INTRADEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

November 10, 2025
11.2

TO: The Honorable Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Chief of Police

SUBJECT: BASIC CAR PLAN / DEPARTMENT PATROL PLAN

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. That the Board of Police Commissioners (Board) APPROVE the attached report responding to the Los Angeles City Council's request regarding the revised Basic Car Plan and Department Patrol Plan for 2025-26.

2. That the Board TRANSMIT this report to the Los Angeles City Council.

DISCUSSION

Attached is the Los Angeles Police Department's analysis regarding the feasibility of revising the Basic Car Plan and how the Office of Operations is updating Patrol Plan to Quarter 1, 2026. The Department has evaluated and recommended a new Basic Car study and the Office of Operations continues to evaluate and update Patrol Plan.

If you have questions regarding this matter, please contact Assistant Chief Emada Tingirides, Director, Office of Operations, at (213) 486-0111.

Respectfully,

JIM McDONNELL
Chief of Police

Attachments

FACT SHEET
DEPARTMENT PATROL PLAN
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PURPOSE. During consideration of the Mayor's Proposed Budget for 2025-26 the Department was provided instruction in Budget Instruction No. 207:

> *207. Instruct the Police Department to complete a revised Basic Car Plan and Department Patrol Plan in 2025-26, given changes in deployment since the last time these plans were revised.*

The purpose of this Fact Sheet is to explain how the Department conducted a comprehensive review of alternative staffing methodologies to replace the current Patrol Plan; however, subsequent analysis confirmed the existing methodology as the most effective approach while maintaining objectivity. Accordingly, the Department is in the process of updating the Patrol Plan to Quarter 1-2026.

BACKGROUND. Police staffing models in the U.S. are generally determined by one of five common methods. Departments traditionally have used crime trends, a per-capita approach, minimum-manning levels, authorized/budget levels, and workload-based models to make staffing decisions.

In 1988, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) adopted the "Patrol Plan" and the Los Angeles City Council established a performance standard known as the "7/40 Plan." The 7/40 Plan set the expectation that the LAPD would respond to all emergency calls within seven minutes, and that 40 percent of a patrol units resource time (or 24 minutes of each hour) be focused on proactive policing. Patrol Plan is a conceptually sound set of mathematical formulas and queuing algorithms tailored for the urban policing environment.

In an effort to determine the total number of officers needed to meet the patrol workload demands, and taking into account varying shift lengths, as well as anticipated and unanticipated time off taken by officers, LAPD incorporates a Staffing Factor (SF) into the calculations for total patrol deployment. Staffing Factor is a mathematical formula that forecasts how many officers will be needed to fulfill patrol operations in each Area.

The Field Deployment Unit (FDU), Office of Operations (OO), calculates the total number of officers each geographic Area will need to properly staff patrol operations every quarter. Due to Department deployment, as seen with the current Department-wide sworn staffing number of 8,692 (Personnel Division - Report to the Chief of Police (COP), October 20, 2025), and OO staffing of 6,448 (Personnel Roster DP-11, 2025), OO has maintained use of Quarter 2-2023 Patrol Plan at 7/30 since its publishing.

In February of 2025, the COP established a Patrol Minimums and Consolidation of Resources Working Group (the Working Group) to evaluate the Department's daily Patrol Minimums and address ongoing staffing challenges. The Working Group identified two potential areas for improvement with the Patrol Plan model:

1. Data Inaccuracies with Multiple Units Responding to the Same Call: The software records extended time for a call when additional support units fail to properly clear from, or, "Dispo," a call, impacting the accuracy of the Patrol Plan algorithm; and,

2. Inconsistent Use of the "Code Six" Status: The varied use of "Code Six" for different activities creating inconsistencies in tracking the deployed unit's availability.

While it was acknowledged that Patrol Plan is an effective tool, the group agreed that the FDU should initiate discussions with the Patrol Plan developer to explore ways to refine. The developers recommended addressing patrol culture rather than updates to the system or algorithm.

As a result, the group agreed to evaluate alternative solutions presented by three vendors with expertise in law enforcement staffing models. While in the pre-production/evaluation period with the vendors, FDU worked through additional options such as building an inhouse system, building a deployment model based on the established Basic Cars, and updating the Patrol Plan. Each option had benefits and flaws. In all the options, FDU continued to encounter the same concept; the mathematical principles will remain constant, but the specific data inputted can and does vary. Meaning, even with the perfect system or algorithm, the human aspect needs constant management. This brought the unit full circle to when the developers of the Patrol Plan recommended addressing patrol culture rather than changing the math.

