

Communication from Public

Name: Colin Warn

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 05:00 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Los Angeles streets are some of the deadliest in the nation, and the state of our infrastructure is embarrassing and deteriorating. We need a CIP to align projects and departments, but we also need a Director of Public Works to coordinate and create a system of accountability. I support increasing the budget for the Parks Department. I also strongly feel we should remove section 580 from the charter, this would create flexibility and allow council to shift duties between departments and public works easily without needing to go back to voters.

Communication from Public

Name: Michael

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 04:18 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Los Angeles streets are some of the deadliest in the nation, and the state of our infrastructure is embarrassing and deteriorating. We need a CIP to align projects and departments, but we also need a Director of Public Works to coordinate and create a system of accountability. I also strongly feel we should remove section 580 from the charter, this would create flexibility and allow council to shift duties between departments and public works easily without needing to go back to voters. I am supporting the following Charter Commissions recommendations: Create a Citywide CIP - This would enshrine a Capital Infrastructure Program into LA's budget process, creating transparency and efficiency around infrastructure delivery. Empower a Director of Public Works Right now we have at least 10 different people accountable for the state of our public infrastructure. A director of public works would manage the department and bureaus alongside overseeing the CIP process. It's critical this role is empowered to coordinate between various departments and general managers. The Board of Public Works is an antiquated body from 100 years ago, we need a real director empowered to manage the various Bureaus of Public Works. For a CIP to succeed we need someone in charge, and that person has the tools to get different departments and bureaus to coordinate with each other. Right now there is no one who is accountable for our infrastructure in the City of LA, instead duties are split between many different general managers and the various board members. We need a clear executive chain of command and management in LA. Double the Budget for Parks - Los Angeles has some of the worst park access of any major city in the nation. We need to increase their dedicated charter budget. I am also asking Council Offices to make the following amendments: Remove Section 580 - This will allow future Council offices and the Mayor to easily move duties between Public Works and other Departments. For decades different studies have recommended moving the duties of public works and departments around to deliver projects more efficiently. Section 580 makes that impossible without modifying the charter. By moving this from the Charter to administrative code make the City more nimble for future Councils. For example, if we wanted to give LADOT the authority to repave streets or fix sidewalks, that would require a charter amendment by voters. Removing Sec.

580 allows Council to move those duties around much more easily. Remove Section 507 Section 507 gives each bureau of public works their own Chief Administrative Officer. This is part of what creates a culture of fractured bureaus that act as their own departments instead of a unified body working towards the same goal.

Communication from Public

Name: Garrick

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 04:20 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

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Communication from Public

Name: David Welch

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 04:23 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Los Angeles deserves great infrastructure and parks — and our current charter is holding us back. With that in mind, I strongly agree with recommendations made by the Charter Commission: - Create a citywide CIP - Empower a Director of Public Works - Double the budget for Parks - Remove Section 580 - Remove Section 507 Thank you for your consideration.

Communication from Public

Name: Karina Hernandez
Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 04:24 PM
Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Hello, My name is Karina and I care deeply about improving infrastructure throughout Los Angeles in order to make our streets safer for everyone. That is why I support an empowered Director of Public Works to lead the department and oversee deliverables in accordance with a citywide Capital Infrastructure Program. In addition, please consider doubling the budget for Parks. Los Angeles has some of the worst park access of any major city in the nation. Neglected green spaces coupled with some of the deadliest streets in the nation has lead to an embarrassing and unfortunate reputation for the City. Finally, we cannot achieve the goal of accountability and transparency in a charter system that is not flexible. I urge the Council Offices to amend the following: first, remove Section 580 which will allow future Council offices and the Mayor to easily move duties between Public Works and other Departments; second, remove Section 507 which would forgo multiple bureaus' Chief Administrative Officers in favor a more unified body. Sincerely, Karina Hernandez North Hollywood, 91602

Communication from Public

Name: Ian Lundy

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 04:26 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Los Angeles streets are some of the deadliest in the nation, and the state of our infrastructure is embarrassing and deteriorating. We need a CIP to align projects and departments, but we also need a Director of Public Works to coordinate and create a system of accountability. I support increasing the budget for the Parks Department. I also strongly feel we should remove section 580 from the charter, this would create flexibility and allow council to shift duties between departments and public works easily without needing to go back to voters. We are supporting the following Charter Commissions recommendations: Create a Citywide CIP - This would enshrine a Capital Infrastructure Program into LA's budget process, creating transparency and efficiency around infrastructure delivery. Empower a Director of Public Works Right now we have at least 10 different people accountable for the state of our public infrastructure. A director of public works would manage the department and bureaus alongside overseeing the CIP process. It's critical this role is empowered to coordinate between various departments and general managers. The Board of Public Works is an antiquated body from 100 years ago, we need a real director empowered to manage the various Bureaus of Public Works For a CIP to succeed we need someone in charge, and that person has the tools to get different departments and bureaus to coordinate with eachother Right now there is no one who is accountable for our infrastructure in the City of LA, instead duties are split between many different general managers and the various board members. We need a clear executive chain of command and management in LA Double the Budget for Parks - Los Angeles has some of the worst park access of any major city in the nation. We need to increase their dedicated charter budget. We are also asking Council Offices to make the following amendments: Remove Section 580 - This will allow future Council offices and the Mayor to easily move duties between Public Works and other Departments. For decades different studies have recommended moving the duties of public works and departments around to deliver projects more efficiently. Section 580 makes that impossible without modifying the charter. By moving this from the Charter to administrative code make the City more nimble for future Councils For example, if we wanted to give LADOT the authority to repave streets or fix sidewalks,

that would require a charter amendment by voters. Removing Sec. 580 allows Council to move those duties around much more easily. Remove Section 507. Section 507 gives each bureau of public works their own Chief Administrative Officer. This is part of what creates a culture of fractured bureaus that act as their own departments instead of a unified body working towards the same goal.

Communication from Public

Name: Isaac

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 04:39 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: PLEASE - do the smart thing, invest in our city and our infrastructure. Help create a world class city out of Los Angeles. A city with crumbling side walks, rampant litter, pot hole laden streets is not one befitting of the wealthiest country in the world. Los Angeles streets are some of the deadliest in the nation, and the state of our infrastructure is embarrassing and deteriorating. We need a CIP to align projects and departments, but we also need a Director of Public Works to coordinate and create a system of accountability. I support increasing the budget for the Parks Department. I also strongly feel we should remove section 580 from the charter, this would create flexibility and allow council to shift duties between departments and public works easily without needing to go back to voters. We are supporting the following Charter Commissions recommendations: Create a Citywide CIP - This would enshrine a Capital Infrastructure Program into LA's budget process, creating transparency and efficiency around infrastructure delivery. Empower a Director of Public Works Right now we have at least 10 different people accountable for the state of our public infrastructure. A director of public works would manage the department and bureaus alongside overseeing the CIP process. It's critical this role is empowered to coordinate between various departments and general managers. The Board of Public Works is an antiquated body from 100 years ago, we need a real director empowered to manage the various Bureaus of Public Works For a CIP to succeed we need someone in charge, and that person has the tools to get different departments and bureaus to coordinate with eachother Right now there is no one who is accountable for our infrastructure in the City of LA, instead duties are split between many different general managers and the various board members. We need a clear executive chain of command and management in LA Double the Budget for Parks - Los Angeles has some of the worst park access of any major city in the nation. We need to increase their dedicated charter budget. We are also asking Council Offices to make the following amendments: Remove Section 580 - This will allow future Council offices and the Mayor to easily move duties between Public Works and other Departments. For decades different studies have recommended moving the duties of public works and departments around to deliver projects more efficiently. Section

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Communication from Public

Name: Sam Potts

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 05:51 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Los Angeles streets are some of the deadliest in the nation, and the state of our infrastructure is embarrassing and deteriorating. We need a CIP to align projects and departments, but we also need a Director of Public Works to coordinate and create a system of accountability. I support increasing the budget for the Parks Department. I also strongly feel we should remove section 580 from the charter, this would create flexibility and allow council to shift duties between departments and public works easily without needing to go back to voters. We are supporting the following Charter Commissions recommendations: 1. Create a Citywide CIP - This would enshrine a Capital Infrastructure Program into LA's budget process, creating transparency and efficiency around infrastructure delivery. 2. Empower a Director of Public Works Right now we have at least 10 different people accountable for the state of our public infrastructure. A director of public works would manage the department and bureaus alongside overseeing the CIP process. It's critical this role is empowered to coordinate between various departments and general managers. The Board of Public Works is an antiquated body from 100 years ago, we need a real director empowered to manage the various Bureaus of Public Works. For a CIP to succeed we need someone in charge, and that person has the tools to get different departments and bureaus to coordinate with each other. Right now there is no one who is accountable for our infrastructure in the City of LA, instead duties are split between many different general managers and the various board members. We need a clear executive chain of command and management in LA. 3. Double the Budget for Parks - Los Angeles has some of the worst park access of any major city in the nation. We need to increase their dedicated charter budget. We are also asking Council Offices to make the following amendments: 1. Remove Section 580 - This will allow future Council offices and the Mayor to easily move duties between Public Works and other Departments. For decades different studies have recommended moving the duties of public works and departments around to deliver projects more efficiently. Section 580 makes that impossible without modifying the charter. By moving this from the Charter to administrative code make the City more nimble for future Councils For example, if we wanted to give LADOT the authority to repave streets or fix sidewalks,

that would require a charter amendment by voters. Removing Sec. 580 allows Council to move those duties around much more easily

2. Remove Section 507 Section 507 gives each bureau of public works their own Chief Administrative Officer. This is part of what creates a culture of fractured bureaus that act as their own departments instead of a unified body working towards the same goal.

