

WHO IS DOING THE WORK?

In February 2023, Mayor Bass declared, “Los Angeles is open for business.” Unfortunately, Los Angeles is not delivering results for its stakeholders. The business of governing the City’s finances does not appear to be open.

Who is doing the work of the City? Who is doing the business of managing the City?

The Mayor’s 2024-2025 Budget proposes to shrink the budget gap by eliminating nearly 2,000 positions that had been funded but never staffed. With a 20% vacancy rate, this saves the City a considerable amount of money. Closing the open positions not only shrinks the budget gap, it also leaves us to deal with the inadequate services we’ve been living with while the City was, and now will continue to be, understaffed. It leaves us with insufficient oversight because those departments who are charged with providing it are understaffed. And it leaves us without a plan that can guide our future.

Why is the City forced to take these drastic measures? To pay for the raises it gave to its employees, sworn and civilian, in two new budget contracts finalized in 2024. Don’t get us wrong. We want employees to earn a good wage. It makes it easier to hire and keep employees, but we also want a way to pay for those wages. We find ourselves in this position with every labor agreement renegotiation. It’s not like we don’t know it’s coming. We never seem to have a financial plan for it and thus the repeated deficits.

One could point at the City’s liability payouts that are significant and say this is why we have a budget gap, but the City has liability claims every year and plans for them. A budget gap of the size we’re facing occurs when we negotiate new labor agreements.

Exacerbating the issue, at the same time we negotiated these new labor agreements, our anticipated revenues are below projections and the State’s deficit means fewer dollars flowing from the State government to the City.

The City has long been facing a services deficit. Our sidewalks are crumbling. Our urban forest needs serious attention. Our streets are dirty. The City frequently pointed to the 20% vacancy rate to explain why repairs took so long. The positions were included in the Budget, but we couldn’t find the staff to do the work. Now, with the City eliminating most of the open positions, we’re being told there won’t be a decrease in services because the services weren’t being provided anyway.

This answer doesn’t cut it. If we are going to deny services to the City’s stakeholders, if we are going to let the City continue to decay, we need to have a plan that shows how we can catch up.

Given the current spending gap, Los Angeles will experience pain for the next four to five years. We can turn this pain into an opportunity by doing the hard work to truly turn the City around and not just manage the deficits until the economy improves.

The Budget Advocates make some suggestions here to increase transparency and provide better fiscal management.

Fiscal Manager

The City is crying for someone to run its fiscal house. Call the position City Manager as the Budget Advocates first recommended in 2019. Call the position the Office of Transparency and Accountability as the Budget Advocates first recommended in 2017. Call the position Chief Financial Officer as Washington, D.C. does, and, by the way, their CFO was able to put the District's financial house in order. Call the position Fred. It doesn't matter what the position is called. What matters is the City needs an independent actor with overall tactical fiscal responsibility. The Mayor and City Council can set the City's strategy. They have not shown themselves able to take a tactical approach to protect the City's finances.

We pay more fees for less work. A fee-for-service model, towards which we head with every passing year, is inherently inequitable. The fiscal manager can develop a plan to address the structural and services deficits. None of our politicians seem willing to do this so let's create a position for somebody whose job it will be.

Multi-year Budgeting

In its 2012 White Paper, the Budget Advocates called for multi-year budgeting and have been repeating the call in the years since. Now, Controller Mejia calls for two-year budgeting. Two years is a good start.

The Budget Advocates continue to advocate for multi-year budgeting. While the Charter requires the Mayor to deliver a budget for the next fiscal year on or before April 20, it doesn't prohibit the Mayor from delivering a budget beyond the next fiscal year. The Mayor could develop a two-year budget and still deliver the next fiscal year according to the Charter's mandate. There's nothing in the Charter that prevents the Mayor from having thought through a multi-year budget.

Civil Service Reform

The City needs to find a way to overcome its employment logjam. The Civil Service bureaucracy remains stubborn in spite of Mayor Bass and Personnel Department General Manager Brown's desire to reform it. Departments are still waiting for cert lists of people from which they can hire and the lists still fall out-of-date leaving Departments with no choice but to wait.

Even Departments that have up-to-date cert lists find the process to hire so lengthy and cumbersome that filling their ranks is very difficult. By the time offers can be made, many candidates have found other employment.

This logjam must be broken. Civil Service reform, which is under discussion, must be undertaken. The City cannot afford to wait.

While we're reforming Civil Service, we need to reform employee compensation. The new 2023 contract for LAPD moved the City's Budget into deficit even before the City began to negotiate the civilian contracts. The deficit will only worsen. It is expected to rise to \$1 billion a year by 2028, greater than 7.5% of the City's \$12.8 billion budget.

In the past, one worked in a Civil Service job knowing the pay was less than in the private sector and the benefits, including retirement, were rich. The City is now improving the pay so Civil Service workers in the City get the private sector benefit of good pay and the public sector benefit of good benefits and generous retirement. If the City is going to pay market rate for its employees, it should consider moving to a 457(b) plan to make the employees partners in building their retirement benefits.

A Plan for Moving Forward

The City government's job is to deliver services. With the current cancellation of most open positions, how can the City provide the services its residents expect? It cannot. What is the plan to move forward? What is the plan to fix the structural deficit? What is the plan to fix the services deficit? While some individual departments have 5-year plans, the City does not. It needs one. We can't keep bouncing in and out of deficit like we do. We can't keep ignoring our crumbling infrastructure.

In its 2017 White Paper, the Budget Advocates began the call for long-range planning. The need continues today.

We are in a politically created financial crisis that could have been avoided or minimized or mitigated with some planning.

A Strong Reserve Fund

The temptation is to cover the budget gap by using the reserve funds. The reserve funds are there to protect the City in case of emergency. The City would have been in big trouble in 2020 if we hadn't had the reserve funds to cover our financial obligations until Federal money arrived when the Covid-19 pandemic shut everything down leaving the City without revenues. Thank goodness we had that money. The Budget Advocates urge the City to maintain our reserves at 10% of the Budget and to use those reserves only for emergencies and not to cover budget gaps that arise from the normal cost of business.

Civic Openness In Negotiations

The City should explore moving to open labor agreement negotiations using Civic Openness In Negotiations (COIN) or some other framework. All of the constituents of the labor agreements, voters and union members, would benefit from a more open process.

COIN is legal in California (see SB-331 signed by Governor Brown on October 9, 2015 requiring openness be applied to all large negotiations, not just labor agreements, if COIN is used) and has been practiced by Beverly Hills, Costa Mesa, and Fullerton.

COIN is supported in a [September 21, 2015 Los Angeles Times editorial](#), “Los Angeles could use more COIN.”

Labor Unions Influence Over Elected Officials

Through ethics reform, we need to treat union officials who are lobbying on behalf of their unions as registered lobbyists. Campaign contributions from the funds of labor unions should be prohibited. This is not to limit individual union members from lobbying their individual elected officials, a right enjoyed by every stakeholder of Los Angeles. This is not to prevent individual union members from contributing to the candidates of their choice. People whose job it is to lobby, must be treated like all other lobbyists.

Additional Departments Whose Positions Should Not Be Cut

The departments on whom the functioning of the City depends, such as Personnel and the Information Technology Agency, need to be funded. Emergency management is more than our first responders and the Emergency Management Department should also be funded.

The Personnel Department has a lot of work to do on Civil Service reform and compensation reform. Personnel was among the departments cut in response to the 2008-2009 financial crisis. As the City’s finances improved, Personnel was too underfunded to handle the rush of open positions. We should not repeat this mistake. Allow the Personnel Department to keep its open positions so it can do the reform work on its plate and prepare for the hiring rush that will happen when the finances improve.

The City works with an IT network that is greater than 60% end-of-life. Radio repairs, critical in emergencies, are underfunded. The City cannot work efficiently if its computer systems, radio technology, and networks are not current. The City must catch up and can only do so by keeping the Information Technology Agency’s positions open.

