



May 8, 2026

Los Angeles City Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
City Hall, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attention: Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

Re: Los Angeles World Airports Recommendations for Charter Amendments CF 26-0489

LAX

Van Nuys

City of Los Angeles

Karen Bass
Mayor

Board of Airport Commissioners

Matthew M. Johnson
President

Vanessa Aramayo
Vice President

Courtney La Bau
Victor Narro
Nicholas P. Roxborough
Valeria C. Velasco

John Ackerman
Chief Executive Officer

Dear Honorable Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to share these recommendations as the City Council considers amendments to the Los Angeles City Charter. On behalf of Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA), we appreciate your leadership and the Charter Reform Commission’s inclusion of many of the Proprietary Departments’ procurement-related requests in its recommendations to this body.

This letter provides an in-depth overview of LAWA’s Charter reform priorities, offers practical recommendations to improve efficiency and accountability, and highlights opportunities for partnership with the Council to accelerate outcomes for Angelenos.

This letter is also a call to action to make structural changes to the Charter that will enable LAWA to reach its full potential by making significant reforms in the areas of procurement, planning, and personnel.

Furthermore, it advocates devolving authority for decision making in these areas away from the Charter and to departments so that we can operate more effectively, more efficiently and with greater nimbleness to meet the evolving needs of the complex operational, commercial and regulatory environments in which LAWA operates.

Today, the City of Los Angeles and LAWA are facing a perfect storm of generational challenges and opportunities, from the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the LA28 Olympic & Paralympic Games to wildfire recovery, a budget crisis, and crumbling infrastructure.

Our airports are economic engines for our entire region. Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) generated 620,600 jobs in Southern California, with labor income of \$37.3 billion and economic output (business revenues) of more than \$126.6 billion, according to a report published by the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) in 2016, and the numbers are certainly higher today.



This activity added \$6.2 billion to local and state tax revenues. The report also stated that LAX's capital improvement program – which has grown significantly since the time of the study – created an additional 121,640 annual jobs with labor income of \$7.6 billion and economic output of \$20.3 billion; and \$966 million in state and local taxes.¹ According to a 2015 LAEDC study, Van Nuys Airport – the busiest general aviation airport in the country – supported more than \$2 billion in economic activity across the region and more than 10,000 jobs across Los Angeles County.²

At the same time, LAWA is facing substantial challenges. Today, LAX is the third highest-cost airport in the United States for airlines. LAX is the 97th worst recovered airport of the top 100 by passenger volume in the country post-pandemic, with a gap of more than 30 points to some of our competitors. For the first time in decades, LAX is not on the list of the top 10 busiest airports in the world by passenger traffic. Too much of LAX's infrastructure is failing and hopelessly outdated. And the state and local regulatory environment is forcing our critical airport business partners to rethink their decision to operate at LAX and consider leaving for other cities where they see a brighter future.

LAWA is working hard to address the shortcomings and barriers that are within its control and is grateful for the support of Mayor Bass, the City Council, and other City departments in doing so. But true change on the scale and pace necessary will not be possible without significant changes to City systems that are holding back progress. These systems are ill-equipped and were not designed for an operation on the scale and scope of LAWA's today and in the future. LAWA is a complex commercial enterprise with more than \$3 billion in annual revenue and a \$30 billion dollar capital investment plan, yet we operate under many of the same rules and regulations as the rest of the City. LAX and VNY have the potential to be among the best airports of their kind in the world; they can become the world-class facilities this great City deserves, but they cannot do with the outdated and sclerotic rule set that stifles progress today.

At the same time, the City of Los Angeles is facing an unprecedented and multifaceted crisis – rebuilding from the massive wildfires one year ago; a budget crisis fueled by economic uncertainty and structural challenges, a slowing economy, soaring liability and personnel costs, and the ongoing homelessness and affordable housing crisis.³

As a Proprietary Department that generates its own revenues and does not receive any funds from the City's general fund, LAWA is uniquely positioned to support the City and the region in the coming years. To realize this full potential, however, significant reforms are necessary in the areas of:

- Procurement
- Personnel
- Planning and Infrastructure

¹ https://laedc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/LAWA_FINAL_20160420.pdf

² https://laedc.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/VNY_FINAL.pdf

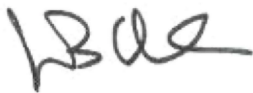
³ <https://mayor.lacity.gov/news/mayor-bass-state-city-speech-delivered-0>

As discussed during the Charter Reform Commission's Personnel and Budget Committee meeting on January 15, 2026,⁴ LAWA has proposed several Charter amendments to address these issues. LAWA is grateful that its procurement-related proposals were included in the Charter Reform Commission's recommendations to this body.

These proposed reforms, which I have included as attachments, will reduce friction, bureaucratic red tape, and inefficiency, thereby securing Los Angeles' future as a leader in tourism and equitable economic opportunity and LAX's transformation into a world-class global gateway, employer, and partner.