Communication from Public

Name: Yusef Abouremeleh
Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 06:42 PM
Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: I am writing in support of the Charter Commission's recommended infrastructure reforms. Los Angeles must enshrine a Citywide Capital Infrastructure Program into the budget process to bring transparency and accountability to infrastructure delivery. We must also empower a Director of Public Works with real authority over the bureaus and departments — right now responsibility is fragmented across at least ten different managers with no single person accountable for the state of our city. And with some of the worst park access of any major city in the nation, doubling the charter-dedicated parks budget is essential. I also urge Council to remove Sections 580 and 507: Section 580 prevents future Councils from efficiently realigning infrastructure duties without a full charter amendment, and Section 507 entrenches siloed bureau culture by giving each its own Chief Administrative Officer. Together, these reforms would make Los Angeles more functional and accountable for all residents.????????????????

Communication from Public

Name: Angelo Mike

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 07:33 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Hello Council, Having attended the installation of three ghost tires at 99 Market Ranch last Sunday, where a driver crashed into the store, killing three and injuring six, I am witness to some of the pain those families endure from their loved ones being taken by a car crash. As of May 2nd, traffic deaths were up 18% from that same time in 2025. Having lost two cars in hit and runs in LA, including one while I was sleeping in it, leaving me unable to work for a month and recovering for several more months, I've been car free since Oct 2021 and see both the great benefits of transit, biking, and walking, but also the terrible lack of will from city leadership to bring about life saving street infrastructure. A lot of this inertia is due to the city's lack of a Capital Infrastructure Plan. There's a huge lack of accountability for safe streets, with various departments being either willful, powerless, or willfully powerless to bring about infrastructure changes that would make streets healthy, safe, affordable, and that would get more people moving with fewer cars, easing the burden on our infrastructure, our finances, our health, and the climate. I'm asking for a Director of Public Works to oversee accountability for the departments responsible for our streets and for providing overall direction to them to achieve Vision Zero of no traffic fatalities. Such a person needs to be empowered to coordinate all departments to achieve Vision Zero. This would be a big change from our current system in which no one is responsible for stopping traffic deaths, so effectively, everyone is responsible for traffic deaths. Someone needs to be responsible for pushing through infrastructure improvements, as opposed to, again, no one. I'm asking to increase funding for the Parks Department - to double it. I'm also asking to remove section 580 from the charter to both speed up and make more flexible the different departments and public works to achieve Vision Zero. Remove Section 580. This will allow future Council offices and the Mayor to easily move duties between Public Works and other Departments. For decades different studies have recommended moving the duties of public works and departments around to deliver projects more efficiently. Section 580 makes that impossible without modifying the charter. By moving this from the Charter to administrative code make the City more nimble for future Councils. For example, if we wanted to give LADOT the authority to repave streets or fix sidewalks,

that would require a charter amendment by voters. Removing Sec. 580 allows Council to move those duties around much more easily. Remove Section 507. Section 507 gives each bureau of public works their own Chief Administrative Officer. This is part of what creates a culture of fractured bureaus that act as their own departments instead of a unified body working towards the same goal. These are important steps to having a healthy, livable, and joyous city. Thanks, Angelo Mike 90034

Communication from Public

Name: Amin El Gamal

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 07:36 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Los Angeles streets are some of the deadliest in the nation, and the state of our infrastructure is embarrassing and deteriorating. We need a CIP to align projects and departments, but we also need a Director of Public Works to coordinate and create a system of accountability. I support increasing the budget for the Parks Department. I also strongly feel we should remove section 580 from the charter, this would create flexibility and allow council to shift duties between departments and public works easily without needing to go back to voters.

Communication from Public

Name: Villarreal

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 07:48 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: As a long-term resident of Los Angeles and a registered voter, I respectfully urge the Council offices to consider the following amendments: Remove Section 580 – Eliminating this section would allow future Council offices and the Mayor greater flexibility to reassign duties between the Department of Public Works and other city departments. Remove Section 507 – Currently, Section 507 grants each bureau within Public Works its own Chief Administrative Officer. Revising this structure could streamline management and reduce redundancy. Create a Citywide Capital Infrastructure Program (CIP) – Establishing a citywide CIP within Los Angeles' budget process would enhance transparency and efficiency in the planning and delivery of infrastructure projects. Empower a Director of Public Works – A Director of Public Works should oversee the department and its bureaus, including management of the CIP. The current Board of Public Works is an outdated structure from over 100 years ago. Updating this governance model would provide a clear executive chain of command and improve operational management for the city.

Communication from Public

Name: Violet

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 08:34 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Los Angeles streets are some of the deadliest in the nation, which I can personally attest to, as someone involved in a car accident as a law abiding pedestrian. The state of our street infrastructure is alarming and embarrassing for a city of our size. We need a CIP to align projects and departments AND a Director of Public Works to coordinate. I want to see the budget for the Parks Department increased, but also remove section 580 from the charter, allowing council to shift duties between departments and public works easily.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 09:17 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: CCA support of a five year CIP and two year budget framework



May 13, 2026

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

**Re: Charter Reform Priorities (CF #26-0489)
Five-Year Capital Improvement Program & Two-Year Budget Cycle**

Dear Council President Harris-Dawson and Honorable Members of City Council:

For over 100 years, CCA has advanced policies and partnerships that strengthen Los Angeles as a place to live, work, invest, and visit. We lead by convening diverse perspectives and aligning them around practical, forward-looking solutions. As Los Angeles continues to grow, the need for strong, effective, and transparent governance is more important than ever. Decisions made today will impact economic opportunity, infrastructure capacity, and the City's ability to attract and retain investment for decades to come.

We would first like to extend our thanks to the Charter Reform Commission for its work and commitment to examining how our City's foundational structures can better serve Angelenos. This is complex and consequential work, and we recognize the time and engagement required to do it well. In that spirit, **we urge your support of two complementary Charter reform recommendations: the establishment of a five-year Capital Improvement Program and the adoption of a two-year budget framework.** Together, these reforms would provide Los Angeles with the structure and stability needed to deliver critical infrastructure projects more effectively, curb escalating liability costs, and strengthen long-term fiscal planning.

I. Adoption of a Five-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Every major city in the country relies on a CIP to build, repair, and maintain essential public infrastructure — sidewalks, streets, curbs, ramps, and more. Los Angeles does not. The result is visible neglect across our entire city: uprooted sidewalks, crumbling streets, and broken streetlights from Reseda to El Sereno. To date, over 50,000 sidewalk repair requests remain unattended, access ramp installations still face wait times of up to ten years, and broken streetlights take an average of one year to repair.

It is no surprise then that liability costs have steadily increased, as deferred maintenance inevitably compounds into greater risk and expense over time. Over the past five years alone, the City has spent over \$300 million on liability claims tied to deteriorating infrastructure - diverting scarce public resources that should be directed toward fixing problems before they become crises.

To address these challenges, the City should adopt a five-year Capital Improvement Program, as recommended by the Charter Reform Commission. This would shift Los Angeles from a reactive approach to infrastructure maintenance toward proactive, long-term planning. By systematically identifying infrastructure needs, prioritizing investments, and aligning funding with long-term objectives, the City can deliver projects more efficiently and ensure neighborhoods across Los

Angeles receive equitable attention. At a time of growing fiscal strain, a comprehensive CIP would also help reduce costly inefficiencies and liability exposure, preserving scarce City resources for the delivery of essential public services and reinvestment in core infrastructure.

II. Two-Year Budget Framework

A Capital Improvement Program is most effective when paired with a two-year budget framework that aligns long-term planning with fiscal decision-making. Under the City's current annual budget cycle, departments are often forced into a constant state of short-term planning, leaving limited capacity to focus on implementation, project delivery, and long-range coordination. The result is delayed projects and infrastructure investments that lack continuity from one fiscal year to the next.

A biennial budget structure would create the stability necessary for departments to plan more strategically and execute more effectively. The first year of the cycle would allow departments to solidify priorities and funding commitments, while the second year would provide the operational runway needed to focus on implementation and delivery. This approach would allow City staff to spend less time rebuilding budgets and renegotiating priorities each year, and more time delivering sidewalks, streets, facilities, and other essential infrastructure projects on schedule and within budget.

Just as importantly, a two-year framework would strengthen fiscal accountability by creating clear performance expectations and longer-term visibility into the City's financial obligations. It would improve coordination among departments and provide greater certainty for those relying on the timely delivery of public projects. At a time when Los Angeles faces mounting infrastructure needs, rising liability costs, and ongoing fiscal pressure, pairing a comprehensive CIP with a biennial budget process would represent a meaningful structural reform that focuses on efficiency, stability, and long-term stewardship of public resources.

We appreciate your leadership and respectfully request your support in advancing these reforms as part of the City's ongoing efforts to build a stronger and more sustainable Los Angeles. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Nella McOsker
President & CEO
Central City Association of Los Angeles

Communication from Public

Name: Chad Shields

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 02:44 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Honorable Chair and Members, Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee: I write to submit two memoranda for inclusion in the council file on the Charter Reform Commission's approved package. Each memorandum supports the Commission's underlying diagnosis and adopts its analytical framework. Each identifies a structural gap in the implementation that, if left unaddressed, would diminish the package's effectiveness or its prospects with the November 2026 electorate.

