

Communication from Public

Name: Carmina Calderón Santos

Date Submitted: 08/07/2024 03:47 PM

Council File No: 23-0038-S6

Comments for Public Posting: Hello, my name is Carmina Calderon Santos. I am a resident of Koreatown and a tenant at the Beverly-Vermont Community Land Trust - and honestly, it is such a relief to live in housing that is not for profit, and to know that my rent is actually a contribution to my building and the community that we're in. There needs to be more models of housing like this. It is imperative that we support and fund these alternative modes of housing, it can significantly improve quality of life and health of our communities. I'm here to encourage your support of Item #3, the motion for a social housing finance strategy. I want the city and responsible banks to have a plan to sustainably produce new social housing units and provide residents with new tools for collective ownership of social housing in LA. We encourage you to support this motion. Thank you!

Communication from Public

Name: Glafira Lopez

Date Submitted: 08/07/2024 03:58 PM

Council File No: 23-0038-S6

Comments for Public Posting: Hello, my name is Glafira Lopez and I am a Community Organizer with Strategic Actions for a Just Economy and a member of ACT-LA. As an organizer, I support tenants who are so often rent-burdened, undergoing harassment and are often at risk of being evicted. These tenants so often express a longing for having permanent housing- for owning their own homes and not having to worry about being evicted. When they tell me how much of a hopeless dream it feels like to own a home, I let them know about social housing and they see hope in it. We need to have a plan to be able to make this social housing happen. I'm writing to encourage your support of Item #3, the motion for a social housing finance strategy. I want the city and responsible banks to have a plan to sustainably produce new social housing units and provide residents with new tools for collective ownership of social housing in LA.

Communication from Public

Name: EDNA MONROY

Date Submitted: 08/07/2024 02:16 PM

Council File No: 23-0038-S6

Comments for Public Posting: Hi, my name is Edna Monroy, i am a renter, and I live in council district 10. I am here to urge city leaders to address some important issues impacting tenants such as amending the Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance, amending the draft Right to Counsel ordinance, and releasing the United to House LA (ULA) funds to materially support tenants in need. A lot of time has passed since the last Housing and Homelessness committee met and tenants cannot afford more delays. I strongly support the 7 proposed amendments to close loopholes in the Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance (TAHO). Since the passage of the Tenant Anti-Harassment ordinance in August 2021, it has been nearly impossible to use the ordinance to stop harassment. I also strongly support a codified Right to Counsel ordinance, with key amendments that need to be made to the draft. We call for Tenants Right to Counsel to be included in the title and throughout the ordinance so it aligns with City Council motion directives. We need clear definitions around which tenants are eligible and a zip code based model, and when to seek legal representation so tenants can connect to Stay Housed LA. We also ask for added language so that landlords post notice of Right to Counsel in common areas.

Communication from Public

Name: Amy Nevarez

Date Submitted: 08/07/2024 01:16 PM

Council File No: 23-0038-S6

Comments for Public Posting: Hi, my name is Amy Nevarez. I am a renter, and I live in CD#8. I am here to urge city leaders to address some important issues impacting tenants such as amending the Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance, amending the draft Right to Counsel ordinance, and releasing the United to House LA (ULA) funds to materially support tenants in need. A lot of time has passed since the last Housing and Homelessness committee met and tenants cannot afford more delays. I strongly support the 7 proposed amendments to close loopholes in the Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance (TAHO). Since the passage of the Tenant Anti-Harassment ordinance in August 2021, it has been nearly impossible to use the ordinance to stop harassment. I also strongly support a codified Right to Counsel ordinance, with key amendments that need to be made to the draft. We call for Tenants Right to Counsel to be included in the title and throughout the ordinance so it aligns with City Council motion directives. We need clear definitions around which tenants are eligible and a zip code based model, and when to seek legal representation so tenants can connect to Stay Housed LA. We also ask for added language so that landlords post notice of Right to Counsel in common areas.