Thank you for your important work on Charter reform. We hope you will include these proposed reforms in the final reform package you include in the November 2026 ballot for the voters' consideration, and we welcome the continued opportunity to discuss these proposals with you and to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



John Ackerman
Chief Executive Officer

Enclosures: Charter Reform Recommendations

cc: Sharon M. Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst

⁴ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HszNM42gGFTgJ7uHVk6SxsaRr3oP2YLM/view>

LAWA Charter Reform Recommendations Summary Chart

	Charter Section	Description
CRC #	Charter Reform Commission Recommendations	
61	371(a)	Include "best value" in competitive bid
62	371(b)	Remove required ordinance for competitive sealed proposals and allow this procurement method to be approved by the Board of Commissioners
63	371(e)	Include exceptions to lowest bid criteria for critical infrastructure and software
64	470(c)(12)(H)	Allow technical or administrative defects to be cured.
65	607(a)	Leases up to 66 years.
LAWA Recommendations Requiring Additional Council Consideration		
	632	Increase approval limits for certain purchases, including increasing GM approval authority
	245	If City Council meeting cadence changes, make Board actions final within 5 business days
	503(b)	Require boards to meet at least once a month, amending Sec. 503
	632	Clarify self-certification & self-permitting authority within LAWA areas
	511	Clarify pay-setting authority of boards of departments controlling their own funds
	1001	Provide additional exemptions for senior leadership and create exemptions for managerial and mid-level positions
	1009	Allow for a single open and promotional list
	1010	Allow certification of the whole list and departments to bypass list for qualified internal candidates
	1013	Allow temporary appointments until list is available for up to two years, instead of one year
	1164(b)	Extend retirees' employment services from 120 to 240 days

LAWA Charter Reform Recommendations Approved by the Charter Reform Commission

A. Procurement

These proposed changes to the procurement process will reduce staff time, increase the speed at which contracts get approved and implemented, and get money into the community for small, local businesses more quickly.

1. Include “best value” in competitive bid in Section 371(a)

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 371(a). Competitive Bidding

Include “best value” in competitive bid in Section 371(a), as follows:

(a) **Competitive Bidding.** Except as provided in subsection (e) below, the City shall not be, and is not, bound by any contract unless the officer, board or employee authorized to contract has complied with the procedure for competitive bidding or submission of proposals established by this section and ordinance.

Contracts shall be let to the **lowest** responsive and responsible bidder furnishing satisfactory security for performance **and best value**. This determination may be made on the basis of the lowest ultimate cost of the items in place and use. Where the items are to constitute a part of a larger project or undertaking, consideration may be given to the effect on the aggregate ultimate cost of the project or undertaking. Notwithstanding the provision of this subsection ~~requiring award to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder~~, a bid preference can be allowed in the letting of contracts for California, Los Angeles County, or City of Los Angeles firms, and the bid specifications can provide for a domestic content and recycled content requirement. ~~The extent and nature of the bid preference, domestic content and recycled content requirement and any standards, definitions and policies for their implementation shall be provided by ordinance.~~

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal would reduce administrative burdens by permitting departments to consider the best value of contracts. Current lowest bid requirements can lead to quality issues that create additional administrative burdens.

Fiscal Impact(s): Over time, city departments will save money because they will receive higher quality goods and services. As a Proprietary Department, LAWA generates and utilizes its own funds; therefore, any LAWA contracts will not affect the General Fund.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: Charter Amendment required.

Advantages of Proposal: The current competitive bidding requirements are extremely onerous. The “lowest bid” requirements prioritize price over quality and prevent LAWA and other departments from getting the best suppliers to deliver their projects and services.

Additional Concerns: None.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

2. **Remove required ordinance for competitive sealed proposals in Section 371(b)**

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 371(b). Competitive Bidding; Competitive Sealed Proposals

Remove required ordinance for competitive sealed proposals and allow this procurement method to be approved by the Board of Commissioners in Section 371(b), as follows:

(b) **Competitive Sealed Proposals.** As an alternative to an award pursuant to open and competitive bidding, a contract can be let pursuant to a competitive sealed proposal method, ~~in accordance with criteria established by ordinance adopted by at least a two-thirds vote of the Council.~~ The competitive sealed bid proposal system may permit negotiations after proposals have been opened to allow clarification and changes in the proposal. Adequate precautions shall be taken to treat each proposer fairly. No award may be made pursuant to this alternative method to a proposer whose final proposal is higher as to the ultimate cost, as above defined, than any other responsive proposal submitted. The contracting authority, in order to utilize this alternative method, must make a written finding supported by a written statement of facts that adherence to the rule that the award be made to the **lowest best value** responsive and responsible bidder is not practicable or advantageous and shall also state in writing the reason for the particular award. Consistent with competitive bidding requirements, design-build or other appropriate project delivery systems may be used when justified by the type of project and approved by the contracting authority.

A note about the foregoing proposed revisions:

- “[no] higher as to the ultimate cost to the City” is already interpreted as “best-value” and considers factors other than cost.

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal will reduce administrative burdens by eliminating the need to obtain a City Council ordinance every time a department uses the Competitive Sealed Proposal Selection Process. The City Council ordinance process can add 6 months or more to the procurement timeline, with significant work required by departmental staff, commission staff, and Council staff.

