

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 08:21 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: Fund the Public Bank Feasibility Study. My name is Mads, and I'm a LA resident of Council District 1. The LA City Council has approved funding for the public bank feasibility study. I urge the Council to immediately fund the next phase. This plan will outline how LA can use its own balance sheet to save money, cut borrowing costs, and reinvest in priorities like affordable housing, green energy, small businesses, and community development. As LA faces a \$1 billion budget deficit and thousands of union jobs at risk – this is urgent. Delays will keep costing the city billions in debt service and finance costs. It's time to stop sending public money to Wall Street, reinvest it in our communities, and help prevent future budget deficits.

Communication from Public

Name: Jeffrey Gutierrez

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 08:38 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Councilmember Blumenfield, I write in strong support of the 2025 to 2026 City of Los Angeles budget and of the proposals of the Budget and Finance Committee. I respectfully request that you ensure that the adopted budget protects the jobs of Los Angeles Department of Transportation employees. The Department of Transportation plays an important role in keeping our city safe, accessible, and moving. From designing our streets and ensuring traffic safety to transit planning and street maintenance, these staff directly influence residents' quality of life in every community. They play an important role in helping achieve the goals of the city's mobility, climate, and equity. By laying off DOT staff, it wouldn't just stop critical services, it would also undo years of permanent investment in safer streets, ped improvements, and accessible transit. They are public servants that work day in, day out, to support the operation and continued existence of our city. Retaining their employment is an assurance of safe, equitable, and sustainable transit for Angelenos. I would respectfully ask that you consider prioritizing funding for the Department of Transportation and its workers in the final budget. Thank you for your continued leadership and service.

Communication from Public

Name: George Meyer

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 05:06 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: Dear City Councilmembers: I am the Treasurer of the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy and live in Long Beach. I am also the recently retired Station Manager of Los Angeles Union Station. I am writing regarding the proposed staffing cuts to the Dept. of Cultural Affairs budget that will severely affect the management of Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House. I urge you to protect the Administrative Clerk, Arts Manager I and Gallery Attendant position authorities in the city budget. Hollyhock House is only 1 of 8 American sites that are part of the "20th Century Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright", inscribed onto the UNESCO World Heritage list in July 2019, which the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy lead through an arduous process that took many years to accomplish. This is the only World Heritage listing in the City of Los Angeles and is considered a prestigious recognition by a world authority. Hollyhock House is a world destination for tourists. Part of the UNESCO expectations is that the City of Los Angeles will take care of this property. Eliminating most of the staff positions is not taking care of this site. These proposed cuts will surely require that Hollyhock House will have to close for public tours. That is a real shame as it will send a message to the world that Los Angeles is not prepared to protect its only UNESCO World Heritage site. Please don't do this as it will have lasting negative effects, especially since Los Angeles will be hosting the Olympics in 2028 and many tourists are expected to visit the city. As the retired Station Manager of Los Angeles Union Station, I can attest to the thousands of American and foreign tourists who flock to historic locations such as the 1939 Union Station that I helped preserve for Metro and the public. By eliminating the staff positions at Hollyhock House, residents of Los Angeles, Californians, Americans and the world will miss out on this beautiful property of the City of Los Angeles. Please keep these positions. Thank you.

Communication from Public

Name: Thelma Garcia

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 03:47 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: My name is Thelma Garcia, a concerned resident, I have been honored to provide HIV prevention services for women in Los Angeles for many years. With the invaluable support of ACO, I have connected with individuals who are at risk. I firmly believe that HIV prevention and education are not only important today but are also vital for protecting future generations. I am deeply concerned that any cuts to essential services for the Department on Disability could have a devastating impact on thousands of residents in our community. Such changes would jeopardize their access to care and compromise crucial emergency response and planning efforts that are essential for everyone's safety and well-being. I urge you to protect Disability Access and HIV Services for the residents of Los Angeles. Our collective efforts to achieve an end to the HIV epidemic in the United States cannot be undermined by taking steps backward. Funding is critical to ending the HIV epidemic and is necessary to support the Department on Disability. Thank you for your attention to this vital issue.

Communication from Public

Name: Samantha

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 03:51 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: I am writing regarding the federal pandemic relief funding that is at risk of being used for other unrelated purposes. These funds should go towards Covid mitigations (public health education, free masks, air purifiers) and Long COVID help and research.

Communication from Public

Name: Penny Sommers
Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 03:51 PM
Council File No: 25-0600
Comments for Public Posting: Please see attached.