Memorandum 1 — Adoption of a Three-Office Architecture for City Legal Services (May 11, 2026) The first memorandum supports the Commission's bifurcation of the Office of the City Attorney into a separately elected City Prosecutor and a Mayor-appointed City Attorney. It recommends that the Committee expand the package to a three-office ("trifurcation") architecture by adding an Office of Council Counsel appointed by and accountable to the Council itself. Under bifurcation as approved, the same Mayor-appointed officer serves as legal advisor to both the Mayor and the Council. Every level of government above the City — the federal government, the State of California, and comparable large cities including New York — addresses this tension in the same way: the legislative body has its own counsel. The Commission's report already relies on these comparable jurisdictions; trifurcation aligns the proposal with the model the Commission's own analysis presupposes. The memorandum proposes four supporting safeguards: explicit civil rights allocation between the Attorney and Prosecutor; for-cause tenure protection for the appointed City Attorney paralleling the approved CFO formulation in Sec. 290; reconstitution of the Claims Board to include the Controller in place of the City Attorney; and an Ethics Commission dispute-resolution mechanism extending the existing Sec. 710 architecture. It addresses the principal counter-arguments (cost, voter comprehension, and three-way deadlock risk) and includes recommended charter text for a new Sec. 230 and conforming amendments to Secs. 270, 271, 273, and 710.

Memorandum 2 — Pairing Council Expansion (Sec. 241) with Departmental Interaction Guardrails (May 13, 2026) The second memorandum supports the Commission's expansion of the Council to twenty-five single-member districts under amended Sec. 241. It

recommends that the Council pair the expansion with three companion reforms so that expansion produces a more responsive Council rather than a multiplication of the existing co-management dynamic. The "more bosses" objection raised at the Committee's recent hearing is correct in form but misdiagnoses the cause. Departmental burden is a function of Los Angeles's councilmember-prerogative norm, not of council size. The memorandum proposes (1) right-sized council offices, reducing staffing in proportion to the forty-percent reduction in district population; (2) an expanded and specialized Chief Legislative Analyst organized into four subject-matter divisions modeled on the New York City Council; and (3) a codified three-tier Department Communications Protocol routing inquiries through 311, departmental legislative liaisons, and CLA divisions respectively. Only one element of the package — an optional ceiling provision under Sec. 218 — would require charter text. The remainder are implementable through Council rule and ordinance during the 2027–2032 transition window provided by amended Sec. 241(b), and a phased implementation schedule is identified. Action Requested I respectfully request that both memoranda be included in the council file for the Committee's continuing consideration of the charter reform package, and that the Committee direct its staff and the Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst to evaluate the specific recommendations and proposed charter text. I am available to discuss any element of either memorandum with Committee staff, the Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst, or the City Attorney's office. Respectfully submitted, Chad Shields

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Chair and Members, Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee, Los Angeles City Council

CC: Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst; Office of the City Administrative Officer; Charter Reform Commission

FROM: Chad Shields

DATE: May 13, 2026

RE: Pairing Council Expansion (Sec. 241) with Departmental Interaction Guardrails

I. Summary

This memorandum supports the Charter Reform Commission's recommendation to expand the Council to 25 single-member districts under amended Sec. 241. It further recommends that the Council pair the expansion with three companion reforms (collectively, a Governance Modernization Package) so that expansion produces a more responsive Council rather than a multiplication of the existing co-management dynamic.

The reforms are: (1) right-sized council offices, reducing per-member staffing in proportion to the reduced district population; (2) an expanded and specialized Chief Legislative Analyst capable of supporting committee-based oversight at scale; and (3) a codified Department Communications Protocol routing council inquiries through department leadership rather than line staff.

Together, these reforms answer the principal structural objection to expansion raised by Members of the current Council and amplified in editorial commentary: that adding ten members increases the number of principals to which each department must respond. The objection is correct in form but misdiagnoses the cause. The burden on departments is not a function of council size; it is a function of Los Angeles's longstanding co-management norm, under which individual members operate as district executives. Pairing expansion with the reforms below completes the transition the Commission's Mayoral Powers package began: from a co-management council toward a true legislative body.

None of the three reforms is essential to the charter text. Each is implementable through Council rule and ordinance during the 2027 to 2032 transition window provided by amended Sec. 241(b). Optional charter language is identified in Section VI for the Committee's consideration.

II. The Structural Concern

A. The “More Bosses” Diagnosis

Members of the current Council have raised a legitimate operational concern about expansion: that increasing the number of district offices from fifteen to twenty-five (or, with the Mayor, from sixteen to twenty-six principals) multiplies the inboxes, hearings, meeting requests, and intervention asks each city department must absorb. The concern was articulated at the December 2023 Ad Hoc Committee on Governance Reform hearing in approximately these terms: more members mean more pathways through which departments will receive requests.

The diagnosis is partially correct. The numerical observation is accurate. The causal attribution is not. Departments are not burdened by the existence of fifteen council members per se. They are burdened by the operating norm under which each of those fifteen members functions as an executive within their district, intervening directly in permitting, contracting, casework, and personnel decisions that are properly within departmental purview. The Commission’s own report calls this norm out by name as “councilmember prerogative” and identifies it as a principal source of inefficiency and accountability erosion.

B. What Expansion Compounds Absent Guardrails

If twenty-five members each retain the full set of co-management practices currently exercised by fifteen, the result is not a more responsive city. It is a more diffuse version of the current pathology, with smaller geographic fiefdoms and the same per-member workflow imposed on a larger institutional footprint.

The Chicago case illustrates this risk. Chicago’s fifty alderpersons operate under a comparable prerogative norm. They have been described in the political-science literature as “fifty aldermen serving essentially as mayors of fifty wards.” The city has suffered a long-running corruption record correlated with that structure. The Commission’s package does not embrace the Chicago model and does not propose to. But absent positive structural counterweights, the post-expansion equilibrium will drift toward it.

C. What Expansion Enables When Paired With Reform

Expansion is the political event that creates the conditions for the broader shift. Three mechanisms operate here.

First, the per-district population reduction (from approximately 260,000 to 155,000) substantially changes the resource calculus of council offices. Districts forty percent smaller cannot credibly justify offices the same size as before.

Second, a larger body permits deeper committee specialization. Committee-of-jurisdiction oversight is the workflow under which large councils manage department interactions effectively, and meaningful committee specialization is feasible only above a certain membership threshold. Fifteen members chairing one committee and serving on two others is

structurally thin; twenty-five members support a richer and more specialized committee architecture.

Third, expansion provides political cover for the underlying delegation of operations to the executive branch. Members of an expanded body, with smaller districts and clearer legislative footing, can credibly accept a narrower operating role in a way that members of the current body cannot. The Commission's Mayoral Powers package (Secs. 214, 231) creates the executive-side authorities; the reforms recommended in this memorandum create the legislative-side complement.

III. The Three Companion Reforms

A. Right-Sized Council Offices

Los Angeles's existing council offices are exceptionally large by comparable-jurisdiction standards. Each of the fifteen offices currently operates with approximately twenty-five to thirty staff and an annual operating budget in the range of \$2.0 to \$2.5 million. The typical New York City Council member's office operates with six to ten staff. Members of the United States House of Representatives are statutorily capped at eighteen employees. Los Angeles's outsized per-office staffing reflects the historic co-management role; it is not a baseline that should be carried into a twenty-five-member structure.

At 155,000 residents per expanded district, the appropriate range is approximately twelve to fifteen employees per office. This is sufficient for the legitimate constituent service, community liaison, and policy support functions of a district office without supporting parallel departmental operations within each member's office.

The savings (approximately fifteen FTE per office across twenty-five offices, or roughly 375 FTE citywide relative to a no-change baseline) substantially offset the cost of the other reforms recommended in this memorandum. Implementation is by ordinance amending the Council's existing expenditure ceiling framework; charter text is not required. Section VI identifies optional charter language for the Committee's consideration.

B. Expanded and Specialized Chief Legislative Analyst

The Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst currently serves as the Council's primary nonpartisan policy and budget analytical capacity, supporting all members and all committees as generalist staff. This model is workable at fifteen members; it will not scale to twenty-five members with the committee proliferation expansion will entail.

Recommended is a restructuring of the CLA into four subject-matter divisions, each headed by a senior analyst and staffed with subject-matter analysts, attorneys where appropriate, and supporting personnel:

- Land Use and Planning Division

- Public Safety Division
- Finance and Budget Division
- Infrastructure and Public Works Division

The model is the New York City Council's Planning and Land Use Division, which maintains a dedicated team of planners, attorneys, and administrative staff supporting the Council's Land Use Committee and individual members on land use matters. The divisional structure permits members to route subject-matter inquiries through the CLA rather than directly to departments, displacing a substantial fraction of the council-department workflow into a staff function. It also gives the Council a credible institutional capacity for oversight independent of departmental self-reporting.

The CLA expansion can be authorized by Council ordinance and funded from the office-rationalization savings described in Section III(A). Optional charter language guaranteeing minimum CLA capacity is identified in Section VI.

C. Codified Department Communications Protocol

Council members and their staff currently contact department employees at any level, on any matter, through any channel. The absence of a routing protocol is a principal driver of the departmental workload concern. It also produces inconsistency in service delivery: matters reaching senior departmental attention through a council office receive disproportionate priority, while comparable matters from the public route through 311 with longer resolution times.

Recommended is a written, three-tier protocol jointly developed by the Council, the Office of the City Administrative Officer, and the Mayor's office:

Tier One. Routine constituent service requests (street repair, code enforcement complaints, illegal dumping, tree maintenance, traffic signage). Routed through 311, with council offices having dashboard visibility into their district's volume, status, and resolution rates.

Tier Two. Operational and case-status inquiries (permit timelines, project-specific questions, agency contact requests). Routed to designated departmental legislative liaisons at the level of department head designee, not line staff.