Based on the above, it was determined to continue with the Patrol Plan while working on managerial oversight in the geographic areas.

METHODOLOGY. The total number of officers authorized for patrol operations (A & X Cars) at a geographic Area is determined by the Patrol Plan. Patrol Plan provides a comprehensive analysis of patrol workload needs based on the previous year's patrol demands, the 7/40 performance standard and the current year's Staffing Factor. Essentially, Patrol Plan forecasts an Area's operational needs based on the previous year's workload.

Patrol Demand or Workload Data

There are 25 variables that go into determining a Patrol Division's Patrol Operations workload. Those Variables are:

- **Patrol Speed (#1)** – Obsolete portion of the original Patrol Plan software utilized in random patrol operations. This portion of the program remains in current models of the Patrol Plan software to assist with a "saturation" type patrol model, if it were to be requested. In the interim, the data is given a neutral value so that it has no effect on program output.

- **Number of Units Fielded (#2)** – The average number of response units fielded, broken down into four-hour blocks by day of the week, month, or quarter as needed. This information included the core A, L, X, and XL designations and also includes units that were assigned a radio call but were not of these designations.

- **Forecasted Call Rate (#3)** – Projects the number of calls for service by comparing the calls for service from the last six months and those from the same period during the previous year.

- **Percent of Calls with One (two, three, four, five or six plus) Unit(s) Dispatched (#4 to #9)** – This data set (counting as six of the 25 Patrol Plan factors) estimates the percentage of calls requiring one or more units to respond. It is broken down into one unit responding, two units responding, and so forth until it gets to six-plus units responding, whereupon it groups anything over six responding units.

- **Average Service Time (#10 to #15)** – This data set (counting as six of the 25 Patrol Plan factors) is similar to the one preceding, but in lieu of determining the percentage of calls requiring the specific number of units, it computes the average response time for those units.

- **Non-Calls for Service Time (#16)** – Calculates time spent on activities such as meetings, administrative tasks, vehicle maintenance, qualification, lunch, etc, and averages this in hours per shift/per unit.

- **Dispatching Policy (#17)** – This information set includes the three possibilities relating to call dispatch once a request for service has been received. The first two possibilities are immediate dispatch of the call and holding the call-in queue. The final possibility (assignment of priority calls to non-patrol units during certain hours) is not used by the LAPD.

- **Percent of Calls Dispatched by Priority (#18 to #20)**– Three categories of data that corresponds to Priority One, Two and Three Calls for Service (defined below).

    - Priority One Call – Code 3 Response
    - Priority Two Call – Code 2 Response/Non-Coded alarm calls
    - Priority Three Call – Non-Coded calls

- **Square Miles (#21)** – Determines the square miles of a geographic area from existing city data sources.

- **Average Travel Time (#22 to #24)** – Average time factor for Priority One, Two, and Three calls for service.

- **Street Miles (#25)** – Preventive patrol estimates based on total length on the streets measured in miles that are patrolled.

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7/40 And 7/30 Performance Standard

The 7/40 Plan set the expectation that the LAPD would respond to all emergency calls within seven minutes, and that 40 percent of a patrol units resource time (or 24 minutes of each hour) be focused on proactive policing. In the 7/30 Plan, the seven-minute response time to all emergency calls is maintained but the proactive policing metric is set at 30 percent of the patrol units resource time (or 18 minutes for each hour). The breakdown of the seven-minute response time is seen below:

- One minute for the Radio Telephone Operator (RTO) to receive the call and determine what the caller needs.
- One minute to locate and dispatch a unit to the call.
- Five minutes for the first unit to go Code 6 at the call (Code 6 is code for arriving at scene).

Staffing Factor

The respective Staffing Factors for 2025 were calculated using 2024 Payroll Variation Code data provided by Fiscal Group (FG).[1] The eight-hour, ten-hour and twelve-hour workday Staffing Factors are based upon the number of actual reported employee absence hours for sworn personnel in the police officer rank assigned to the 21 Areas.

Relief Factor first calculates the number of personnel a one-person position needs to be staffed. Then, the average amount of hours sworn personnel work is determined. The formula accounts for anticipated absences (such as vacations, training, compensatory time off, etc.) and unanticipated absences (such as sick leave, injured on duty, suspension time, etc.) to determine the average number of hours an employee is expected to miss work. The result is the average number of sworn personnel that need to be assigned to the one-person position, to ensure adequate coverage.

