems Consolidation	\$19 million	\$19 million
Paperless System		\$50 million
Investigative tools for detectives		\$17 million
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$19 million</b>	<b>\$86 million</b>

Source: LAPD

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**COST SAVINGS FROM NEW  
TECHNOLOGY SHOULD GREATLY OFFSET  
ITS PROCUREMENT COSTS.**

Infrastructure consolidation and delivery of new systems for detectives would require approximately one year to implement following Department approval and the securing of funding for the projects, while the paperless system, *Operation Archangel*, and the development of a regional information system would require on-going multi-year funding sources.

Funding for procurement of new technology will be sought primarily through federal and other grants.

The time has come to remove the technology handicap that has greatly impeded LAPD productivity and placed at unnecessary risk the safety of both police officers and the people of Los Angeles.

## **THE COST FOR A SAFE LOS ANGELES**

What is the total cost of an expanded force and new technology as recommended here? What would it cost City taxpayers initially? And annually thereafter? How much of these costs could be funded by government and foundation grants? These questions cannot now be answered with exactness at this time. The variables are many. A detailed plan will be developed that projects or determines:

- The practical number of additional officers that can be hired each year until recommended force strength is achieved.
- The number of officers now employed that would need to be promoted to supervisory positions.
- The cost of expanding training facilities and instruction.
- The cost of new station facilities, vehicles, and equipment to support the additional officers hired.
- A precise cost for each technology component based on detailed specifications and vendor bids.
- The timing for a phased introduction of the suite of technology components.



- The maintenance cost savings resulting from new technology.
- The identification of grants opportunities and foundation interest to fund each of these new technology components.

Whatever the costs that will be more precisely projected in the near future, the needs for additional officers and new technology are urgent if the City is not only to maintain its economic and cultural position today, but also flourish as it moves forward in the 21st Century. And the people of Los Angeles should not forget the significant economic growth other cities have experienced from dramatic reductions in crime. And dramatic crime reductions will be the outcome of an expanded and technologically equipped LAPD.

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**“YOU WILL NOT MAKE YOUR ECONOMY  
GROW UNTIL YOU MAKE YOUR CITY SAFER.  
AND I THINK WE’VE HAD IT BACKWARDS  
TOO LONG.”**

— Mayor James K. Hahn  
“L.A. Public Safety Battle Looms Again”  
Copley News Service, January 19, 2004

## **ECONOMICS OF CRIME REDUCTION**

While the pool of research examining the direct relationship between crime and a city’s economy is shallow, research that does exist finds that the public cost of urban violent crime is indeed substantial. A reduction in violent crime, such as last year’s decrease of 6%, and this year’s 14% decrease through October 9, can result in hundreds of millions of dollars in savings ultimately benefiting the taxpayer.<sup>70, 71</sup>

- In 2002, Part I crimes in the City of Los Angeles cost an estimated \$4.2 billion in private and taxpayer expense.<sup>72</sup>
- The 4.2% decrease in Part I crime in 2003 produced savings of more than \$639 million.<sup>73</sup>
- But Part I crime still had enormous cost for private and public sectors of the City combined: in First Half of 2004, more than \$1.5 billion.<sup>74</sup>
- Shooting-related injuries represent a sizeable portion of this economic cost in terms of treatment, both directly and indirectly borne by the residents of Los Angeles.<sup>75</sup>
  - The Los Angeles County Department of Health’s Injury and Violence Protection Program estimated that the average cost in 2002 of treating a non-fatal gunshot victim at L.A. County

MONETARY IMPACT OF GUNSHOT INJURIES, 2003

Avg. hospital cost per victim	\$65,031
L.A. gunshot victims	x 2,424
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>\$157,635,144</b>

Avg. hospital cost per victim for 59% on Medicare or Medicaid	\$79,000
Estimated number of victims	x 1,430
<b>Total cost to taxpayers</b>	<b>\$112,970,000</b>

hospitals was \$65,031 per victim, not including physician fees, ambulance services, ongoing therapy, etc. This amounts to a cost of more than \$157.6 million.

- The study also noted that 59% of victims were covered by tax-funded Medicaid, meaning that their hospital bills were almost entirely paid with taxpayer dollars. For these victims, the average cost of treatment was \$79,000.
- The estimated taxpayer burden of treating shooting victims in Los Angeles in 2003, based on these calculations, was more than \$113.0 million.

REDUCTION IN CRIME FOSTERS ECONOMIC VITALITY

One exploratory position paper examining the relationship between national unemployment figures and the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reports data suggests a strong positive correlation between unemployment levels and both violent crime and property crime.<sup>76</sup> Another study shows that “although crime rates are found to be significantly determined by both the wages and unemployment rates of less educated males... a sustained long-term decrease in crime rates will depend on whether the wages of less skilled men continue to improve.”<sup>77</sup>

- The reduction in crime in high-crime neighborhoods will foster economic vitality in these neighborhoods creating job opportunities. The higher employment rate and better wages that result will help sustain lower crime levels and contribute to the economy through growth in neighborhood commerce. A higher employment rate and a growing economy will contribute to an expanded tax base.

The reductions in crime in 2003 may be one reason why last year’s real estate boom, in which housing prices citywide appreciated on average an astonishing 21.6% in one year,<sup>79</sup> benefited virtually every neighborhood of the City regardless of crime incidence. Other cities that have reduced crime dramatically and lastingly have seen rapid economic rebounds.