Tier Three. Policy, oversight, and legislative inquiries. Routed through the CLA's relevant division and the committee of jurisdiction.

The protocol regulates the communications workflow, not the underlying policy authority. Council members retain the same legislative, budget, and oversight powers as before; the protocol requires only that requests reach departments through channels that allow systematic response and tracking.

Two implementation precedents bear mention. The City of Pleasanton's City Manager issued a similar memorandum to council on July 11, 2025, governing routing of constituent inquiries in

the face of rising public records request volume. Salt Lake City’s Council Member Policy Manual contains formalized routing protocols distinguishing requests requiring less than sixty minutes of staff time (handled directly) from larger requests (routed through the Executive Director). Richmond, Virginia’s 2019 attempt at a similar protocol failed because it was imposed unilaterally by the Mayor over Council objection; a successful Los Angeles version must be co-developed by all three branches and ratified by ordinance, not adopted by executive fiat.

IV. Comparative Jurisdictional Reference

The pattern below recurs across comparable jurisdictions: large legislative bodies manage departmental interaction through structural mechanisms (committees, central staff, communications protocols) rather than through individual member access. Los Angeles’s current per-office staffing is an outlier; its absence of a communications protocol is also an outlier.

| Jurisdiction | Council Size | Constituents per Member | Staff per Member Office (approx.) | Departmental Communications Norm |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Los Angeles (today) | 15 | 260,000 | 25 to 30 | Direct contact at all levels; informal “councilmember prerogative” over district matters; no codified protocol. |
| Los Angeles (proposed) | 25 | 155,000 | 12 to 15 | Three-tier protocol: 311 (routine), department legislative liaison (operational), CLA division and committee (policy/oversight). |
| New York City | 51 | 172,000 | 6 to 10 | Speaker-coordinated legislative agenda; committee-based oversight calendar; substantial central council staff (Planning & Land Use Division, Finance Division, Oversight & Investigations Division). |
| Chicago | 50 | 55,000 | varies; smaller than LA | “Aldermanic prerogative” norm; direct contact prevalent; correlated with documented corruption risk; cautionary model. |
| Houston | 16 | 143,000 | varies | Mayor-routed for service delivery; centralized constituent service through 311. |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|---------|----------------|---|
| U.S. Congress (House) | 435 | 770,000 | 18 (statutory) | Agency Congressional Affairs offices route inquiries; oversight handled through committees with professional staff. |
|-----------------------|-----|---------|----------------|---|

Two observations follow from the table. First, New York City is the right structural comparator for an expanded Los Angeles: similar in scale, similar in the executive-legislative balance the Commission proposes, and operating effectively with substantially smaller member offices than current Los Angeles practice. Second, Chicago is the cautionary case. Expansion alone, paired with prerogative norms, produces the worst features of both small and large councils.

Los Angeles’s current per-office staffing levels are best understood as historic artifacts of an unusual co-management arrangement, not as service-delivery requirements. The proposed configuration brings Los Angeles into line with the comparable jurisdictions on which the Commission’s broader analysis already relies.

V. Counter-Arguments and Responses

A. Constituent Service Erosion from Smaller Offices

The principal objection to office rationalization is that smaller offices will degrade constituent service. The objection is intelligible but does not survive examination.

Districts under amended Sec. 241(b) are forty percent smaller in population than current districts. Comparable-scale offices in New York City and elsewhere deliver constituent service successfully with significantly smaller staff than the proposed twelve-to-fifteen range. Net constituent service capacity per resident is substantially higher under the proposed configuration, not lower.

A substantial fraction of current council office workload consists of acting as an intermediary to departments: receiving a constituent complaint, contacting a department, tracking the resolution, and reporting back. Under the protocol recommended in Section III(C), this work is performed by 311 (Tier One) or by department liaisons (Tier Two) rather than by member office staff. Freed capacity within member offices can be redirected to community liaison, policy support, and legitimate constituent advocacy.

B. Mayoral Power Concentration

A second objection concerns the combined effect of the Mayoral Powers package and the recommendations in this memorandum: that taken together, the reforms tilt structural power toward the Mayor and away from the Council.

The objection is partially correct on administrative authority. The Mayor does gain meaningful administrative coherence under Sec. 214 and Sec. 231 as approved. The objection is incorrect,

however, on legislative authority. The Council retains its full legislative power, full budget approval power, and full oversight power. The recommendations in this memorandum substantially strengthen the Council's legislative and oversight capacities through specialized CLA staffing and committee-based oversight scheduling. What the Council gives up is not legislative power but operational entanglement, which is properly an executive function. Each branch is strengthened in the role the Charter assigns to it. The architecture moves Los Angeles toward, not away from, the separation of powers the Charter has always nominally provided.

C. Implementation Risk During the Transition

The 2027 to 2032 transition window provided by amended Sec. 241(b) creates both an opportunity and a risk. The opportunity is the multi-year runway in which to implement the reforms before the expanded Council seats. The risk is that political momentum dissipates over a six-year horizon.

A phased schedule mitigates the risk:

- **2027.** Department Communications Protocol adopted and operational under the existing fifteen-member Council, providing a demonstration period before expansion.
- **2028.** CLA divisional restructuring authorized and substantially staffed.
- **2029 to 2031.** 311 buildout and council-office dashboard completed; office expenditure ceilings published in advance of the 2032 elections so prospective candidates know the resource baseline they will inherit.
- **2032.** Expansion takes effect; right-sized offices commence concurrently.

The protocol and CLA reforms can begin operating in the current configuration and demonstrate value well before expansion takes effect, building constituency support for the broader package.

D. Why Pair the Reforms With Expansion At All

A final objection runs in the opposite direction: if the structural diagnosis is that Los Angeles's problem is co-management rather than council size, why is expansion necessary at all?

The answer is political. Members of the current Council have demonstrated, across multiple proposals and decades, an unwillingness to accept reductions in office resources or constraints on member-department contact absent a counterweight. Expansion is that counterweight. Each member of an expanded Council represents a substantially smaller population and operates within a more clearly defined legislative role. The trade is acceptable; absent the trade, the reforms recommended above are not. The political conditions for the broader shift are present now and may not recur.

VI. Recommended Implementation Vehicles

The recommended reforms fall across three implementation vehicles. Only one element (optional) requires charter text; the remainder are accomplished through Council action during the transition window.

A. Charter (Optional Addition to the Sec. 241 Package)

A new subsection codifying the office-staffing ratio principle provides baseline protection against future drift. The provision is recommended but not essential; the same outcome is achievable by ordinance alone, and inclusion in the charter is appropriate only if the Committee judges that ceiling discipline requires constitutional protection.

Proposed addition to Sec. 218:

“(e) The Council shall by ordinance establish expenditure ceilings for the offices of individual Council members, with maximum authorized staffing not to exceed twenty employees per office in any district with fewer than 180,000 residents. The Council may by ordinance establish higher transitional ceilings during the period commencing with the adoption of this subsection and ending on the operative date for representational purposes of the expanded Council under Section 241(b).”

B. Council Rules

Two rule amendments support the reforms:

Rule on Committee-Based Oversight Calendar. Each standing committee shall hold quarterly oversight hearings of the departments within its subject-matter jurisdiction, plus an annual budget hearing. Departmental appearance schedules shall be published in advance on an annual basis. The rule converts ad hoc departmental appearances into predictable institutional engagement that departments can resource for.

Rule on Member-Department Contact. Council members and their staff shall direct departmental inquiries through the channels established by the Department Communications Protocol adopted pursuant to ordinance. The Ethics Commission shall have authority to advise on application of this rule.

C. Ordinance and Joint Administrative Order

Three implementation instruments:

(1) Department Communications Protocol. Adopted by joint administrative order of the Council President, the Mayor, and the City Administrative Officer; ratified by ordinance within 180 days of adoption.

(2) CLA Divisional Authorization. Adopted by Council ordinance amending the relevant administrative code provisions, establishing the four divisions identified in Section III(B), with appropriations following in the next budget cycle.

(3) 311 Buildout and Council Office Dashboard. Directed by Council motion to the City Administrative Officer and the Information Technology Agency, with implementation report within twelve months. The motion should specify dashboard access for each Council office, status tracking, and aggregate volume reporting.

VII. Conclusion

The legitimate concern that expansion increases the burden on city departments deserves a substantive response. The response is structural: expansion paired with the three companion reforms above completes the shift from a co-management council to a legislative council, which is the architecture the Commission's package, as a whole, contemplates.

The reforms align Los Angeles with the comparable jurisdictions on which the Commission's analysis already relies. They are achievable within the resources released by office rationalization, and implementable on the multi-year runway provided by amended Sec. 241(b). They also convert a politically vulnerable feature of the ballot package, the "more bosses" critique, into a clear and defensible answer: the Commission's diagnosis is correct, the proposal addresses the diagnosis, and Angelenos under the new architecture will know exactly who is responsible for delivering city services.

The author is available to discuss any of these recommendations with Committee staff, the Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst, or the Office of the City Administrative Officer.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Chair and Members, Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee, Los Angeles City Council

CC: Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst; Charter Reform Commission

FROM: Chad Shields

DATE: May 11, 2026

RE: Adoption of a Three-Office Architecture for City Legal Services

I. Summary

This memorandum supports the Charter Reform Commission's recommendation to separate the prosecutorial and civil-counsel functions of the current Office of the City Attorney. It further recommends that the City Council expand the Commission's package to a three-office ("triforcated") architecture by adding an Office of Council Counsel appointed by and accountable to the Council itself.

