

Communication from Public

Name: Wendy Butts
Date Submitted: 12/24/2020 11:39 AM
Council File No: 16-0596-S2
Comments for Public Posting: Please see attachment.



December 22, 2020

The Honorable City of LA Councilmembers
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Establishing a Youth Development Department in the City of Los Angeles

Dear Councilmembers:

Currently, Los Angeles is one of the few large cities in the U.S. without a dedicated youth department. Youth outcomes also trend negative: 200,000 live in poverty¹, nearly 70,000 are disconnected from educational and workforce pipelines², and tens of thousands³ are impacted by the justice system. As policymakers continue to sort through the wreckage caused by COVID-19, these figures have only increased. Between mid-March and late-April, 53% of statewide unemployment claims were made by young people ages 16-24.⁴ At this point, only one thing is certain: the need for a department has been dramatically accelerated given the level of uncertainty that youth and their families now face.

The magnitude of complications facing the City demand that we do more. There should be an ongoing role for nonprofit advocates to deliver those solutions alongside city programs. Investing the necessary resources into a youth agency is the first step in pursuing a systemic approach to youth development. A stand-alone department focused on prevention will allow for a restorative and comprehensive way of supporting youth and is an effective public safety strategy. The City's Youth Development Task Force is already working on a blueprint to create a unified department, and we encourage policymakers to complement its efforts by making a down payment. Once the initial investment is made, more resources could be devoted to expand the agency.

Los Angeles stands at a crossroads. The city is confronting unprecedented challenges and has a unique opportunity to establish a Youth Development Department as the first step toward a more prosperous, safe and equitable future. We urge you to act now and take the steps necessary now to establish a **Youth Development Department** by creating the initial infrastructure and staffing for the department. The department will be instrumental in implementing the recommendations of the Executive Task Force on Youth Development that was established by the City Council to develop the framework for a department along with a citywide youth development strategy. The work to ensure that Los Angeles is a place where all young people can thrive begins now.

Respectfully,

Wendy A. Butts
Chief Executive Officer

¹ Ages 10 to 24. Source: American Community Survey, 2015, 5-year

² Fogg, N., & Harrington, P. (2016) Understanding the Diminished Prospects of Disconnected Youth in Los Angeles. Drexel Center for Labor Markets and Policy.

³ <https://data.lacity.org/A-Safe-City/Arrest-Data-from-2020-to-Present/amvf-fr72>
(Updated 9/30/20; Downloaded 10/19/20; Filter: ages 25 and under)

⁴ <https://hildalsolis.org/la-county-to-identify-funding-to-continue-offering-young-people-work-experience-through-youthwork/>

Communication from Public

Name: Charisse Bremond Weaver
Date Submitted: 12/24/2020 11:42 AM
Council File No: 16-0596-S2
Comments for Public Posting: Please see attachment below.



December 21, 2020

The Honorable City Councilmembers
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Establishing a Youth Development Department in the City of Los Angeles

Dear Councilmembers:

Brotherhood Crusade is a proud member of the Invest in Youth Coalition, which is comprised of nonprofit organizations, community leaders, educators, parents, and young people interested in their peers' wellbeing. Our theory of change emphasizes the importance of strategic youth development and the value of providing young people, especially young people of color living in the most under-resourced communities, the knowledge and skills they need to become effective leaders.

Currently, Los Angeles is one of the few large cities in the United States without a dedicated youth department. Youth outcomes also trend negative: 200,000 live in poverty¹, nearly 70,000 are disconnected from educational and workforce pipelines², and tens of thousands³ are impacted by the justice system. As policymakers continue to sort through the wreckage caused by COVID-19, these figures have not stayed immune: Between mid-March and late-April, 53 percent of statewide unemployment claims were made by young people ages 16 to 24.⁴ At this point, only one thing is certain: the need for a department has been dramatically accelerated given the level of uncertainty youth and their families face in the pandemic.

The magnitude of complications facing the city demand that we do more. There should be an ongoing role for nonprofit advocates to deliver those solutions alongside city programs. By investing the necessary resources into a youth agency will begin the first steps in pursuing a systemic approach to youth development. A stand-alone department focused on prevention will allow for a restorative and comprehensive way of supporting youth and is an effective public safety strategy. The City's Youth Development Task Force is already working on a blueprint to create a unified department, and we encourage policymakers to complement its efforts by making a down payment. Once the initial investment is made, more resources could be devoted to expand the agency.

Los Angeles stands at a crossroads. The city is confronting unprecedented challenges, and has a unique opportunity to establish a Youth Development Department as the first step toward a more prosperous, safe and equitable future. We urge you to act now to take the following important steps and actions:

1. Establish a Youth Development Department

Take the steps necessary now to establish a Youth Development Department by creating the initial infrastructure and staffing for the department. The department will be instrumental in implementing the recommendations of the Executive Task Force on Youth Development that was established by the City Council to develop the framework for a department along with a citywide youth development strategy.

*"Sowing Seeds and Growing a
Strong Community"*

2. Research opportunities through justice reinvestment.

Reprogramming resources from policing into a youth agency would begin the first steps in pursuing a racially just approach to youth development. It is well known that justice-system costs run high – so establishing a stand-alone department focused on prevention would allow for a more humane and restorative way of supporting youth. This creates two benefits. First, the city's long-term financial outlook could benefit as more General Fund resources would be made available from the decreases in police spending. Second, young people would have access to the positive youth development programming they deserve.

The work to ensure that Los Angeles is a place where all young people can thrive begins now. We call upon the city to establish a Youth Development Department and look forward to working in partnership on this important issue.

Respectfully,



Charisse Bremond Weaver
President/CEO

Ages 10 to 24. Source: American Community Survey, 2015, 5-year

² Fogg, N., & Harrington, P. (2016) Understanding the Diminished Prospects of Disconnected Youth in Los Angeles. Drexel Center for Labor Markets and Policy.

³ <https://data.lacity.org/A-Safe-City/Arrest-Data-from-2020-to-Present/amvf-fr72>

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⁴ <https://hildalsolis.org/la-county-to-identify-funding-to-continue-offering-young-people-work-experience-through-youthwork/>