Emergency Management is critical for the safety of the City’s residents. No one can predict when the next earthquake, pandemic, freeway collapse, or other crisis will hit. The Emergency Management Department, for our own protection, should be funded and its positions kept open.

Additionally, any positions working on grant applications and grant management should be retained since the people filling these positions bring money into the City.

Some are thinking about preparedness for the Olympics in 2028. We’re wondering if we’re prepared for day-to-day life in 2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Animal Services Department

A. Recommendations to Help Achieve and Maintain No-Kill

- Fund the Animal Sterilization Fund in the amount of \$7.5 million from the General Fund to save the City tens of millions of dollars in the future [financial savings]
- Fund the Community Cat Program in the amount of \$2.4 million from the General Fund to meet the minimum requirement of the Environmental Impact Report, to partially make up for no funding for 10 years, and to save the City millions of dollars in the future [financial savings]
- Increase funding to the Animal Services Department to adequately care for stray, homeless, and surrendered animals and to provide safety in our neighborhoods

B. Recommendations to Increase Volunteer Support for the Shelters

- Continue to work to get volunteers from prior to the COVID-19 pandemic to return and to recruit new volunteers
- Reinstate volunteers who were terminated after talking to the press or posting on social media
- Start the Reserve Animal Control Officer (RACO) program [financial savings]

C. Recommendations Regarding Staffing

Hire the following additional personnel:

- 234 Animal Care Technicians (ACTs)
- 332 Animal Control Officers (ACOs)
- 9 Administrative Clerks
- 2 Management Analysts
- 12 Veterinarian IIs and Veterinarian Technicians
- 9 Animal Care Technician Supervisors
- 5 District Supervisors
- 1 Social Worker III
- 2 Social Worker IIs
- 1 Senior Carpenter
- 4 Carpenters

D. Recommendations Regarding Coyotes

- Work with the State Fish and Wildlife Department to come up with an effective and humane way to deal with urban coyotes
- Develop innovative programs to humanely deal with the increased presence of coyotes in our neighborhoods

E. Recommendations Regarding the Northeast Valley Animal Shelter

- Begin work to transition the Northeast Valley Shelter to a fully functioning municipal shelter, possibly using the City's Innovation Fund

F. Recommendations for Funding Increases

- \$100,000 in Operating Supplies Account
- \$600,000 in the animal Food/Feed and Grain Account
- \$35,000 in Overtime General Account
- Funding to purchase replacement military grade radios
- Funding for staff training

Department of Building and Safety

For the City:

- Proactively implement a mechanism for data sharing and tracking among the Department of Building and Safety, the Housing Department, City Planning, and other City departments for projects specifically including low-income units
- Ensure sufficient funding for Building and Safety to hire qualified professionals to staff all programs, and to provide relevant ongoing training in new technologies
- Enable expedited hiring procedures to fill urgent vacancies
- Fund the expansion of the Affordable Housing Tracking System to include all relevant data, especially with regards to low-income units, on a more timely basis
- Provide funds for Building and Safety to work with relevant departments and entities to integrate their requirements into the new LA City Permitting System
- Fund public engagement opportunities for organizations, businesses and residents to provide early, ongoing and meaningful input into the functionality, accessibility and implementation of the new LA City Permitting system
- Authorize funds for Building and Safety's Board of Commissioners to undergo training in the relevant codes and regulations

For the Department:

- Implement and apply a performance metric for low-income housing units that is consistent with the definition of low-income housing units in the 2021-2029 Housing Element
- Integrate these performance metrics into the current Plan Check and Inspection System permitting system and the new LA City Permitting System
- Implement procedures for clearing low-income units with the Housing Department to ensure that identifying Housing Department project information is captured in the Plan Check and Inspection System
- Implement adequate metrics to ensure all stakeholder concerns are considered and addressed in and in transition to the new system
- Establish policies to verify permit applicants comply with relevant requirements by all governmental entities prior to approval to proceed
- Develop and disseminate, on its website and with an introductory package to applicants, step-by-step easy-to-comprehend directives on compliance

City Administrative Officer

- Break the cycle of deficits in years where labor agreements are negotiated. Ideas include, but are not limited to, multi-year budgeting and negotiating contracts the year before they take effect.
- Pilot Civic Openness in Negotiations (COIN)
- Add liabilities to department budgets so they are aware of the amount of money the City pays out on their behalf

City Clerk

- Improve departmental training to increase consistency from employee to employee
- Vigorously test the new payroll system to be sure it can handle the difference between Civil Service and other types of employees
- Enact policies to increase engagement of new employees to reduce premature attrition and the recurring costs of replacement
- Continue focusing on retention of existing employees; not only does it cost less than hiring someone new, invaluable institutional memory is maintained

Civil + Human Rights and Equity

- Fund a full-time position for grants management [increased revenue]
- Continue L.A. REPAIR which allows local and often neglected communities to decide how some of the tax dollars will be spent in their neighborhoods. [Civic participation; Revenue neutral]
- Continue exploring ways to use philanthropic organizations to deliver for Los Angeles [extend the reach of the department without additional City funds]

Bureau of Contract Administration

For the City:

- Maintain current funding levels for the Construction Inspection Divisions to allow capital projects to continue to proceed at the current rate
- Maintain current funding levels to the Office of Contract Compliance to allow it to transition to a strategic wage theft enforcement approach currently being used by both the State and the U.S. Department of Labor
- Maintain current funding levels for outreach and education programs designed to promote small, local, and diverse businesses
- Provide additional funding from the proprietary departments for hiring and training new inspectors to allow the Bureau to provide for their increased inspection and compliance needs including Los Angeles World Airports for their multi-billion dollar improvement program.
- Maintain current funding levels for the Construction Inspection Divisions to allow capital projects to continue to proceed at the current rate

- Provide funding to the Office of Wage Standards for additional staff to enforce the City's recently adopted Minimum Wage Ordinance
- Provide funding to the Administrative Services Division to improve the record keeping of the Bureau and allow for a more orderly transition to a virtual record keeping, retention, and recall environment

Controller

- Advocate for multi-year budgeting's inclusion in the Charter reform proposals
- Advocate for inclusion of a CFO in the Charter reform proposals
- Focus audits on big ticket items and items with great impact on people's lives
- Develop a five-year strategic plan
- Develop Department-specific training and advocate for Personnel to develop City-specific training

Department of Cultural Affairs

- Provide money for baseline staffing.
- Succession planning 10-15% of the budget request.
- Items 12-20 on the budget request are the priorities.
- Encourage multi-year budgeting to clearly identify revenue needs.
- Revisit how cultural Affairs are funded to provide for more consistent revenue stream and increase the department's reserve fund.
- Reach out to community members interested in making suggestions of the types of cultural events of local interest.

Emergency Management Department

For the City:

- Establish a five-year plan to incrementally increase critical full-time personnel to ensure the Emergency Management Department is able to meet demands for present and future preparedness, response and recovery initiatives
- Fund an additional Public Information Officer to proactively improve outreach; a coordinator to develop and maintain a database accessible to the public on steps to take in emergencies; and personnel to access grant funding and handle relevant paperwork
- Provide access to at least \$1 million in emergency funds for the period at the start of a disaster before the City Council can meet and approve money for medical care, housing, potable water, and food
- Increase funding for new and emerging concerns including extreme weather and climate change

For the Department:

- Prioritize developing detailed loss projections, emphasizing specific human and financial consequences to encourage the City to adequately fund all Angelenos' needs
- Engage with the City Council's Public Safety Committee to develop and implement programs to limit the likelihood of significant impact from any disaster
- Develop an emergency status alert system for localized events to assist residents to understand which areas are affected, the severity, and actions to take
- Engage with Chambers of Commerce and other associations whose survival will be impacted if the EMD doesn't have the resources to quickly reopen businesses
- Develop three, five, and ten-year plans so the Department has clear parameters to pursue strategies and budgets including factoring in the World Cup and Olympics

For All Angelenos:

- Call your Councilmember about the urgent need to adequately fund the EMD and, when City budget discussions go live in April, post your concerns to the City Clerk's website [[<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=24-0600>]]

Ethics Commission

For the City:

- Fulfill the Commission's request for two new auditor positions
- Regularize the eight new positions added to the Ethics Commission in the FY 2023-2024 budget.