Fiscal Impact(s): This proposal will have a positive fiscal impact by freeing up City resources, getting project funds into the community more quickly, and speeding up the timeline for

delivering infrastructure projects. As a Proprietary Department, LAWA generates and utilizes its own funds; therefore, any LAWA contracts will not affect the General Fund.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: These reforms could be achieved either by Charter Amendment, as proposed above, or through changes to the Los Angeles Administrative Code. On September 25, 2025, Mayor Bass sent a letter⁵ to this Council requesting that it approve an ordinance allowing the Proprietary Departments to utilize the Competitive Sealed Proposal Selection Process (CSPSP) for “capital improvements or other construction-related projects where the complexities and timely completion of the project require factors in addition to price be taken into consideration.” The Mayor also requested that the ordinance remove the requirement that Proprietary Departments obtain an ordinance from Council each time they seek to utilize CSPSP. LAWA has drafted Administrative Code amendment language accordingly. LAWA looks forward to working with the City Council to secure this change, whether through Charter reform or Administrative Code change, without further delay.

Advantages of Proposal(s):

The Competitive Sealed Proposal Selection Process (CSPSP) allows LAWA to consider other factors in addition to price when making a contract award. Those factors may include items such as relevant experience, key personnel, approach to the project scope, and other pertinent details required to best assess the quality and fitness of the proposer to deliver the project. The CSPSP often is utilized at LAWA with Alternative Delivery Methods (Construction Manager-at-Risk, Design/Build, Public-Private Partnership, etc.) on construction projects. As LAWA has moved almost exclusively to delivering its capital improvements utilizing these methods, it is of critical importance that staff be able to consider the aspects cited above, in addition to price, when determining a proposer's ability to complete a project successfully.

Currently, LAWA's Board can only utilize a CSPSP process for nonprofessional services through the approval of an ordinance every time, which can take as long as six months. In contrast, in 2018, the City Council amended the Administrative Code to give the Department of Water and Power (DWP) the authority to utilize the CSPSP for highly specialized equipment without needing an ordinance.

This added time prolongs LAWA's timeframes for delivering its capital improvements, largely eliminates the time savings sought by LAWA's use of alternate construction methods, and ties up staff time at LAWA and in the City. Allowing LAWA to utilize the CSPSP in relation to Capital Improvements or other construction related projects, without having to seek an ordinance every time, would provide significant time savings in line with how LAWA has delivered these projects in recent history.

Additional Concerns: None.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

⁵ https://mayor.lacity.gov/sites/g/files/wph2066/files/2025-09/Executive%20Directive%20No.%2015%20-%20Letter%20to%20Council%20re_LAAC%20Amendments.pdf

3. Include exceptions to lowest bid criteria for critical infrastructure and software in Section 371(e)

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 371(e). Exceptions

Proposed revision to 371(e)(7)

(e) **Exceptions.** The restrictions of this section shall not apply to:

(7) Contracts for equipment repairs, **service** or parts obtained from the manufacturer of the equipment or its exclusive agent, **including software that is only offered by one vendor.**

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal will reduce administrative burdens by (1) reducing the need for lengthy procurement processes where only one vendor exists for a software product, and (2) streamlining processes for developing and servicing critical infrastructure.

Fiscal Impact(s): None. As a Proprietary Department, LAWA generates and utilizes its own funds; therefore, any LAWA contracts will not affect the General Fund.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: Charter Amendment required.

In addition, to incorporate the charter change made to 371(e)(7), there is a corresponding administrative code change that will need to occur in LAAC Sec. 10.15(a)(7):

Contracts for equipment repairs, **services** or parts obtained from the manufacturer of the equipment or its exclusive agent, **including software that is only offered by one vendor.**

Advantages/Disadvantages of Proposal(s): The Charter does not allow for flexibility in contracting and adaptation to current circumstances. Even where only one vendor exists for a certain software product, staff time and effort still must be expended on lengthy contracting processes for procuring and servicing that software. For example, LAWA incurs needless delays to procure IT software like Oracle for which there is only one source. Similarly, the Charter requires the lowest bid for critical infrastructure development and servicing, whereas this amendment would allow the Council to set requirements for such procurements through ordinance.

Additional Concerns: None.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

4. Allow technical or administrative defects to be cured. Sec 470(c)(12)(H)

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 470. Limitations on Campaign Contributions in City Elections

Proposed revision re Charter section 470(c)(12)(H)

(H) Every contract solicitation regarding a contract subject to this provision shall include notice of the prohibitions of this subdivision. At the time of submitting a bid or proposal for a contract subject to this section, the bidder or proposer must complete a form identifying the names of its principals, subcontractors of at least \$100,000, the principals of those subcontractors, and certify that the bidder or proposer will comply with and notify its principals and subcontractors of the prohibitions in this subdivision; and provide any other information determined necessary. **At the discretion of the contracting authority, technical or administrative defects in completion of any forms subject to this provision may be waived as minor or inconsequential, and subject to cure.**

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal would reduce administrative burdens by eliminating needless delays where departments have to restart a procurement process because of bidder disqualification over minor technical defects.