May 20, 2025

Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council:

The League of Women Voters of Greater Los Angeles commends the Budget Committee for not only approving the Mayor's proposal to continue the Unarmed Model of Crisis Response (UMCR) pilot, but also to expand it to three additional precincts.

As the full City Council finalizes the budget, we ask that you keep the Mayor's initial \$9.376 million to fund UMCR, and approve the \$4.4 million for expansion as recommended by the Budget Committee. Support for UMCR demonstrates the City's long-term commitment to establish a 24/7 comprehensive city-wide unarmed crisis response program. By expanding UMCR, the City will benefit from almost 43% coverage. We look forward to the day when 100% of the City will be served.

With UMCR, calls can be diverted from armed police to better trained responders for mental health, substance abuse calls and more, serving housed AND unhoused Angelenos. Nearly a third of LAPD shootings involve a person in a mental health crisis. Behavioral health specialists, community workers, therapists, crisis interventionists are the unarmed responders that can provide actual services at the scene.

The budget investment in UMCR recognizes the fact that during the pilot's first year, it was able to reach incidents with an average response time of 28 minutes. Compare that to L.A. County's Department of Mental Health response time of two hours. By diverting calls from Police and Fire Departments, there is more time to address more serious threats to public safety. Additionally, the CAO has determined that an incident handled by UMCR averages \$35, compared to \$85 that it would cost if LAPD responded to the same incident, less than half! Finally, unarmed crisis response saves money by preventing potential lawsuits involving police harm. Just two recent cases cost taxpayers \$14 million. By bringing appropriately trained responders to the scene of mental health and substance abuse emergencies, there is less likelihood of a situation rising to the level of serious use of force.

We are acutely aware of the tough decisions you must make. Please keep the Budget Committee's proposal to continue and expand UMCR.

Thank you,

Penny Sommers and Mary Dickson, Co-presidents
League of Women Voters of Greater Los Angeles

League of Women Voters of Greater Los Angeles
3333 Wilshire Boulevard Suite 803 | Los Angeles, CA 90010 US
(213) 368-1616
www.lwvlosangeles.org/

Communication from Public

Name: Los Angeles Language Justice Coalition (on behalf of 24 organizations)

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 04:25 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: Please find attached a letter from the Los Angeles Language Justice Coalition, signed by 24 organizations, expressing our deep disappointment with the proposed cuts to critical programs and lack of meaningful investments in language access services. We urge the City Council to support and incorporate the three priorities laid out in our attached letter when the proposed budget goes before the full City Council on May 21, 2025. As federal civil rights protections continue to erode, we urge the City of Los Angeles to be a beacon of light and stand firm in values that recognize, honor, and celebrate our City's diverse communities. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

May 16, 2025

Los Angeles City Council
200 N Spring St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: 2025-2026 Budget Language Justice Recommendations

Dear Los Angeles City Councilmembers:

As the City and its departments finalize their budgets for the coming year, we write to urge the City of Los Angeles to prioritize and promote language justice in the City's programs, services, and operations. Over half of all Angelenos speak a language other than English at home, with nearly 1 million residents having limited English proficiency (LEP) and using non-dominant languages. Although Spanish is a great need, there are many other languages and linguistic varieties spoken and signed in the City of LA. These are our most vulnerable communities who need City services now more than ever. Yet, many are left stranded when they try to access services from City departments. City departments must eliminate language barriers that stand in the way of far too many Angelenos who are simply trying to engage their City government and access services for which they are eligible and entitled.

As you know, the City of Los Angeles and its departments are subject to a wide range of existing federal and state mandates, along with implementing regulations and guidance, that provide broad anti-discrimination language rights protections. Particularly in light of the evolving federal landscape and recent executive orders, it is imperative that the City stands by its values and strengthens policies to be a beacon of light for our diverse communities. Unfortunately, meaningful language access requirements have not always been followed in the City of Los Angeles. **In practice, for languages other than Spanish, very little is translated, and interpreters are rarely available.**

In December of last year, many organizations sent a [joint letter](#) to LA City Mayor Karen Bass and the City Council with critical recommendations for advancing language justice through the City's budget for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026. As you know, the Mayor has released her [proposed budget](#), and we are very disappointed to find that not only does it exclude our recommendations, but it also includes devastating proposed cuts to crucial programs and services for communities with LEP. We know that this proposed budget is not yet final, and you have the power to ensure sufficient resources for meaningful language services. In addition to our previous recommendations, **we want to emphasize these key priorities that will further language justice in our linguistically diverse communities:**

- **Preserve (and Enhance) Staffing for Language Access:** Remove the proposed elimination of the filled Management Analyst position within the Office of Immigrant Inclusion and Language Access (OIILA) under the Community Investment for Families Department (CIFD). Cutting this role would leave only one person to oversee the entire Citywide Language Access Program, significantly undermining the City's language access infrastructure.