Communication from Public

Name: Anonymous

Date Submitted: 08/07/2024 10:54 AM

Council File No: 23-0038-S6

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Housing Committee City Council Members, I live in Studio City, one of the most expensive and exclusionary neighborhoods in Los Angeles. I love that my neighborhood is somewhat walkable (though could certainly improve with wider sidewalks, better bikeways and pedestrian crossings, and narrower roads with lower speed limits) with high quality schools, restaurants, library, parks, shops, grocery stores and jobs nearby. I am writing in support of LA developing a social housing model to finance, streamline, build, and preserve abundant amount of housing that is affordable to low-income and middle-class residents for generations to come. I would like the council to consider a few aspects of social housing, present in other countries, which would be worth incorporating into an LA social housing model. 1 - Rents mortgages co-op fees need to be kept permanently low and affordable, and need to remain consistent with what tenants owners co-op members paid when they initially entered the building. As highlighted in the now famous NYT article about social housing in Vienna, 80% of city residents live in social housing and housing costs remain consistent and low, even as residents make more money. This is the point of stabilized, low housing costs -- they allow residents to remain in the same housing for their entire lives, if they so choose, and save more money as they make more money. All income requirements should be waived and no one should have risk of losing their housing just because they start to do a little better in life. This model will allow true equity with and possibly even greater affordability for social housing residents than for people who buy and own their homes. It will also allow residents to save more toward retirement or spend more money on education for their children, growing their family, or simply taking a vacation, small rights that everyone deserves and which truly stabilized social housing will allow. 2 - LA needs to streamline single-stair approval, particularly if single stair building codes are approved by the CA State Legislature. Single-stair buildings allow for the type of 3+ bedroom, large family-friendly apartments common and popular throughout the world, and especially common in social housing buildings (from South America to Europe to Asia). Single-stair buildings allow for better communal green space, better windows and lighting, cross-ventilation, and easily build

greener building alternatives (like Cross Laminated Timber buildings and pre-constructed housing that allows for cheaper, easier assembly on the building site [SEE: Sweden] I would also like to see incentives for greener but cheaper building materials that have less "embodied carbon" in their production process. 3 - I would encourage the City Council and Housing Committee to take a look at Nightingale Housing in Australia which has a similar climate to and affordable housing challenges as Los Angeles, though which has enacted notably better, more progressive zoning policies in the last few years. This is a great example of high quality, green, permanently affordable owner-occupied housing model with homes constructed by a private company with subsidized incentives provided by local governments. Also a great example of single-stair housing near transit, without parking reqs 4 - I would like to see the "baugruppen" model (common in Germany) deployed as one of the options for social housing in LA. Baugruppen is similar to co-op development, and allows neighborhoods or groups of like-minded individuals to build housing from the ground up and compete with private developers for land, loans, and building materials thanks to subsidized government loans with low, often 1% interest rates. Baugruppen housing is adaptable to particular communities' needs, meaning that because residents design the building they will live in, they can tailor it to what they need and want -- multi-bedroom units that cater to multi-generational family, for example, or footprints that can change as Boomers / ageing couples shrink their apartments when they downsize while neighboring young families grow. It also allows for multi-use buildings with communal space that the baugruppen community members can choose to use however they want. Baugruppen can rent community rooms to outside parties to pay for building fees, further subsidize rent, or turn space into shops, daycares, etc. according to the community's needs 5 - Zoning and transportation models need to mirror and support the development of more dense housing. This means upzoning single family neighborhoods and allowing community buildings original ED1 zoning exemptions in R-1

The Quiet Power of Car-Free Neighborhoods

Restricting or banning vehicles in congested city centers pays off with cleaner air and safer streets. We need to talk more about the other big benefit — less noise.

[David Zipper](#) July 31, 2024 at 4:00 AM PDT

Laying on the horn doesn't help anyone.

Photographer: Debrocke/ClassicStock/Archive Photos via Getty Images

One morning on a recent work trip to the German city of [Leipzig](#), I found myself with time to kill, so I left my hotel with no plan beyond meandering through the city center, which dates to medieval times. I turned left or right whenever an intriguing storefront, building or park caught my eye.

There turned out to be plenty to see, including the [St. Thomas Church](#), where Johann Sebastian Bach lies buried, as well as a [monument commemorating Leipzig's role](#) in the peaceful collapse of East Germany in 1989. In one square, a construction crew was setting up for a wine festival; nearby, a bagpipe-playing busker in a kilt drew a crowd of bemused onlookers.

But what I found most striking about Leipzig's historic core was not a presence, but an absence: There was no car noise at all. Instead of squealing brakes and rumbling engines, I heard café chatter and chiming clock towers.

A [website](#) supported by the German government explains why that was the case. In the 1990s, Leipzig's leaders wanted to do something about its car-clogged city center, which was "almost at a standstill." The result was a low-traffic plan for the area that diverted vehicles to surrounding roads, giving

more street space to people walking and biking.

With cars now nearly absent from Leipzig's downtown, my stroll was strikingly free of noise — and also delightful, as I enjoyed the thrill of a place that was both vibrant and quiet. I ended up wandering the streets for hours longer than I had planned (and spending more money, too).

