



CITY OF LOS ANGELES
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

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August 25, 2026

Patrice Lattimore, City Clerk
200 North Spring Street, Room 360 City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Ms. Lattimore:

Pursuant to your letter dated July 21, 2026, attached please find the Chief Legislative Analyst's Impartial Summaries for the following ballot measures for the November 3, 2026 General Election:

- Property Transfer Tax Exemption for Victims of January 2025 Fire Disaster – Proposition TE.
- City Planning Department – Charter Amendment PL.
- City Ethics, Elections, and Governance – Charter Amendment EE.
- Campaign Finance Rules Related to Board of Education Election – Charter Amendment SC.
- City Airports, Harbor, and Water and Power Departments – Charter Amendment PRT.
- City Department of Recreations and Parks Budget – Charter Amendment PRK.
- Los Angeles Fire Department Through a One-Half Percent Sales Tax – Initiative Ordinance FD.
- City Infrastructure, Budget, Finance, and Contracting – Charter Amendment LA.

Electronic copies have been sent to Christopher Garcia of your staff. Please do not hesitate to call me or Karen Kalfayan if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Sharon M. Tso
Chief Legislative Analyst

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Attachments: Impartial Summaries

**PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX EXEMPTION FOR VICTIMS OF JANUARY 2025 FIRE
DISASTER. PROPOSITION TE.**

**IMPARTIAL SUMMARY
BY SHARON M. TSO, CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST**

The City of Los Angeles imposes a documentary transfer tax of 0.45 percent on the sale or transfer of real property. In 2022, voters approved the Homelessness and Housing Solutions Tax (Proposition ULA), an additional special documentary transfer tax on the sale or transfer of real property. Proposition ULA established a four percent tax on the sale or transfer of real property over \$5 million and a 5.5 percent tax on sales or transfers at \$10 million or more. The property sale thresholds subject to the tax are adjusted annually based on the Chained Consumer Price Index and are currently at \$5.4 million and \$10.9 million. Government entities, qualified affordable housing organizations, and certain non-profit organizations are exempt from the tax.

Revenue from the Proposition ULA tax is used for affordable housing and tenant assistance programs. The Affordable Housing Program funds the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. The Homelessness Prevention Program funds various tenant assistance activities, such as financial support or legal support in eviction cases. No more than eight percent of the revenue can be used for program administration, reporting, compliance, and implementation.

On January 7, 2025, the Palisades Fire began. According to data from the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety, the Palisades Fire led to the damage and destruction of approximately 5,620 structures, of which an estimated 5,495 were residential structures. If any of these properties are sold or transferred for over \$5 million (as adjusted for inflation), the transaction would be subject to the Proposition ULA tax.

This measure would exempt the sale or transfer of residential properties over \$5 million (as adjusted for inflation) that were damaged or destroyed by the Palisades Fire from the Proposition ULA tax. Damage or destruction would be verified by the Department of Building and Safety. If a damaged or destroyed residential property is sold or transferred between January 7, 2025 and January 6, 2030 by the owner of record on the date the Palisades Fire began, the sale or transfer would qualify for a one-time refund or exemption from the Proposition ULA tax.

The Director of Finance would be authorized to issue refunds on eligible claims for any Proposition ULA tax paid prior to the effective date of this measure.

This measure would provide financial relief for property owners affected by the Palisades Fire. This measure may lead to a reduction in Proposition ULA tax revenues, which would result in a decrease of funding for affordable housing and tenant assistance programs.

This measure will become effective if approved by a majority of voters.

CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT. CHARTER AMENDMENT PL.

IMPARTIAL SUMMARY

BY SHARON M. TSO, CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

This measure proposes changes to the City's planning and land use management. The measure would specify in the City Charter (Charter) the authorities and duties of the City Planning Department and Director of Planning, while concurrently modifying the authority of City Council to review planning and land use matters and replacing the seven Area Planning Commissions with a single new Neighborhood Appeals Commission.

The City governs planning and land use through the Charter (City's constitution) and ordinances (City laws). The Charter is the foundational document that establishes the powers and duties of key decisionmakers, which include the City Planning Department, City Planning Commission, Area Planning Commissions, Director of Planning, Office of Zoning Administration, the City Council and the Mayor. The Charter also establishes the processes and appeal rights for certain land use entitlements including General Plan Amendments, zone changes, variances, conditional use permits and similar quasi-judicial approvals.

