

Communication from Public

Name: Warren Adler

Date Submitted: 04/13/2026 04:53 PM

Council File No: 26-0460

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Councilmembers, I urge you to vote NO on the City Attorney's request for additional outside counsel funding related to Venice Dell (Report No. R26-0160 to Council File 26-0460). I have lived in Venice for almost 50 years. I love the community here. I believe the city's #1 problem is a lack of affordable housing, not only for the homeless, but for working people who are increasingly leaving Los Angeles because they cannot afford the cost of housing. I cannot believe the City continues to fight the Venice-Dell project, which would be a step in alleviating our housing crisis. The City has already spent nearly \$2 million fighting affordable housing our community needs and faces over \$10 million in damages. A third round of litigation funding is indefensible. The State has raised concerns about Housing Element law violations, and continued action risks fines, sanctions, and loss of local zoning authority. Deny the \$650,000. End the litigation. Build the housing. Thank you.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 04/13/2026 12:29 PM

Council File No: 26-0460

Comments for Public Posting: please post

April 13, 2026

Chair & Members, Budget and Finance Committee

Los Angeles City Council

200 North Spring Street, Room 395

Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: [Council File 26-0460](#) & [Council File 15-1138-S42](#) — Venice Dell Affordable Housing / LADOT Lot 731

Dear Chair and Members of the Budget and Finance Committee:

As the Director of Government & Public Affairs for the Los Angeles chapter of The American Institute of Architects (AIA|LA) I am writing in strong support of the Venice Dell affordable housing project and in firm opposition to the City Attorney's March 25, 2026 request (Report No. R26-0160) for an additional \$650,000 to continue defending the City against lawsuits arising from its own obstruction of this project.

We urge this Committee to take three concrete actions:

- (1) reject the requested \$650,000 contract amendment with Nossaman LLP;
- (2) demand a public — not closed-session — accounting of the City's total outside counsel spending on Venice Dell-related litigation; and
- (3) direct the relevant departments to report publicly on the City's substantive response to HCD's Letter of Inquiry, as the Raman-Park motion required in October 2025.

This Committee is now being asked to authorize yet another tranche of spending to defend the City against the consequences of its own obstruction. On March 25, 2026, the City Attorney filed Report No. R26-0160 requesting an additional \$650,000 to fund the Nossaman LLP legal services contract (Contract No. C-146250) through June 30, 2026 — on top of the \$1,380,000 already authorized in January 2026. The cumulative Nossaman contract now stands at \$2,030,000, covering only one outside counsel firm for only some of the active Venice Dell-related cases. Meanwhile, the City Attorney has separately sought more than \$12 million in additional outside counsel funding across all matters (Report No. R25-0523, October 17, 2025), of which roughly \$1.5 million is attributable to opposing Venice Dell specifically. Most remarkably, the City Attorney's Office has filed suit against the very nonprofit

developers it is blocking — accusing them of failing to build the project the City itself is preventing them from constructing. The City stands to lose more than \$10 million in damages as a result. The City has responded to the California Department of Housing and Community Development’s formal [Letter of Inquiry](#) not with a housing compliance plan, but with a closed-session legal strategy. The longer the City delays, the more it pays — and the more it risks.

I. Venice Dell: What Has Already Been Approved

Venice Dell is a 120-unit affordable housing development at 200 North Venice Boulevard, designed to serve people experiencing chronic homelessness alongside low-income residents in one of Los Angeles’s most resource-rich coastal neighborhoods. The project has cleared every required approval:

- Selected through competitive City RFP, 2016
- Planning Commission approved, July 2021
- City Council approved entitlements and rezone, December 1, 2021
- Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) executed, June 15, 2022
- California Coastal Commission approved, December 11, 2024
- Superior Court upheld City Council approval as proper and lawful
- \$42,455,697 in California Multifamily Housing Program funding awarded, September 22, 2025

The project includes 68 permanent supportive units, 49 low-income units, 3 manager units, and a replacement LADOT parking structure — increasing net public parking on the site. It will deliver hundreds of union construction jobs under a Project Labor Agreement. Of the 34 city-owned pipeline sites in the City’s Housing Element, only six are in high-resource areas. Venice Dell is one — and one of only two that have stalled since 2023.