Leipzig's downtown pedestrian zone draws shoppers and strollers in 2021. Photo: Peter Endig/picture alliance via Getty Images

Although still rare in North America, car-free and car-light neighborhoods have grown common in Europe, established in cities like [Paris](#), [Brussels](#) and [Pontevedra, Spain](#). Boosters often tout the improvements in air quality and road safety when street space is used for sidewalks, bike lanes and outdoor public space instead of transporting and storing motor vehicles.

By comparison, the removal of “the roaring traffic’s boom,” to borrow Cole Porter’s phrase, garners scant attention. But its upside is very real. Apart from an occasional jackhammer, the urbanist adage really is true: Cities aren’t loud, cars are loud.

Don’t just take my word for it. Researchers have found that about half of urban noise is attributable to motor vehicles. In some places the share is higher, such as in Toronto, where traffic produces [about 60%](#) of the background din. And silencing that cacophony can lead to flourishing street life — in North America as well as in Europe.

Consider what happened in October 2019, when [New York City banned private cars](#) from 14th Street, a major Manhattan thoroughfare, with the goal of speeding up bus services and reducing crashes. The move was hugely controversial at the time, and a group of nearby residents filed numerous lawsuits attempting to block it. They ultimately delayed but did not kill the project.

When the changes to 14th Street finally went into effect, the city’s

[predictions proved justified](#). Bus trips did indeed speed up, and crashes fell. (Despite some residents' fears, the amount of traffic on adjacent streets barely budged.) But few seemed to anticipate what seemed to be the most popular aspect of a transformed 14th Street: the tranquility of a car-free roadway in the midst of the City That Never Sleeps. The *New York Times* [described](#) "a quiet that was almost eerie," where no one "heard a single honking horn." Others dubbed it "[The Miracle on 14th Street](#)," and local officials promised to replicate the policy on other city roadways.

Perhaps because it happened just before the Covid-19 pandemic brought a far more unnerving and widespread spell of urban silence, that success story has now been largely memory-holed. But the unexpected jubilation that followed the removal of 14th Street's cars suggests an American inability to even conceive of the pleasures of quiet streets. At least on this side of the Atlantic, car noise is an immutable urban fixture, something almost impossible to imagine being without, a bit like David Foster Wallace's [classic joke](#) about the fish that grow flummoxed when asked "How's the water?"

It takes truly extraordinary sonic assaults to make drivers draw enough attention to warrant official sanction. Think of the "Belltown Hellcat," the 21-year-old Seattleite who managed to [infuriate an entire city](#) by gunning his modified Dodge through late-night streets and then posting videos of his exploits on social media, in defiance of law enforcement, city officials and frazzled neighbors. (This week, the [driver was arrested](#) and barred from posting on his social media accounts.) Left unpunished are the instigators of more commonplace irritants — decibel-blasting motorists who bombard neighborhoods with revving engines, explosive exhausts and sound systems that [go to 11](#).

Recognizing the social costs imposed by obnoxiously loud machinery, [London](#) and [Paris](#) now deploy automatic noise cameras that snap pictures of vehicles when they break maximum decibel thresholds, with a ticket mailed to their registered owners. The idea has started to catch on in the US, too,

with [New York City](#) and [Knoxville, Tennessee](#), experimenting with it.

But noise cameras address only the most egregiously amplified cars and trucks; they do nothing about the background babel that is ever present in urban America, the kind that requires people to raise their voice when chatting on the sidewalk. Nor can such devices mitigate the relentless clamor endured by those living adjacent to arterials and freeways. As far back as 1981, the Environmental Protection Agency [estimated](#) that nearly 100 million Americans were regularly exposed to traffic noise of at least 55 decibels, enough to cause health problems.

Such ongoing noise exposure can [have deadly consequences](#), such as increased risk of stroke, hypertension and heart attacks. A growing body of research has separated the health effects of car noise from vehicle emissions, and its findings are ominous. [According to the World Health Organization](#), excessive noise from motor vehicles "can disturb sleep; cause adverse cardiovascular, metabolic, psychophysiological and birth outcomes; [and] lead to cognitive and hearing impairment." A [2022 United Nations report](#) concurred, saying that traffic noise of 60 decibels "is enough to raise heart rate and blood pressure and cause a loss of concentration and sleep." In Denmark, [a multiyear study](#) of 2 million people aged 60 and over found that fully 11% of dementia diagnoses could be attributed to roadway noise.

As with so [many other environmental hazards](#), those living in low-income communities across the US are at particular risk, with background noise typically two decibels higher than in more affluent areas, [according to a 2017 study](#). This is by design, as planners have sited countless highways, airports and other high-volume infrastructure in disinvested neighborhoods. [A paper](#) from last year found that urban neighborhoods that were subjected to racially discriminatory redlining practices decades ago still experience louder noise today.