- In New Orleans in 2002, six years after the introduction of Compstat, the highly successful crime analysis and accountability process now employed by the LAPD, violent crime had declined 59%. Over this period, the average residential home value increased 46%,

“WE’VE PROVEN THAT REDUCING CRIME AND IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE – BESIDES BEING THE RIGHT THINGS TO DO – ARE ALSO THE KEYS TO STIMULATING NEW YORK CITY’S ECONOMY.”

– Rudolph W. Giuliani, Speech, October 23, 1997<sup>78</sup>

residential construction increased 22%, commercial construction increased 207%, and property tax revenues increased 19%.

- In New York City in 2002, nine years after the introduction of Compstat, violent crime had declined 58%. Over this period, the number of private sector jobs increased by 430,000, home ownership increased by over 10%, total visitor spending increased 65%, the total number of overnight visitors increased 54%, and population, after years of slow decline, grew to over 8 million people for the first time in the city's history.

While these are just two examples of a successful turnaround, they point to the benefits of lower crime that can accrue to a city. Increasing the safety and security of all residents will make Los Angeles a more attractive place to live, to work, and to visit, ultimately driving economic growth.

## THE PEOPLE OF LOS ANGELES MUST DECIDE

It will be argued that the costs of increasing the Department's size to 10,500 officers, and perhaps eventually to 12,500 officers, and acquiring 21st century technology are too high; that any new investment in the LAPD should be balanced with investment in other resource-strapped components of the criminal justice equation – intervention, prosecution, incarceration, probation, rehabilitation. But if public safety is the public mandate, then this is a sophistic argument. To limit the level of police enforcement needed to protect the people and assets of Los Angeles because the courts and jails and other institutions have needs would be a case of the tail wagging the dog. A properly resourced LAPD will be a deterrent to criminal activity thereby ultimately producing fewer demands on the other criminal justice agencies. And if the sales tax increase is approved in November, other criminal justice agencies will also benefit from these new revenues.

The residents of Los Angeles need to think seriously about the choice before them. The LAPD can continue with present resources to make incremental progress against high crime, but it will not be able to suppress



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**"SURE, WE PAID THIS MAN AND HE WAS  
THE BEST MARSHAL THIS TOWN EVER HAD.  
AND IT AIN'T HIS TROUBLE, IT'S OURS.  
I TELL YOU, IF WE DON'T DO WHAT'S RIGHT,  
WE'RE GONNA HAVE PLENTY MORE TROUBLE.  
SO THERE AIN'T BUT ONE THING TO DO NOW,  
AND YOU ALL KNOW WHAT THAT IS!"**

– Ezra in *High Noon*

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**A SAFE LOS ANGELES MEANS AN IMPROVED  
QUALITY OF LIFE FOR EVERY RESIDENT AND  
SUSTAINED ECONOMIC EXPANSION.**

fully gang tyranny or provide as strong a shield against terrorist threat that the exposure of Los Angeles as a primary target demands. Or, with resolve and the will, Angelinos can empower their police with the support needed to prevail over criminal and terrorist violence.

### **THE PEACE DIVIDEND FROM DRAMATIC CRIME REDUCTION**

The cost of increasing the size of the LAPD eventually to 12,500 officers, the number we believe is needed to achieve and sustain low levels of crime in every Los Angeles neighborhood, would be a modest investment for each City resident in consideration of the enormous peace dividend that would accrue paid out to all in greater public safety, improved quality of life, and dynamic economic growth.

The people of Los Angeles must decide whether or not this investment in the Los Angeles Police Department is reasonable for securing one of the world's great cities that happens to be their city, their home, and their future.





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# “THIS IS THE CITY. LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

465 SQUARE MILES OF CONSTANTLY INTERFACING HUMANITY...  
REPRESENTING EVERY RACE, COLOR, CREED AND PERSUASION, THAT GOD,  
NO MATTER HOW HE IS WORSHIPPED, CHOSE IN HIS INFINITE WISDOM  
TO DEPOSIT HERE IN THE CULTURAL NEXUS OF THE PACIFIC RIM.  
ALMOST FOUR MILLION PEOPLE WORK AND PLAY HERE.  
AND LIKE ANY OTHER PLACE ANYWHERE, THERE ARE THOSE WHO HAVE IT  
AND THOSE WHO WANT IT. THOSE WHO HAVE IT, ENJOY IT, NO MATTER HOW  
THEY GOT IT. THOSE WHO WANT IT CAN GET IT BY ATTEMPTING TO BETTER  
THEMSELVES IN A SYMPATHETIC COMMUNITY POPULATED BY DECENT  
CITIZENS CHEERING THEM ON. OR THEY CAN TRY TO TAKE IT THE EASY WAY.  
BECAUSE EVEN IN THE CITY OF ANGELS, FROM TIME TO TIME, SOME HALOS  
SLIP. THAT'S WHERE I COME IN, DOING MY JOB TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY  
ON A DAILY BASIS. I WORK HERE. I CARRY A BADGE.”

– Joe Friday in *Dragnet*

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 Federal Bureau of Investigation. *Crime in the United States*, 2003 preliminary report. Retrieved 10/12/2004 from <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm>.
- 2 LAPD Critical Incident Management Bureau, October 22, 2004. See also "L.A. a top concern for terror alert." *CNN*, December 23, 2003. Retrieved October 24, 2004 from <http://www.cnn.com/2003/US/12/23/threat.level/>.
- 3 LAPD Special Operations Support Division (SOSD). "Los Angeles Police Department Citywide Gang Crime Summary." September 2004. Retrieved October 21, 2004 from <http://www.lapdonline.org>.
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