

**From:** [Acevedo, Gloria](#)  
**To:** [Acevedo, Gloria](#)  
**Subject:** FW: RBOC Proposed FY 2023 Operating Budget  
**Date:** Monday, May 09, 2022 11:52:02 AM  
**Attachments:** [RBOC Budget Letter FY 2023.pdf](#)

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**From:** Breathe Justice  
**Sent:** Monday, May 9, 2022 10:48 AM  
**Subject:** RBOC Proposed FY 2023 Operating Budget

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Dear Mayor Gordo, Vice Mayor Wilson, Councilmembers Hampton, Kennedy, Madison, Masuda, Rivas and Williams, and Members of the Finance Committee,

Thank you for your consideration of our attached letter regarding the Rose Bowl Operating Company and the Proposed FY 2023 Operating Budget.

Respectfully Submitted,

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The B.R.E.A.T.H.E. Justice 365 Team

A Pasadena-based collective of physicians, attorneys, clergy, educators and everyday people striving for equality.

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# B.R.E.A.T.H.E. JUSTICE 365

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May 9, 2022

RE: RBOC Proposed Operating Budget FY 2023

Dear Mayor Gordo, Pasadena City Council Members, and Finance Committee Members,

As a collective of Pasadenans striving for justice and equality in our City, we write to urge the City Council to commit to **not** spending any more funds from our General Fund or from our fund reserves to pay the Rose Bowl debt.

As of May 2021, the stadium had collected \$197.72 million in outstanding debt from massive renovations years ago. According to City staff, the City had to step in and pay approximately \$11.5 million of Rose Bowl debt in fiscal year 2021 and approximately \$10 million in fiscal year 2022. Those substantial debt payments were paid from the City's General Fund and/or General Fund reserves. Last year, former City Manager Steve Mermell advised the City Council that paying the Rose Bowl debt had exhausted much of the City's General Fund Operating Reserve.

For FY 2023, Interim City Manager Cynthia Kurtz reports that the City will not have to pay the Rose Bowl debt obligation this year. This is due, in large part, to the federal government providing the Rose Bowl with a **one-time** \$10 million Shuttered Venue Grant.

Unfortunately, though, the FY 2023 General Fund Five-Year Forecast shows a substantial **increase in debt** service for FY2024 and beyond due to having to cover the Rose Bowl debt again. Even worse, according to Ms. Kurtz, with the resumption of debt payments, **FY2024 and beyond are projected to have deficits in the General Fund.** (C. Kurtz Transmittal Ltr., p. 6.) This could result in a decrease in City services.

The RBOC's Proposed FY2023 Operating Budget projects a net **loss** of \$4.6 million after reserves (RBOC Proposed FY2023 Operating Budget, p. 7.) What this suggests to us is that, unless the Rose Bowl generates substantially more revenue this coming year than is predicted, **the City will have to pay millions of dollars more toward Rose Bowl debt starting again in FY2024.**

**Our City has a substantial and urgent need to adequately fund critical programs such as evidence-based, Public Health model violence prevention programs and shelter for our hundreds of unsheltered residents. We need *increased* City funding for these programs, *not* the threat of *decreased* funding due to the City's payment of the Rose Bowl debt.**

For this reason, we urge the City Council to commit to **not** using General Fund money and/or City fund reserves for Rose Bowl debt payments and to ensure that the City and the RBOC pursue other available options to pay the debt.

At a special City Council/RBOC joint meeting on June 8, 2021, many options were discussed. The RBOC can ambitiously pursue much more funding through donations and grants from those passionate about the Rose Bowl, including through the Rose Bowl Legacy Foundation.

The RBOC can also pursue more revenue-generating opportunities such as sponsorships, naming rights (e.g., Arroyo campus and/or its assets), more events, etc. The RBOC can also pursue leasing portions of the Rose Bowl property to generate funds. We support these options.

In conclusion, our City Council cannot continue to pay the Rose Bowl debt obligation while failing to provide for the basic and critical needs of all of our residents. Please ensure that Pasadena works for *all* of its residents. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

The B.R.E.A.T.H.E. Justice 365 Team

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