Good evening, Los Angeles.

Nearly eight years ago, I was sworn in as your mayor and I set my attention to the basics of our government and our economy.

The idea was simple: City Hall should work for all Angelenos and all Angelenos should be able to work.

My every day was consumed with building a responsive city government and promoting economically thriving neighborhoods.

We prioritized city services and brought them back.

We took on tough problems that had gone unaddressed for too long.

We drove hard towards investing in and building the city of the future.

From the start, I said that none of these goals would be accomplished alone …

Not by City Hall … not by private enterprise … not by any single neighborhood or church or club.

Our L.A. goals require collective work, and we started down that path together.

Step by step, Los Angeles moved forward.

We took risks.

We didn’t hide from politically difficult issues.

We built coalitions and took measures to the ballot box.

And we inspired others across the state and even around the world to join us in this work.

The results? We raised our minimum wage to $15 an hour … and others followed.

We made community college free … and others followed.

We saved the drop, reduced our water use, and secured water for the next generation.

We made our buildings more earthquake-proof and launched an earthquake early warning app.

We passed the largest transportation measure in U.S. history.
We passed the largest homeless housing initiative of any city.

We chased Olympic gold and a home for the Lucas Museum … and won both.

We cut our city’s business tax and built its strongest fiscal reserve ever.

We cut our emissions by 24% and launched L.A.’s Green New Deal.

We approved a train to the planes at LAX.

We cleaned up the port while breaking cargo records.

We paved more streets and sidewalks, replaced more pipes and power lines, than we have seen in decades.

We cut fatal police shootings by 80% … and we restored resources to our neighborhood fire stations.

The list goes on and on.

You see, we built a more resilient … a more just … and a more forward-looking city.

And when we faced tough days, we faced them together:

The long tail of the Great Recession …

The drought …

The fires, the floods, the heat wave blackouts.

We faced the pernicious rise of homelessness and the continued warming of our earth.

And through them all we learned that we can rise to meet these moments … when we rise together.

We learned that this work is hard — some of it, really hard — but that we love this place too much to sit on the sidelines.

We are a brave and intelligent city … a creative and caring people.

Then, 13 months ago, our journey turned and everything changed.

On March 15, 2020, I came to you with an unscheduled address on live television, asking you to stand apart… and to pull together… to meet head-on a new and potentially devastating threat.
None of us could have foreseen what this year would hold.

We’ve wept through daily death tolls, each as high as a Northridge earthquake.

We lost livelihoods.

We lost lives.

But through our pain and trauma, we showed who we are — and defined what we believe in.

We learned our neighbors’ names and what they needed from the store.

We masked up, to save lives. We ordered in, to save jobs.

And we saw how unfair the world still was …

The pandemic hit all of us, but it hit some of us worse …

Taking too many of our seniors and too many of our sick … too many of our poor in too many communities of color … and it reminded us how much work we still have left to do.

Three hundred sixty-five days ago, at my last State of the City address, I stood before you to pledge that we would emerge from this crisis …

And when we did, we would rebuild our city but we would not return to a broken status quo.

I promised you that we would reimagine Los Angeles, with justice and resilience not only as guides in a starry sky but as destinations we would reach and know.

Tonight I speak to you from the Griffith Observatory, where the neighborhoods we know are laid out just as magnificently as the starry sky that fires our imaginations.

And from this vista I say to you: It’s past time to imagine that just and resilient city… it’s time to build it.

Tomorrow, I’ll deliver to the City Council my eighth city budget.

It’s a financial document … but also a roadmap to a city built on justice and equity.

It reflects our values.

It restores what we love best about Los Angeles …
It reinvests in our health and our strength …

And it reinvents what has held us back.

It is the biggest city budget I’ve ever presented.

It’s the most progressive, too — arguably of any big city anywhere.

I know that’s a bold claim …

But I invite you to check the work.

This budget is not mine — it’s ours … it’s the result of our trials and your testimony, the product of your advocacy and our ambition.

From community meetings to public comments, Zoom gatherings to quiet conversations in the far corners of our city, you are its co-authors and co-owners.

It belongs to each of us.

So let’s dig in and get to work.

Job one in this budget: end the pandemic.