Looking to the future, the ascendance of electric vehicles offers a partial solution to noise pollution — but with an emphasis on "partial." EV motors are

quieter than gas engines, but at speeds over 35 miles per hour (56 kilometers per hour) car noise comes largely [from friction between tires and pavement](#), which electrification does not mitigate. (And then there are the battery-powered performance vehicles designed to broadcast [fake engine noises](#) just [as deafening](#) as their gas-powered predecessors, which is a whole other issue.)

Cars drive past a noise barrier beside the highway in the Zuffenhausen district of Germany in 2022. *Photo: Marijan Murat/picture alliance via Getty Images*

There are technical ways to dampen background vehicle noise, such as erecting [highway barriers](#) that block sound and using [asphalt designed to muffle tires](#) rolling over it. Policies can also mitigate specific aspects of car cacophony. [Lima enacted laws against unnecessary honking](#) in an effort to silence the [Peruvian capital's famously exuberant drivers](#); Israel [banned loud car alarms](#). But the foolproof fix for urban vehicle noise is a simple one: Do as Leipzig has done, and limit, or eliminate, the cars.

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To be fair, in many US neighborhoods, car noise is probably there to stay. Decades of car-centric planning have made it difficult to imagine many urban neighborhoods — or even streets — in the South or Southwest ever banning private cars, as has become common in Europe. But there are still plenty of neighborhoods in older cities of the Midwest, West Coast and Northeast that predate the automobile, where one could realistically imagine oases of car-free calm.

Were traffic to be tamed, the resulting quietude could stimulate business activity, attracting people from elsewhere to visit the neighborhood and compelling them to linger (and shop) while they are there. That said, no one should expect small-business owners to sound a clarion call for car-free streets; they are often staunch defenders of car access, and studies

[consistently show](#) that they overestimate the share of customers who drive, undercounting those who walk, bike or take transit.

That is a shame. The packed cafés I saw in Leipzig suggest that businesses thrive when streets are free from car noise. Indeed, restaurateurs could see particular gains from quieter streets: One academic [study](#) found that even low-volume traffic sounds diminish the pleasure of eating.

Tastier meals would seem just one of many ways that quieter, car-free streets can make urban life more appetizing.

Communication from Public

Name: Cheryl

Date Submitted: 08/07/2024 12:01 PM

Council File No: 23-0038-S6

Comments for Public Posting: I am here to urge city leaders to address some important issues impacting tenants such as amending the Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance, amending the draft Right to Counsel ordinance, and releasing the United to House LA (ULA) funds to materially support tenants in need. A lot of time has passed since the last Housing and Homelessness committee met and tenants cannot afford more delays. I strongly support the 7 proposed amendments to close loopholes in the Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance (TAHO). Since the passage of the Tenant Anti-Harassment ordinance in August 2021, it has been nearly impossible to use the ordinance to stop harassment. I also strongly support a codified Right to Counsel ordinance, with key amendments that need to be made to the draft. We call for Tenants Right to Counsel to be included in the title and throughout the ordinance so it aligns with City Council motion directives. We need clear definitions around which tenants are eligible and a zip code based model, and when to seek legal representation so tenants can connect to Stay Housed LA. We also ask for added language so that landlords post notice of Right to Counsel in common areas.

Communication from Public

Name: Angela Birdsong

Date Submitted: 08/07/2024 12:12 PM

Council File No: 23-0038-S6

Comments for Public Posting: Hi, my name is Angela Birdsong and I am a housing rights organizer for Los Angeles Community Action Network better known as LA CAN. I work in Council District 14, and I reside in the city of Inglewood, a close neighbor of the city of Los Angeles. I am here to urge LA city leaders to address some important issues impacting tenants such as amending the Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance, amending the draft Right to Counsel ordinance, and releasing the United to House LA (ULA) funds to materially support tenants in need. A lot of time has passed since the last Housing and Homelessness committee met and tenants cannot afford more delays. Anyone who takes the housing crisis seriously—which is a crisis of housing affordability, housing availability, and poverty—must speak and act from a moral place, not a politically convenient place, to keep people in their homes, to prioritize permanent housing, and to stop using criminalization to hide poverty, erase people and cause a city wide genocide. I strongly support the 7 proposed amendments to close loopholes in the Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance (TAHO). I also strongly support a codified Right to Counsel ordinance, with key amendments that need to be made to the draft. Motion 18 erases our fellow human beings. Let's move towards a future of care, towards hope, towards house keys not handcuffs. Thank you

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 08/07/2024 10:40 AM

Council File No: 23-0038-S6

Comments for Public Posting: Please release the ULA funds! Tens of thousands of tenants (and their landlords!) across LA need rental assistance NOW