Fiscal Impact(s): This proposal would have a positive fiscal impact in allowing departments to select the most cost-effective bidder and not miss out on bidders because of minor technical defects. As a Proprietary Department, LAWA generates and utilizes its own funds; therefore, any LAWA contracts will not affect the General Fund.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: Charter Amendment is required.

Advantages of Proposal:

Current administrative requirements are not curable and often discourage small firms' participation in procurement opportunities.

Charter Section 470(c)(12)(H) provides: "Every contract solicitation regarding a contract subject to this provision shall include notice of the prohibitions of this subdivision. At the time of submitting a bid or proposal for a contract subject to this section, the bidder or proposer must complete a form identifying the names of its principals, subcontractors of at least \$100,000, the principals of those subcontractors, and certify that the bidder or proposer will comply with and notify its principals and subcontractors of the prohibitions in this subdivision; and provide any other information determined necessary."

City Ethics Commission forms 50 (Bidder Certification)⁶ and 55 (Prohibited Contributors)⁷ were developed to ensure compliance with this Charter requirement. Although well-intentioned, these forms have become “show stoppers,” meaning that a single missed signature dooms a bidder, causing LAWA to miss out on well-qualified bidders, companies to miss out on opportunities, and needless delays resulting from LAWA’s sometimes having to start a procurement process over again. We have seen excellent firms lose out as a result, such as an A+ architectural firm excluded from a contract for the Remain Over Night (RON) hangar and parking project in the southwest airfield, a design project worth millions of dollars, due to the forms missing signature.

Bidders should be given the opportunity to cure these negligible errors without giving an unfair advantage to any bidder or compromising ethics requirements.

Additional Concerns: None.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

5. Leases up to 66 years. Sec. 607(a)

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 607. Limitations on Franchises, Concessions, Permits, Licenses and Leases

Proposed revision re Charter section 607(a)

(a)**Length.** The term shall not exceed 30 years, or the term specified by applicable federal or state law, whichever is less. If Council makes a finding that a term longer than 30 years would be in the best interest of the City, Council may, by a two-thirds vote, subject to Mayoral veto, or three-fourths vote over the veto of the Mayor, authorize a term up to ~~50 years for the Airports Department and Department of Water and Power and a term up to~~ 66 years for the Harbor Department, ~~Airports Department, and Department of Water and Power,~~ or the maximum period allowed by any federal or state law, whichever is less.

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): None.

Fiscal Impact(s): Positive impacts from additional investment in Los Angeles.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: Charter Amendment required.

Advantages of Proposal:

⁶ <https://ethics.lacity.gov/pdf/forms/city/CEC50.pdf>

⁷ <https://ethics.lacity.gov/pdf/forms/city/CEC55.pdf>

Major, innovative development projects at LAWA demanding massive capital expenditures from third parties require amortization over a significant period of time. The Port of LA is permitted up to a 66-year lease term under the Charter, whereas LAWA and DWP are limited to 50 years. The current Charter limitation of 50-year leases has proven problematic with third-party developers considering long-term investment in projects that require very large outlays, such as cargo development and building an airport hotel. Extending LAWA's lease authority to 66 years (subject to a supermajority City Council vote for leases exceeding 30 years) would help attract transformational, long-term investment to Los Angeles.

Additional Concerns: None.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

LAWA Recommendations Requiring Additional Council Consideration

6. Amend Sec. 632 to increase approval limits for certain purchases, including increasing GM approval authority

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 632. Powers and Duties of the Board

Amend Charter Section 632(c) to Authorize delegation of contracting authority to the Airport General Manager for (1) professional, scientific, expert, or technical services; (2) goods, materials, supplies, or equipment; (3) non-professional services; and/or (4) ground and facility leases, for a term not to exceed five years and in amounts not to exceed \$5 million annually, adjusted annually by the Consumer Price Index,⁸ as follows:

(c) Development of the Airports. Purchase, lease, acquire, condemn, design, erect, maintain, improve, repair, and operate all property, improvements, utilities, equipment, supplies or facilities as it may deem necessary or convenient for Departmental Purposes. The power of condemnation shall only be exercised with approval of the Council.

Authorize delegation of contracting authority to the General Manager for (1) professional, scientific, expert, or technical services; (2) goods, materials, supplies, or equipment; (3) non-professional services; (4) ground and facility leases, and/or (5) right-of-entry permits, for a term not to exceed three years and in amounts not to exceed \$5 million annually, adjusted annually by the Consumer Price Index.

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

⁸ The Department of Water and Power General Manager has authority up to \$5 million per year, and LAWA currently has lease authority up to 5 years.

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal would reduce administrative burdens. Increasing the number of contracts approved at the LAWA CEO's level would reduce the amount of time writing, scheduling, and going through the Board and City Council approval processes, thereby freeing up staff for other pressing work and reducing procurement completion times.