The Commission's bifurcation proposal correctly diagnoses the role conflicts in the current consolidated office. It does not fully address a structural concern raised by Members of the Rules Committee at the most recent hearing. Under the bifurcated architecture, the Council and the Mayor share the same legal advisor: an officer appointed by the Mayor, removable by the Mayor (subject to Council concurrence), and dependent on the Mayor for reappointment. Every level of government above the City addresses this same tension in the same way. The federal government, the State of California, and the largest American cities with separated executive and legislative branches each give the legislative body its own legal counsel, appointed by and accountable to the legislature.

This memorandum sets out the architecture, the supporting safeguards, the comparative jurisdictional reference, and the proposed charter text. It also addresses the principal counter-arguments. These include fragmentation cost, voter-comprehension complexity, and the risk of inter-office friction. Each is tractable through the design choices recommended below.

II. From Bifurcation to Triforcation

A. The Commission's Approved Framework

Under the Commission's recommendation, the current Office of the City Attorney is separated into two distinct City Officers and Offices established under Sec. 200 and Sec. 201:

- **City Prosecutor.** Elected at-large under Sec. 202, with a four-year term and two-term limit under Sec. 205 and Sec. 206. Criminal misdemeanor prosecution authority is retained from the predecessor office.
- **City Attorney.** Appointed and removed under Sec. 508 (cross-referenced from Sec. 270). Designated under Sec. 271(b) as the “sole and exclusive legal advisor” to the City and to all City boards, departments, officers, and entities. Affirmative civil litigation, defensive civil litigation, and ordinance drafting are consolidated in this office.

This architecture resolves the original role conflict between the elected prosecutor’s electoral incentives and the office’s civil-advisory responsibilities. It leaves unresolved the question of who advises the Council when the Council’s institutional position diverges from the Mayor’s.

B. The Structural Question Bifurcation Leaves Open

Under Sec. 271(b) as approved, the City Attorney is the “sole and exclusive legal advisor” to all City entities. After bifurcation, that includes the Council. The same Attorney also advises the Mayor, sits on the Claims Board chaired by the Mayor under Sec. 273, and depends on the Mayor for both initial appointment and renewal. When the Council and Mayor disagree on a settlement, on the constitutionality of a Mayor-supported ordinance, or on the scope of the Mayor’s expanded reorganization authority, the same officer advises both sides.

The charter already recognizes this problem in narrower contexts. Sec. 708 authorizes the Ethics Commission to retain independent general counsel and limited support staff outside the City Attorney’s office. The revised Sec. 488 provides a parallel carve-out for the Independent Redistricting Commission. Each of these is an institution sufficiently independent of the executive that its lawyer cannot be the Mayor’s lawyer. The Council, as the principal legislative body of the City and the most consequential locus of inter-branch disagreement, is a stronger candidate for the same treatment than either.

C. The Trifurcation Architecture

Trifurcation extends the Commission’s framework by establishing a third office:

- **Council Counsel.** Appointed by the Council by a two-thirds vote of all members for a fixed seven-year term, renewable once. Removable during the term by a two-thirds vote of the Council. The office advises the Council and its committees, drafts ordinances and resolutions at Council direction, and represents the Council in inter-branch disputes.

The architecture aligns with the established federal and state model: an executive-branch civil legal office (City Attorney), an independent prosecutorial office (City Prosecutor), and a legislative legal office (Council Counsel), each accountable to the branch it serves. This is the structure under which Congress, the California Legislature, and the New York City Council all operate.

Three design asymmetries within the architecture are deliberate:

- 1. City Attorney removal requires cause; Council Counsel removal does not.** The Mayor is a single appointing authority capable of unilateral action, so the for-cause requirement is the

standard professional-independence safeguard. Council removal already requires a two-thirds vote of a 15-member (eventually 25-member) deliberative body. That supermajority itself ensures broad consensus before any removal, and adding a cause requirement provides little additional constraint.

- 2. Council Counsel has a fixed seven-year term; the City Attorney does not.** The fixed term decouples Council Counsel from electoral cycles and reflects the long-tenure professional posture of comparable federal and state legislative-counsel offices, where deep institutional and procedural expertise is the principal asset of the office.
- 3. The City Prosecutor is the only elected legal officer.** Election is appropriate where the office exercises discretionary charging authority that directly affects individual liberty. That function has long been understood to require direct democratic accountability. Election is not appropriate for technical legal drafting or institutional advisory work, both of which are better insulated from electoral pressure.

III. Supporting Safeguards

Four refinements are necessary to make the three-office architecture function:

A. Allocation of Civil Rights Work

The approved text does not specify where civil rights work resides. In practice the work splits along three lines: (i) defense of the City and its officers in federal civil rights litigation, principally under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, which is defensive civil work; (ii) affirmative civil enforcement of fair housing, ADA, and consumer protection statutes, including hate crime victim civil litigation, which is affirmative civil work; and (iii) prosecution of misdemeanor civil rights offenses, which is criminal work. Categories (i) and (ii) belong with the City Attorney under Sec. 271(a). Category (iii) belongs with the City Prosecutor.

Sec. 271 should be amended to allocate these categories explicitly, and to require a written referral Memorandum of Understanding between the City Attorney and the City Prosecutor, refreshed at the start of each Prosecutor's term.

B. Tenure Protection for the Appointed City Attorney

Sec. 270 as approved provides that the City Attorney "shall be appointed and removed as provided in Section 508." Section 508 is the general charter mechanism for appointed officers and does not, on its face, require cause for removal. The Commission's approved language for the Chief Financial Officer in Sec. 290 specifies that the CFO "may only be removed by the Mayor for cause, with the concurrence of the Council by a two-thirds vote." The City Attorney provision should match that formulation. The principal function of the office is to give the Mayor and the Council legal advice. That sometimes means advice the Mayor will not want to receive. An at-will removal posture systematically biases that advice toward the appointing authority.

C. Reconstitution of the Claims Board

Sec. 273 currently composes the Claims Board of the Mayor (chair), the Council President, and the City Attorney. Under trifurcation, the City Attorney becomes a Mayor-appointed officer voting

on Mayor-influenced settlements. The cleaner and more democratically accountable composition is Mayor (chair), Council President, and Controller. All three are independently elected officials who can be held to account by voters. The City Attorney attends as a non-voting advisor and provides litigation information as the Board requests.

The Controller is the right third member for three reasons. First, the position is elected citywide, providing direct democratic accountability. Second, the office is fiscally specialized, with audit access and the analytical capacity to evaluate settlement reasonableness. Third, under the Commission’s approved Sec. 261 reforms, the Controller has Fraud, Waste, and Abuse investigative authority, which involves the same kind of expenditure scrutiny the Claims Board exercises on settlements. The City Prosecutor was considered for this seat and rejected. The Prosecutor has no visibility into civil litigation files and would face direct conflicts on settlements involving conduct that could also be criminally chargeable, particularly police misconduct and harassment claims.

D. Inter-Office Dispute Resolution and Generalized Special Counsel

Three co-equal officers without a dispute-resolution mechanism will produce predictable points of friction. The City Attorney drafts an ordinance the Prosecutor declines to enforce. The Prosecutor wishes to charge a misdemeanor the Attorney advises is constitutionally vulnerable. The Council Counsel advises the Council to take a litigation position adverse to the City Attorney’s position. The Ethics Commission, structurally independent of all three offices, should be designated as the neutral, with authority on a four-fifths vote to issue binding allocation determinations subject to judicial review under Sec. 709.

Concurrently, extend the existing Sec. 710 special-prosecutor mechanism so the Ethics Commission may appoint independent counsel whenever any of the three offices has a conflict of interest, regardless of subject matter, on the same four-fifths-vote standard, drawing from a pre-approved panel of outside firms.

IV. Comparative Jurisdictional Reference

The architecture proposed here is not novel. Congress, the California Legislature, and the New York City Council have operated under this structure for decades. Each does so for the same structural reason that motivates the present proposal: legislative bodies require legal counsel they appoint and control, separate from the legal counsel of the executive.

| Jurisdiction | Executive Civil Counsel | Criminal Prosecutor | Legislative Counsel |
|--|--|---|---|
| Los Angeles (proposed trifurcation) | City Attorney. Mayor-appointed, Council-confirmed; for-cause removal with 2/3 Council concurrence. | City Prosecutor. Elected at-large; four-year term, two-term limit. | Council Counsel. Appointed by 2/3 Council vote; 7-year term, renewable once; removable by 2/3 Council vote. |
| Federal | U.S. Department of Justice (Solicitor General; Civil Division). Presidential | United States Attorneys. Presidential appointment with Senate confirmation. | Offices of the Legislative Counsel of the House and the Senate. Appointed by |

| Jurisdiction | Executive Civil Counsel | Criminal Prosecutor | Legislative Counsel |
|----------------------|---|---|--|
| | appointment with Senate confirmation. | County-level prosecution by state DAs. | chamber leadership; nonpartisan technical drafting. |
| California | Attorney General. Separately elected statewide. | County District Attorneys. Separately elected county officers. | Office of Legislative Counsel. Appointed by concurrent resolution of both houses; nonpartisan drafting and advice for the Legislature. |
| New York City | Corporation Counsel. Mayor-appointed; heads Law Department. | Five elected County District Attorneys. Outside City government. | Counsel to the Council. Appointed by the Speaker; advises and represents the Council and its committees. |
| Chicago | Corporation Counsel. Mayor-appointed. | Cook County State's Attorney. Elected county-wide; outside City government. | No formal independent legislative counsel; certain Council committees retain dedicated counsel by ordinance. |
| San Francisco | City Attorney. Separately elected. | District Attorney. Separately elected. | Counsel for the Board of Supervisors handled within Clerk's office; less formalized given electoral independence of both top officers. |

The federal and California state models are direct precedents for the architecture proposed here. Both governments place affirmative civil litigation under an executive-appointed lawyer (or in California, a separately elected lawyer). Both place criminal prosecution under separately accountable prosecutors: federal U.S. Attorneys and county-level District Attorneys. Both place legislative drafting and advice under a legislative-counsel office appointed by chamber leadership. The professional culture of these legislative-counsel offices is uniformly nonpartisan and technical, and this is the model the Council Counsel should be designed to emulate.