This measure would:

- Replace the seven Area Planning Commissions (APCs) and their 35 Commissioners with a single, new Neighborhood Appeals Commission (NAC) with at least seven members, subject to qualification requirements concerning geographic or other representation to be defined by ordinance, and grant the NAC the power to hear administrative appeals and consider those appeals anew and without deference to earlier decisionmakers. This will eliminate the APC system that has been in place since the current Charter became effective in July 2000 and return the City to an oversight and decision-making structure that mirrors one that existed prior to 2000 which consisted of a single, five-member quasi-judicial body, the Board of Zoning Appeals.
- Specify in the Charter the responsibilities of the City Planning Department and Director of Planning by amending the Charter's section on the Office of Zoning Administration to grant the Department authority over quasi-judicial applications and the Director of Planning authority to appoint staff beyond the Office of Zoning Administration to perform the duties of quasi-judicial review, as authorized by ordinance.
- Remove Charter sections that establish the processes and appeal rights for certain land use entitlements including General Plan Amendments, zone changes, variances, conditional use permits and similar quasi-judicial approvals, and delegation of legislative authority, thereby authorizing such matters to be governed by ordinance.
- Make changes to the existing process for City Council to assert jurisdiction in planning and land use matters. This measure will: (1) create a 30-day time limit for the City Planning Commission or Neighborhood Appeals Commission to concur with or dissent from City Council upon remand, after Council asserts jurisdiction; (2) require the Commissions' action on remand to be referred to City Council for a final vote; and (3) require City Council to act within 21 days or the action of the Commission becomes final. City Council's

authority to assert jurisdiction in the planning and land use context is unique in that Council has the ability to act in place of the underlying Commission upon asserting jurisdiction.

- Deem General Plan Amendments automatically approved if City Council does not act within 75 days of approvals by the Mayor and City Planning Commission. This measure will: (1) replace current City law which provides for an automatic disapproval of the General Plan Amendment if the City Council does not take action on the matter, and (2) codify the 75-day time limit for City Council to act, which already exists in City law, in the Charter.
- Allow the City Council to change the Floor Area Restriction limitation by ordinance. The Charter currently imposes a floor area limit of 13 times the buildable area of a site.

This measure will become effective if approved by a majority of voters.

**CITY ETHICS, ELECTIONS, AND GOVERNANCE
CHARTER AMENDMENT EE.**

**IMPARTIAL SUMMARY
BY SHARON M. TSO, CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST**

The City Charter establishes the structure, powers, functions, processes and responsibilities of City government. The City is proposing various changes and clarifications to the City Charter regarding City ethics, elections, and governance.

The measure would amend the City Charter as follows:

- Prohibit the Executive Director and Commissioners of the Ethics Commission from running for any City elected office or Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education office for at least five years after leaving their positions, thereby establishing a five-year post-service ban on running for City or Los Angeles Unified School District elected office;
- Increase the maximum monetary penalty for campaign finance violations to the greater of \$15,000, adjusted annually for inflation, or three times the amount improperly reported or unlawfully contributed, expended, given, or received, per violation;
- Increase the number of signatures required to qualify a referendum petition for presentation to the City Council from 10 percent to 15 percent of the total number of votes cast in the last Mayoral election, the same percentage of signatures required for initiative petitions;
- Strengthen the independence of the Police Department Inspector General by removing the authority of the Board of Police Commissioners to direct the Inspector General not to commence or continue an investigation or audit;
- Strengthen the independence of the Fire Department Independent Assessor by removing the authority of the Board of Fire Commissioners to direct the Independent Assessor not to commence or continue an assessment or audit;
- Clarify language such that the Police Department and Fire Department would remain exempt from transfers or consolidation of departmental powers if it significantly alters or affects the primary purpose of the departments;
- Require that the City Council hold regular meetings at least weekly rather than meet at least three days per week, as currently required;
- Change the timing requirement for boards of commissioners actions to become final after 15 calendar days during which the City Council has convened in regular session rather than five meeting days of the City Council, as currently required in the Charter;
- Change the timing requirement associated with the City Council's ability to act before an action of the Board of Police Commissioners to remove the Chief of Police becomes final to 21 calendar days during which the City Council has convened in regular session rather than ten meeting days of the City Council, as currently required in the Charter;
- Clarify that the City shall adopt and maintain ordinances and policies to ensure that City services are accessible across various languages; and
- Incorporate several technical and terminology-related changes to provisions concerning Neighborhood Councils and indicate that the definition of Neighborhood Council stakeholder shall be defined by ordinance.