Fiscal Impact(s): This proposal would provide positive fiscal impacts by reducing burdens on LAWA and City staff and would help expedite projects, thereby reducing costly delays. As a Proprietary Department, LAWA generates and utilizes its own funds; therefore any LAWA contracts will not affect the General Fund.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: These recommendations can be accomplished either through Charter Amendment, as proposed above, or by amending the Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 10.1.1 through ordinance. In a letter on September 25, 2025, Mayor Bass called on Council “to adopt an ordinance amending the Administrative Code to give the General Managers of the Department of Airports and Harbor Department the same delegated authority as afforded to the General Manager of the Department of Water and Power, and to eliminate, for all three Proprietary Departments, the exclusion of personal service contracts from the General Managers’ delegated contracting authority.”⁹ LAWA has prepared ordinance language and looks forward to working with Council to effectuate these changes without delay, whether through amending the Charter or the Administrative Code.

Advantages of Proposal:

The current contract authority for LAWA's CEO has been stagnant at \$150,000 since 2012.

Today, given the \$30 billion scale of LAWA's Capital Improvement Program, it is routinely contracting amounts in the tens of millions of dollars, and the \$150,000 limit on CEO contracting authority cannot keep pace.

In contrast, the Administrative Code was amended in 2018 to give the Department of Water and Power (DWP) General Manager contracting authority up to \$5 million annually for up to three years. LAWA enters into many dozens of contracts each year that are critical to Capital Improvement Program (CIP) delivery, airport operations, and providing opportunities for small and local businesses. But current approval requirements cause lengthy delays in awarding even low-dollar contracts and burden LAWA and City staff.

Additional Concerns: None.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

7. If City Council meeting cadence changes, amend Sec. 245 to make Board actions final within 5 business days

⁹ https://mayor.lacity.gov/sites/g/files/wph2066/files/2025-09/Executive%20Directive%20No.%2015%20-%20Letter%20to%20Council%20re_LAAC%20Amendments.pdf

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 245. City Council Veto of Board Actions

If the Charter is amended to reduce the number of City Council meetings, amend Charter Section 245 to make actions of boards of commissioners final within five business days, unless the Council acts within that time, as follows:

“Actions of boards of commissioners shall become final at the expiration of the next five ~~meeting business~~ days ~~of the Council during which the Council has convened in regular session~~, unless the Council acts within that time by two-thirds vote to bring the action before it or to waive review of the action.”

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal would relieve administrative burdens by making commission actions final without undue delay.

Fiscal Impact(s): None.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: Charter Amendment required

Advantages of Proposal: Charter Section 245 provides that, “Actions of boards of commissioners shall become final at the expiration of **the next five meeting days of the Council** during which the Council has convened in regular session, unless the Council acts within that time by two-thirds vote to bring the action before it or to waive review of the action.” (emphasis added). Some have proposed changing the frequency of City Council meetings, which would be problematic and prevent finalization of Board of Airport Commissioners’ actions. LAWA recognizes that the Charter Reform Commission did not recommend reducing the frequency of Council meetings and therefore found this LAWA request to be moot. However, should the City Council decide to advance such a proposal to the ballot, LAWA respectfully requests that the Council make this corresponding change to Section 245.

Additional Concerns: None.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

8. Require boards to meet at least once a month, amending Sec. 503

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 503. Organization of the Board

Amend Section 503(b) to reduce the number of required monthly meetings from two to one, as follows:

(b) **Meetings.** Each board shall hold a regular meeting at least ~~twice~~once a month. All meetings shall be in a municipal or other facility open to the public.

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal would relieve administrative burdens by freeing up staff resources required to hold twice-monthly meetings.

Fiscal Impact(s): None.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: Charter Amendment required

Advantages of Proposal: Members of the Board of Airport Commissioners are unpaid volunteers who dedicate a tremendous amount of time and energy to their service, at full board meetings, committee meetings, and community events. Reducing the number of required monthly meetings will decrease the burden on commissioners, thereby increasing the ability of Angelenos from diverse backgrounds to participate on the Board of Airport Commissioners and other citizen boards.

Additional Concerns: None.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

B. Planning and Infrastructure

Current overlapping permitting processes result in duplication, waste, and costly delays. Providing LAWA with enhanced certification and permitting authority would save City resources and support timely completion of infrastructure projects.

9. Amend Sec. 632 to clarify self-certification & self-permitting authority within LAWA areas

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 632. Powers and Duties of the Board

Amend Section 632(c) to clarify LAWA's self-certification and self-permitting powers within LAWA areas.

(c) **Development of the Airports.** Purchase, lease, acquire, condemn, design, erect, **construct, excavate,** maintain, improve, repair and operate all property, improvements, utilities, equipment, supplies, **streets, public works,** or facilities as it may deem necessary or convenient for Departmental Purposes. **Notwithstanding other provisions of the Charter, these powers also include sole authority over planning and related activities, land use regulations and requirements, aesthetic design development and approvals, control over works of art and design over works of art, certifications,**

inspection, and permitting to the maximum extent allowable under federal or state law for all property related to Departmental Purposes or all property owned, managed, or controlled by the department. The power of condemnation shall only be exercised with approval of the Council.

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal would reduce administrative burdens by streamlining approvals, allowing for simultaneous determinations, helping keep projects on budget and on schedule, and freeing up strained City resources to address priority projects outside of the LAX and VNY campuses.