For the Ethics Commission:

- Pilot a social media presence to announce important meetings and educational opportunities.

Office of Finance

- Recommend a complete review of the financial structure of the City's financial departments.
- Consider and analyze:
 1. A Charter change to elect a City Financial Officer (could be the current Controller position)
 2. Review all City Departments that have any independent financial operations other than issuing requests for payments to be processed and moving any direct financial activity to either operations under the CFO or a department organized under the CFO.
 3. Establish all budgetary operations under the CFO with direct communication and input from each department.

4. Require all direct spending and collections be conducted under the direction of the CFO with input from each department.
5. Establish oversight with either a Mayoral Committee, a City Council Committee, a Public Commission, independent outside review board, or other acceptable method.

While these suggestions may be a radical change, there also would be a large operational improvement as well as considerable cost savings.

Housing Department

For the City:

- Work with the Department to ensure programs are adequately staffed
- Advocate against the proposed ballot measure that would amend the State Constitution to nullify Measure ULA

Information Technology Agency

For the City:

- In conjunction with the Personnel Department, implement technical improvements to streamline hiring, increasing efficiency and the effective delivery of services
- Fund the Information Technology Agency to keep equipment and software, including the City's radio system, up to date to best enable City departments to provide services, and keep the City fully operational
- Fund the Zero Trust model to keep the City at the zenith of cybersecurity strength to reduce the risk of cyber attacks

For the Department:

- Post Department metrics to the website to increase transparency
- Expand the strategic plan to cover five-years to broaden its vision

Personnel

- Provide the public with the data necessary to make an informed decision on Charter Amendments related to Civil Service hiring and whether it should be placed on the ballot.
- Improve the Department's communication of job opportunities and hiring practices to job-seekers.

Department of City Planning

- Provide access to language translation for City Planning Department hearings

- Use the closest City Planning facility to the project under review for holding hearings so neighbors are able to attend and participate
- Require three-story and higher Residential Density Bonus development projects, including those using the Transit Oriented Communities program, that are built on commercial corridors include retail space on the ground floor
- Thirty percent of ground floor retail spaces built on residential corridors should be reserved for low-to-moderate income businesses as supported by net businesses sales-receipts, businesses displaced by development projects, and businesses on the verge of being displaced

Los Angeles Public Library

For the City:

- Approve the proposed Library Budget submittal Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Board of Public Works

For the City:

- Provide the Department the funding to allow it to continue staff development through community outreach and improvements to the hiring process.
- Authorize the hiring of an Emergency Management Coordinator who will coordinate the emergency response of the Bureaus within the Department in communication with other City departments.
- Develop policies and procedures to combat copper wire theft and provide Street Services with the funding it needs to make repairs more quickly.

Department of Recreation and Parks

- Expedite hiring improvements to ensure sufficient staffing for all programs and maintenance
- Provide necessary replacement funding to sustain and expand the childcare program
- Fund increased programming at Senior Centers in response to the growing numbers of older Angelenos
- Enhance funding for increased maintenance at high use facilities to combat graffiti and crime

Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System and Fire and Police Pension Plan

For the Departments:

- Work with Personnel and CAO on hiring for specialized positions.
- Strengthen investment management.
- Improve IT capabilities.

- Develop recommendations for full funding.
- Lower the investment rate assumption.
- Maintain ARC for plans that are fully funded.

For the City:

- Ensure full readiness and accuracy of the Human Resources & Payroll system before launch.
- Appoint qualified commissioners.
- Develop explicit policy that pension plans are not sources of funds for the City.

Bureau of Street Lighting

- Work with Neighborhood Councils in neighborhoods targeted for public wi-fi to receive their input on what they want and where they want it
- Extract Smart City Goals table from the 5-year strategic plan and publish on the Department's own web page where results can be shared with the public
- Create new job classifications to replace employees due to turnover and retirement
- Consider switching from electric power to solar for streetlights

Bureau of Street Services

For the City:

- Fund nine new resolution authority positions for a second Risk and Liability crew to reduce liability claims [cost savings]
- Reform the Civil Service to make hiring easier and more efficient [potential cost savings in liability claims reduction]
- Fund positions that work on grants [increased revenue]

Youth Development Department

- Proceed as planned in developing Youth Development Strategic Plan
- Educate the public about the Youth Development Department (YDD) and all youth programs.
- Develop system of accountability in conjunction with the Working Group

Los Angeles Zoo

- Pursue the animal welfare aspects of the Vision Plan as a top priority
- Move forward in removing invasive plants and replacing them with native flora to assist in improving the City's ecological system
- Focus on environmental impacts when deciding which animal exhibits to prioritize
- Consider not adding additional human-centered facilities to save native habitat from destruction

- Halt plans to commercialize a ridgeline to preserve the character of Griffith Park and reduce the City's capital costs for years to come

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL BUDGET ADVOCATES RECOMMENDATIONS ON REVENUE AND EFFICIENCIES

REVENUE

Animal Services Department – Recommendations to the City

- Fund the Animal Sterilization Fund in the amount of \$7.5 million from the General Fund to save the City tens of millions of dollars in the future [financial savings]
- Fund the Community Cat Program in the amount of \$2.4 million from the General Fund to meet the minimum requirement of the Environmental Impact Report, to partially make up for no funding for 10 years, and to save the City millions of dollars in the future [financial savings]
- Start the Reserve Animal Control Officer (RACO) program [financial savings]

City Administrative Officer

- Add liabilities to department budgets so they are aware of the amount of money the City pays out on their behalf

Civil + Human Rights and Equity – Recommendation to the City

- Fund a full-time position for grants management [increased revenue]

Emergency Management Department – Recommendation to the City

- Provide access to at least \$1 million in emergency funds for the period at the start of a disaster before the City Council can meet and approve money for medical care, housing, potable water, and food [time is money and, in this case, can be lives]

Office of Finance

- Recommend a complete review of the financial structure of the City's financial departments.
- Consider and analyze:
 1. A Charter change to elect a City Financial Officer (could be the current Controller position)
 2. Review all City Departments that have any independent financial operations other than issuing requests for payments to be processed and moving any direct financial activity to either operations under the CFO or a department organized under the CFO.
 3. Establish all budgetary operations under the CFO with direct communication and input from each department.
 4. Require all direct spending and collections be conducted under the direction of the CFO with input from each department.

5. Establish oversight with either a Mayoral Committee, a City Council Committee, a Public Commission, independent outside review board, or other acceptable method.

While these suggestions may be a radical change, there also would be a large operational improvement as well as considerable cost savings.

Information Technology Agency – Recommendation to the City

- Fund the Zero Trust model to keep the City at the zenith of cybersecurity strength to reduce the risk of cyber attacks

Board of Public Works – Recommendation to the City

- Develop policies and procedures to combat copper wire theft and provide Street Services with the funding it needs to make repairs more quickly.

Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System and Fire and Police Pension Plan – Recommendation to the Departments

- Strengthen investment management.

