

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

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Date: April 24, 2026

To: The Honorable Members of the Budget and Finance Committee
c/o Office of the City Clerk
City Hall, Room 340

Subject: Office of Public Accountability Comments on FY2026-2027 Proposed Budget

The Office of Public Accountability (OPA)/Ratepayer Advocate would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Budget and Finance Committee (Committee) for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27 Budget allocation. We are pleased to see that the proposed budget aligns with our request, providing the necessary resources to fulfill our Charter-mandated responsibilities.

Established under Section 23.144 of the Los Angeles City Charter, the OPA is driven by a mission to improve the performance of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) through independent analysis. This budget directly supports our mandate to report on the reasonableness of water and power utility rates and strategic planning documents, verifying that the assumptions underlying LADWP's proposals are sound. By providing expert information and advice to the Board, the City Council, the Mayor, and the public, we remain committed to maintaining LADWP's transparency and accountability to its customers.

With this funding, OPA is well positioned to meet its preliminary goals for Fiscal Year 2026-27:

- Rate- and Budget-Review Excellence: Complete independent reviews and public reports on all LADWP rate proposals for both electricity and water.
- Strategic Planning Oversight: Review the reasonableness of, and provide recommendations related to critical LADWP plans, policies, procedures, decisions, contracts, and programs, including assessing critical components of the LA100 / Strategic Long-Term Resource Plan (SLTRP) and recycled water projects (e.g. Pure Water LA) for assumptions, transparency, accountability and rate implications.
- Consumer Protection & Complaint Insights: Analyze utility customer complaints and service issues to produce reports with actionable recommendations for utility performance improvement.
- Transparency & Stakeholder Engagement: Expand public outreach via webinars and digital updates and conduct consistent collaboration meetings with City Council offices and the Mayor's Office of Sustainability.

Our independent oversight is indispensable for LADWP's accountability during critical transitions like LA100 and upcoming rate actions. We are dedicated to executing these preliminary FY 2026-27 goals to safeguard the financial interests of all Angelenos and look forward to continuing our partnership with the City.

Should you have any questions on the OPA's budget, please contact me by email at tim.oconnor@lacity.org or by phone at 213-978-0303.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim O'Connor", written in a cursive style.

Timothy O'Connor
Executive Director/Ratepayer Advocate
Office of Public Accountability

Cc: Nancy Sutley, Deputy Mayor for Energy and Sustainability