New York City's Counsel to the Council, established by the City Charter and appointed by the Speaker, is the nearest large-city analog. The office advises the Council and its committees, drafts legislation, and represents the Council institutionally. It has not produced significant inter-office friction with Corporation Counsel in practice, and where disputes arise they are typically resolved through informal allocation between the offices.

San Francisco's relative absence of formal legislative counsel is explained by the electoral independence of both its top legal officers, a feature Los Angeles cannot replicate without making Council Counsel itself elected. Election of Council Counsel would defeat the technical, nonpartisan posture the role requires. Trifurcation through appointment is the best available alignment with the comparable jurisdictions.

V. Counter-Arguments and Responses

A. Cost

Standing up an Office of Council Counsel will entail real ongoing cost. Sized for a 15-member (eventually 25-member) Council, the office will require approximately 15 to 30 attorneys plus support staff, with an annual operating budget in the range of \$8 to \$15 million. Three points address the cost objection. First, a meaningful fraction of the cost is offset by the elimination of ad hoc outside counsel retention by Council and its committees, which currently occurs without consolidated oversight or rate negotiation. Second, the cost is small relative to the City's total legal services expenditure: the consolidated City Attorney's office budget exceeds \$130 million annually, and the City's total annual settlement payments are larger still. Third, the principal cost driver is staffing parallel to Council size, which would scale with any expansion of the Council whether or not Council Counsel is established. The fiscal impact statement should acknowledge the cost honestly and contextualize it.

B. Voter Comprehension

Trifurcation is more complex to explain than bifurcation. The accurate framing is that the proposal separates three legal functions that have always existed (criminal prosecution, executive civil counsel, and legislative drafting and advice) into three offices that mirror the City's three branches. That framing tracks the federal and state models voters already accept at higher levels of government.

C. Risk of Three-Way Deadlock

Three offices with overlapping subject-matter authority and no inter-office dispute mechanism could produce paralysis. The Section III(D) proposal addresses this directly: the Ethics Commission, on a four-fifths vote, issues binding allocation determinations subject to judicial review. This is the same mechanism the charter already uses for ethics-related conflict resolution under Sec. 710 and is well-suited to the role.

D. Erosion of Unified City Legal Posture

When the City speaks in court as a single entity, three offices could produce inconsistent positions. The proposal preserves the City Attorney's primary representational role in litigation; the Council Counsel represents the Council only in inter-branch disputes where the Council asserts a position adverse to the executive's. In the ordinary run of cases, the City speaks with one voice through the City Attorney. This is how the federal government operates: the Solicitor General represents the United States in court even when individual agencies or congressional committees have differing views, and inter-branch conflicts are handled through specifically authorized representation.

VI. Recommended Charter Text

The four safeguards in Section III, together with the new Office of Council Counsel, can be implemented through targeted amendments to the approved package. The following text is recommended:

Sec. 270. City Attorney Tenure

Replace the second sentence of Sec. 270 with the following formulation, paralleling Sec. 290 for the CFO:

“The City Attorney shall be appointed by the Mayor, subject to confirmation by the Council. During the term in office, the City Attorney may be removed by the Mayor only for cause, with the concurrence of the Council by a two-thirds vote as provided in Section 508.”

Sec. 271(a). Civil Rights Allocation

Add a new subsection (d) to Sec. 271:

“(d) The City Attorney shall retain authority over (i) defense of the City and its officers in civil rights litigation, including under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, and (ii) affirmative civil enforcement of state and federal civil rights statutes, including fair housing, disability access, and consumer protection. Criminal prosecution of misdemeanor civil rights offenses shall be the responsibility of the City Prosecutor. The City Attorney and City Prosecutor shall execute and publish a written Memorandum of Understanding allocating overlapping matters and establishing referral protocols, refreshed at the start of each City Prosecutor’s term.”

Sec. 271(b). Amendment to “Sole and Exclusive Advisor” Language

Replace existing Sec. 271(b) with:

“The City Attorney shall be the legal advisor to the Mayor, the executive departments, and the City’s boards and commissions other than those entitled by this Charter to retain independent counsel. The Ethics Commission, the Independent Redistricting Commission, and the Council shall have the authority to retain independent counsel as provided in Sections 488, 708, and 230, respectively. The City Attorney shall give advice or opinion in writing when requested to do so by any City officer or board within the City Attorney’s advisory jurisdiction.”

New Sec. 230. Office of Council Counsel

Add a new section to Article II:

“(a) Establishment. There shall be an Office of Council Counsel within the Office of the City Council.

(b) Appointment and Term. The Council shall appoint a Council Counsel by a two-thirds vote of all of its members. The Council Counsel shall serve a term of seven years and may be reappointed once for one additional seven-year term.

(c) Qualifications. The Council Counsel must be qualified to practice in all the courts of this state and must have been so qualified for at least five years immediately preceding appointment. The Council Counsel shall devote their entire time to the duties of the office.

(d) Removal. During the term of office, the Council Counsel may be removed only by a two-thirds vote of all members of the Council.

(e) Powers and Duties. The Council Counsel shall: (1) advise the Council and its committees on matters before the Council, including matters in which the institutional interests of the Council are adverse to those of the Mayor; (2) draft ordinances,

resolutions, and other legislative measures at the direction of the Council, the Council President, or the chair of any standing committee; (3) represent the Council in inter-branch disputes; and (4) perform other legal services for the Council as set forth by ordinance.

(f) *Independence.* The Council Counsel shall be independent of the City Attorney and the City Prosecutor and shall not be subject to direction by either.

(g) *Office Administration.* The Council Counsel may appoint deputies, assistants, and other staff as authorized by the Council. The Office of Council Counsel shall be otherwise administered as provided by ordinance.

(h) *Outside Counsel.* With the approval of the Council, the Council Counsel may retain outside counsel for specific matters.”

Sec. 273(b)(2). Claims Board Reconstitution

Replace the existing Sec. 273(b)(2) with:

“(2) A claims board comprised of the Mayor as chair, the President of the Council, and the Controller, or their designees, shall have the authority to approve or reject settlement of litigation involving only the payment or receipt of money damages exceeding the amount that is within the Mayor’s authority under the preceding subsection, and below an amount set by ordinance. The City Attorney shall attend meetings of the claims board as a non-voting advisor and shall provide such information regarding pending litigation as the claims board may request. The claims board shall make client decisions with respect to settlement of such litigation.”

New Sec. 271.7. Inter-Office Dispute Resolution

Add a new section:

“When the City Attorney, the City Prosecutor, or the Council Counsel disagree as to the allocation of jurisdiction over a particular matter or category of matters, any such officer may refer the disagreement to the City Ethics Commission. The Commission, by a four-fifths vote of all of its members, may issue a binding allocation determination. Determinations under this section shall be subject to judicial review as provided in Section 709.”

Sec. 710. Generalized Special Counsel

Amend Sec. 710(a) by replacing the phrase “relating to campaign financing, lobbying, conflicts of interest or governmental ethics” with the following:

“... relating to any matter in which the City Attorney, the City Prosecutor, or the Council Counsel has a conflict of interest as defined in Article VII or by ordinance.”

Conforming amendments to Sec. 710(b) and (c) preserve the existing four-fifths-vote standard, the pre-approved panel mechanism, and the \$500,000 annual expenditure cap.

VII. Conclusion

Trifurcation is the architecture the Commission's diagnosis implies. The bifurcation proposal correctly identifies that an elected misdemeanor prosecutor cannot also serve as the City's principal civil advisor and chief legislative drafter. The unaddressed corollary is that an executive-appointed civil advisor cannot also serve as the legal counsel of a legislative branch whose interests will sometimes diverge from the executive's. The federal government, the State of California, and the largest American cities with separated executive and legislative branches all resolve this by giving the legislature its own counsel. Los Angeles should do the same.

Adopting the three-office architecture, with the four supporting safeguards described above, would (a) close the structural gap that gave rise to the Committee's questions, (b) align Los Angeles with the comparable jurisdictions on which the Commission's analysis already relies, (c) preserve the unified City legal posture in ordinary litigation while providing a proper home for inter-branch advice, and (d) substantially strengthen the proposal's prospects with stakeholder organizations and the November 2026 electorate.

The author is available to discuss any of these recommendations with Committee staff, the Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst, or the City Attorney staff.

Communication from Public

Name: Justi Sexton

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 12:06 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Councilmembers, I'll be frank. We didn't get the charter reform we wanted. Instead of streamlining to a more nimble document, we got more explicit governance line items - many of which I whole heartedly believe in, but too many for a charter all the same. On this note I emphatically encourage you to move CRC-60 Periodic Charter Review forward so we can improve this in the future. In the meantime, we must move forward with what is on the table, all 300+ pages of it. While it is correct to consistently ask which reforms belong in the charter and which can become an ordinance - It is imperative that recommendations for any ordinance referrals include a set timeline for review and next action. Deciding a reform doesn't belong in the charter without clearly provisioning the next steps to move it forward is death by administrative action. Attached are our full recommendations and research contexts for all items on the agenda for May 14, which has already been emailed to your offices. - Justi Sexton

Charter Reference Sheet - 5/14/2026

Prepared by: *Justi Sexton, Chad Shields, James Moore*

Public Works

CRC 1: Establish Director Of Public Works

Charter Established, Detailed In Admin Code | Minor Adjustments

Empowers the Director of Public Works to manage the day-to-day operations of the Department of Public Works and all of its bureaus; support the function of citywide capital improvement planning; excludes the Director of Public Works from Transfer of Powers provisions in Section 514.