II. The Escalating Cost of Obstruction: \$2 Million and Rising

Now before this Committee is Report No. R26-0160 (March 25, 2026), in which the City Attorney requests an additional \$650,000 to fund the Nossaman LLP contract through June 30, 2026. This follows the January 15, 2026 Report R26-0038, which expanded the Nossaman contract from \$620,000 to \$1,380,000. The cumulative Nossaman contract authority now totals \$2,030,000. These funds are used to defend the City against five separate lawsuits — all stemming directly from the City’s own treatment of Venice Dell — while a sixth suit, filed by the City Attorney against the nonprofit developers themselves, accuses them of failing to build the very project the City has spent years blocking. Those cases are:

- LA Forward Institute et al. v. City of Los Angeles et al. (LASC 24STCV17156)
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- Venice Community Housing Corp., Hollywood Community Housing Corp., Venice Dell LP v. City (LASC 25STCV20355)

The following table summarizes the documented and potential fiscal exposure created by the City's delay:

Cost Category	Amount	Source
Nossaman LLP outside counsel — total authorized (Jan 2026)	\$1,380,000	City Attorney R26-0038
Additional Nossaman funding requested (Mar 2026, R26-0160)	\$650,000	City Attorney R26-0160
Additional City Attorney in-house litigation (LASC 25STCP03578)	Not disclosed	City Attorney R26-0038
\$42.4M state MHP funding at risk of clawback	\$42,455,697	HCD Award / DDA
RHNA credit already claimed (120 units × replacement cost)	Exposure TBD	Housing Element pipeline

The \$2,030,000 Nossaman contract covers only one outside counsel firm for only some of the active cases. When added to the broader \$12 million-plus in outside counsel funding the City Attorney has sought across all matters since August 2025 (Report No. R25-0523), and to the City Attorney's own lawsuit against the nonprofit developers — accusing them of failing to build the very project the City is blocking, with damages exposure exceeding \$10 million — this Committee is being asked to fund a legal strategy that works directly against the housing the City has publicly committed to build. This is taxpayer money being spent to defend the City against housing developers, community organizations, and advocacy groups with whom the City promised to partner. It is money that could have built housing.

A month earlier, on November 25, 2025, the City Attorney filed Report R25-0590 requesting a closed session to discuss the City's 'proposed response' to HCD's Letter of Inquiry. The response

to a state housing compliance letter was handled as a litigation matter — in secret, with outside counsel — rather than as a housing policy obligation requiring a public remedy.

III. HCD's Warning: State Intervention Remains a Live Threat

The California Department of Housing and Community Development's October 3, 2025 Letter of Inquiry documented a specific pattern of City actions conflicting with the 2021–2029 Housing Element and the City's Affirmatively Further Fair Housing (AFFH) obligations. HCD's concerns were not resolved by the City's closed-session legal strategy. They remain active. HCD identified:

- The December 2024 Board of Transportation Commissioners hearing — convened as a surprise special session after eight years of development — as a governmental constraint on supportive housing the City is legally required to remove, not add.
- The City's exclusion of Venice Dell from the Affordable Housing Managed Pipeline (AHMP) extension list in April 2025 as threatening the project's financing structure without public justification.
- The \$42,455,697 MHP award as at risk of loss given ongoing City delays.
- The City's RHNA credit for Venice Dell's 120 units has already been claimed — meaning cancellation creates a housing element deficit, not just a lost unit.

HCD warned it would consider issuing a formal Corrective Action Letter against the City's Housing Element and initiating a review of Los Angeles's Prohousing Designation — the state certification that gives the City priority access to competitive state housing funding across all programs, citywide. Defending obstruction in closed session does not address these risks. Building Venice Dell does.

The Raman-Park [Amending Motion](#) of October 7, 2025 requested the City Attorney, Department of City Planning, and Los Angeles Housing Department to report back to Council within 30 days on how they were responding to HCD's inquiry. That deadline passed. What the City produced instead was a closed-session litigation strategy and an expanded outside counsel contract. The Committee deserves a public answer.

IV. What the LADOT Report Actually Reveals

LADOT's [February 2026 report](#) on establishing a mobility hub at Lot 731 does not support the case for displacing Venice Dell. It undermines it. The report's own draft timeline does not reach construction completion until April or May 2028 — at the earliest, subject to staff resources, litigation, and CCC permitting. LADOT concedes there is 'no one-size-fits-all blueprint' and that a feasibility study is needed before the scope can even be defined. Its formal recommendation is merely to 'note and file.'