Staffing Factor uses the Relief Factor to determine the number of personnel that need to be assigned to a two-person position, to ensure adequate coverage, 364 days of the year. To calculate this, Staffing Factor uses the percentage of one-person unit deployment and two-person deployment.

[1] The Payroll Variation Codes are the codes by which FG accounts for all timekeeping hours reported for each Department employee. For this report, the Police Officer Class Code 2214, Grades I, II, and III, was used to sort the data for all sworn employees assigned to the 21 geographic Areas.

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FINDINGS. The data presented in these findings combine Staffing Factor, the 7/30 Performance Standard and Workload Data to build the Quarter 1, 2026 Patrol Plan.

Staffing Factor

In 2024, the total number of anticipated absence hours decreased from 1,284,798 in 2023 to 1,169,192.60; a decrease of approximately 9%. In 2024 unanticipated absences decreased from 976,596.60 in 2023 to 826,044.60; a decrease of approximately 15%.

The average number of officers deployed, each deployment period, in 2024 has decreased from 4,113 in 2023 to 4,052; which is a decrease of 61 or approximately 1.5%. The decrease in unanticipated absences is in-line with the decrease in average deployment.

The calculated Staffing Factors for the 8 hour, 10 hour, and 12 hour shifts are seen below (Corresponding calculations are attached):

8 Hour Shift: 3.59
10 Hour Shift: 4.47
12 Hour Shift: **5.37**

Performance Standard

The managerial decision based on shrinking deployment and increased responsibilities was made to continue utilizing the 7/30 performance standard.

Patrol Plan: Quarter 1-2026

The combination of the 5.37 Staffing Factor, 7/30 Performance Standard, and Quarter-1 2025 workload data, utilizing the software from Police Management Advisors, generates the patrol demand totaling 2,531 Officers assigned to A and X cars at the 21 geographic Areas.

The following chart displays the comparison of current patrol deployment against Current Patrol Plan and the upcoming Quarter 1-2026 Patrol Plan at 7/30. The (+/-) associated with each plan is calculated by the following formula: DP-11, 2025 Deployment – Patrol Plan Demand = (+/-) column.

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DP 11, 2025 Patrol Deployment		Current Patrol Plan (7/30 Q2, 2023)		Patrol Plan (7/30 Q1, 2026)	
		7/30	+/-	7/30	+/-
Central	143	111	32	108	35
Rampart	117	104	13	97	20
Hollenbeck	144	117	27	120	24
Northeast	160	159	1	149	11
Newton	164	147	17	128	36
Southwest	146	133	13	129	17
Harbor	117	113	4	119	-2
77th	148	135	13	134	14
Southeast	148	135	13	127	21
Hollywood	135	115	20	110	25
Wilshire	125	114	11	100	25
West LA	136	146	-10	126	10
Pacific	124	123	1	120	4
Olympic	130	108	22	104	26
Van Nuys	105	101	4	100	5
West Valley	113	130	-17	122	-9
N. Hollywood	109	109	0	100	9
Foothill	122	133	-11	116	6
Devonshire	141	154	-13	143	-2
Mission	130	145	-15	156	-26
Topanga	113	122	-9	123	-10
TOTAL	**2770**	**2654**	**116**	**2531**	**239**

As seen in the chart above, OO deployed 2,770 officers in DP-11, 2025 to patrol operations. In this analysis, the term "Patrol Deployment" represents Police Officer IIIs and below who are assigned to patrol watches only. These numbers do not include loans.

The above data reveals a **116** Officer overall surplus when maintaining the current Patrol Plan at 7/30 and a **239** Officer surplus with Quarter 1-2026 Patrol Plan at 7/30. The overall deployment meets demand but the individual distribution at each Area requires adjustment. The OO has already begun directing Personnel Division to focus transfers, wheels and promotions to the (5) areas with the shortages.

Along with updating Patrol Plan to Quarter 1, 2026, OO is working on plans to manage patrol operations as to ensure accurate data.

RECOMMENDATIONS. As seen above, the Department's Patrol Plan is a workload-based staffing model that adjusts to the demands of the time. Patrol Plan demand for a given quarter is the same demand whether the Department has 10,000 Officers or the actual 8,692. It is recommended that the Department continue to utilize the Patrol Plan and continue to update it Quarterly, as deployment and demand allows.