Fiscal Impact(s): This proposal would have a positive fiscal impact by keeping projects on schedule, thereby reducing project costs and change orders, and by reducing duplicative permitting processes, thereby saving City resources.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: It is possible to achieve some of these changes through amendment of the Los Angeles Municipal Code. LAWA looks forward to working with the Council to effectuate these forms, whether through Charter Amendment or ordinance.

Advantages of Proposal:

Duplicative and inefficient permitting processes are a drain on City resources, a hindrance to completion of LAWA Capital Improvement Programs that are an economic driver for the City and its tourism ecosystem, and a severe pain point for LAWA tenants. Permitting traditionally has involved a multitude of agencies with disconnected workflows. In implementing its \$30 billion Capital Improvement Program and its regular operations, LAWA routinely coordinates with and must receive approvals from 10 City agencies, whose permitting policies, timelines, and available resources do not meet the delivery method or schedule needs of LAWA's construction practices. This current process has resulted in:

- **Duplication:** For example, 93 percent of Department of Building and Safety (DBS) inspection overlaps with or is completed by LAWA inspection.
- **Waste:** That DBS inspection duplication equates to \$2.9 million and 17,490 hours of overlap in one year.
- **Costly Delays:** On its Automated People Mover project, LAWA paid approximately \$340 million in claims related to Authorities Having Jurisdiction.

Some of these delays result from inconsistent training for inspectors at different City departments, which in turn lead to inconsistent code interpretations and rework. These inconsistent interpretations harm not only LAWA's project delivery, but also LAWA tenants – many of which are small and local businesses that can ill afford the rework required.

Granting this authority to LAWA would reduce this resource burden for the City and enable a more concise review effort that minimizes duplication of review, eliminates needless overlapping coordination, and meets projects' time constraints.

Additional Concerns:

Conforming changes also may be necessary to Charter sections governing other City departments with certification and permitting authorities to clarify LAWA actions are exempt, including but not limited to:

- Sec. 520. Powers and Duties of the [Fire] Department
- Sec. 550. Powers and Duties of the Department [of City Planning]
- Sec. 551. City Planning Commission
- Sec. 580. Public Works Department Powers and Duties
- Sec. 581. Board of Public Works

Furthermore, if Charter changes are made to other departments (e.g., City Planning, LADOT, Board of Public Works), it will be important to preserve LAWA authorities as necessary.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

C. Personnel

LAWA seeks to create a gold medal experience for its employees, where excellence is celebrated and rewarded. Unfortunately, bureaucratic obstacles stand in the way of the progress needed to support a modern workforce. Today, the inability to hire full-time employees with the expertise and experience required to run a mega-airport forces LAWA to rely on consultants, which are more costly and outside the civil service system. Providing additional flexibility would keep that money and that talent within the LA City system.

LAWA greatly appreciates the Personnel Department's leadership in developing Citywide recommendations for Charter reform and has been pleased to participate in the Personnel Department's process for developing those recommendations. Here, we are pleased to share with the Council the same recommendations that LAWA has shared with the Personnel Department as part of its process.

10. Amend Sec. 511 to clarify pay-setting authority of boards of departments controlling their own funds

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 511. Responsibilities of Boards of Departments Controlling Their Own Funds

Amend Sec. 511(a) to clarify that the boards of departments controlling their own funds have the authority to determine pay for their employees, as follows:

“In addition to the other powers and duties imposed upon them by the Charter, the board of each department having control over its own special funds shall:

- (a) provide suitable quarters, equipment and supplies for the department, create the necessary positions in the department, authorize the necessary deputies, assistants and employees and fix their duties, determine pay for such positions, deputies, assistants and employees, and may require bonds of any or all the department's employees for the faithful performance of their duties; and”

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal will reduce administrative burdens by streamlining approval processes within the City.

Fiscal Impact(s): Given Proprietary Departments use their own funds, granting this authority does not affect general fund dollars. In fact, it will protect those dollars by freeing up precious resources at taxpayer-funded City departments that could be better used serving Angelenos who need help now.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: Some of these changes should be achievable through amending the Administrative Code and through changes in other City Departments' policies and practices. LAWA looks forward to working with the Council and other City departments to achieve these changes without delay.

Advantages of Proposal:

To attract and retain the best talent, LAWA must offer competitive compensation. Unfortunately, current onerous approval processes with other City departments delay LAWA's hiring and pay-setting, causing it to lose qualified staff members and expend unnecessary LAWA and City resources. The City Administrative Officer (CAO) currently reviews and approves Advance Step Hires, paygrade downgrades, paygrade upgrades, in-lieu appointments, and sub-authority creations. Delays in processing these items and denials have resulted in declined offers, improper payments to employees, and inability to hire personnel as needed. LAWA is using its own funds and not burdening taxpayers. And, in fact, the current system creates a burden for taxpayers by using CAO staff resources. Historically, CAO did not approve these determinations, but it has done so since the implementation of Workday in 2022. It should be clarified that this authority rests with LAWA and all departments controlling their own funds.

