



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 14, 2008

COUNCIL MOVES TO SAVE TAXPAYERS \$71 MILLION, RESTORE CORE SERVICES

LOS ANGELES - The Los Angeles City Council's Budget and Finance Committee concluded its hearings on the Mayor's proposed budget for the coming fiscal year today. The Council leadership announced that it plans to save taxpayers \$71 million dollars and restore funds for core services, including fire fighters, police officer recruitment, and street repaving.

"Our priority is to provide public safety and core city services to Los Angeles residents while balancing our budget and ensuring that our city remains financially sound in coming years," said Council President Eric Garcetti. "Even in this tough budget year, we've worked to find a way that we can save taxpayers millions of dollars and restore some of the proposed cuts that directly impact residents."

"We've had to make tough but necessary cuts to get our fiscal house in order, while maintaining the core services that Angelenos rely upon," said Council President Pro Tem Wendy Greuel. "I'm proud that we've taken some concrete steps to address the long-term structural problems that we face as a City, to ensure that we never have this large a deficit again."

"I've never experienced a budget this challenging," said Assistant Council President Pro Tem Jan Perry. "It's important that we convey to our constituents what the challenges are and at the same time consider their interests to the best of our abilities. I believe we have accomplished an important balance."

"After dozens of hours of deliberation and hard work from the CLA, the Budget and Finance Committee reflects the concerns of Council in that we did not want to defer pension payments due to the cost over time. We focused more on the quality of life issues such as streets, alleys, trees, signals, and sign ordinances. We also concentrated on prevention and intervention; we believe that if the libraries are open and accessible it will aide in the prevention and

intervention of gangs and youth crime," said Councilmember Bernard Parks, who chairs the Council's Budget and Finance Committee.

The City Council leadership supports prepayment of the city's pension obligation rather than paying it quarterly as proposed in the Mayor's budget. Prepayment will save taxpayers \$71 million in finance charges over the next five years.

The City Council leadership also supports restoration of cuts proposed in the Mayor's budget that directly impact Los Angeles residents, including:

- Police officer recruitment efforts
- Firefighter positions
- Sidewalk improvements (restoration of the 50/50 program)
- Funding for illegal sign enforcement and newsrack inspectors
- \$3.2 million for the Department of Recreation and Parks facilities, operations, and maintenance
- Library Sunday hours and \$1.5 million for additional materials
- \$250,000 for Controller's audit of anti-gang programs
- Five more new traffic signals
- Street resurfacing

These items are funded by an additional \$97 million in revenues that the Council worked to identify and are above revenues accounted for in the Mayor's proposed budget.

###