

Communication from Public

Name: San Fernando Valley Audubon Society

Date Submitted: 04/30/2026 09:37 AM

Council File No: 26-0489-S2

Comments for Public Posting: San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, as detailed in the attached letter, strongly supports the request from the City Charter Committee to amend Los Angeles City Charter §593 to double the minimum budget allocation to RAP from .0325% to .065% of assessed values of city property. We urge the Mayor and the entire City council to back this proposal and get it on the November ballot



San Fernando Valley Audubon Society

Incorporated as California Audubon Society in 1913

P.O. Box 7769 • Van Nuys • CA • 91409-7769

www.sfvaudubon.org • 747-237-3720

For the conservation of wildlife, natural resources, and nature education.

April 30, 2026

Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street, Room 350
Los Angeles, CA, 90012

Re: Council File 26-0489 and 26-0489-S2
Request to Amend Charter Section 593 to Increase Charter-Required Minimum Budget
Allocation for the Department of Recreation and Parks

Honorable Chair and Members of the City Council:

The California Audubon Society dba San Fernando Valley Audubon Society (SFVAS) represents conservation and bird advocates throughout most of the entire portion of the City of Los Angeles north of Mulholland Drive - including City of Los Angeles Parks in the Sepulveda Basin, Hansen Dam, Omelveny Park and countless smaller venues. These parks comprise islands of habitat for wildlife (including endangered species) in our urban area, and also provide outdoor classrooms and respite from urban heat and other stressors for millions of residents.

As was obvious from the recently-completed City of Los Angeles Parks Needs Assessment, our parks are starving and on the verge of collapse. Maintenance is lagging, enforcement of park, conservation and environmental rules is inadequate, and we lag far behind peer cities in park investment in general.

The Los Angeles City Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) is one of only two city departments—the other being the Library Department—for which the City of Los Angeles Charter explicitly provides financial support. Specifically, RAP receives .0325% of the assessed value of property within city limits - a formula which has been in place since 1937. The hollowing out of RAP began during the “2009 Great Recession” when the City began charging both RAP and the Libraries for their “indirect costs”. The loss of funding for Libraries had immediate consequences of library closures, and the lost funding was quickly replaced by Measure L in 2011.

Unfortunately, the negative consequences for city parks from loss of funding were not so obvious or sudden. Rather, they quietly metastasized. Well over a billion dollars has been diverted from RAP’s charter-mandated funding since 2009. This has resulted in staffing shortages, a demoralized and understaffed Park Ranger force, billions of dollars in deferred maintenance, and decades of environmental degradation. Wildlife regulations are rarely

enforced resulting in unfortunate and horrifying situations. The Los Angeles Fire Department has been forced to step in to assist RAP with land maintenance to avoid dangerous wildfires, in addition to putting out hundreds of fires in the parks. Funding has been unavailable for proactive management of resources, resulting in further deterioration.

Accordingly, the SFVAS strongly supports the request from the City Charter Committee to amend Los Angeles City Charter §593 to double the minimum budget allocation to RAP from .0325% to .065% of assessed values of city property. We urge the Mayor and the entire City council to back this proposal and get it on the November ballot.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Patricia Bates".

Patricia Bates, PhD
Pat.Bates@sfvaudubon.org
Conservation Committee Co-Chairperson