My budget sets aside $75 million to deliver vaccines, testing, and PPE to all of our people, in all of our neighborhoods.

We know we can do this fast, and we know we can do it well, because at no point in this crisis did Los Angeles wait for permission to act.

Throughout this year, we saw what had to happen … and we did it.

Never mind that we don’t have our own health department … that we had never administered tests or vaccines … or procured PPE for hospitals … or given out cash cards for groceries.

This was no ordinary year. It was an extraordinary year that required extraordinary effort.

We did what it took to save lives, from closing down businesses where people gather … to requiring masks … to providing free testing to those without symptoms … to stocking our hospitals with PPE.

We got there first and we got it done…
Creating one of the country’s biggest local testing operations and quickly converting it to one of the nation’s largest local vaccination programs, directly putting as many as 26,000 shots in arms a day — and when we saw a racial gap in deaths, we eliminated it.

Our collective spirit never flagged.

Every clinician … every firefighter … every neighborhood volunteer … and mutual aid group … who stepped up and kept Angelenos fed and housed and tested and vaccinated … has accelerated our return to the lives we love in the city we so dearly miss.

We worked together. That doesn’t mean we always spoke in one voice.

After all, this was a year of protest and passion … of anger and sorrow … of a demand — shouted and chanted and written on cards and spoken at public comment — that we must do better …

That we could demand more — from our state and federal partners … from our own city government… from ourselves.

Our work starts now.

If job one is to end this pandemic …

Then job two and three and four, for every day as long as I am your mayor, is that we demand — and deliver — justice.

So to that end, tonight I’m presenting to you a justice budget:

A budget that invests in services for residents … infrastructure and cleanliness … arts and culture … an economic comeback … wealth building … safe neighborhoods … technology … and municipal operations.

It starts with more than one billion dollars invested in a movement to untangle the inequities that have strangled our city and our nation for decades.

It includes a quarter billion dollars to preserve the neighborhood and human services that weave our common wealth from trimmed trees and swept streets … from arts grants and erasing the digital divide to youth employment.

It starts to make up for the wrongs of the past by planting trees in neighborhoods that have been left too long to bake in the sun, and opening doors for youth in zip codes that too long slammed them shut.
It dedicates $151 million more to programs and pilots to advance racial justice and economic progress so we can light up every corner of our city that’s been darkened by want or fear.

It cleans our streets, empowers our youth, and brings home our unhoused.

It creates genuine safety and enduring prosperity.

My friends: we are the generation of Angelenos who will beat this pandemic, and lift up our young people.

We are the generation of Angelenos who will make an unprecedented leap forward for racial justice.

We are the generation of Angelenos who will leave behind a stronger, a fairer city for us all.

We know COVID-19 has thrashed our economy.

Many of L.A.’s small businesses are gone ...

Many more, just barely hanging on.

Workers lost their hours and lost their jobs …

Entrepreneurs lost their dreams …

And neighborhoods lost their main streets.

But just as we helped Los Angeles roar back out of the last recession more quickly than the state and more quickly than the nation … we’re bringing that fighting spirit back.

Because our economy is ready to roar.

Businesses who want to open or re-open those doors, your city is going to have your back so you can reopen, hire up, and spread the wealth.

On our end, we will cut red tape.

Tonight, I’m asking our city council to pass an ordinance to cut by 90% the time it takes a restaurant to secure city approval for an alcohol permit … and to cut the cost of that permit by 70%.

Next, let’s cut fees.

Starting by letting our restaurants defer $8,000 or more of expiring fees for three years.
Then let’s suspend valet and off-site parking requirements to help restaurants save up to $10,000.

And in a city whose unofficial motto is 72 and sunny, let’s make *al fresco* dining permanent, including nearly $2 million in grants for restaurants in low-income neighborhoods to set up permanent parklets for outdoor dining.

And let’s move all of L.A.’s businesses into the 21st century by getting them online …

The L.A. Optimized program will connect 1,000 small businesses to the transformed, post-pandemic digital marketplace by providing website assistance, branding, and marketing assets to them for free.

And let’s get L.A. small businesses the cash they need to open up and thrive.