Additional Concerns:

Should any other department seek to limit paygrade authorities under this section, LAWA asks that the Council reject any such attempt.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

11. Amend Sec. 1001 to provide additional exemptions for senior leadership and create exemptions for managerial and mid-level positions

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 1001. Exemptions

Amend Section 1001(a) to exempt all Assistant General Manager and Deputy Director positions at LAWA, as follows:

Amend Sec. 1001(a) as follows:

(21) All Assistant General Manager Airports and Deputy General Manager Airports positions in the Department of Airports.¹⁰

Amend Section 1001(d)(3) to authorize addition of part-time entry-level exempt positions in professional/managerial classifications (currently limited to administrative/clerical employees) and for mid-level employees (currently only available for entry-level and high-level managerial), as follows:

Amend Section 1001(d) as follows:

(d) **Positions Approved by Council.** In addition to the exempt positions created in subsections (a), (b) and (c) of this section, any of the following may be exempted from the provisions of this Article upon the request of the head of the department or office in which they are employed, by order of the Board of Civil Service Commissioners, approved by the Council by resolution:

...

(3) any position requiring the services of one individual for not more than half time and paying a salary not to exceed three-fourths of the monthly rate established by the salary fixing authority of the department, division or office for entering-level or mid-level clerical or management positions”;

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal could reduce administrative burdens by streamlining the process for onboarding exempt employees.

Fiscal Impact(s): LAWA generates its own revenues, so there will be no impact on the General Fund. LAWA could save funds through reduced reliance on costly contractors. There would be positive fiscal impacts for the City as a whole because of improved airport administration, leading to tourism and other related revenues.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: Charter Amendment is required. Although City Council has the ability to increase the number of exemptions under Section 1001(b), there are still limitations on the total number of such exemptions, and the process for securing exemptions under Section 1001(b) is unduly onerous.

Advantages of Proposal(s):

Exempt positions allow LAWA to recruit the best qualified candidates for senior management positions, as well as the flexibility to bring in entry-level employees who are of critical

¹⁰ Similar exemptions currently exist for all Deputy Chiefs of Police (1001(a)(5)), all Deputy Chiefs of Fire (1001(a)(6)), and all Assistant Directors in the Office of the CAO (1001(a)(14)).

importance to the operation of the airport. It is important to note that exempt hires are represented and included in collectively bargained MOUs.

LAWA currently has just over two dozen positions available for critical senior leaders – less than half what public and private companies of similar size and complexity have – in an organization that needs dozens more to be successful. Even where exemptions are granted, that can take many months, adding to the difficulty of attracting top quality leaders to LAWA. To hire multiple senior LAWA leaders, the LAWA CEO has had to appeal directly to the Mayor herself to avoid losing key talent that was ready, willing and eager to move to LA and join the City team.

LAWA should have the ability to hire all executives at the Assistant General Manager and Deputy General Manager level under exemptions as is the case in, for example, the Office of the CAO.¹¹

Furthermore, beyond executive-level positions, the exemption provisions in the Charter provide inadequate flexibility to bring in entry- and mid-level hires and create a pipeline to the civil service. For example, the exemption authority for part-time entry-level exempt positions is currently limited to administrative/clerical employees but should be expanded to professional/managerial classifications. Similarly, there currently is no ability to bring in mid-level hires on a part-time, exempt basis.

Additional Concerns: None.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

12. Amend Sec. 1009 to allow for a single open and promotional list

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 1009. Promotion

Amend Section 1009 to provide for a single open and promotional list of candidates, as follows:

In rating eligible candidates, the board shall make an allowance of credits for past job relevant service experience. The announcement of the examination shall state that credits will be given for past job relevant service experience. ~~Upon the written request of the appointing authority, the board may certify the names of those applicants having the highest ratings on the open competitive eligible list whose scores before adjustment for preferential credits are higher than the score of the highest available applicant on the promotional eligible register after credits for past service have been added. Names of candidates shall be removed from the register of eligibles for promotion after they have remained on the register for two years without re-examination.~~

¹¹ Charter Section 1001(a)(14).

There shall be one list of eligible candidates, combining both open and promotional candidates, listing candidates in order of scores, including their service experience scores.

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal will ease administrative burdens by reducing time-consuming hiring processes and hiring delays.

Fiscal Impact(s): None.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: Charter Amendment required.

Advantages/Disadvantages of Proposal(s):

Many of the jobs at LAWA require specific skills or experience that are not available within the City. In addition, incumbent staff benefit from learning from new staff coming in from the outside with exposure to innovations. However, in many cases LAWA is required to limit job searches to promotional candidates, leading to delays and difficulties in filling critical roles. Roles should be able to be filled using a single open and promotional list. This also would allow displaced workers or those looking for jobs within the City at all levels of experience to compete and earn a well-paying union job. As the CAO noted in its 2024 Charter reform proposals, "Although hiring from within the City potentially ensures the continuity of knowledge, the current language in this section is so strict that almost no mid-career hiring is permissible, leading to limited hiring pool that may not suffice to fill positions, and the practice may cause the City to lose out on highly qualified external candidates."¹²

Additional Concerns: None.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

13. Amend Sec. 1010 to allow certification of the whole list and departments to bypass list for qualified internal candidates

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 1010. Certification

Amend Section 1010 to allow certification of the whole list; allow departments to hire staff who are already in lieu of the positions; make it easier for departments to hire internal candidates / bypass the list to hire internal candidates with a passing score that are already performing the work, as follows:

Sec. 1010. Certification.