[§ 514, 581, 582](#)

[CRC Redline](#)

- In keeping with other major cities, appointing someone to be the person responsible for DPW and CIP management makes logical sense.
- Interacts with the Mayor Removal Power (CRC 21), in that it is excluded from those mayoral powers
- Could be supplemented with Schlageter motion.

Recommendation: An organizing, unifying body is necessary for either CIP (charter version or council version) to succeed. Details may need to be worked out, but could be done in the Administrative Code.

Supplemental: [PDF Martin Schlageter P and I Committee Motions.docx.pdf](#)

CRC 2: 5 Year CIP

Charter Established, Detailed In Admin Code | Minor Adjustments

Establishes a Capital Improvement Program with the Department of Public Works being the lead agency; Capital Improvement Program Plan shall span a minimum of five fiscal years and shall have identified and dedicated funding sources

[§ 323 \(NEW\)](#)

[CRC Redline](#)

- Broadly agreed upon at commission that a CIP was urgently needed.
- Could be supplemented with Schlageter motion.
- Objections have been raised that language as written only covers "future" infrastructure projects, not existing.
- CIP also being explored at council ordinance level

Recommendation: We would suggest stripping out all language except requiring the city maintain and update a 5-year CIP that covers current and future infrastructure projects, with the details then being left to both parallel work in the BFI and subsequently the Administrative Code to cover specifics.

Supplemental: [PDF Martin Schlageter P and I Committee Motions.docx.pdf](#)

CRC 3: Allocate 2% Budget Minimum to DPW

N/A | Not Ready

Dedicate a minimum of 2 percent of the City's budget to the Department of Public Works

[§ 583 \(New\)](#)

[CRC Redline](#)

- We are not sure why 2% was landed on as a number.
- Discussions arose as to the necessity of ballot-box budgeting.

Recommendation: This could be covered in Charter, Municipal Code, Ordinance, or through the simple process of budgeting. Our general perspective is that Charter-protected budgets belong to politically vulnerable departments (Redistricting, Controller, Ethics Commission) in order to provide them with a durable defense. This reform fails to clear that bar. Budgeting is where it belongs and where it should go.

Recreation and Parks

CRC 4: Allocate .0065% Budget Minimum to RAP

Charter ▾ | Ready For Council

Increase the Department of Recreation and Parks Charter-mandated minimum for the Department's budget to 0.065% of assessed property value

[§ 593](#)

[CRC Redline](#)

- RAP's budget has not been updated since 1937.
- Discussions arose as to the necessity of ballot-box budgeting.
- One of the single most popular reforms in terms of public comment, with 38.6% of public comments being associated with it.
- There are two budget shortfalls forecast for next year, with the expiration of Measure K as well as PLAYLA.
- Interacts with proposed 4-year "phased increase" motion (Council File 26-0489-S2)

Recommendation: From a purely principled stance, this likely should go into the Budgeting process and the allocation should be removed entirely. However, we would believe that to be extremely politically unpopular, both with current council members and with the public at large, and would instead recommend this be passed forward.

Supplemental: [RAP CRC Presentation](#) | [Motion from Council File 26-0489-S2](#)

CRC 5: Enable RAP to sell unusable land (with council approval)

Charter ▾ | Minor Adjustments

Authorizes the Department to sell or transfer land that is not suitable for or determined to be a viable use for public recreation or open space; Approval of the sale or transfer can be done via the Board of Recreation and Park's determination, with the approval of the Council, OR by the Council through the adoption of a Motion.

[§ 594](#)

[CRC Redline](#)

- RAP proposed this themselves as a way to offload the maintenance costs of unusable Park Land.
- This is generally believed to be things like sheds by the side of the road that cannot be used, but whose continual maintenance and liability risk is still on the Parks Department.
- All sales require the approval of the City Council and are subject to public hearings.
- Notable that this reform deviated significantly from the suggestions from RAP's presentation (linked below).
- There were some debates as to adding language to specify that the sale be "for the public good", but that failed at full commission due to concerns about vagueness.

Recommendation: This could be passed forward as an "ordinance enablement", or the restriction could be removed. However, we would also support the original motion from RAP, which seems to have been lost in translation—and which was more in-depth and incredibly moderate in its action. Would advise reviewing these for ordinance, and ensuring that language in charter as written would not conflict with their future implementation should the council wish to take it up.

Supplemental: [RAP CRC Presentation](#)

CRC 13: Establish CFO Role

Charter Established, Detailed In Admin Code | Not Ready ▾

Redesignates the City Administrative Officer as the Chief Financial Officer, with a ten-year term; defines roles in the development and adoption of Capital Improvement Program, preparation of a mid-term biennial budget report and a multi-year financial plan

[§290-293](#)

[CRC Redline](#)

- Concerns have been raised post-Commission about the inability to fire the CFO, as well as the significantly long tenure of the position.
- The Commission saw a lot of debate around who and where the CFO functions should sit.
- CFO comes with a requirement for fiscal experience, and would be appointed by the mayor and confirmed by council.
- Recommendations from the Controller's office were that the Controller should become the CFO, but failed at full Charter Commission due to a general belief that the CFO should not have auditing powers.

Recommendation: To ensure fiscal accountability, Los Angeles must maintain three distinct pillars of financial governance: a "backwards-looking" Controller for auditing, a "present-looking" City Administrative Officer for operations, and a "forward-looking" Chief Financial Officer for long-term strategy. Combining these roles creates a conflict of interest, as the strategist should not be their own auditor, nor should they be bogged down by the day-to-day administrative burdens of the CAO. We believe a dedicated CFO is necessary to provide independent, high-level vision without the risks associated with a ten-year term or consolidated power. More study is required here.

CRC 59: Establish 2 -year Budget

Charter ▾ | Minor Adjustments

Authorizes the creation of a two-year operating budget consisting of two consecutive fiscal years that includes the following associated provisions: creation of a Four-Year Strategic Plan that identifies the City's goals and priorities; shifts the departmental timeline for budget estimates to December 1 instead of January 1; shifts the timeline for the Mayor's submittal of a proposed biennial budget to April 1st instead of April 20th; requires public comment for the proposed biennial budget to occur over at least three separate dates during the Budget Committee's consideration (first day of hearings, final day of hearings, and another of the Committee's choosing) and at least once during the Council's consideration

[§ 291, 292; 310 -](#)

[315](#)

[CRC Redline](#)

- Broadly uncontroversial at the Charter Commission in spirit if not in detail.
- Concerns have arisen since about the schedule of the 2-year budget dovetailing with the 2-year infrastructural plans, which would double workload, instead of offsetting.
- Parallels work being done in the BFI committee.

Recommendation: We would suggest stripping out all language except requiring the city maintain and update a two year budget in years offset from infrastructural planning, and then leave the remainder to the Admin code and the parallel work in the BFI to cover specifics.

Supplemental: [PDF](#) CAO Charter Reform Proposal_2 Year Budget.pdf

CRC 60:

[Admin Code](#)

[Ready For Council](#)

Requires departmental performance evaluations with potential proposed adjustments to Departments for the second year of the biennial cycle; requires the CAO to develop a Mid-Term Biennial Budget Report that provides updated expenditures and revenue projections; Requires Council and Mayoral approval of report

[§ 316-319 \(new\)](#)

[CRC Redline](#)

Recommendation: This does not need to be charter language and could be handled by ordinance as addition to CIP implementation.

Public Bank

CRC 40: Public Bank Language Alignment

[Charter](#)

[Ready For Council](#)

Includes language that references Public Banking provisions, as outlined similarly in State Law

[§ 363 \(NEW\)](#)

[CRC Redline](#)

- Minor adjustment to LA City Charter that aligns it with state law.
- Broadly uncontroversial at the Charter Commission discussions.

Recommendation: This is a small edit with significant impact. However, it is required to be in the charter. We would strongly support this change as it only enables future possible action but does not create a burden or requirement to do so.

Contracting/Procurement

This section of proposed reforms contains several linguistically small edits with significant implementation impact. If procurement measures remain in the charter, these items can move forward as-is or with minor adjustments.

Overall Recommendation: Our recommendations for CRC 61-65 are that they either be moved to the Administrative Code (preferred), or that they be passed forward as charter reforms unchanged, with the possible exception of CRC 64.

Supplemental: [PDF LADWP Charter Reform - Sub Committee 1.15.26 - Final.pdf](#)

[PDF Charter Reform Commission Presentation PPT_1.15.26.pdf](#)

[PDF LAWA Charter Reform Commission Presentation- 01.15.26 FINAL.pdf](#)

CRC 61: Best Value Bidding

[Admin Code](#)

[Ready For Council](#)

Replaces language for the letting of contracts from "lowest responsive and responsible bidder" with "best value" language for competitive bidding and competitive sealed proposals

[§ 371](#)

[CRC Redline](#)

- Broadly uncontroversial at the Charter Commission.
- Additional clarification for the definition of “best value” could be useful

CRC 62: Contract Letting Ordinance Removal

Admin Code | **Ready For Council**

Removes the ordinance requirement for the letting of contracts pursuant to competitive sealed proposals

[§ 371\(b\)](#)
[CRC Redline](#)

- Broadly uncontroversial at the Charter Commission.