Bureau of Street Lighting

- Consider switching from electric power to solar for streetlights

Bureau of Street Services – Recommendations to the City

- Fund nine new resolution authority positions for a second Risk and Liability crew to reduce liability claims [cost savings]
- Reform the Civil Service to make hiring easier and more efficient [potential cost savings in liability claims reduction]
- Fund positions that work on grants [increased revenue]

Los Angeles Zoo

- Halt plans to commercialize a ridgeline to preserve the character of Griffith Park and reduce the City's capital costs for years to come

EFFICIENCIES TO SAVE FUNDS IN THE LONG TERM**Animal Services Department**

- Continue to work to get volunteers from prior to the COVID-19 pandemic to return and to recruit new volunteers
- Reinstate volunteers who were terminated after talking to the press or posting on social media

City Administrative Officer

- Break the cycle of deficits in years where labor agreements are negotiated. Ideas include, but are not limited to, multi-year budgeting and negotiating contracts the year before they take effect.
- Add liabilities to department budgets so they are aware of the amount of money the City pays out on their behalf

City Clerk

- Vigorously test the new payroll system to be sure it can handle the difference between Civil Service and other types of employees
- Enact policies to increase engagement of new employees to reduce premature attrition and the recurring costs of replacement
- Continue focusing on retention of existing employees; not only does it cost less than hiring someone new, invaluable institutional memory is maintained

Civil + Human Rights and Equity

- Continue exploring ways to use philanthropic organizations to deliver for Los Angeles [extend the reach of the department without additional City funds]

Controller

- Advocate for multi-year budgeting's inclusion in the Charter reform proposals
- Advocate for inclusion of a CFO in the Charter reform proposals

Housing Department – Recommendation to the City

- Advocate against the proposed ballot measure that would amend the State Constitution to nullify Measure ULA

Information Technology Agency – Recommendations to the City

- In conjunction with the Personnel Department, implement technical improvements to streamline hiring, increasing efficiency and the effective delivery of services
- Fund the Information Technology Agency to keep equipment and software, including the City's radio system, up to date to best enable City departments to provide services, and keep the City fully operational

Personnel

- Improve the Department's communication of job opportunities and hiring practices to job-seekers.

Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System and Fire and Police Pension PlanFor the Departments:

- Develop recommendations for full funding.
- Maintain ARC for plans that are fully funded.

For the City:

- Ensure full readiness and accuracy of the Human Resources & Payroll system before launch.
- Develop explicit policy that pension plans are not sources of funds for the City.

Los Angeles Zoo

- Pursue the animal welfare aspects of the Vision Plan as a top priority
- Move forward in removing invasive plants and replacing them with native flora to assist in improving the City's ecological system
- Focus on environmental impacts when deciding which animal exhibits to prioritize
- Consider not adding additional human-centered facilities to save native habitat from destruction

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL BUDGET ADVOCATES THEMES OF THE 2024 WHITE PAPER

Where to Find Recommendations by Theme:

REVENUE and EFFICIENCIES

Revenue: Animal Services, City Administrative Officer, Civil + Human Rights and Equity, Emergency Management, Finance, Information Technology, Public Works, Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System and Fire and Police Pension Plan, Street Lighting, Street Services, Zoo

Efficiencies to save funds in the long run: Animal Services, City Administrative Officer, City Clerk, Civil + Human Rights and Equity, Controller, Housing, Information Technology, Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System and Fire and Police Pension Plan, Zoo

Efficiencies via technology/Automation: City Clerk, Information Technology

PERSONNEL/STAFFING

Hiring: Animal Services, Building and Safety, Civil + Human Rights and Equity, Contract Administration, Emergency Management, Housing, Personnel, Public Works; Recreation and Parks, Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System and Fire and Police Pension Plan, Street Lighting

Retention/Benefits/Salary: City Clerk, Cultural Affairs, Ethics

ADDITIONAL THEMES, Alphabetically

Animal Care: Animal Services, Zoo

Business: Planning

Chief Financial Officer: Controller, Finance

Civic Engagement: Civil + Human Rights and Equity, Planning

Cleanliness: Recreation and Parks

Climate: Emergency Management, Zoo

Coordination between Departments and with Other Governmental Entities: Animal Services, Building and Safety, Contract Administration, Emergency Management, Public Works, Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System and Fire and Police Pension Plan

Data/Technology: Building and Safety, City Clerk, Emergency Management, Ethics, Information Technology, Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System and Fire and Police Pension Plan, Street Lighting

Enforcement: Contract Administration

Emergencies: Emergency Management

Homelessness/Housing: Building and Safety, Housing

Investments: Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System and Fire and Police Pension Plan

Neighborhood Councils: Street Lighting

Outreach: Building and Safety, Contract Administration, Cultural Affairs, Emergency Management, Personnel

Seniors: Recreation and Parks

Strategy: Controller, Cultural Affairs, Emergency Management, Information Technology, Public Works, Street Lighting

Training: Building and Safety, City Clerk, Contract Administration, Controller

Transparency: City Administrative Officer

Youth: Recreation and Parks, Youth

Concerns Expressed by Budget Day 2023 Attendees

After the Budget Day plenary session, attendees are invited to attend a discussion of the City services they see lacking in their neighborhoods. The people who participate in these discussions are primarily Neighborhood Council board members who are bringing with them the insights they gained from their positions as board members.

The attendees are divided into 7 rooms (in 2023 the rooms were virtual Zoom rooms) depending on the region of the City in which their Neighborhood Councils reside. The full descriptions of the regions along with the Neighborhood Councils in each one can be found at <https://empowerla.org/councils-by-service-region/>.

The Budget Advocates use the concerns brought to these sessions to help formulate the questions we ask during the Department meetings that are the source of our Departmental reports.

The main areas of concern were, in no particular order, housing, homelessness, public safety, and infrastructure.

The remainder of this report provides a sorted (by topic and region) collection of the comments received. The language and grammar reflect what was said and grammatical errors and language belong to the speakers. The Budget Advocates suggest the City Council, as it is working on the budget, take into account the concerns of its constituents.

Governance/Governmental Access/Ethics/Budget

Northeast and Northwest Valley

- There is a tower effect across all city departments where there is no communication with other city departments on shared projects
- 311 app still has gaps where information is not communicated in a consistent or timely manner
- There need to be better approach for improving 311 calls
- There is not enough discussion about ways to reduce costs in the City Budget
- There should be a report on the value that money that is spent on different programs provides. This would require a better tracking system. For example, the billions of dollars that has been spent on the homeless industry without seeing any noticeable improvement.
- Hoping for another round of funding for LA Repair
- The budget was increased, exponentially, this year (2023). The Mayor stated that she was going to deny bringing city departments to pre-Covid levels with the exception of the LAPD. The budget took a hit with the great loss of revenue during Covid and required a federal bail-out to prevent bankruptcy. There needs to be a balancing of the funds to be used for the homeless and by the different city departments.
- Better representation for Sun Valley in L.A. REPAIR which is currently underserved
- Advisory committees in the City that have seats open. Some are getting more resources because they have better representation.

Southwest and Southeast Valley

- Increasing revenue could be gained by maximizing fines by the Ethics Commission for misconduct. Presently fines are \$5,000.00 and should be increased to \$20,000.00
- The Ethics Commission needs funding for an investigator position
- The Ethics Commission needs an independent budget
- The Ethics Commission needs an auditor's position as there are very few auditors
- By creating bounty positions to report fraud, with a percentage awarded to the person who reported the violation, this engages the citizen, perhaps with a citizen commission.
- There is a need for more centralized shared services and not duplication of services
- There is a critical need to capture discretionary measures of City Council; money that is coming in and out. Transparency of revenue received and how it is being sent out. There is a difference in regional spendings as it is being allotted and used. Ethics violation?
- Each council member's contribution and a community citizen's group should be formed that would oversee managing funds and reviewing discretionary funds.
- Focus should be placed on the allowable goals and the ability to focus on areas that are not engaged. The existing neighborhood councils might be an avenue to bring into structure instead of setting a new structure.