¹² https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2023/23-1027_rpt_BPW_01-19-24.pdf

(a) **Certification Three-Highest-Whole Scores.** The appointing authority of a department shall notify the board when one or more classified positions are to be filled. The general manager of the Personnel Department shall certify to the appointing authority the names and addresses of those eligibles ~~having the three highest whole scores~~ on the register for the class to which the positions belong. The appointing authority shall fill the positions from the names certified by the general manager within 60 days from the date of certification. Certified test scores shall be made public. Where there is an internal candidate with a passing score and/or a candidate who is already performing the work in lieu of the position, the appointing authority may bypass certification to hire such candidate into the position.

(b) **Selective Certification.** Upon request of the appointing authority and approval by the board, the general manager of the Personnel Department may establish a separate register of eligibles ~~from among those eligibles having the three highest whole scores~~ based on factors such as special skills, licenses, language proficiency and specialized training.

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): Reduce administrative burden from having to certify lists multiple times.

Fiscal Impact(s): Positive fiscal impact from reduced staff time.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: Charter Amendment required.

Advantages of Proposal(s):

Currently, whenever LAWA needs a list of eligible candidates certified, it submits a request to Personnel and awaits several approvals before candidates are notified. As the CAO stated in its 2024 Charter Reform proposals, "Regardless of the score, the Personnel Department has affirmed that those with a passing score are capable of performing the related work."¹³ Especially problematic is when the process has to start over again because the response is inadequate, as occurred in these cases:

- Senior Management Analyst: 100 names were referred but only two (2) made themselves available to LAWA.
- Senior Administrative Clerk: 60 names were referred but only one (1) person made themselves available to LAWA.

In addition, departments should be able to hire internal candidates who are qualified for the job, especially when they are already doing the work.

Additional Concerns: None.

¹³ CAO PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENTS (Proposal 14).

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

14. Amend Sec. 1013 to allow temporary appointments until list is available for up to two years, instead of one year

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 1013. Temporary Appointment

Amend Section 1013 to provide the Department Personnel Officer of proprietary departments authority to authorize Temporary Appointments in the manner that the Civil Service Commission is now authorized. Also, amend to allow for Temporary Appointments up to a period of two years, or allow for an extension of up to one additional year at the end of the first year, if no list is available.

(a) **Length of Appointment.** To prevent stoppage of public business or to meet extraordinary exigencies, any appointing authority may make temporary appointments to classified positions in accordance with civil service rules that the board shall prescribe. The board or Proprietary Department Personnel Officer shall have the power to authorize such temporary appointments until an eligible list is established, but for no longer than ~~one~~ two years.

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal will ease administrative burdens by reducing the amount of paperwork required to keep a temporary appointee until a list is available.

Fiscal Impact(s): None.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: Charter Amendment required.

Advantages of Proposal(s):

Temporary / Emergency Appointments are limited to one year. However, there frequently still is no available list at the end of that one-year period. An emergency appointment should remain active until a permanent appointment can be made from a certified list. This will reduce the amount of paperwork required to keep someone on until a list is available.

Furthermore, allowing Proprietary Department Personnel Officers to authorize Temporary Appointments will reduce the time and paperwork required to take such requests through the Civil Service Commission.

Additional Concerns: None.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org

15. Amend Charter Section 1164(b) to extend retirees' employment services from 120 to 240 days

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

Sec. 1164. Employment by the City of a Retired Member of the System

Amend Sec. 1164 to allow former City employees with specific experience, knowledge, or background to return to the City to assist between now and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, waiving the 120-day cap and ensuring no adverse effect on their retirement benefits, as follows:

(b) **Exception for Temporary Service.** The Mayor may, at the request of the appointing authority, authorize employment of a Retired Member to a vacant position in a class in which he or she has been employed or, subject to the civil service provisions of the Charter, in any other position, for a period not to exceed ~~120~~ **240** days in any fiscal year when such Member's services are required for an emergency or to prevent a stoppage of public business or when his or her special skills are needed to perform work of a limited duration. The foregoing 240-day limit may be waived where the Mayor finds that such Member's special skills are needed to assist the City at any time up to and including December 31, 2028. While so employed, the Retired Member will continue to receive his or her retirement allowance as a Retired Member, but will make no further contribution to the System, and will not be subject to any change in benefits from the System as the result of the employment.

Responding Department: Los Angeles World Airports

Administrative Impact(s): This proposal will ease administrative burdens by making it easier to employ retired City employees on a temporary basis.

Fiscal Impact(s): None. Departments will benefit from retirees' expertise without increasing pension expenses.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: Charter Amendment required.

Advantages of Proposal(s):

Currently, retired former City employees are permitted to return to the City for a maximum of 120 days in a given fiscal year. This change will make the best use of talent and experience in the City at a time when that expertise is needed more than ever.

Additional Concerns: None.

Departmental Liaison Contact: Glenda Silva, LAWA Interim Chief of Staff, 424-646-5248, gsilva2@lawa.org