This measure will become effective if approved by a majority of voters.

**CAMPAIGN FINANCE RULES RELATED TO BOARD OF EDUCATION ELECTIONS.
CHARTER AMENDMENT SC.**

**IMPARTIAL SUMMARY
BY SHARON M. TSO, CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST**

City Charter Section 803 establishes the campaign finance rules that candidates for the Board of Education for the Los Angeles Unified School District must follow during the election process. City Charter Sections 470 and 471 and Article 9.7 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code establishes the campaign finance rules that candidates for Mayor must follow during the election process. These rules supplement the California Political Reform Act of 1974. The campaign finance rules for candidates for the Board of Education and Mayor are similar, but are contained in different parts of the City Charter as well as the Los Angeles Municipal Code.

This measure would clarify the campaign finance rules for Board of Education candidates by amending the City Charter to remove repetitive language in Charter Section 803 and requiring Board of Education candidates to follow the campaign finance rules for Mayoral candidates, as specified in City Charter Sections 470 and 471 and Article 9.7 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code. This measure would apply the same provisions for Mayoral candidates to candidates for the Board of Education, with the exception of those provisions that apply only to candidates for City elected offices, such as the Office of the Mayor, and limitations on contributions from City contractors and lobbyists.

If this amendment is approved, the existing campaign rules for both the Board of Education candidates and Mayoral candidates would be as follows:

- Candidates and their donors would be restricted by contribution limits that may be periodically adjusted, with the baseline for these limits maintained at \$1,000 for any individual office, and no limit on candidates to contribute personal funds to their candidacy;
- Treasury and financial accountability requirements, such as training, filing deadlines, public disclosures, monitored campaign accounts, and petty cash funds;
- Time limits on contributions and expenditures, including fundraising windows and acceptable uses of funds received in those time frames; and
- Audit and investigative powers of the City Ethics Commission, including criminal and civil enforcement provisions.

This measure would allow for additional restrictions or exceptions to be established by ordinance.

This measure will become effective if approved by a majority of voters.

**CITY AIRPORTS, HARBOR, AND WATER AND POWER DEPARTMENTS.
CHARTER AMENDMENT PRT.**

**IMPARTIAL SUMMARY
BY SHARON M. TSO, CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST**

City Charter Section 607 places limitations on franchises, concessions, permits, licenses and leases for each Proprietary Department (Airports Department, Harbor Department, and the Department of Water and Power). Section 607(a) provides that the City Council may authorize a lease term of up to 50 years for the Airports Department and Department of Water and Power, and 66 years for the Harbor Department.

City Charter Section 630 provides that the Board of Airport Commissioners shall consist of seven members, and that one member shall reside in the area surrounding Los Angeles International Airport and one member shall reside in the area surrounding Van Nuys Airport. These areas are defined by ordinance.

City Charter Section 651 provides that the Board of Harbor Commissioners shall have possession, management, and control of Harbor Department assets. It further specifies that the lands and waters under possession, management, and control of the Board of Harbor Commissioners shall be known as the Harbor District. City Charter Section 651 also reserves water frontage for public use, and prohibits the sale of the tidelands and submerged lands of the Harbor District. City Charter Section 652 states the powers and duties of the Board of Harbor Commissioners, including the power and duty to establish rules and regulations related to the Harbor District.

State law requires a Coastal Development Permit for many developments within the Harbor District. This includes construction projects and projects that meaningfully increase or change the level or type of activity on a site or in the water, or that change public access to it, even if nothing is built.

This measure would amend the City Charter to:

- Allow the City Council to authorize Airports Department and Department of Water and Power leases for a term up to 66 years, or the maximum length allowed by any federal or state law, whichever is less, if the City Council makes a finding that a term longer than 30 years would be in the best interest of the City. The City Charter already allows the City Council to authorize Harbor Department leases for a term up to 66 years.
- Increase local residency requirements for the Board of Airport Commissioners by requiring that three of the seven members of the Board of Airport Commissioners reside in the area surrounding the Los Angeles International Airport and that two of the seven members reside in the area surrounding Van Nuys Airport. The measure would also allow the City Council to, by ordinance, further divide these areas into subareas and establish commissioner residency requirements.
- Require the Board of Harbor Commissioners to annually allocate a portion of the operating income of the Harbor Department for waterfront public access projects and other public serving projects and programs developed with public input as part

of a Public Access Investment Plan. The Board of Harbor Commissioners would have the sole authority to determine the amount to allocate each year.