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PURPOSE. During consideration of the Mayor's Proposed Budget for 2025-26 the Department was provided instruction in Budget Instruction No. 207:

> *207. Instruct the Police Department to complete revised Basic Car Plan and Department Patrol Plan in 2025-26, given changes in deployment since the last time these plans were revised.*

The purpose of this Fact Sheet is to explain the Basic Car Plan, the Department's efforts to revise the plan, and the requirements for moving forward with a new model.

BACKGROUND. The City of Los Angeles is approximately 469 square miles in size; with an approximate 4,000,000 people living within its jurisdiction. Providing Police Services to a City this size is a monumental challenge. To accomplish this, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) divides the City into four geographic Bureaus (Central, South, West and Valley). Each Bureau consists of between four (4) to seven (7) geographic Areas; totaling 21 geographic Areas. These 21 Areas are broken down further in to Reporting Districts (RD). The RDs were designed and developed using a myriad of variables such as population size, as well as natural and manmade boundaries which include, but are not limited to, rivers, mountains, major streets/thoroughfares and railroad tracks. Every effort was made to ensure communities and neighborhoods stayed within the same RD, which were then grouped into Basic Cars. There are between six (6) to eleven (11) Basic Cars per Area for a total of 168 Basic Cars Citywide.

In 1970, then Police Chief Edward M. Davis initiated the Basic Car Plan based on a book written by Robert Ardrey titled Territorial Imperative, which pointed out that people tend to form protective attachments to geography. The concept was to assign officers to specific communities with a goal of keeping those officers in that community for as long as possible; ultimately holding them responsible for crime and disorder in that community. Davis' vision was to divide each geographic Area into small Basic Cars that were manageable, under ordinary circumstances, by one patrol unit or "A" car. Each Area was analyzed to determine the number of police cars that would normally be deployed during a light workload period. That number then determined the Basic Cars for each Area.

In March of 2001, the Department published an Office of the Chief of Police (OCOP), Administrative Order No. 2, *Institutionalization of the Ideal Basic Car*. This Order established the Ideal Basic Car is the primary service delivery system that facilitates the accomplishment of the Department's overall mission to: reduce the incidence and fear of crime, and to enhance public safety while working with our diverse communities to improve the quality of life.

The Ideal Basic Car continues to include the full participation of the watch commander, Basic Car Coordinators (BCCs), Basic Car Supervisors (BCSs), Senior Lead Officers (SLOs), as well as every other officer assigned to the Ideal Basic Car including its component parts: X-Cars, foot beats, bicycle details and community outreach centers.

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In August of 2005, the Department published an OCOP, Administrative Order No. 8, *Partnerships, Problem Solving and Prevention – The Department's Community Policing Efforts*; superseding the previous March 2001 Order No. 2. The updated Order established Senior Lead Officers' (SLO) role as patrol officers, problem solvers, mentors, leaders and community mobilizers. Additionally, it established the problem-solving process by which the Department would respond to community concerns, holding all Department employees accountable for furthering the Department's community policing efforts.

In 2008, Police Management Advisors, presented a report to the Los Angeles City Council titled, *"Analysis of the Feasibility of Establishing A Constant Staffing Model for Patrol Officers in the Los Angeles Police Department."* In this report, the authors stated that the current Basic Car number is dramatically larger that Davis' vision of the number of cars needed to staff during a low workload period. The researchers advised that the Department and City would have to deal with three conflicting expectations:

Basic Car Plan

The fundamental premise of the Basic Car Plan is that officers will be assigned to a particular community for a sustained period of time, to build strong ties to that community during the delivery of police services. While the theory is strong, most Basic Cars are routinely assigned to handle calls in other Basic Car Areas due to the lack of police resources.

Workload

The objective is to balance the workload across all Basic Cars to achieve a seven-minute response time for emergency calls while preserving 40% of their time for proactive policing. In practice, however, communities rightly expect consistent service levels, and their geographic and operational boundaries must be factored into these configurations. As a result, some Basic Cars experience significantly higher workloads than others. The busiest units quickly become overwhelmed with calls, leaving little to no time for proactive patrol. To compensate, less active Basic Cars are often dispatched into these high-demand areas to help manage the additional workload.

