

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Eva Amar

**Date Submitted:** 05/05/2026 04:56 PM

**Council File No:** 26-0489

**Comments for Public Posting:** CITY WATCH—GRANADA HILLS - There's a moment—if you've been paying close enough attention to how land-use decisions are being made in Los Angeles—when the process starts to feel less like independent review and more like something already set in motion. Not obviously. Not at first. But gradually, as documents appear fully formed, pathways shift, and conclusions seem to precede explanation, it becomes harder to tell where evaluation ends and approval begins. In theory, the City's Planning Department is supposed to act as a neutral decision-maker—reviewing applications, analyzing impacts, weighing evidence, and ultimately making an independent determination in the public interest. But based on publicly available records, something very different appears to be happening. What we're seeing now is a system where applicants are not just proposing projects—they are increasingly being guided through the process of getting them approved. In some cases, when a project stalls under environmental review, the path forward appears to shift. Rather than continuing through full Environmental Impact Report analysis, alternative approval pathways are identified—sometimes through statutory exemptions that significantly limit environmental review. And in some instances, that shift appears to occur through direct coordination between City staff and applicants before the public ever sees it. That matters. Because an Environmental Impact Report isn't red tape. It exists because communities were harmed when projects moved forward without full analysis. It's supposed to force a hard look at real-world consequences. Like what happens when you place a nearly 100-unit elder care facility in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, on a constrained two-lane road that already serves as a primary evacuation route for hundreds of residents. That's not theoretical, that's life safety. And yet, the administrative record in the MorningStar of Granada Hills case raises serious questions about whether those risks were ever meaningfully evaluated. Documents central to the City's decision—documents used to justify exempting the project from environmental review—appear in the record without clear authorship, without signatures, and without dates. In some instances, materials appear to have been prepared by the applicant and later relied upon as part of the administrative record, without independent analysis

clearly documented. In some instances, the pathway doesn't originate with the applicant at all. Internal communications reflect that City Planning staff reached out to discuss "the potential of utilizing the AB 130 Infill Housing Statutory Exemption for the project," and went further—offering prior examples and noting that "we recently received a similar justification document for another project, which we can provide as a template." But it goes further than that. Those same communications reflect that key eligibility determinations had already been resolved in advance—including confirmation that senior housing "qualifies as a housing development" and that the site meets the required urban use criteria. In other words, before the public ever saw the project shift pathways, the foundational question—whether a facility of this size, scope, and operational nature qualifies as "housing"—had effectively already been answered. And once that determination is made upfront, everything that follows starts to look less like evaluation—and more like execution. Because when the analysis itself is effectively constructed with City guidance and then carried forward through the process, the role of independent review begins to blur. At that point, it's fair to ask what role the City is actually playing. Because if the conclusions are being assembled before the hearing, and the justification is built to support them, the process starts to look less like deliberation—and more like endorsement. All that's left is the stamp. The problem isn't just that the analysis is missing—it's how the conclusions are presented. The Justification for Exemption Memorandum reads less like an evaluation and more like a checklist. Statutory criteria are laid out, and then, one by one, declared satisfied—housing? yes. zoning? consistent. urban use? met. The logic, at times, appears to be reduced to something even simpler: people sleep there, therefore it qualifies as residential. But that kind of shorthand skips over the very distinctions the law is supposed to examine whether a use functions as independent housing, or as a managed, institutional environment serving residents who cannot live independently. That difference matters. And it's nowhere meaningfully addressed. There is no identified methodology. No data. No parcel-level analysis. No discussion of conflicting facts or site-specific constraints. Instead, the document moves directly from criteria to conclusion as if the outcome were already known and the exercise was simply to confirm it. Existing property owners = minor hurdles!

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Andrew

**Date Submitted:** 05/05/2026 11:04 AM

**Council File No:** 26-0489

**Comments for Public Posting:** I am writing in support of the following reforms to the Charter, to ensure that the Controller can fulfill their role as the City's independent watchdog: Give the Controller an independent budget of no less than 0.42% of the City's General Fund Clarify the Controller's audit authority includes performance audits of ALL City programs that are sourced from or use City tax dollars (including those under elected offices) Allow the Controller to hire outside counsel when necessary Enshrine the Controller's Fraud, Waste, and Abuse function (recommended by the Charter Reform Commission) Require minimum qualifications for the Controller Designate the Controller as the City's Chief Financial Officer

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Sheryl B

**Date Submitted:** 05/05/2026 11:10 AM

**Council File No:** 26-0489

**Comments for Public Posting:** 1. I am writing in support of the following reforms to the Charter, to ensure that the Controller can fulfill their role as the City's independent watchdog: 2. Give the Controller an independent budget of no less than 0.42% of the City's General Fund 4. Clarify the Controller's audit authority includes performance audits of ALL City programs that are sourced from or use City tax dollars (including those under elected offices) 6. Allow the Controller to hire outside counsel when necessary 8. Enshrine the Controller's Fraud, Waste, and Abuse function (recommended by the Charter Reform Commission) 10. Require minimum qualifications for the Controller 12. Designate the Controller as the City's Chief Financial Officer

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Isabella Schlact  
**Date Submitted:** 05/06/2026 09:34 AM  
**Council File No:** 26-0489

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## Communication from Public

**Name:** Jennifer Rowland

**Date Submitted:** 05/06/2026 10:20 AM

**Council File No:** 26-0489

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## Communication from Public

**Name:** Lorena B.

**Date Submitted:** 05/06/2026 02:23 PM

**Council File No:** 26-0489

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## Communication from Public

**Name:** Jennifer Y.

**Date Submitted:** 05/06/2026 03:21 PM

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