- There may be a central group that is conducting such organizing. Nonprofits going out to communities with a message. This needs to work proactively with the neighborhood council system. We need to hear all of this and not channel it through a new department.
- The participatory budget is \$3M and last year it was \$8.5M. The communities with more needs are being addressed in the budget process. A review is needed of what was submitted and what was accepted, given the totality of the budget.
- Needs are not being addressed. Programs are created for notoriety. The budget is not oriented to the average person. Council members are unresponsive to our needs. That is a huge part of the problem we are having. What they are doing is not what they are saying.
- Some of the projects as related to the budget are meaningless. There is a systemic problem. Why are the underserved communities getting what they need and let us not form a new department. Why do they get underserved in the first place? How does the community come forward? There should be an “at large” system. Everyone in LA should receive the same service.
- Opportunities for convenient public comment on the Budget was very limited this year

Central

- Pico Union is suffering due to a lack of focus from the City Council. 1.67 square miles for 50,000 people - not counting the homeless - exacerbates many of these issues.
- It seems as if you go through the regular measure to get a request for services, that the City Council (a 311 or another service number request) takes a long time to get the request back and completed. However, if you know someone high in the council, you get a timely response. Is this fair? It seems that your response time is dependent on who you know.
- The area has been split, but they tend to be vocal and communicative about their issues to the council. (Re gentrification)
- Going through the system and its normal process is frustrating; the City will close requests without resolving the issues. Supposedly the City will send help in 24 hours but that is not often the case.
- For years, requests of helping Spanish speakers make 311 requests were not addressed but it seems as if they are finally starting to be addressed.
- DWP has been good for the most part, but the biggest issue is in the City Hall demanding DWP do things that are not necessarily within DWP’s purview. Bloomenfield spoke about how some specialized funds are subsidizing a lot of generalized funds with “related costs” such as medical benefits and pension costs.
- A big issue is staffing, where a lot of the departments are understaffed. Sewer fees, other fees mean these departments are funded but still understaffed.

- When city departments have to work with other city departments, it can be a nightmare. Heard from a worker that the departments all have separate timelines, don't talk to each other, and money is misappropriated.
- A motion from Karen Bass to get departments to work together to deal with issues such as homelessness was seen. The departments don't communicate with each other.
- The way to get things done in City Hall is through litigation or a ballot measure.
- There are issues of getting new people to perform tasks related to neighborhood council.

East and Northeast

- Why don't we have the same districts as the City Councils? It would make life for NC so much better. Why can't it be fixed?
- I believe we're going to have a total reorganization of City Council districts. Example that might apply: CD4: extends from Silverlake, all the way across the valley and into Hollywood, so many distinct concerns for each of those three vast areas. So unless they come up with City Council districts that represent a geographical area and where there might be common concerns, I don't know if that will work. But I think it's a really important issue.
- That would make things a lot easier for my NC. CD1 and CD14 have very different concerns. They could work together, They could help that a lot.
- Mejia called for a 2-year operational budget. Think we need a min 2 years and extend it to 5 or 10 in many areas.
- Need to address bureaucracy, lack of technology, need to train people in management skills. And Promoting from within prevents people from coming in with new perspectives
- I'm very discouraged with the political process of the city and looking at my different options and whether I can add value. Looking at the City and my NC. I don't really see an end, don't know if anything we do is adding real impact, or value.
- We don't plan ahead. We don't have enough money. We over-commit to the things we can't afford and we can't do things that we have to and need to do.
- Fascinating that all the NCs get the same budget every year, regardless of size. Don't want to lose ours, but makes me wonder if that's still a realistic decision.
- Some of the rules around the usage of our funding can be harsher than they need to be.
- I don't think that we represent the neighborhood as being historically working class, as having a large Spanish-speaking community, that's been my angle trying to get other representatives reflecting the diversity we have here.
- Huge need for a relationship between the people in these depts. Have not seen an interest in their part to own up to their mistakes and to take responsibilities for things in their dept. Also brings up concerns of who's watching their funding.
- I would like the City Controller to do a study about the graft, the pay to play going on in the city - happening with city council members all throughout the city.

- The thing came into being to address this in the 80s and 90s. Until they enforce regulations, not much we can do. Huizar - ethics was onto him. Advocates for the city many need to demand that if the fed dept sticks their nose in, they don't stop the city from removing these people, so we are not without qualified representation.
- That's it, it's a mentality throughout decision making at city hall based on the 1930s, I'll scratch your back, you scratch mine, instead of any kind of democratic thing. And they need to divide the city into much smaller district. Councilmembers represent 250,000 people each. They got to split up the areas and take the power away from the individuals. Much as I hate bureaucracy, it can be done well. Put the power in hands of people who know what they're doing and make so that they cannot be bought. We've put our heart and soul into fighting this and we've totally lost.

West

- It is troubling that the Metro communications network never had public hearing but was implemented via a supplemental budget memo. The budget process was misused.
- City Council was forgiving hotels their TOT. That is a problem.
- Top 5 issue: Enforce the rules.
- Departments do not work well together. The effects efficiency.
- When Villaragosa slashed budgets, and laid off people. They cut across the board. They need to not cut revenue generating programs. Almost nobody got laid off. 4000 went to DWP and got a 15% raise. We actually increased costs. We should fund 100% basic core services. Identify the core services and fund them.
- The ADA issue. The City has a large budget for liability. An RV was taking up 3 handicapped spaces. Threatened a lawsuit. Was told please sue us. That's the only way we can respond. The CA said if we don't have a place to move them, there's nothing we can do. The department of disability needs to have more teeth to be able to affect change. The CAs don't wait until sued. Do what you have to do.

Harbor

- The City's quarterly FSR (Financial Status Report) is not very helpful
- There's a lack of transparency

Public Works

Northeast and Northwest Valley

- City Lighting needs to be looked into as there is a very slow timeframe for repairs and this creates opportunities for crime
- Sun Valley has a lack of infrastructure
- Sun Valley needs more bus shelters
- Sun Valley needs more street lights
- Need better management of the trees
- Street Cleaning needs to be updated and address in Sun Valley
- There needs to be a prioritization of funding paving for streets and alleys and resurfacing projects
- We should be taking a closer look at what's going on with street repair funds
- Nowhere in the budget does it talk about how Street Services brings in revenue. While they are extremely short handed, there are millions of dollars not being written right now. He's concerned about this and wants to know why there have been no tickets written in his area over the past 8 weeks? He would like the city to address this in the budget.

Southwest and Southeast Valley

- Street cleaning frequency, cost of repeated clean-ups in the same areas, over-and-over for the same service and still not attaining the cleanliness standard

Central

- Pico Union has many overgrown trees and cracked sidewalks.
- Pico Union was clean and safe in the past during compared to today
- City is not good on issues such as street lighting issue requests. It seems that some of this is due to a backlog of requests.
- Affiliates of the National Health Foundation will help deal with the illegal dumping.
- Dumping that leads to methane has been an issue.
- Trying to contact multiple departments is futile and it takes 6-7 months for a response. \$76 million spent on "bioswells" and tree wells project for planting trees and making park-like areas, but now they are empty and full of trash seemingly because the multiple departments are not fully communicating and cooperating with each other to bring this project to fruition. These bioswells have been abandoned since 2018. The multiple departments seem to be content just finishing their individual part without communicating and coordinating to finish this project. Ryan Jackson, an environmentalist, was coordinating to help finish this unfinished project.

East and Northeast

- Beg to differ. Things like street cleaning
- When I brought up street cleaning they told me the city has gardeners. You don't need a gardner to clean the streets.
- Theft of copper on the Hyperion bridge so city removed streetlights that have historic value
- I feel very strongly that the LASan department needs to restructure its fees to first reduce the garbage pails to quarter of size. And increase the cost for people putting out more than that. We all need to reduce the amount of garbarga we use, the dumps are taking over, the methane is ridiculous. And we need to reevaluate how they're collecting garbara - bugs, flies, rats becoming overwhelming especially in summer months, worry that it wil spread disease.
- Had a huge manhole on my street that was sticking up really high. Neighbor had to get entire oil pan replaced. Was causign a lot of car damage and leakage. They finally fixed the manhole. Was from before the pandemic.Took about 3-4 years of nagging to get it fixed.
- Concern is about fixing potholes, especially the large ones in a timely manner.