Flexible Work Schedule

In 2002, the City negotiated a Flexible Work Schedule for the Department. The Department informed the research team that Basic Cars are deployed only during the 12-hour, or primary, shifts. However, this deployment model presents a challenge: the number of response units needed to handle calls for service during the second half of Watch 3 is roughly half of each Area's assigned Basic Cars. As a result, most Areas do not deploy all their Basic Cars on Watch 3, leaving many Basic Car areas without a geographically designated patrol unit during the busiest evening hours.

The researchers wrote, "But, all three components must be considered together as they each have considerable impact on the other."

Matrix Consulting

In August of 2017, Councilmember Bonin introduced a motion to fund an analysis of the Department's existing Basic Cars, with an emphasis on studying the quantity of patrol resources deployed and the appropriateness of historical boundaries.

In January 2018, the Department issued the initial Request for Proposal (RFP), and Matrix Consulting Group was later selected to conduct the study.

After several drafts and revisions, on April 13, 2021, the CAO distributed the final Basic Car Area Study to the Department and City Council.

Summary of Basic Car Boundary Realignment Recommendations from Matrix report:

- Increase the number of Basic Cars from 168 to 202;
- Redraw boundaries to keep neighborhood cohesion and avoid discontinuity from natural barriers; and,
- Some proposed redrawn boundary alignment, such as the expansion of West Los Angeles Area, increase already large geographic Areas.

Summary of General Recommendations from Matrix report:

- More time for proactive work is needed to move away from a regional approach to patrol and avoid having officers taken out the assigned Basic Car Areas;
- After extensive review and revision, implement the alternative Basic Car Area plan;
- Realign the identified Basic Car Area boundaries that are geographically impacted by freeways, central business districts and other barriers; and,
- Contingent on the implementation of the alternative Basic Car Area plan, increase the number of Senior Lead Officers (SLO) by 34 to ensure that each Area is assigned a SLO.

Budget and Finance Committee - Fiscal Impact Statement from Matrix report:

Approval of the recommendations in this report will have no direct impact to the General Fund at this time. The total cost of the principle recommendations provided by the Matrix Consulting Group are unknown and would require a programmatic cost analysis of salaries, benefits, and related expenses to hire 122 new civilian responder positions to handle low-priority non-emergency calls for service; 170 additional sworn police officers for patrol duties, if not reassigned from existing positions; and the cost to replace the existing Patrol Plan, a proprietary resource deployment program. It is recommended that consideration of all policy actions requiring budgetary resources be made in the context of the annual budget process.

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Department Recommendations for Basic Car Boundary Realignment Based on Matrix Report

On August 13, 2021, the Department responded to the Budget and Finance Committee budget report on the Basic Area Boundary Study (CF 17-0860). This response addressed multiple items; however, the below recommendations were provided for Basic Car Boundary Realignment:

> *The Department Strongly supports further strengthening community relationships, including by rationalizing the number of Basic Cars and Senior Lead Officers to address population growth and shifting neighborhood identities and boundaries.*
>
> *This recommendation is feasible and expected to have a cost of $7.28 million/year.*
>
> *Additionally, the Department believes an in-depth and extensive review is warranted to ensure that a revised Basic Car plan meets community needs and practical goals (such as ensuring no geographic Area serves too large of a geographic footprint). This inquiry would likely have an expected cost of consultants, but an estimate is not available without initial stages of a Request for Proposal.*

FINDINGS. As of November 2025, the number of Basic Cars remains at 168.

The duration of the most recent Basic Car evaluation completed by Matrix, from initial proposal to final response, exceeded four years. This evaluation was completed utilizing 2018 workload data. Today, we are approximately seven (7) years removed from the data used in that study.

The Basic Car Plan is used to staff Senior Lead Officers, while emphasizing the structure that defines community policing efforts, assisting Communications Division (CD) with reducing cross over rates between Basic Cars. The quantity of units and officers required in a geographic Area to meet the demands of Patrol, is determined separately by Patrol Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS. The Department continues to support further strengthening community relationships, including further rationalizing the number of Basic Cars and Senior Lead Officers to address population growth and shifting neighborhood identities.

Additionally, the Department continues to believe in an in-depth and extensive review of data relevant to determining an appropriate geographic footprint and quantity of Basic Cars. To ensure an objective and thorough review of current boundary alignments, it is recommended that the Department and the City issue a Request for Proposal to conduct a new Basic Car boundary study.