

June 10, 2026

The Honorable City Council
c/o Holly Wolcott, City Clerk
200 North Spring Street
City Hall—3rd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Conflicts Counsel

Honorable Councilmembers:

On January 23, 2026, the members of the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission issued a final decision in Ethics Commission Case No. 2020-019. The respondent is seeking judicial review of the decision in Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. 26STCP01082 (“the litigation”).

The City Attorney’s Office has determined that it has a conflict of interests in the litigation. In this situation, conflicts counsel would typically be selected and hired from the Attorney Conflicts Panel (ACP), which is administered by the City Administrative Officer (CAO). However, the firms currently on the ACP may also have conflicting or potentially conflicting interests or may lack the expertise to effectively defend the City.

Los Angeles City Charter section 708 authorizes the Ethics Commission to establish an outside counsel panel and to engage firms on that panel for assistance in specific enforcement matters. The Ethics Commission has identified a firm on its outside counsel panel that is particularly well suited to handle the litigation.

The firm, Hecker Fink LLP, has already been approved by both the City Attorney’s Office and the members of the Ethics Commission to be on the Ethics Commission’s outside counsel panel. The firm has the background, expertise, and experience needed to assist the Ethics Commission in the litigation. One of the firm’s attorneys is a former Assistant United States Attorney for the Central District of California and has extensive experience in complex governmental ethics litigation.

To ensure that the City has the resources needed to effectively participate in the litigation, the Ethics Commission respectfully requests that the City Council take the following action:

1. INSTRUCT the CAO, or designee, to enter into legal services contract agreement with Hecker Fink LLP, effective immediately, for advice and legal representation to the Ethics Commission in the litigation. The contract will be administered

through the ACP program, consistent with rates approved under Charter section 708.

2. INSTRUCT the CAO to fund the contract through the Attorney Conflicts Panel Fund No. 46T, Department 10, with the Ethics Commission reimbursing the CAO 100 percent of all related costs and expenses, as authorized by Charter section 711(b), by initially transferring \$120,000 from Fiscal Year 2025-26 funds and, within 60 days after receiving a bill from the CAO, transferring any costs and expenses in excess of \$120,000 from subsequent fiscal year funds.
3. AUTHORIZE the CAO to prepare Controller's instructions for any technical adjustments and authorize the Controller to implement the instructions.

Thank you for your assistance with this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Policy Director Tyler Joseph at (213) 978-1960.

Sincerely,



David Tristan
Executive Director