The City is being asked to cancel an approved, funded, legally vetted housing project in favor of a concept its own transportation department has not defined, not funded, and does not recommend pursuing at this site. Furthermore, Venice Dell has already won its California Coastal Commission permit for Lot 731. A new CCC permit for a mobility hub — in the dual-jurisdictional Coastal Zone — would take up to 12 additional months and begin from scratch. That CCC approval, won through years of process, cannot be transferred.

V. Lot 701: The Right Site for the Mobility Hub

LADOT Lot 701 is publicly owned, near Venice Beach and the transit corridors the mobility hub is meant to serve, and carries none of the legal encumbrances that make displacing housing from Lot 731 so costly. It has no executed Development Agreement to breach, no state funding at risk of clawback, no RHNA credit already claimed, and no Coastal Commission approval already secured that would be surrendered. It is the precise type of clean-slate site that LADOT's own feasibility study process requires. The West LA Sawtelle Neighborhood Council, in an 8-0 vote on October 22, 2025, explicitly rejected proposals to substitute Lot 701 for Lot 731 for the housing project — while supporting Lot 701 for the mobility use.

Beginning the LADOT mobility hub feasibility study on Lot 701 now — in parallel with Venice Dell construction — produces both outcomes: housing and mobility. Not one instead of the other.

VI. An Equity Argument from an Unexpected Voice

The West LA Sawtelle Neighborhood Council's October 2025 Community Impact Statement, submitted unanimously and directed to the full City Council, names a double standard that deserves to be part of this Committee's record: Council District 11 has repeatedly told the West LA Sawtelle NC and community members that it is 'powerless to intervene' in ED1 developments flooding neighboring Sawtelle — while simultaneously devoting 'significant political and legal resources' to blocking Venice Dell in Venice.

The WLASNC's words are worth quoting directly: this 'raises serious questions of equity and fiscal accountability in a moment of budget strain for the City.' An 8-0 vote from a neighboring neighborhood council is not an abstraction — it is an adjacent community watching and naming what is happening.

VII. Our Requests

AIA Los Angeles respectfully urges the Budget and Finance Committee to take the following actions:

- **1. Reject the City Attorney's request (Report No. R26-0160) for an additional \$650,000 in Nossaman LLP outside counsel funding**, and direct the City Attorney to report publicly on the total outside counsel expenditures attributable to Venice Dell litigation across all active matters.

- **2. Demand a comprehensive public fiscal accounting** of all outside counsel spending related to Venice Dell, including amounts attributable to Report Nos. R25-0523, R26-0038, and R26-0160, and require that any further requests be brought in open session with a full explanation of the legal strategy and settlement alternatives.
- **3. Direct the City Attorney to evaluate and report on settlement options** in lieu of continued outside counsel expenditure, including withdrawing the City's own suit against the Venice Dell developers, which accuses them of failing to build the very project the City is obstructing.
- **4. Demand a public report** — not a closed-session legal briefing — from the City Attorney, LAHD, and DCP on the City's substantive response to HCD's Letter of Inquiry, as the Raman-Park motion required in October 2025.

The City has now committed more than \$2 million in Nossaman LLP outside counsel fees alone — with the March 25 request for an additional \$650,000 now before this Committee — to defend its refusal to build housing it approved, funded, and legally committed to build. When the City Attorney's own suit against the developers is factored in, alongside more than \$10 million in potential damages exposure and \$42.4 million in state funding at risk of clawback, the true cost of this obstruction vastly exceeds the cost of resolution. Every dollar this Committee approves for continued litigation is a dollar that cannot be spent on housing, on services, or on the fiscal priorities Angelenos are counting on this Committee to protect. The path forward is clear. We urge the Committee to take it.

Thank you for your leadership on this urgent matter.

Truly yours,



Will Wright, Hon. AIALA
Director, Government & Public Affairs

TO: councilmember.hernandez@lacity.org, councilmember.blumenfield@lacity.org, councilmember.yaroslavsky@lacity.org, councilmember.padilla@lacity.org, councilmember.park@lacity.org

CC: clerk.cps@lacity.org

Communication from Public

Name: Britney B.