That’s why tonight I’m announcing a $25 million program to write Comeback Checks of five thousand dollars to 5,000 businesses.

This money will help L.A. businesses roar back.

Need some new equipment? Check.

Need to pay off debt? Check.

Need to make the first month of payroll? Check.

Comeback Checks will catalyze our main streets … and we’ll focus them where our city took the biggest hits, from South L.A. to East L.A. to the Northeast San Fernando Valley.

How about street vendors?

There’s no L.A. love quite like our love affair with street food.

But that doesn’t make life any easier if you’re the one with the cart.

Here’s what will: a set-aside of over $1.3 million, with Councilmember Raman’s support, to help street vendors clear bureaucratic hurdles and purchase modernized carts that will let them get the permits needed to operate with stability and freedom.

If we want a strong economy, we have to help small business owners thrive.

I know that in my blood.
My grandfather Salvador was a barber … my other grandfather Harry was a tailor.

My first jobs, both unpaid and paid, were sweeping up the barbershop and hawking ties on the sales floor.

My family worked hard every day, but they were supported by on-ramps of opportunity, from the GI Bill to a city that invested in new housing.

Today, too many of our residents don’t have that access to capital or to stable housing.

We have to help build a better future for our most vulnerable residents so that on-ramps don’t turn into dead ends when workers can’t afford housing in the city where they work.

A year ago we saw an eviction tsunami bearing down on us.

While others debated, we took swift action, keeping people housed, passing one of the first eviction moratoriums in the United States.

Next, we raised tens of millions of dollars privately to help Angelenos pay their rent … and then we built the largest emergency rental assistance program of any city in the country with government funds.

Together, we’ve already distributed over $200 million in direct assistance to Angelenos to pay for rent, utilities, and the basics.

Now, in Phase Two, L.A.’s Emergency Rental Assistance program is putting another $235 million in the hands of Angelenos. Together these efforts will help pay the rent of nearly 100,000 households that couldn’t. You heard that right — 100,000 households.

Tonight, I’m proud to announce that we are going to double down again: this summer, our city will put another $300 million in aid from the American Rescue Plan into the hands of Angelenos.

Money we can finally use to cover more rent and pay down more mortgages and utilities for both renters and homeowners.

Together, these efforts represent more than $700 million in direct assistance to Angelenos when they need it most.

But the pandemic didn’t start our housing crisis, and our success in eliminating so much rent won’t end it.

Loving Los Angeles means facing the bitter truth about our past — that maps of our city were drawn to protect the wealth of white people and destroy the wealth of Black people and other people of color.
Redlining and exclusionary zoning resulted in a city where today Black and Mexican-origin families hold 1/90th the wealth of white families on average.

It’s a city where Black people are overrepresented among those experiencing homelessness by a factor of four ... and where Latino homelessness accounts for the greatest jump of newly-homeless Angelenos.

When it came to homelessness, this pandemic had lessons for us.

The threat of COVID finally led the federal and state governments to do something I’ve been banging the table about for a long time: treat an emergency like an emergency and offer a FEMA-level response.

Instead of fighting over crumbs to implement different homelessness solutions, we suddenly had real resources and the alignment from federal to state to local governments to begin moving the needle.

Our life-saving action allowed us to help thousands of our most vulnerable neighbors get into temporary shelters including trailers, motels, and hotels right away, and to move thousands more into housing.

Working with Governor Newsom and the state legislature, we bought twenty buildings in just three months …

Now we are talking to the Biden Administration about building on these models nationally, and buying more buildings to convert into long-term permanent housing.

Together with our successful advocacy for more federal homelessness dollars and thousands more housing vouchers, there’s real hope on the horizon in our fight to end homelessness.

But our justice budget won’t wait for the cavalry to arrive …

We are putting our money where our heart is.

And so, today I’m announcing that for the first time ever, with the new money our budget is investing, we will dedicate nearly $1 billion towards ending homelessness.

To put that number in perspective — when I became mayor, we spent about $10 million on treating homelessness.