- **Strengthen Language Access Capacity in the Housing Department (LAHD):** While we support the proposed budget's inclusion of the Translation Services and Facilities Coordinator within LAHD, we continue to contend that a dedicated full-time position is needed for department-wide language access coordination. We also urge the City to dedicate a funding line for comprehensive in-house and contracted language access services, including real-time on-demand interpretation for high-need languages, pre-scheduled interpretation, translation of written communication and other materials, training, meaningful multilingual access to RSO and code violation complaint portals beyond Spanish, and multilingual staff support. These enhancements are critical to address the [language access challenges](#) experienced by our communities when interacting with LAHD and will enable tenants with LEP to access potentially life-saving support and information.
- **Oppose Elimination of Key Departments:** We strongly oppose the proposed elimination and consolidation of the Departments of Aging, Economic and Workforce Development, and Youth Development under CIFD. To consolidate all these departments under another entity would dilute the City's efforts to serve the most vulnerable populations in our City. We are especially concerned regarding the decreased support for vulnerable elderly populations who are linguistically marginalized and isolated. This restructuring would be harmful to our communities that depend on their programs and is being proposed without any stakeholder input or transparency.

These priorities were chosen based on both urgency and feasibility in the current budget climate. While we recognize that our recommendations come with associated costs, the costs of failing to invest in language access are far greater. When residents cannot access services due to language barriers, it results in increased strain on emergency services, worsened health and housing outcomes, and deeper inequities that require more expensive interventions down the line. Additionally, noncompliance with federal and state language access mandates exposes the City to legal liability and potential lawsuits, which can result in costly settlements or corrective actions. Investing in language access is not only a moral and legal obligation, but it is also a proactive and fiscally responsible strategy that ultimately improves service delivery and strengthens overall City operations.

Although language barriers are not new, they became greatly exposed and exacerbated during the pandemic, as critical services and benefits have been in constant flux in their accessibility and operations. Many City departments have shifted to an increased reliance on complex phone trees, websites, and online portals. Websites should feature clear, easy-to-use links to multilingual information and videos, while phone lines must offer a straightforward path to a live person who can provide real-time language services. There should also be taglines in more languages notifying the public of the right to services in their preferred language with corresponding contact information. Individuals with LEP often lack accurate, timely, culturally appropriate information and therefore are unable to access vital services. Best practices for serving non-dominant language users center on holistic planning to implement and enforce a wide range of elements to ensure meaningful access, not on quick-fix tech-based solutions like Google Translate or use of minimally trained bilingual staff and volunteers. There should be a focus on working with trained professionals and intersecting with practices that proactively address low literacy and the digital divide.

While we set forth the above priorities for the upcoming budget cycle, we also maintain and reiterate that much more must be done to ensure that each Angeleno has meaningful access to all its services, benefits, programs, and activities. With the budget process coming to a close, we urge the City Council to enhance systems and services that recognize, honor, and celebrate our City's diverse communities and their vast language abilities. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Communication from Public

Name: Matt Wait

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 05:37 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: Read my lips: NO MORE HELICOPTERS. Every resident hates them, they don't do ANYTHING, and they are wasting a TON of money that we don't have. They are just expensive toys for LAPD. When have they EVER solved a SINGLE crime?

Communication from Public

Name: Ashley Moses

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 05:53 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: I am a resident of Los Angeles and am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed budget cuts to LA Animal Services. Our shelters are already overcapacity and severely underfunded. We need more support for LA Animal Services, not less. Thank you for your time...please do the right thing.

Communication from Public

Name: shirley june worrels

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 07:04 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: I understand the need for budget cuts because fiscal responsibility should be a priority for our city leaders. However, I am disappointed in the manner that one of the top priorities, homelessness, has been handled. It is unconscionable that billions of dollars were mismanaged with very little accountability. Apparently, there were no checks and balances in place to keep this from happening, and it speaks to the poor leadership of our elected officials. In addition, there is very little focus on the cleanliness of the City of LA, and I am concerned with the need to cut budgets, it will only get worse. The astronomical salaries paid to the head of DWP and other entities, is outrageous with very poor results. I hope that these salaries will be part of the budget cuts. The transparency that was promised is not apparent, and the lack of transparency leads to lack of trust. It is difficult to trust our leaders when they tell us that we have to tighten our belts, when we see the mismanagement of finances that have led to the need to cut budgets. Thank you for allowing citizens to provide this feedback.