South

- Concerned with street sweeping issues. Too many streets are not being swept.
- Also experiencing lack of street sweeping. Need more city services with street cleanup
- Trash bins overflowing
- Heard about trash pick up from hairstylist.
- The illegal dumping is an equity issue. We have a civil rights dept charged with looking into these issues. Heavily impacting the community.
- The illegal dumping is construction materials left by others. Who is in the task force for this? They are dumping because it gets cleaned but then they repeat offend. Can they put a camera to find out who's doing it and why.
- And this is a civil rights issue. Child care provider and kids cannot walk on the sidewalk.
- There were cameras and they found the person and prosecuted them. It is a civil rights issue. Big equity issue. Needs to invest in infrastructure.

West

- There are planned revenues from advertising programs with the street furniture program. Part of that should go to RAISE fund and part to Council discretionary funds. The places these funds can be used go beyond transportation amenities. The first \$3M will go to council discretionary funds. There is no guarantee there will be \$3M generated so the City-wide fund could wind up with nothing.
- Street furniture and lack of strategic planning around signage. They are approving programs that compete with STAP. Curren Price moved to have children's orthopedic hospital have a special sign district. We need not to undermine STAP.

- How can we educate the public more about littering and dog waste?
- There are barely any trash cans around? How can we get more waste baskets around the neighborhood?
- Can the City provide services for people who don't pick up animal waste? Don't know what the solution is. Was threatened by a neighbor when she requested someone pick up their dog waste. What can the City do to help remove the dog waste.
- We often try to protect our urban forest but there are never building inspectors available beyond business hours. DBS needs to address this in some manner. We need a process that does not rely on the police. We are told the City can take no action because it wasn't witnessed by a City employee. The city should empower NC members or someone else to handle the gap.
- There was a study done that DBS and Planning be merged. The result was not politically acceptable to DBS. DBS doesn't carry out what Planning sets. Can DBS be under some other department to make sure the rules are carried out? Or create better training for those who are meant to do it.
- DBS does not enforce their fines
- They don't enforce the law. They don't inspect.
- We need keep the City clean. Protected bike lanes are gathering crap.
- The City doesn't focus on things that protect us, sidewalk repair and infrastructure. We need to address what people want to make the City livable, our quality of life.
- Are there independent audits in the field. A palm tree was cut down in the morning. Then people went to lunch and dawdled the rest of the day.
- Tree trimming. Parts of trees fall. They say they can't trim the trees because they can't trim often enough.
- Man in Palms had a stroke. He's supposed to walk and he's supposed to use a walker. The sidewalk is bad on both sides of where he lives so he's trapped unless he walks without the walker. We helped him file an ADA request for a sidewalk repair. He was told it will be 10 years. Will he even be alive in 10 years?
- Fees haven't been raised for street lighting and sanitation, etc
- Blumenfield talked about copper wire theft. Why should the taxpayers pay for this? Los Angeles is expensive. Raising fees exacerbate the problem.
- Top 5 issue: Street cleaning (two people)
- Top 5 issue: Potholes (two people)
- Top 5 issue: Sidewalks (three people)
- Top 5 issue: Urban forest
- Top 5 issue: Littering/dog waste education/trash cans
- Willits settlement. It takes 10 years to get a fix with an ADA complaint.

Harbor

- Repairs are needed for streets

- Bike lanes and sidewalk

Homelessness/Housing/Construction

Northeast and Northwest Valley

- Homelessness in Sun Valley with lots of industrial zones which host a lot of RVs
- People are depressed because they are not seeing any improvements in homelessness

Southwest and Southeast Valley

- The cost of homeless and housing without oversight, seems endless, and where is this going to end and what is the fiscal responsibility
- There is a need for oversight, homeless services and the Inside Safe contract, and transparency of contractors. Who is the contractor as it was redacted There is an area of nontransparency.
- Concern on community safety, housing contracts redacting the contractor's information on site. We need to get back to basics and we can do other things as needed.
- From a City Watch LA article, "The City of Los Angeles' current budget for homelessness is \$1.3 billion, or \$31,700 per unhoused person in the city (currently estimated at 41,000). Added to the County's expense, that's \$75,185 per homeless person in the city. According to the US Census, the median family income in 2021 was \$69,778; Los Angeles spends 107 percent of the average family's income on each homeless person."
- The inside safe contracts literally have the hotel names redacted. I've never seen anything like that in my time of looking at contracts

Central

- Pico Union is surrounded by highways, bridges, tracks, and thus the area is surrounded by homelessness, homeless encampments
- Homeless encampment issues get acknowledged but getting service back takes a long time, and it seems that it does involve who you know in the Council to get action.
- You can build apartments and get permits but without being covenanted thus contributing to lack of affordable housing.
- The Housing Department (LAHD) does not have a good way of managing data. LAHD is not being collaborated with by (Department of Building and Safety) LADBS and so these buildings are not being affordable.
- Different agencies need funding from different sources and departments. 33.3 to 40% of costs for these units are "soft costs" - environmental, planning, lawyers, all elements to bring these projects together and then waging/labor issues. Frustrations in dealing with the government are seemingly many strange provisions or regulations.
- Efficiency issues with these departments.
- Private groups building things without city and public funds, and thus project labor agreements for efficiency.

East and Northeast

- Increase in lack of affordability for living in the city - apts and houses, but also for services. So it becomes discriminatory because how these fees are applied is often not equitable.
- I lived year in one of the new tiny homes. Think it's great to see city resources in action like that.
- Agree with the city state of emergency being a very hopeful promise. But a lot of work and resources need to be thrown at it so it will be interesting.
- Try to have conversations with the unhoused. We have encampments on every corner now.
- The Silverlake area needs help with homeless encampments. And that on the neighborhods have been clean, that they don't fill up
- The bridge on Sunset blvd. That goes over Silverlake bridge where a giant encampment has been in place since around the time this year where our councilperson changed. A couple days ago there was a huge cleanup. Which was posted properly. All the tents were removed. But one is already back. This is an historic landmark. I've talked with the planning deputy, who I think its going to take on the task of making sure that landmark is treated the way a landmark should be treated. And these encampments attract graffiti This is a giant issues for our Silverlake community.

West

- We can't allow the City to replicate what happened with the Ramada Inn. We turned it over the PATH for \$1. PATH can spend 2 years rehabbing it. Tax dollars can't be used to fund non-profits.
- Lives within extended stay purchased for \$55M. There were two independent appraisers who appraised at \$40M and another \$11M in fees. Average cost per unit is \$350K. It was a successful hotel. Even during Covid they were at 70% occupancy. We are losing their tax dollars. Do not agree with spending our tax money on a non-profit. Pick properties that are not generating revenue for the City.
- Wants accountability to how many homeless are housed and where there are.
- As the City owns properties, there is a huge problem with units becoming damaged by the residents placed in them. Skid Row Trust had so many damaged units they couldn't be occupied.
- Top 5 issue: Homeless on streets
- Top 5 issue: Homelessness
- Top 5 issue: RVs
- The feds need to fix homelessness.
- Why do we give properties to non-profits? The City is incapable of maintenance.

City Planning and Building and Safety

Northeast and Northwest Valley

- There is a disconnect between Building & Safety and City Planning and there needs to be an overhaul
- Building & Safety and City Planning are major issues in Sun Valley
- There are incongruent businesses next to homes and this requires a review and possible update of the Community Plan
- Building and Safety and City Planning also have major issues

Central

- In another area of Region 5 it seems as though gentrification is successfully encroaching into the area.
- The area is an upper income white area especially compared to the rest of LA
- LADBS is not being responsive. They are good at giving data but not in other ways.