Starting July 1st, that number will be north of $950 million.
Ending homelessness is tough, tough work and not for the faint of heart, but our investments are building a movement and building our capacity to improve the lives of our unhoused neighbors:

Since 2013, the number of City-funded outreach workers has grown by 1,000 percent — from just 11 to more than 120 today …

We helped 8,000 additional people this past year get into shelters and hotels through Project Roomkey …

And this year we are going to give at least 1,200 additional vouchers to help people find homes.

Proposition HHH got a second wind and beat the hype.

It’s now set to come in at an average of $15,000 per unit cheaper for one thousand units more than originally promised — two years ahead of schedule.

Next, we have to start setting our post-HHH goals as Councilmember de Leon and the City Council are already considering, and get state and federal partners to match our ambition.

To our partners, we recognize your efforts, and we challenge you: meet this moment and match us.

Specifically, California’s Big City Mayors and cities are calling on our state to invest $16 billion in housing and services for California cities over the next four years … on our way to a permanent source of state funding as I and Councilmember Ridley-Thomas have advocated.

And I’m calling on our federal government to declare a national right to housing and to fully fund Section 8 housing choice vouchers and help make homelessness a thing of the past.

We know the key to ending homelessness is homes:

Let’s rent them … let’s buy them — and let’s build them brand new.

A reimagined city … a resilient city … a just city … must have room for us all.

And we have to be able to get around that city, too.

We need more transit, and we need it everywhere.

We need more walkable and bikeable communities … the kinds we have enjoyed so much during the pandemic.

Better transportation means healthier communities, safer streets, and shorter commutes.
Thanks to Measure M, the biggest local transportation initiative in North American history times two, we’re building out 15 transit lines, including the soon-to-open Crenshaw-LAX Line to get us to the airport and the Regional Connector Transit Project to sweep us through downtown.

A new transit line is set to break ground in the East San Fernando Valley and planning is moving ahead for the Sepulveda Pass … while the first phase of the Wilshire subway extension is nearly 70% complete.

While we are building the Metro system of tomorrow, we need to improve the system of today.

That is why we will restore full bus service in September — one year ahead of schedule — and why, along with Councilmember Bonin, I am building on a free transit movement in Los Angeles. Starting with students this fall, and eventually reaching 70% more of our riders by the beginning of January, low-income Angelenos will ride Metro for free, helping accelerate our recovery for our most vulnerable and cutting traffic and emissions across L.A.

Transit is just one dimension of L.A.’s infrastructure revolution.

From port to power lines to pavement, we’re building more than we have in half a century.

Infrastructure done right turns the wealth of a people into the backbone of our common good.

When it addresses the inequities of community underdevelopment, infrastructure investment empowers and protects our neighborhoods and our people.

Our airport is ready to take off again this year, buoyed by a nearly $15 billion construction program — the nation’s largest.

We’ve built or renovated ten terminals and concourses — each as big as a medium-sized airport … and we are finally building a people mover to get you to the gates without a car.

And tonight I am announcing that we are going to propose a brand-new concourse zero, Terminal Nine and a new state-of-the-art cargo facility.

Together, we will keep out airport traffic in our neighborhoods and keep up with a surge in demand for travel and shipping.

After decades of neglect, our water and power investments are making our system more reliable and more resilient. Our boldest initiative is appropriately enough called Operation Next, an $8 billion investment to recycle and distribute water for L.A., including a massive build-out of our Hyperion Treatment plant. Today recycled water only accounts for 2% of our water, but Operation Next will increase that to 35% by 2035 — and the finished project will produce three
times more water than the L.A. Aqueduct, ensuring a dependable clean water supply for our city for decades to come.

Together, these investments are creating more than a million new jobs for our city. And we are making sure that they address racial inequity, by focusing job-training initiatives along with our unions and community colleges in neighborhoods where Angelenos of color and low-income residents live.

That’s the foundation for a prosperous L.A.

But the most important infrastructure is where power lines lead … where roads and rails deliver us at the end of the day.

That infrastructure is home — a resilient, just community that we can call our own.

Justice means investing in community infrastructure. And community starts with our youth.

For L.A.’s youth, this budget has a lot in store.

If you have felt disconnected from school and work and your city, go online after this speech to lamayor.org/summer2021 to learn about “Earn. Learn. Play.”