- Require all applicants seeking approval of a lease, lease extension, or lease amendment, or any proposed development of property within the Harbor District that requires a Coastal Development Permit, to submit a workforce impact disclosure that provides an assessment of estimated workforce effects associated with the proposed action, including employment and economic impacts. The Board of Harbor Commissioners may exempt small businesses and nonprofit organizations from providing an economic impact analysis.

This measure will become effective if approved by a majority of voters.

**CITY DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS BUDGET.
CHARTER AMENDMENT PRK.**

**IMPARTIAL SUMMARY
BY SHARON M. TSO, CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST**

The General Fund is the primary operating fund of the City. General Fund revenue is used to fund City services such as police, fire, public works, transportation, libraries, and parks. General Fund revenues are derived from taxes, licenses, permits, fees, fines, and other sources.

The City Charter establishes a minimum budget allocation for the Department of Recreation and Parks from the General Fund. That minimum budget is an amount equal to 0.0325% of the assessed value of all property as assessed for City taxes. The current City Charter allocation percentage rate and the resulting budget allocation has not kept pace with the growing population, expanding park system, and increasing costs of maintenance and operations. This has contributed to reductions in Recreation and Parks services over time.

In 1996, voters approved the passage of the Proposition K: LA for Kids Program (Proposition K) which created a citywide assessment that has generated \$25 million annually for the acquisition, development, improvement and restoration of parks and recreational facilities. The Proposition K program will expire in Fiscal Year 2026-27 and will result in the loss of funding to support parks and recreational facilities.

This measure would increase the minimum amount of General Fund money allocated to Recreation and Parks. These additional resources would help restore Recreation and Parks service levels, address park equity gaps, and allow the Department to cover the cost of operations and programs. The percentage would gradually increase from the current 0.0325% to 0.065% of the assessed value of all property as assessed for City taxes, phased in over a ten year period as follows:

- Fiscal Years 2026-2027 and prior: 0.0325%;
- Fiscal Year 2027-2028: 0.03575%;
- Fiscal Year 2028-2029: 0.039%;
- Fiscal Year 2029-2030: 0.04225%;
- Fiscal Year 2030-2031: 0.0455%;
- Fiscal Year 2031-2032: 0.04875%;
- Fiscal Year 2032-2033: 0.052%;
- Fiscal Year 2033-2034: 0.05525%;
- Fiscal Year 2034-2035: 0.0585%;
- Fiscal Year 2035-2036: 0.06175%;
- Fiscal Years 2036-2037 and thereafter: 0.065%

This measure would not create a new tax or generate additional City revenue. It would require more General Fund money to be provided to Recreation and Parks. Consequently, the amount of General Fund revenue available for other City services will be reduced.

During a declared fiscal emergency, the City Council could reduce the increased funding required in this measure by up to 30 percent for the duration of the fiscal emergency. However, Recreation and Parks' minimum budget allocation could not be reduced below the current level of 0.0325% of assessed value of all property as assessed for City taxes.

This measure will become effective if approved by a majority of voters.

FUNDING FOR THE LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT THROUGH A ONE-HALF PERCENT SALES TAX (INITIATIVE ORDINANCE FD).

IMPARTIAL SUMMARY BY SHARON M. TSO, CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

This citizen-sponsored ballot initiative, if approved, would require the City to adopt an ordinance to impose a new one-half percent (0.5%) retail transactions and use tax (Sales Tax) in the City of Los Angeles. The proceeds generated by this new Sales Tax would be used to provide supplemental funding for the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD). The City's current Sales Tax rate is 9.75%. This new tax would remain in place unless repealed by the voters, or if City budget obligations are not met, as specified in the initiative.

Currently, the LAFD is funded primarily through the City's General Fund. The General Fund is the primary operating fund of the City, and receives revenues from various taxes, permits, fees, fines and other sources that are available for discretionary uses. The General Fund has limited resources and is used to fund the majority of City departments that provide services to the public.

If adopted, the additional revenue will be deposited into a new Special Fund. These funds would be used for LAFD-specific purposes, including but not limited to:

- Hiring and retaining firefighters, paramedics and civilian LAFD staff;
- Purchasing and maintaining vehicles to support firefighting and rescue needs, such as fire trucks, fire engines, ambulances, aircraft and helicopters;
- Purchasing and maintaining equipment to support firefighting and rescue services;
- Replacing, upgrading or building new fire stations and emergency medical services facilities, the construction of which would be subject to project labor agreements and prevailing wage requirements;
- Purchasing and maintaining emergency communications systems; and
- Improving brush clearance and wildfire preparedness.

