

Why Does SacPD Need So Much Funding?

The deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery sparked ubiquitous unrest throughout the United States while also spreading throughout the international political scene. Since the rebellion started, cities throughout California enacted curfews to quell large gatherings of people most of whom were protesting in support of the most recent victims of police violence. The City of Sacramento declared a local public emergency and enacted a citywide curfew on Monday, June 1st. Officials said the curfew will last from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m for an unspecified length of time. It is hypocritical seeing local governments utilizing police forces to suppress the people (whom they claim to be representing) for their responses to police brutality. It is as if the people of Sacramento have not been highlighting these problems even before Stephon Clark was killed in his grandmother's backyard. Since demonstrations began the city has witnessed numerous occasions of the Sacramento Police Department and the Sacramento County Sheriff using excessive force on protesters. The most notable being an 18-year-old protester shot in the face by a rubber bullet ([Link](#)¹). A Legal Observer was also struck in the face by a rubber bullet later that night. This reinforces the basis of my studies which conclude that the police, during times of social change will always be the provocateurs and perpetrators of violence.

Calls for the demilitarization of the police have been endemic before the creation of the Black Lives Matter organization in 2013. In my book *Subservience: Political and Economic Decisions that Created a Global Black Underclass* I highlight the formulation of the relationship between the military and the police during the War on Drugs. While the relationship was created before President Reagan, it was under his administration that the Military Cooperation with Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies Act of 1981 was amended to strategically target low-income black communities. My studies would attribute this regulation of violence to the manner by which the United States seeks global hegemony through military occupation. Since the Reagan administration not only have police budgets increased in funding, but the defense budget or military budget has increased as well for US international occupation.

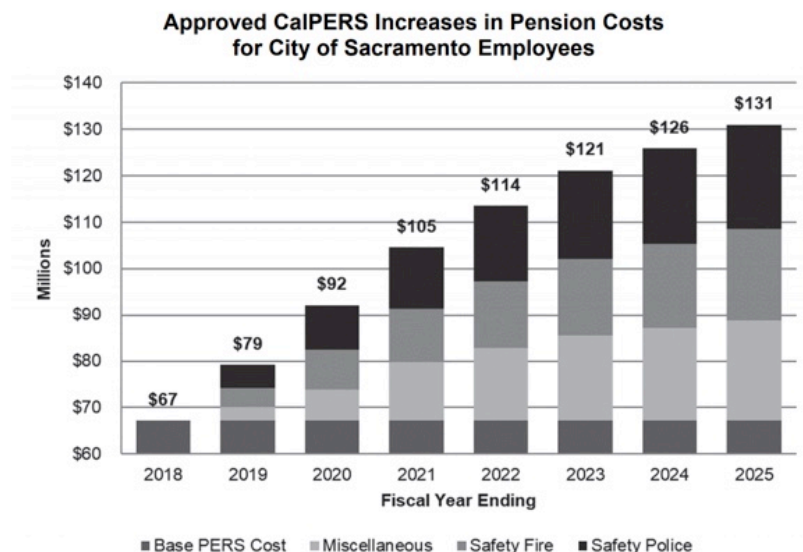
Sitting on the Measure U Oversight Commission I have made efforts to see a breakdown of the \$176.3 million or 44.8% of the General Budget that goes to the Sacramento Police Department. My findings have been interesting. According to the approved budget for Fiscal Year 2019/20 overall costs for the city have been increasing and will continue to increase due to a number of characteristics. I found that pensions have been an unsustainable problem for the City of Sacramento since 2014, according to a [brief](#)² by the City Manager. Yet pensions continue to be unsustainable well into the year 2025. Page 43 of the [approved budget](#)³ says “The pension cost (normal and unfunded liability combined) in the G/MU alone is projected to be \$131 million in FY2024/25 when the rate of change is completely phased in. This reflects an increase of more than \$63.8 million (95% increase) FY/2017/18 to FY2024/25.” One of the largest parts of the pension costs are the costs associated with the police pension. This doesn't even get into the rising

¹ <https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/article243142336.html>

² <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Finance/Budget/FY15-Proposed-Budget-in-Brief/140994FINAL-City-of-California--Dept-of-Finance-DESIGN-FY201415-Proposed-Budget-in-Brief-WEB.pdf?la=en>

³ https://www.cityofsacramento.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Finance/Budget/2019-2024-Proposed-Budget/FY20-Proposed_FINAL.pdf?la=en

insurance premium costs associated with more highly publicized losses to the city as noted on page 44 of the budget.



Measure U dollars have disproportionately gone to expenditures for the police department. The midyear report shows that they went over budget with spending towards the police. Initially projected at \$31,210,000, by midyear the expenditures for police were projected to be \$36,220,000. This is 48.7% of the total expenditures which aggregated to \$74,325,000 and now with an interruption in revenue to the city, economic development and youth funding from Measure U will be minimal at best. The [proposed FY2020/21 budget](#)⁴ reflects the same disparities. Out of the projected \$80,179,000 in revenue for the Measure U fund \$41,727,000 will go towards spending for police - taking up 52% of the budget. On the same note, economic development is only expected to see 5.2% (\$4.2 million) of those expenditures and Youth, Parks, and Community Enrichment (YPCE) 17.95% (\$14.4 million). While it is subject to change, we see given the current trends the police will realize if anything, a very incremental change to their funding. The people have not forgotten that the City Council agreed to move forward with the purchase of a Lenco Bearcat using Measure U dollars in the amount of \$404,521.00 at the March 10th City Council Meeting. A quick search for the description of what a Bearcat is reveals: “The Lenco BearCat is a wheeled armored personnel carrier designed for military and law enforcement use. It is in use by several military forces and law enforcement agencies around the world.”

As a response to the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, there has been multiple termination of contracts by various entities with the Minneapolis Police Department. The Minneapolis Board of Education, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, and various private entities have severed their ties with the Minneapolis Police Department. The Mayor of Los Angeles also announced that his city will begin to divest \$150 million from the police to be reinvested into communities of color, an ask that has been echoed for years by activists all over the nation. If the

⁴ https://www.cityofsacramento.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Finance/Budget/FY2020_21_Proposed-Budget.pdf?la=en

City has been having sustainability problems with the rising costs of pensions, along with police brutality and rising insurance costs, wouldn't a more fiscally responsible solution be to begin divesting away from liability costs? In the long run, wouldn't it be more economically sensible to free up these funds to go towards economic development in impoverished communities? I mean studies show that crime is a derivative of poverty, maybe we should listen and actually respond to the needs of these communities.