“Earn. Learn. Play.” is a one-stop shop where you’ll find endless opportunities to work, study, and have fun near you. Built in partnership with L.A. County Office of Education and Superintendent Debra Duardo and the Mayor’s Fund for Los Angeles, we’re going to keep adding more opportunities each week as summer approaches.

You know how passionate I am about summer youth jobs. When I became mayor, we had opportunities for just 5,000 young Angelenos to earn their first paycheck and expand their dreams. Since then, we’ve more than quadrupled that number.

But this year, I am introducing an even stronger investment in our youth with a new, year-round Angeleno Corps, which commits $5 million to fund 400 students for a year of service to their city in areas critical to our L.A. comeback.

If you join the Angeleno Corps, you’ll support community-based health and environmental justice programs or work as a tutor or arts educator …

Or you’ll directly help immigrant Angelenos …

Or you’ll use technology to erase the digital divide.

Many young Angelenos have younger siblings who struggled with distance learning and need to catch up.
Just as home health care programs recognize that a lot of family care work should be paid labor … our new Student-to-Student Success Pilot will pay 1,000 young Angelenos to tutor their brothers and sisters.

This city may be a mess right now … but we’re going to clean it up … and we need your help … so we are funding a Clean L.A. Jobs plan for hundreds of young people to help us clean up LA and find a pathway to a full-time career.

You heard me: hundreds of young Angelenos, together with unhoused Angelenos, getting paid to clean up our city this summer.

And for 505 Dreamers in the Los Angeles Community College District who commit to service in COVID recovery … we’re going to pay your DACA fees. That’s right, we are going to pay for your DACA fees, with an assist from the Mayor’s Fund and the Foundation for Los Angeles Community Colleges.

Not to mention, building on the longtime advocacy of Councilmember Gil Cedillo, our Justice Fund is coming back with a $1 million commitment — ensuring that immigrants and their families can stay together while they defend their rights in federal court … so we can keep building a city that includes everyone.

Imagine a City Hall that helps every child in Los Angeles find the ladder to their dreams well within their reach.

Today, our local efforts sprawl across 26 departments without a unified vision …

It’s time to bring them together and empower our young people.

In partnership with Councilmember Monica Rodriguez, this justice budget creates a Youth Development Department to coordinate youth programs and to convene a youth strategy … citywide.

Young Angelenos, we want you to count on your city …

And we want you to know that your city is counting on you.

Justice doesn’t stop with empowering our youth. Young people are parts of families, and grow up to start families of their own.

So in partnership with Council President Martinez, I’m also proud to announce that this budget funds the city’s first Community Investment for Families Department.
This department will strengthen our FamilySource System ... expand investments in domestic violence intervention ... and make it easier for families to access the resources they need, from child care to legal assistance, mental health services to financial counseling.

Finally, we will fund a new standalone housing department, enabling us to redouble our focus on bringing and keeping more Angelenos home.

In just two years, we will have added new agencies for youth, families, and housing as well as for civil rights and for climate.

We are setting the standard on how government can and must confront the most urgent crises in front of us.

There is perhaps no greater crisis in America than our poverty crisis. We must end America’s addiction to poverty — an addiction that costs us tens of billions of dollars a year in lost productivity, criminal justice costs, and unequal health outcomes.

This pandemic has shined a light on the consequences of poverty in America, but also pointed to what happens when the federal government provides cash assistance to poor Americans.

At the beginning of this pandemic, child poverty dropped 20% nationally ...

And the American Rescue Plan could cut it in half.

The reason for this isn’t complicated ... it’s something that I and other local leaders have been shouting to the rafters:

When you give money to people who are poor, it creates better outcomes.

It covers childcare. It puts food on the table.

It leads to more high school graduations and better health.

During the pandemic, I came together with 11 other mayors to found Mayors for a Guaranteed Income.

Today, we’re 43 mayors strong ... 

And we’ve already seen evidence of its success in cities like Stockton.

When L.A. gets involved with a transformational issue, we don’t just follow — we lead.

So, today I’m proud to announce that this year, Los Angeles will launch the largest Guaranteed Basic Income pilot of any city in America.
We have budgeted $24 million to provide $1,000 a month to 2,000 households for an entire year, no questions asked, wherever poverty lives in our city.

