

Communication from Public

Name: Carolyn L., Brentwood Hills

Date Submitted: 10/06/2026 03:09 AM

Council File No: 09-0969-S4

Comments for Public Posting: VOTE NO on the fee increase to file an appeal Reject the proposed fee increase under Option B23, and maintain the current appeal fee which is already a significant barrier for most people in Los Angeles; This fee increase is particularly concerning for residents in the VHFSZ I am a resident of BRENTWOOD HILLS and request you OPPOSE the fee increase. The fee increase is Inconsistent with the City's General Plan and Environmental Justice Commitments This fee increase does not just harm individual appellants — it runs directly against commitments the City has already written into its own General Plan. • Safe and Just Neighborhoods. The City's Health Element (“Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles,” adopted 2015, amended 2021) commits Los Angeles to building “Safe and Just Neighborhoods” as one of its core General Plan goals. A fee structure that only residents with \$1,145 to \$2,289 in spare cash can afford is the opposite of a “just” process — it converts a public right into a paid privilege, undermining this General Plan goal. • The General Plan's Equity Principle. The Framework Element — the General Plan's foundational, guiding document — directs the City to invest public resources “on the basis of priority community needs” and states that decisions “should be made in ways that do not unfairly impact any one single community.” Pricing lower-income residents out of the appeal process unfairly impacts exactly the communities the General Plan obligates the City to protect. • The City's Own Civic Engagement Commitments (Implementation Program 60). Implementation Program 60 of the Health Element commits the City to “increase the variety of stakeholders attending public hearings or otherwise providing consultation” in City processes, “with particular attention to participation by historically underserved communities and individuals.” A four-figure appeal fee runs directly counter to that written commitment: it does not expand participation by underserved communities, it forecloses it. • Equitable Engagement and Empowerment (Implementation Program 90). This program commits the City to enhance public participation opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and low-income communities, and to “strengthen the capacity of and empower neighborhood leaders, especially residents from the City's historically marginalized and disinvested communities, to engage

in planning processes.” A fee that only residents with over a thousand dollars to spare can afford does the opposite: it weakens, rather than strengthens, the capacity of low-income and BIPOC residents to engage in exactly the kind of planning process — a land use appeal — this program is meant to open up. •

Environmental Justice in the General Plan (Implementation Program 91). This program commits the City to periodically review the Health Element and other General Plan Elements to address “emerging environmental justice concerns,” including “new concerns raised through continued public engagement,” and to evaluate City policies and programs to ensure they “meaningfully center race and environmental racism.” A fee increase that would price low-income residents and communities of color out of the appeal process is precisely the kind of emerging concern this program commits the City to address — not create. •

The Good Neighbor Policy (Implementation Program 32). This program commits the City to develop strategies that reduce the negative health impacts of “incompatible land uses and the burden they pose on vulnerable populations,” as well as nuisances like noise, dust, and odors from neighboring uses. The non-applicant appeal is one of the only tools a vulnerable resident has to raise exactly these concerns about a project affecting them. Pricing that appeal out of reach for residents of modest means does not reduce the burden of incompatible land uses on vulnerable populations — it removes their ability to protect their health. •

Justice must be demonstrated by keeping fees accessible, not by raising them. The City has repeatedly stated its commitment to justice and equity in its foundational planning documents. That commitment is only meaningful if it is reflected in concrete decisions like this one. Keeping non-applicant appeal fees at their current level — or reducing them — is a direct, low-cost way for the City to demonstrate that its equity commitments are more than words on a page.

Communication from Public

Name: Nancy Girten

Date Submitted: 10/06/2026 01:13 AM

Council File No: 09-0969-S4

Comments for Public Posting: To: ALL CITY COUNCIL EMAIL ADDRESSES Subject: OPPOSE Non-Applicant Appeal Fee Increase — Council File 09-0969-S4 Dear Los Angeles City Councilmembers and City Officials: I am writing to formally object to the proposed increase in non-applicant appeal fees under Council File 09-0969-S4, and I urge the Committee to reject Option B23 as recommended by the Planning and Land Use Management Committee. It seems with each budget cycle the billionaire class encourages the City Council to increase land use appeal fees as a means to maintain complete control over this government and silence their legitimate critics. I object strongly. We still have a constitution. We still have a right to correct ill-conceived and environmentally damaging projects – at least we ought to if our elected officials truly represent the public interest. Under the current proposal, a neighbor or community member who is aggrieved by a discretionary land use decision — and who is not the applicant — would be required to pay \$1,145 to appeal a project within the noticing radius, or \$2,289 to appeal one outside it. These fees, characterized by the real estate industry as “cost recovery,” would price ordinary Angelenos out of a process that is supposed to belong to them and give them a voice in our democracy. I would note that recent amendments to the noticing requirements of the City have reduced the notice area to immediately adjacent landowners, so this illogical scheme is really just a more than 10 fold increase in the land use appeal fee. It sends a poor message to our communities. I ask the Committee to consider the following:

1. These fees are already a serious barrier for working people. Raising them by 10 times the current rate does not make the process more efficient — it simply excludes anyone who cannot absorb a four-figure fee to be heard. Also, there is no rational relationship to charge different fees based upon who was legally entitled to notice and who was not. A right that only the wealthy can afford to exercise is not meaningfully a right at all.
2. Appeals by “aggrieved persons other than the applicant” exist precisely to give affected communities a voice. Developers and applicants already have resources, attorneys, and staff dedicated to navigating city processes. Non-applicant appellants are ordinary residents — renters, small homeowners, and community organizations — pushing back on decisions that affect their daily

lives. Pricing them out tilts the entire system toward developers and against the public. A tone-deaf act like this sends a poisonous message to your own constituents that you do not care about their welfare and only about ramming harmful projects through the City's approval process. 3. Cost recovery should not come at the expense of civic participation. The City has other tools to fund its planning and appeals processes — through general revenue or a surcharge on applicant fees — that do not require closing the door on public participation. Hearing and deciding constitutional land use appeal hearings is a fundamental function of your job and the local government. It is a legitimate expense of the General Fund. 4. If costs are truly motivating a desire to recover the cost of the planning department, levy a surcharge on the cause of the need for our communities to appeal land use decisions: the developers whose projects impact communities. You currently surcharge applicant-developers on all permits to pay for the General Plan. If you want to recover more money so it does not come out of the General Fund to pay for processing the few appeals the City's Planning Commissions and City Council hear each year, levy a surcharge across all development activity as a legitimate cost of having real estate development in the City. If you must have full cost recovery instead of any General Fund subsidy, spread that cost across the entire system that generates the necessity of having a constitutional hearing system of Area Planning Commissions and City Council hearings. 5. This disproportionately harms lower-income communities and communities of color, who are statistically less likely to have the discretionary income to pay these fees, even as they are often the communities most affected by land use decisions such as upzoning, spot zoning, and large-scale development. On this point, the CAO's cruel proposal is inconsistent with your own adopted General Plan goals, policies and programs intended to make the City a healthy, affordable, and equitable place to live. Putting a commitment for an equitable Los Angeles in the Health Element is just words. This decision is an act that puts those words to action -- or defeats them. I respectfully request that the Committee: • Reject the proposed fee increase under Option B23, and maintain the current appeal fee which is already a significant barrier for most people in Los Angeles; • Direct staff to develop a surcharge fee, as part of the current Ge