CRC 63: Exceptions to Lowest Bid

Admin Code | **Ready For Council**

Allows exceptions to lowest bid requirements for critical infrastructure and software

[§ 371\(e\)](#)
[CRC Redline](#)

- Broadly uncontroversial at the Charter Commission.
- Could be combined with CRC 61 to streamline charter

CRC 64: Minor Error Resolution

Admin Code | **Minor Adjustments**

Allows contracting authority to cure technical/administrative defects as it relates to violations of campaign contribution related disclosures;

[§ 470](#)
[CRC Redline](#)

- Directly asked for by LAWA
- While intended to remove red-tape for non-impactful errors, language and provisioning is too vague to ensure limits on application, whether by error or intentional fraud.

Proprietary Leases

CRC 65:

Admin Code | **Ready For Council**

Allows the Department of Airports, Harbor Department, and Department of Water and Power are authorized to enter into 66 year leases, subject to the approval of the Council

[§ 607](#)
[CRC Redline](#)

- This only raises the upper bounds of possible leasing, while leaving council approval power intact.

Reference Sheet

| Reform | Charter or Admin? | Status |
|--------|---|---------------------|
| CRC 1 | Charter Established, Detailed In Admin Code ▾ | Minor Adjustments ▾ |
| CRC 2 | Charter Established, Detailed In Admin Code ▾ | Minor Adjustments ▾ |
| CRC 3 | N/A ▾ | Not Ready ▾ |
| CRC 4 | Charter ▾ | Ready For Council ▾ |
| CRC 5 | Charter ▾ | Minor Adjustments ▾ |
| CRC 13 | Charter Established, Detailed In Admin Code ▾ | Not Ready ▾ |
| CRC 59 | Charter ▾ | Minor Adjustments ▾ |
| CRC 60 | Charter Established, Detailed In Admin Code ▾ | Ready For Council ▾ |
| CRC 61 | Admin Code ▾ | Ready For Council ▾ |
| CRC 62 | Admin Code ▾ | Ready For Council ▾ |
| CRC 63 | Admin Code ▾ | Ready For Council ▾ |
| CRC 64 | Admin Code ▾ | Minor Adjustments ▾ |
| CRC 65 | N/A ▾ | Ready For Council ▾ |
| CRC 40 | Charter ▾ | Ready For Council ▾ |

Councilmember Motions

Port of Los Angeles / Public Access Investment Plan / Leasing Policy / Charter Reform

Admin Code | **Not Ready**

- Aligns with some of Port Authorities presented asks
- Proposed by Councilmember McOsker, and funnels reporting/oversight of Harbor directly to CD15.
- Interacts with CIP.
- Directs budget of harbor to have a minimum of 10%.
- Adds additional restrictions to the leasing agreements that

[25-0118](#)

Recommendation: This would seem to resolve a dispute between CD15 and the Port / Harbor. While broadly supportive of port infrastructure, this most likely could be partially or entirely done in the admin code, especially the leasing agreements.

Supplemental: [PDF Charter Reform Commission Presentation PPT_1.15.26.pdf](#)

Port Master Plan / California Coastal Act / Level I and Level II Coastal Development Permit Framework / Policies and Procedures

Charter or Admin Code | **Report Back**

- Calls for the development of objective, quantifiable metrics to assess project scale and impact, alongside a review of best practices from other California ports to ensure consistent land-use categorization.
- Requires identification of necessary amendments to ordinances, coordination with the California Coastal Commission, and a timeline for stakeholder outreach and environmental reviews.

[26-0444](#)

Recommendation: No action needed, await report back

Alternative Project Delivery Methods / City Charter / Potential Ballot Measure / November 2026 General Election

N/A | **Report Back**

- Requested report back on better procurement strategies.

[23-1027-S11](#)

Recommendation: No action needed.

Small Business Preference / City Charter / Potential Ballot Measure / November 2026 General Election

Charter | **Not Ready**

- Requests language from CLA to add a Small Business Preference to the city charter.

[23-1027-S12](#)

Recommendation: Having not seen language for this, we can't comment on it

Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) / Charter Reforms / Minimum Allocation Budget / Phased

Charter ▾

Ready For Council

- Modifies CRC 4 with a phased 4-year increase to double allocation.
- Unclear if the proposed "phased" increase would be enough to cover the budget shortfalls from expiring funding sources.

[26-0489-S2](#)

Recommendation: Same general arguments apply as CRC 4, but more fiscally responsible.

Schedule of Fee Studies / November 2026 Ballot / Measure Amending Charter Reform / Ordinance

Charter ▾

Minor Adjustments

- Not discussed at Charter Commission.
- Proposed by Councilmember Soto-Martinez
- Grants the CAO the ability to set departmental fee studies and adjust fines in real time, without having to return back to the council or modify the charter.

[26-0489-S3](#)

Recommendation: This charter reform is required to be in the charter, but grants significant flexibility to modernize specific fee schedules without overly burdensome bureaucracy. While we haven't seen specific language for it, we are sharply in favor of it.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 03:54 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Los Angeles streets are some of the deadliest in the nation, and the state of our infrastructure is embarrassing and deteriorating. We need a CIP to align projects and departments, but we also need a Director of Public Works to coordinate and create a system of accountability. I support increasing the budget for the Parks Department. I also strongly feel we should remove section 580 from the charter, this would create flexibility and allow council to shift duties between departments and public works easily without needing to go back to voters. We are supporting the following Charter Commissions recommendations: Create a Citywide CIP - This would enshrine a Capital Infrastructure Program into LA's budget process, creating transparency and efficiency around infrastructure delivery. Empower a Director of Public Works Right now we have at least 10 different people accountable for the state of our public infrastructure. A director of public works would manage the department and bureaus alongside overseeing the CIP process. It's critical this role is empowered to coordinate between various departments and general managers. The Board of Public Works is an antiquated body from 100 years ago, we need a real director empowered to manage the various Bureaus of Public Works For a CIP to succeed we need someone in charge, and that person has the tools to get different departments and bureaus to coordinate with eachother Right now there is no one who is accountable for our infrastructure in the City of LA, instead duties are split between many different general managers and the various board members. We need a clear executive chain of command and management in LA Double the Budget for Parks - Los Angeles has some of the worst park access of any major city in the nation. We need to increase their dedicated charter budget. We are also asking Council Offices to make the following amendments: Remove Section 580 - This will allow future Council offices and the Mayor to easily move duties between Public Works and other Departments. For decades different studies have recommended moving the duties of public works and departments around to deliver projects more efficiently. Section 580 makes that impossible without modifying the charter. By moving this from the Charter to administrative code make the City more nimble for future Councils For example, if we wanted to give LADOT the authority to repave streets or fix sidewalks,

that would require a charter amendment by voters. Removing Sec. 580 allows Council to move those duties around much more easily. Remove Section 507. Section 507 gives each bureau of public works their own Chief Administrative Officer. This is part of what creates a culture of fractured bureaus that act as their own departments instead of a unified body working towards the same goal.

Communication from Public

Name: Jasmine Suggs

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 03:54 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Los Angeles streets are some of the deadliest in the nation, and the state of our infrastructure is embarrassing and deteriorating. We need a CIP to align projects and departments, but we also need a Director of Public Works to coordinate and create a system of accountability. I support increasing the budget for the Parks Department. I also strongly feel we should remove section 580 from the charter, this would create flexibility and allow council to shift duties between departments and public works easily without needing to go back to voters. We are supporting the following Charter Commissions recommendations: Create a Citywide CIP - This would enshrine a Capital Infrastructure Program into LA's budget process, creating transparency and efficiency around infrastructure delivery. Empower a Director of Public Works Right now we have at least 10 different people accountable for the state of our public infrastructure. A director of public works would manage the department and bureaus alongside overseeing the CIP process. It's critical this role is empowered to coordinate between various departments and general managers. The Board of Public Works is an antiquated body from 100 years ago, we need a real director empowered to manage the various Bureaus of Public Works For a CIP to succeed we need someone in charge, and that person has the tools to get different departments and bureaus to coordinate with eachother Right now there is no one who is accountable for our infrastructure in the City of LA, instead duties are split between many different general managers and the various board members. We need a clear executive chain of command and management in LA Double the Budget for Parks - Los Angeles has some of the worst park access of any major city in the nation. We need to increase their dedicated charter budget. We are also asking Council Offices to make the following amendments: Remove Section 580 - This will allow future Council offices and the Mayor to easily move duties between Public Works and other Departments. For decades different studies have recommended moving the duties of public works and departments around to deliver projects more efficiently. Section 580 makes that impossible without modifying the charter. By moving this from the Charter to administrative code make the City more nimble for future Councils For example, if we wanted to give LADOT the authority to repave streets or fix sidewalks,

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Communication from Public

Name: James Macapagal

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 03:54 PM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Los Angeles streets are some of the deadliest in the nation, and the state of our infrastructure is embarrassing and deteriorating. We need a CIP to align projects and departments, but we also need a Director of Public Works to coordinate and create a system of accountability. I support increasing the budget for the Parks Department. I also strongly feel we should remove section 580 from the charter, this would create flexibility and allow council to shift duties between departments and public works easily without needing to go back to voters.

Communication from Public

Name: Miguel Hernandez

Date Submitted: 05/13/2026 11:39 AM

Council File No: 26-0489

Comments for Public Posting: Council File Number 26-0489 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