And thanks to the leadership of Councilmember Curren Price, Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson, and other councilmembers, these funds will grow to more than $30 million in direct help to begin to tear away at poverty in our city and show this nation a way to fulfill Dr. King’s call for a basic income once and for all.

We’re betting that one small but steady investment for Angeleno households will pay large dividends for health and stability across our city and light a fire across our nation.

Strengthening our youth, our families, and our communities is not an additional option or some sort of elective class …

It’s central to the creation of a just and resilient city of the future.

It’s part of creating a city that is safer … freer from fear.

We have lived for far too long in an America that outsourced the work of public safety only to a few, instead of embracing it as the work of us all. While much of that work is heroic, too often it is tragic as well.

Delegating all of our social challenges to our fellow Angelenos with badges has led to their and our frustration.

We’ve burdened police officers with responsibilities that they never asked for because of our society’s collective failure to address poverty, health, and racial injustice.

The first job of the city is to guarantee a life without fear.

That’s all the more important to remember during a year when across America, homicides are rising.

So parts of the guarantee in this budget are familiar, like making sure 911 calls are answered right away.

But other parts mean pushing the envelope, investing in the alternatives to policing that prevent crime and interrupt cycles of violence.

The path of cultivating community health, mutual understanding, and the co-ownership of public safety is before us.

So, let’s walk it together and shed our fear of one another.
If you want to abolish the police, you’re talking to the wrong mayor.

If you want to move backwards towards a failed us-and-them strategy that made police an occupying force in communities they were meant to serve, you’ve come to the wrong place.

This is a moment for all of us to step up together: police departments … neighborhood leaders … elected officials.

It’s a time to recognize wrongs and to set them right.

By giving up some power and admitting some errors, we can foster genuine safety from street to school to park to home.

When situations don’t need guns, let’s not send guns.

So this justice budget funds a new approach we’re calling TURN: Therapeutic Unarmed Response for Neighborhoods.

That includes a nation-leading partnership with L.A. County starting next month to send clinicians instead of cops to respond to non-violent mental health emergencies through 911, 24-7. The goal: real results for Angelenos suffering from mental health challenges that too often go untreated.

Second, this budget funds a one-year pilot project to provide a round-the-clock, community-based response to non-violent crises among people experiencing homelessness focusing on the hardest-hit neighborhoods of our city, from Venice to Hollywood.

Finally, this budget invests in peacemaking and peacemakers.

The Gang Reduction and Youth Development program, or GRYD, is made up of contracted community intervention workers, often who have lived experience of gang life but who have turned their wounds into the power to heal.

They mentor young people.

They heal trauma.

They stop violence before it starts.

Year after year, I have deepened our city’s investments in violence intervention and prevention.

Over the last year especially, I heard the voices of advocates saying that we need more peacemakers on our streets … that we need to empower them … and that we need to pay them more.
So we’re going to ramp up their numbers, expand their footprint, increase their pay, and treat them like the professionals they are.

GRYD’s budget will increase by a third, to $33 million … an expansion that adds a corps of 80 new peace ambassadors planting seeds of reconciliation, calm, and unity.

Healing comes from connection, and nothing connects like the arts.

That’s why my budget dramatically increases our commitment to art and culture.

As part of a 30% boost to the Department of Cultural Affairs, we are going to work with Councilmember Lee to pay our creative workforce to fill a gap in our schools and provide our youth with classes in visual arts, animation, music and more.

We'll also boost direct grants to artists across our city and draw on L.A.’s creative spirit to get back some of our faded luster.

And I’m happy to announce $1 million in funding for a youth and creative workers mural program to commemorate many more of Los Angeles’ neighborhoods and history …

Guided by the hand of Judy Baca, an angel in the City of Angels, whose Great Wall of Los Angeles illuminates the Tujunga Wash.

One of the main things we learned from this pandemic was how vital the internet is, and how unequal our access to it is.

We’re going to put WiFi access points in 300 underserved neighborhoods that will act as giant hotspots, allowing entire neighborhoods to have dependable, fast Internet connections.

Consider that a down payment on true municipal broadband in Los Angeles.