East and Northeast

- I'm from Highland Park, did not know Hermon was a neighborhood that does not serve liquor or beer. I'm a 10 year bartender. My research is on daily separation patterns. Comparing to excessive amount of bars in highland park.
- I don't think our community plans are being done in a timely fashion Would like to see them done more swiftly.
- Street construction that came to a halt. Started digging, then realized there was a problem and had to wait for a long time. Know a big issues is labor.
- Any problems go to Engineering, which is vastly understaffed.
- What we're experiencing is that as people want to build more and more, they're taking over and buying land that's not relay accessible. Mostly in Mt. Washington - it does not have the infrastructure to support land development. They want to build streets to get to the land they purchased. But there's a specific building plan for Mt Washington and they have to meet more standards. But I also think those standards should be extended to all hillside communities.
- People are building on hillsides that have never been built on before. Should extend that to wildlife - losing wildlife and wil never replace it. Can't fix it by putting a few extra trees in. Especially for virgin land, we should have more stringent rules.
- I have a land use matter, regarding parking. Those people who want to see giant, 9 story buildings. Not many current residents are pleased. They come with half a parking space and people in my community are having trouble finding parking today. When they build more residences, they come with half a parking space per unit, some shared with retail. So our people won't have places to park. Most people in market rate community have 2 wage earners and usually two vehicles. Some garages built for Modell T and

accommodate 1 car. My husband and I have 2 garages. I think parking is a giant issues and the city needs to addresses - the way is for our city council people to talk with developers about our current state of affairs in our community. Then the developers can decide whether they want to provide more than half a car being able to park in their community.

- I want to see community plans get done quickly.
- And the current council pres who was chair of the budget and finance committee said Community plans means the council person doesn't get to make all the decisions.
- Planning for the community - need guidelines. Not always followed, but then it takes action to go around what's in the community plans.
- And they need to reflect the community - not the politicians, not a large business that have interests that are divergent from the people who are in the communities. Think there needs to be a reality check going on regarding parking and exchange parking spaces for bike parking is abhorrent.
- public space often provided is rooftops, or patios on the building, not accessible to the public
- I think they need to rethink the transit system for building. Cedillo - Figueroa and Pasadena - there's a 7 floor structure and no driveway. Bec it's close to transit - 75 unit, 12 retail, - 5 parking spots. And it's a busy busy intersection. And Cedillo signed off on it in November just before he left. So the houses across the street in the back see a 7 story wall. Don't see any sunshine until mid-day. It's a terrible situation in the community. But meets requirements for transit. Hernandez voted yes. (rep for community). It's not low income housing. 10 units are going to be low income. Designed with a kitchen and bathroom. Went to the community and we lost. And it's so demoralizing. We need housing, but not that kind of housing.
- That goes back to whole issues of affordability. Building "affordable housing" is doing absolutely nothing to reduce the number of people on the streets. And increases value of housing in surrounding areas, which then drives up rent. Becomes a spiral.

West

- Building and Safety needs an inspection team for billboard compliance. The fees are not high enough to fund staffing such a team.
- Home sharing. In the current budget there is additional budget for Planning for home sharing enforcement. DBS and Housing are the ones who issue citations and their budgets were not increased. The Department is issuing flat fines of \$500. This could be cost of doing business. LADBS fees, particularly for building single family homes, are too low and there isn't adequate staffing.
- The penalties for home sharing violations should be increased.
- There are people illegally running hotels. They are paying TOT and property tax. These are long term rentals being turned into short term rentals. One project was 60 long term

apartments. Their stealing our long term living situations. They go after small guys and garage conversions. It's the REAP program. Housing is really important. Illegal hotel conversions are removing units from the market. These operations should be treated the same way as homeowners caught running a business out of their homes.

- Parks. About 30,000 people live inside the Palms NC boundaries. For those 30,000 people we have one very small park. We need more green space.
- Buildings have a set back above the ground. Below ground they're building parking from property line to property line, leaving no place to plant trees in the ground. This will lead to heat island effect. We need green space including trees in the ground, not in planters.
- Top 5 issue: DBS fine enforcement (two people)

Transportation and Infrastructure

Northeast and Northwest Valley

- There is an extreme danger to pedestrians in Los Angeles as the general attitude that “streets are for cars and pedestrians are not considered.”

Southwest and Southeast Valley

- There is also a need for a traffic commission for bicyclists and traffic measures, perhaps with concrete barriers, not just street striping

Central

- Pico Union has issues with parking due to events nearby making so much traffic and out of towners parking overnight, double & triple parking in spaces therefore very few spaces

East and Northeast

- Goldline. Obstructing sidewalks.
- It came up about making metro and bus transit free throughout the city - will make the need for cars to go down. But you need to improve the public transit and make it financially worthwhile. Having to rent a car for some places and paying large amounts to go on transit, esp when it's physically risky in some places - versus costs of having a car. Can't change existing people, but get 17,18,19 year olds used to public transit instead of insisting on a car for their birthday.
- We've had issues in Hermon with the amount of helicopters that fly by. We 're under a military flight path. Year and a half ago, there was a major communication with the Mayor's office and they had a helicopter buzzing around for at least an hour. Made excuses, but never came back to meeting to say what they'd learned, how they would move forward.
- Helicopters in Highland Park are interested in that you have the police helicopters, but then also a flock of new helicopters. We see that over the 110 on an ongoing basis. But for anyone who lives in the hills, the helicopters don't always keep proper distance, have been 50 feet above my house. But can't do anything about that.
- The bus line, 256, they're going to discontinue it. It runs through Monterrey road, goes to CalState LA, Highland Park.
- I think that's a real complaint; a real issue. The bus lane that goes in front of my house on Glendale Blvd. that bus line went away a year ago. If you take bus lines away, there will be equal and more vehicles on the road. Transportation needs to be aware of that in a way that they'll reconsider some of their actions.
- Mine says Micro AC MiniBus will replace it, but don't know how. There aren't that many.

- Needs to be a review in the planning process for Vision Zero. Maybe the City Controller could look at whether it is working. Don't think this reaches its goal. Would like reassessment.
- Sunset Blvd. is a giant parking lot at commute times. I've had to wait for numerous turnarounds of red light cycles. The vision of Vision Zero is to reduce the size of the two lanes in each direction. The middle is where the giant trucks park to unload for the retail businesses and restaurants. So you'll be right next to the spokes of those vehicles. And they'll have enclosed bicycle lanes. They don't currently use the existing bicycle lanes. Plan to put one enclosed on each side of the street, to block access for cars and protect them. Only see motorcycles, which don't belong in the bicycle lane anyway. And if you pass in those lanes, you're going in the wrong direction, could be head on collision. Many use lanes to pass. Or drive through traffic.
- Bollards - have seen bicyclists go head on into them. Our bicyclists need to follow the law.
- The police and justices need to stop giving into bicyclists demands and enforce that they don't run stop signs, red lights.

West

- There was a proposed revision to the L.A. sign ordinance that included increased penalties for violations. Our fees are too low and the cost of doing business.
- Who is responsible when the IKE program can issue an RFP without outreach to NCs? Nobody asked LATDOT to look at the costs.
- Metro communications network. The focus on revenues is inviting blight. Some are proposed for the Westside. Am appalled.

Public Safety

Northeast and Northwest Valley

- There is a need for better communication and answers from LAPD on local issues
- We need stronger laws to protect stakeholders from criminals who are not being arrested or not being held in prison and this creates a recycling of crime as criminals have no fear of reprisal.
- Need more City funding for LAPD Valley Traffic to hire an additional officer for the Sunland-Tujunga NC area. Fatalities and injury-related accidents have escalated over the past few years.

Central

- The issues tend to be more focused on safety issues. Many residents have private security due to safety issues of people jumping fences or knocking doors and disturbing residents.
- The issues tend to be more focused on safety issues. Many residents have private security due to safety issues of people jumping fences or knocking doors and disturbing residents.
- There is a big graffiti problem in Pico Union due to gangs. 14th street, 18th street, Burlington, MS, and gangs tend to congregate in the south side of the area. Also the Playboys gang by Loyola area. City is good at taking care of graffiti issues (within 24 hours)

North and Northeast

- I just want people to be safe.
- Police and Fire - account for giant portions of the city budget. They first task of the city is to provide for the safety for the residents.
- Would like to see more responsiveness from fire and police dept regarding fires and other issues in the area
- Fire dept has been great. But the police are another issue
- One of the biggest issues of concern in NE LA is we get the fire dept coming to our meetings. They tell us to advocate for: that there is not an equal abundance of paramedics along the NE corridor. I think in planning there should be equal at least to the paramedics in other area. One of our fire stations has a ladder truck and other doesn't. They have to share. Same with paramedics. It's a big issues in NE LA.
- There's a distinct lack of people - in fire and in police. They've got to figure out a way to do that bc they aren't being taken care of.
- They're short staffed, working longer and longer hours, risk of injury, difficulty responding to emergencies. And if they're all understaffed and we have a major earthquake or fire, what's going to happen.