Date Submitted: 04/13/2026 09:27 AM

Council File No: 26-0460

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Councilmembers, I live in this city. I pay taxes in this city. And I am asking you, as my elected representatives, to stop spending my money to block affordable housing at Venice Dell. Nearly \$2 million has already been spent on this legal battle. Over \$10 million in damages hangs over the City. And now the City Attorney is asking for \$650,000 more. This is wrong, both morally and fiscally. Los Angeles talks a great deal about its commitment to housing and equity. This is a moment to prove it. Please vote no on Report No. R26-0160 and put our resources toward the housing our neighbors need. Sincerely, Britney B.

Communication from Public

Name: Eddie Isaacs

Date Submitted: 04/12/2026 08:21 PM

Council File No: 26-0460

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Councilmembers, I urge you to vote NO on the City Attorney's request for additional outside counsel funding related to Venice Dell (Report No. R26-0160 to Council File 26-0460). The City has already spent nearly \$2 million fighting affordable housing our community needs and faces over \$10 million in damages. A third round of litigation funding is indefensible. The State has raised concerns about Housing Element law violations, and continued action risks fines, sanctions, and loss of local zoning authority. Deny the \$650,000. End the litigation. Build the housing. Thank you.

Communication from Public

Name: Michael

Date Submitted: 04/13/2026 10:35 AM

Council File No: 26-0460

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Councilmembers, I urge you to vote NO on the City Attorney's request for additional outside counsel funding related to Venice Dell (Report No. R26-0160 to Council File 26-0460). The City has already spent nearly \$2 million fighting affordable housing our community needs and faces over \$10 million in damages. A third round of litigation funding is indefensible. The State has raised concerns about Housing Element law violations, and continued action risks fines, sanctions, and loss of local zoning authority. Deny the \$650,000. End the litigation. Build the housing. Thank you. Michael Shaw

Communication from Public

Name: Nick Suda

Date Submitted: 04/13/2026 11:38 AM

Council File No: 26-0460

Comments for Public Posting: Stop wasting taxpayer money on illegal obstructionism that actively impedes the prerogatives of the city and the state. Enough with this performative lawfare that is a complete waste of resources by any angle of analysis. Let the Venice Dell project move forward and stop Traci Park from fulfilling her donors' agenda of preventing necessary change at all costs.

Communication from Public

Name: Will Wright

Date Submitted: 04/13/2026 11:58 AM

Council File No: 26-0460

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April 13, 2026

Chair & Members, Budget and Finance Committee

Los Angeles City Council

200 North Spring Street, Room 395

Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: [Council File 26-0460](#) & [Council File 15-1138-S42](#) — Venice Dell Affordable Housing / LADOT Lot 731

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V. Lot 701: The Right Site for the Mobility Hub

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Thank you for your leadership on this urgent matter.

Truly yours,



Will Wright, Hon. AIALA
Director, Government & Public Affairs

TO: councilmember.hernandez@lacity.org, councilmember.blumenfield@lacity.org, councilmember.yaroslavsky@lacity.org, councilmember.padilla@lacity.org, councilmember.park@lacity.org

CC: clerk.cps@lacity.org

Communication from Public

Name: Allison Frye

Date Submitted: 04/13/2026 11:58 AM

Council File No: 26-0460

Comments for Public Posting: I am submitting this public comment in strong opposition to the City Attorney's request for an additional \$650,000 in outside counsel funding related to the Venice Dell affordable housing project (Report No. R26-0160 to Council File 26-0460). The City has now spent nearly \$2 million in taxpayer money fighting a project our community desperately needs, and faces over \$10 million in additional damages for blocking it. This is not fiscal responsibility. This is a costly, drawn-out legal battle that serves no one in Los Angeles. As someone who is a renter and a teacher, we need affordable housing like Venice Dell to keep the westside affordable for the working class. I urge the Council to deny this funding request and redirect our city's resources toward solutions, not litigation. Thank you for your consideration.

Communication from Public

Name: helen m eigenberg

Date Submitted: 04/13/2026 09:32 PM

Council File No: 26-0460

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Councilmembers, I urge you to vote NO on the City Attorney's request for additional outside counsel funding related to Venice Dell (Report No. R26-0160 to Council File 26-0460). The City has already spent nearly \$2 million fighting affordable housing our community needs and faces over \$10 million in damages. A third round of litigation funding is indefensible. The State has raised concerns about Housing Element law violations, and continued action risks fines, sanctions, and loss of local zoning authority. Deny the \$650,000. End the litigation. Build the housing. Thank you.