Communication from Public

Name: Sam Royall

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 02:54 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: Hello, I work in CD 1 and am deeply concerned about massive budget cuts proposed in the forthcoming LA City budget. Drastic cuts to city departments including the Office of Wage Standards (OWS) could turn the clock back on long-overdue reforms to fighting wage theft in Los Angeles. We need to properly fund the departments in our city that are responsible for enforcing the laws that protect working class Angelenos and their ability to achieve economic prosperity. Fair wages keep working families housed and prevent homelessness. Existing national and regional research shows that higher wages improve the local economy by spurring economic growth and new employment opportunities throughout the local economy. When workers can afford to live where they work, they are able to spend more in the local economy — at our local restaurants, cafes, shops, and grocery stores. When workers thrive, we all thrive. The OWS helps ensure that Angelenos are making the wages they deserve and are legally owed. City workers are a critical part of the LA economy, and widespread layoffs will have significant negative impacts to the region. I also urge you to protect the public sector workforce that LA relies on for climate resilience. The City's environmental justice progress is possible because of city workers including in LASAN, Street Services, Planning, Recreation and Parks, and the Climate Emergency Mobilization Office. City workers are critical to programs like brownfields remediation, LA River restoration, environmental planning, cooling centers, and the Rec and Parks programs and shade that families rely on. Working families and LA's climate progress rely on these crucial jobs. In a time when working people and the environment already face unprecedented federal threats to the resources and regulations necessary for health and wellness, the role our city can play in our collective safety and well-being is more urgent than ever. Please do everything possible to protect the workforce in these departments.

Communication from Public

Name: Brian Rawles

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 02:58 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: I'm appalled by the City's proposed cuts to valuable services that support the City as a community, while propping up LAPD's wasteful use of resources. Increasing LAPD budgets has never solved the City's problems and will not do so in the future. I urge the Council to instead consider the value in reinforcing non-violent and non-LAPD related services as buffer to crime-related concerns. Additionally, I am deeply concerned that our City leadership has reacted to LA's recent climate catastrophe by cutting programs related to environmental management and justice. Our lack of climate disruption preparedness will not be more friendly to our personal or citywide budgets in an increasingly variable climate future. Again, I urge this Council to recognize the City's community-driven programs and the dedicated civil service of non-LAPD employees as its greatest resource for prosperity.

Communication from Public

Name: Ashley Gonzales

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 02:06 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Los Angeles City Council Members, I am writing to request that you please protect the staff at the Office of Wage Standards and at Day Labor Centers, and defend as many of the City of LA's workforce as possible. More money for workers is good for the local economy. Again, please protect the staff at the Office of Wage Standards and at Day Labor Centers, and defend as many of the City of LA's workforce as possible. Fair wages keep working families housed and prevent homelessness. Existing national and regional research shows that higher wages improve the local economy by spurring economic growth and new employment opportunities throughout the local economy. When workers can afford to live where they work, they are able to spend more in the local economy — at our local restaurants, cafes, shops, and grocery stores. When workers thrive, we all thrive. The Office of Wage Standards (OWS) helps ensure Angelenos are making the wages they deserve and are legally owed. City workers are a critical part of the LA economy, and widespread layoffs will have significant negative impacts to the region. Thank you for your consideration, Ashley Gonzales-Vielman CD 10 Resident

Communication from Public

Name: Víctor Sánchez

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 02:22 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: ?Councilmembers, My name is Víctor Sánchez, a resident of Council District 14. I am writing to urge you to support a public sector workforce that protects workers, the environment, and communities. In particular, I'd like to share two specific points: Protect the staff at the Office of Wage Standards and at city Day Labor Centers as part of defending as many of LA's workforce as possible. Drastic cuts to city departments including the Office of Wage Standards (OWS) could turn the clock back on long-overdue reforms to fighting wage theft in Los Angeles. We need to properly fund the departments in our city that are responsible for enforcing the laws that protect working class families and their ability to achieve economic prosperity. When workers thrive, we all thrive. The Office of Wage Standards (OWS) helps ensure Angelenos are making the wages they deserve and are legally owed. City workers are a critical part of the LA economy, and widespread layoffs will have significant negative impacts to the region. Protect LA's climate initiatives that build public power and create union jobs. Please protect the public sector workforce that LA relies on for climate resilience. The City's environmental justice progress is possible because of city workers including in LASAN, Street Services, Planning, Recreation and Parks, and the Climate Emergency Mobilization Office. City workers are critical to programs like brownfields remediation, LA River restoration, environmental planning, cooling centers, and the Rec and Parks programs and shade that families rely on. These jobs are climate jobs that working families and LA's climate progress rely on. In a time when working people and the environment already face unprecedented federal threats to the resources and regulations necessary for health and well-being, the role our city can play in our collective safety and well-being is more crucial than ever. Please do everything possible to protect the workforce in these departments.