- I heard from the news that 50% of fires in LA are caused by the homeless. It's a matter of fires set adjacent to buildings. So housing the homeless - whole other issues - you would think ought to reduce the number of fires set in the city . It certainly is true in Silverlake. I think that's a really good way to address fires.

West

- Blumenfield talked about copper wire theft. Why should the taxpayers pay for this? Los Angeles is expensive. Raising fees exacerbate the problem.
- Top 5 issue: Crime
- Top 5 issue: Police funding (wants more)
- Top 5 issue: It takes an hour to get through to 911

Emergency Management

Northeast and Northwest Valley

- The largest underfunded elephant in the room is the EMD: Emergency Management Division. While L.A. has been really lucky so far in not having needed these resources, we could need it at any time. With EMD, you have to pay it forward for it to be useful and suggested increased funding so we are better prepared.

East and Northeast

- I think Emergency Management has been funding for years with a cup of Starbucks coffee per person. Equivalent. Think of the damage that would happen to the city if major earthquake, or insurrection, or fire. Think it's important to get that going. I saw them last the year before the pandemic They had been doing overhauls and now had a second facility, in case the one downtown gets a direct hit. Think the management is excellent. Think it's something people can pull money from bc not needed, until something happens. And leaning on NCs to provide emergency mgmt services as volunteers is really inappropriate. The chain of command is not going to work.
- I think some of the people CERT trained are actually a better resource than NCs, where the turnover maybe too rapid to provide continuity.
- What they need is an intermediary group of people who can work on a neighborhood basis directing people on the ground. How do you communicate things to people in Highland Park or Hermon in an Earthquake.
- Silverlake had until a few years ago, people trained and with walkie talkies
- Need to be prepared in case the repeaters go down and can't use cell phones. Thinking let's put a container of food and water in the back parking lot of the Eagle Rock of city hall. Then who's checking it, updating stuff, distributing things. Or how do we get help to a neighborhood that might need help if others are safe?
- Silverlake initially addressed all those issues. But heard nothing about them in recent years.
- I'm CERT trained. Terry is CERT trained. A number of people in the NC system are. But the issue is a lack of infrastructure. An earthquake and several highrises come down across Sunset Blvd. What's going to happen? All of us in other areas - our access can be shut off very quickly by one or two roads.

Business

Southwest and Southeast Valley

- Concern with the current number of vendors in excess of 50,000. There is a need for governance and budget. There is a need for supplemental oversight, perhaps deputized.

East and Northeast

- Severely exceeding ABC stars by 95%. And how we can increase other performance? In 2018 and 2019 knew we'd have an influx of businesses catering to these events, but want to make sure we can serve our other needs.
- We objected to all the liquor licenses and they turned their back on all of us and approved them.
- I find it really discouraging that we have so many liquor licenses in Silverlake. Rowena, Hyperion, Silverlake Blvd. Have never gotten the support of a council person around excessive number of liquor licenses - think it's because they think their job is to encourage businesses, revenue. And see that as increasing the revenue to the city. Don't know what the answer is.
- I think businesses have right to exist. LA needs more businesses. LA business Tax is very regressive, very unfavorable for businesses in city of LA - the pain should be spread over more businesses. We had that issue in Lake Balboa that someone wants to add liquor to their gas station. Not our job to grandfather the guy across the street from existing liquor license. Obviously there are people willing to buy the product.
- A NC (closest form of govt to the people) is saying we've heard consistent comments about this regarding parking, noise, how it's affecting neighbors. It's indicative of the city prioritizing profit. I think it's about "when do we can/" When a pizza place wants to also serve wine. If a restaurant wants full line of liquor, they're not prioritizing the daytime economy, therefore not supporting the neighborhood. Do they have a permit with the state to say that outdoor seating is allowed?
- We have an imbalance in our neighborhoods that are prioritizing lack of regulation for our neighborhoods. Want to prioritize meeting our basic needs. They only businesses that can meet the rent increases are businesses with liquor licenses, that turn into a bar. Only they can satisfy a rent increase that's three times the amount of currently.

Sustainability/Health/Parks

Northeast and Northwest Valley

- Need a sustainability plan
- Excess pollution in Sun Valley which is causing high incidents of asthma in students
- Green Schools only affects one of the 19 schools in Sun Valley area. There needs to be a connection between the City and LAUSD to provide more green space for students. Maybe allowing non profits to come in would be helpful for this cause.

Central

- Pico Union has very few green areas, very few parks, quality of life is suffering. Few places for kids to play.

East and Northeast

- Rec and Parks needs dedicating funding
- Rec and Parks should not be paying for their own water anymore. They added something to charter few years ago to make them pay for water.
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- Rec and Parks has city community centers. One I saw was dilapidated. Would like to see more respect for the seniors who wish to remain active.
- Re community centers. Highland Park bad too. Montecito Heights better, but also bad.

South

- Need community centers for young black girls, traffic violence and initiatives.

West

- Parks. About 30,000 people live inside the Palms NC boundaries. For those 30,000 people we have one very small park. We need more green space.
- Top 5 issue: Parks (Three people)

Harbor

- A mental health crisis team is needed
- City land contaminated with toxics

City Clerk/DONE

Southeast and Southwest Valley

- Having an off-shoot of a DONE department dedicated to Diversity Equity and Inclusion will only result in increasing the budget not conserving it.

East and Northeast

- We had issues on our NC where we were redoing our bylaws and City Clerk added language to our bylaws. Overall my experience with them has been good personally, though questions about what their purview is. Wondering if they overstepped what they should be doing regarding bylaws - and the functionality of the system that's in place. Bc if we don't have the autonomy to do the things we're tasked to do
- we then reallocated all of our budget from election stuff to their things. It does involved the election side of the NC's, if they're able to change our bylaws without our agreement.
- DONE needs to empower City NCs

West

- The NC system needs to be better funded. The things they are asking of us are impossible if we don't get raises. We've been decreased for a couple of cycles.

Youth and Seniors

East and Northeast

- Lack of identifiable safe spaces for young people - very few youth centers. I participated in programs near to my HS (Kindred HS) and spaces that were readily dedicated there aren't any more.
- Need dedicated spaces for LGBTQIA students
- Some Senior Center providing meals and it's a joke.
- Was there at the senior center in Highland Park. I can't eat that stuff.

West

- Top 5 issue: Education

Library

East and Northeast

- LAPL serves homeless more than any other
- City needs to stop deducting costs from the work on streets outside

West

- Top 5 issue: Library

Harbor

- Challenges for public libraries

Economic and Workforce Development and Personnel

East and Northeast

- I'd like to see dept of economic and workforce come up with things to prepare people for the 20% candidacies in city govt. To excite people but working for city govt and to create entry level positions for people and to move people toward jobs with the city govt.

West

- Civil Service process only allows City employees can apply for higher jobs. The cascading effect of civil service during promotions.

Animal Services

Northeast and Northwest Valley

- Need for more funding and supervision at Animal Services which recently underwent a major change in its operations management.

South

- What about unlicensed dogs? All dogs should be licensed. First one is free.

West

- Animal services is a big problem. There is a lack of funding.

ITA

East and Northeast

- ITA needs more funding. Ridiculous what's going on.

Harbor

- Would like the City to "create data" to help "identify and prioritize" where services are needed

Cannabis

Northeast and Northwest Valley

- need to address the growing illegal and legal cannabis industry with stakeholders being given updates on policy changes
- Cannabis businesses are growing in Sun Valley without proper notification to residents