Building off of the start Councilmember Blumenfield and I made in 2015, we’re looking forward to empanel a committee of experts and local stakeholders to review the investments we’ve made over the last six years.

The American Jobs Plan proposes ways to make it easier for cities to provide municipal broadband.

And here in the city where we sent the very first email in human history, we have the tech … we have the will …

And this year has taught us that the internet is where 21st-century commerce and democracy happens ... and every Angeleno should have equal high-speed access to it, whether they want
to study … do business … organize their community … or communicate with their own city government.

As we extend the reach of technology to empower anyone, we should tap into that same spirit to protect everyone.

A little more than a year ago, together with Councilmember Koretz, we became one of the first cities in the world to declare a climate emergency … and this budget fully funds our new Climate Emergency Mobilization Office because rising temperatures, drought and fires, and environmental injustice remind us that this is a make-or-break decade.

It’s time to go big, go bold, and go green.

And cities are leading the way. It has been my honor as your mayor to chair C40, the network of 97 of the world’s greatest cities, in our collective work to fight climate change. Already, more than half of the cities in C40 — including Los Angeles — are on-track to meet or exceed our commitments under the Paris Climate Accord. In contrast, just two countries in the world are on track to do the same.

We are leading globally while we act locally to clean our air and reduce our emissions.

So tonight, let’s declare a moratorium on new oil and gas drilling anywhere in the city of Los Angeles.

Next, let’s also declare a ban, citywide, on styrofoam once and for all, and on single-use foodware that cannot be reused or recycled.

And we’re going to continue the green revolution at our Department of Water and Power — giving ratepayers $60 for smart thermostats and installing smart meters, putting more solar power in low-income neighborhoods, growing our home weatherization initiative … and doubling the number of houses that receive free insulation and other energy-saving upgrades.

The result?

We’ll reduce our bills.
We’ll reduce our consumption.
We’ll reduce our emissions.

Our vision is as simple as it is powerful: a Los Angeles run on 100% clean energy.

And the landmark LA100 study, commissioned with Councilmember Paul Krekorian in partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory, shows us how to create a carbon-free power grid that’s resilient … reliable … and achievable.
It’s the first-ever study of its kind, and with that blueprint in hand, it’s time to make history.

So I’m declaring today that by 2030, our Department of Water and Power will provide an energy mix that’s 80% renewable and 97% carbon-free — a full six years ahead of our previous commitment.

And with the LA100 study as our guide, we’ll show our nation that we have what it takes to fulfill President Biden’s energy vision first:

And commit to 100% carbon-free energy by 2035, ten years ahead of schedule.

These are enormous goals, but they’re entirely within our reach.

To achieve it we will transition our aging Scattergood power plant to run on green hydrogen and decrease the demands on our Valley generating station, we’ll build a new wind farm in New Mexico, a giant solar farm in partnership with the Navajo Nation with Councilmember O’Farrell, and we will bring zero-emissions green hydrogen to drive turbines at our massive Intermountain Power Plant in Utah.

And we’re leading a zero-emissions transportation revolution, too. This year, we will have installed over 12,000 electric chargers — the most in the nation …

And thanks to the partnership of Councilmember Joe Buscaino, we are jumpstarting a pilot to convert trucks at our ports to battery electric vehicles … as well as working with truck manufacturers like Kenworth and Toyota to create hydrogen fuel cell trucks.

And we are joining with the Port of Long Beach and Mayor Robert Garcia to fund these trucks and lead the country and the world towards a zero-emissions supply chain.

All of these actions will accelerate healthier air, a healthier economy, and a healthier earth.

Our planet and our people are calling on us to meet this moment … and Los Angeles is answering that call.

But as important as standing here and envisioning a just and resilient future is sitting and feeling the weight of the past.

We have to process the trauma that we’ve lived through.

One part of grief is unknowably private.

But another part is collective, and I have said from early on in this crisis: whenever it’s safe, we will give ourselves the time and the space to hurt and to heal.
The loss we suffered was not shared equally, and we will not forget that.

Which is why this budget asks the Department of Cultural Affairs to support COVID memorials throughout our city … to maintain those that are permanent … and to archive those that are temporary.