In order to collect this tax, the City would be required to maintain the LAFD discretionary budget at the average percentage provided for the ten years preceding the operative date of the ordinance. The measure would also establish a Citizens' Oversight Committee (COC) to monitor the expenditure of revenue generated by this Sales Tax. The COC would consist of five members, drawn from residents of the City. The Mayor, Fire Chief, City Controller, City Administrative Officer and the Chair of the City Council Public Safety Committee would each have authority to appoint one member to the COC. The COC would be required to review expenditures and issue reports to the Mayor, Board of Fire Commissioners, City Council and the public at least annually.

The City Council's authority to amend the ordinance without voter approval are limited to amendments that are strictly necessary to implement or administer the ordinance; do not alter the rate or duration of the sales tax; or furthers the purpose of the ordinance. Any Council-initiated amendments would require approval by two-thirds of the Council after a 30-day public notice.

The one-half percent sales tax proposed by this initiative would be imposed approximately 110 days after voter approval.

This measure would become effective if approved by a majority of voters.

**CITY INFRASTRUCTURE, BUDGET, FINANCE, AND CONTRACTING.
CHARTER AMENDMENT LA**

**IMPARTIAL SUMMARY
BY SHARON M. TSO, CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST**

The Los Angeles City Charter (Charter) includes rules for how the City manages its budget, contracting, City-owned property, and the Department of Public Works. This measure would amend the Charter to make changes to these rules, as follows:

- **Two-Year Budget:** Currently, the City is required to adopt a budget each year. The measure would change the City's budget cycle to a two-year cycle unless another budget cycle is adopted by ordinance, and modify the date by which the Mayor submits a Proposed Budget. This measure would require the Mayor to submit a proposed two-year budget to the City Council (Council) by April 1. The Council would have until June 1 to approve or modify the proposed two-year budget. Council changes would be subject to Mayoral veto and Council override as specified in the Charter. For each fiscal year of the two-year cycle, the Council will approve the amount appropriated in the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, by resolution, on or before June 1, subject to Mayoral veto and Council override provisions.
- **Capital Infrastructure Plan (CIP):** Currently, the City is not required to have a capital plan for City infrastructure projects. The measure would require the City to establish a CIP by ordinance. The ordinance would include the scope, timeframe, funds, and reporting requirements for the CIP. Projects may include constructing or improving City roads, parks, bridges, and buildings.
- **Competitive Bidding:** Currently, the Charter requires the City to comply with competitive contract bidding rules, such as awarding contracts to qualified businesses for the lowest cost. The measure adds an exception to these rules for software services or maintenance contracts obtained from the software manufacturer. The measure also allows the City, by ordinance, to create an exception to the rules for certain critical infrastructure contracts that are vital to the City's security, public health, or safety.
- **Department of Public Works (Department) Governance:** Currently, the Charter establishes a full-time Board of Public Works (Board) that is assisted by several bureau heads and the Director of Public Works (Director) to oversee the Department. This measure would increase the Director's powers and duties to: directly manage public works project construction, including the lease or purchase of property; exercise the power of eminent domain, subject to Council approval; oversee contract administration; grant street permits; and recommend operating budgets for the Department. Conversely, some of the Board's authority would be transferred to the Director, but the Board would retain some of its duties, such as: approving the award of contracts; conducting hearings as authorized by ordinance; approving, in consultation with the Director, specifications for public works projects; and making recommendations about public works plans to the Director, Mayor and Council. The measure also authorizes the Council, by ordinance, to make changes to or eliminate the Board. Additionally, the measure eliminates the chief administrative officer designation for the bureau heads, consistent with the proposed powers and duties of the Director.

- Business Operations: Currently, the Charter prohibits the City from mortgaging City-owned property and prevents the City from operating purely commercial or industrial businesses. The measure would remove these restrictions to allow the City to utilize City-owned assets and engage in commercial or industrial businesses.
- Contracting Forms: Currently, when outside companies bid on City contracts, they are required to submit specific forms. This measure would allow the City, by ordinance, to waive or allow correction of minor technical or administrative errors before evaluating a contract proposal. Substantive errors in ethics forms, however, cannot be waived and must be fully corrected.

This measure will become effective if approved by a majority of voters.