

From: [Civic Whittier](#)
To: [WebMail - CCD](#)
Subject: Public Comment - 5/5/26 (Part II)
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I'll say up front: I'm not a budget expert. I'm a people operations and civic nerd imagining a future where community comes first. The numbers below are the City's own, reported to the State Controller and published at publicpay.ca.gov.

A single figure is worth sitting with. In 2024, the City of Whittier spent \$6,039,759 on Police Department overtime. The entire Library system, every employee, every program, every branch costs \$3,029,872. The entire Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department, all 265 employees, costs \$6,697,625. Police overtime alone is twice the Library budget and roughly equal to all of Parks & Recreation. The Police Department absorbs 52.7% of the City's workforce compensation. The Library, 5.1%. Parks & Rec, 11.2%.

I want to offer a different lens for the FY 2026-27 budget. The \$6 million currently flowing to time-and-a-half overtime is not a fixed cost. It is a recurring choice. And it could be building something else entirely.

That money could put real, full-time, benefited staff into the parks where Whittier kids spend their summers instead of relying on 216 part-time and seasonal workers earning under \$10,000 a year to deliver the youth sports, camps, and after-school programs that hold this community together.

It could double the Library's professional staff and expand hours, programming, and outreach into the neighborhoods that need it most. The Library is one of the last truly free public spaces left in this city. It deserves to be treated like one.

It could fund the community services Whittier residents actually call the City for: senior support, family resources, neighborhood coordination, the front-line work that prevents the crises that eventually become Police calls.

It could create career-ladder public-sector jobs and route them, through partnerships with Rio Hondo College and the Whittier Union High School District, to city residents, paying for them.

The budget the Council adopts is a statement of values. The current allocation says Police overtime matters more than libraries, parks, and community programming combined. I do not believe that reflects the community this Council represents.

FY 2026-27 is the chance to put together a budget that imagines a Whittier where community comes first.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Ashley