Memory is no less important in fostering a genuinely safe community.

You cannot protect the present by forgetting the painful chapters that haunt our collective memory.

One of the more bitter effects of this pandemic is the rise of hate crimes against Angelenos and Americans of Asian or Pacific Islander origin.

We have been here before, and we must not forget that.

On a street that today runs under the shadow of City Hall, a violent mob carried out one of the largest mass lynchings in American history: the 1871 massacre of 19 people … Angelenos of Chinese origin.

I’m giving my support tonight to the construction of a memorial to the victims of this heinous act of violence … to remind us never to let hate consume us and to always make this a city of belonging.

What else would it strengthen us to remember?

I speak to you from land that has historically been the land of the Gabrielino/Tongva people.

We often call ourselves a city of immigrants … but we are also a city of natives who were here centuries before joining people of Spanish and African descent for our city’s founding walk as the Pobladores. Folks who are still here today.

The history of Los Angeles is in great part the history of the triumphs and tragedies of Black people, Indigenous people, and immigrants and their descendants.

And the legacy of the last year has been to look unflinchingly at those histories and to let them call us to action in the present day.

So let us act.

Tonight, I am announcing an investment of $12 million in a program called Reforms for Equity and Public Acknowledgement of Institutional Racism, or L.A. REPAIR.

Its mission will be wide-ranging …
Its ambition will be radical but simple …

We’re going to do the work.

The L.A. REPAIR pilot will give communities a direct say in grassroots investments to support job creation and provide organizational backing for community intervention, racial healing, justice and reconciliation.

We will also use that funding to partner with community and faith organizations to establish spaces that foster dialogue among youth and adults alike to name the things that have so starkly divided our fortunes … and hold our city to promises of a better future.

And we’ll put those conversations in the service of a truly participatory budget process, so that when we stand together next year, we’ll present a budget that has 4 million co-authors.

The overarching mission of L.A. REPAIR is to make sure that we never forget the toll that evils from the past take on people’s lives today.

To that end, I’m going to name an advisory commission and engage an academic partner to help me push toward creating a pilot slavery reparations program for Black Angelenos.

These efforts have never been tried at this scale.

To do any less would be to close our eyes to what last year forced us to see.

Not too far away from me is the Zeiss telescope, through which seven million pairs of eyes have cast their gaze on the wonders of the universe.

Around the corner from it is one of three solar telescopes that let us look at a star so bright that it blinds us to try to make it out — our sun.

These instruments aren’t set aside for astronomers — these are the people’s telescopes, open again soon for all who wish to see.

And I know we all want to see — and build — together a stronger, a more hopeful, a more resilient and, yes, a more just city.

That is your charge. And that is my job. And that is what we will do.

Look, it’s easy to make excuses — human beings know a thousand reasons not to try.

For the first eighty-seven years of our nation, there was always a better time to resolve the question of slavery.
For the last 33 years since James Hansen testified to the Senate that humans and their factories and cars were heating up the Earth, there was always a better time to move away from carbon.

But if there’s one thing I know from my eight years of service as your mayor … from my twenty years of service to our city … it’s that Los Angeles doesn’t run from challenges, we rise to them.

We find the reason to get to yes.

To go big.

To set the bar for justice, and to clear it.

To lay the foundation for resilience, and build on it.

And no one — no one — should ever bet against us … our spirit, our grit, our people.

This city, this nation, this planet never before saw the risk of inaction laid out next to the rewards of swift action and decisive change as we have during our pandemic year.

So let it be written that we acted, and we saved lives.

That we changed the way we lived, and we bought time.

That we took the enormous treasure of our common holding towards a lifesaving vaccine and by luck, work, and sheer inspiration, we walk around with it in our bodies today.

We have further to go. To walk.

We always will.

The state of our city is strong … and bruised…

Bursting with joyous possibility … while it cracks with sorrow.

But if you ask me for one word that defines Los Angeles in 2021, I will tell you that it is becoming …

Becoming a city more just, more equal, more kind, more itself than we have ever given it the opportunity to be.

Our better day is within reach …
And when we look back on our city from that future day, let us say with honest pride that we did not start our journey there one minute too late.

Strength and love, L.A.

Good night.

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