Communication from Public

Name: Anthony Cantatore

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 09:30 AM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: As a teacher of 17 years I know the importance of education, as well as the positive effect it can have not only on the individuals who benefit from receiving it, but also on the community at large. I have also had the wonderful opportunity to take two adult art classes at Barnsdall Art Park, one of which I am currently in and am enjoying quite a bit. I also have had many students in my classes at Thomas Starr King MS who attended the Junior Arts Program at Barnsdall. The closure of Barnsdall classes during the pandemic and afterwards for renovations was quite devastating, both personally and to the community. Having now only recently reopened, we are now being told that some classes and staff will be permanently cut due to the limited budget; this is unacceptable. The low-cost classes at Barnsdall Art Park allow people to engage with art in a way that they might otherwise not; as a Science teacher, I often focus on more logical pursuits, but Barnsdall has allowed me to challenge myself to build stained glass pieces and now metal jewelry - things that I would not have considered if it were not for the classes at Barnsdall. The classes offered at Barnsdall are accessible to everyone in the community; for example, the 8-week metalsmithing class I am taking now was offered at \$50, while other similar private courses in Los Angeles were well above \$500, which most people, including myself can not afford. While I understand there are budget concerns (which I am well aware of as a teacher in LAUSD) and some cuts must be done in order to ensure financial responsibility, the devastating cuts to Barnsdall are not the way to do so. In fact, cutting classes and staff at Barnsdall will only exacerbate the financial losses the city is currently experiencing, since the classes at Barnsdall help to boost the local economy. For example, when I go to Barnsdall, I take the Metro, paying for fares to and from the park; additionally, I usually eat dinner at local restaurants before going to class. This is just a small example of how the classes at Barnsdall help local businesses and boost the local economy. With fewer classes and staff at Barnsdall, the local economy will suffer even more, continuing the vicious cycle of cuts and closing businesses. I urge you to please reconsider your budget cuts to Barnsdall Art Park; if anything, classes and staff should be expanded, as some classes sell out within mere minutes of opening to the public, showing the high demand and great service this

community program provides. I hope you will consider fighting for the expansion, or at the very least, preservation of Barnsdall Art Park programs, which both adults and children all around Los Angeles enjoy. Thank you.

Communication from Public

Name: Sara Johnson

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 10:21 AM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Council President Harris-Dawson and Council Members, The City of Los Angeles is facing a \$1B budget shortfall. At the same time, Council File 24-0500-S3 proposes to reprogram \$13.15M in unspent federal COVID relief into unrelated capital upgrades and small business programs. This is a critical mistake. The money is still eligible for pandemic response and should be used to prevent a much larger fiscal threat: the \$12B in projected costs from Long COVID. According to Harvard economist David Cutler, Long COVID is expected to cost the City more than \$12B over the next five years in lost wages, reduced workforce participation, rising disability, increased medical spending, and pressure on public benefit systems. These losses are already materializing across departments. They are growing every month the City delays a coordinated response. What is being dismissed today as a medical issue will very soon become a structural budget problem if left unaddressed. Long COVID is a disabling, multisystem condition affecting over 268,000 Angelenos. One in four people with Long COVID are unable to work. Nearly half have lost income. Less than 10 percent recover. This is a large, persistent economic driver that is increasing strain on housing, labor, health, and emergency systems. Despite that, there is no City infrastructure to address it. No plan, no line item, no public accountability. The silence is not neutral. It creates disorganization and leaves departments unsupported as they absorb rising costs and unmet needs. Long COVID is not a legacy or historic one-time event. People are still getting Long COVID. It results from new, repeated, and ongoing COVID infections. Vaccines do not prevent Long COVID in any meaningful or reliable way. That means the risk is not behind us. It is active and compounding. As reinfection rates grow, so does the financial liability. Every delay increases the cost. Without action, this will become one of the most expensive failures in the City's public health history. The clearest, most effective use of the \$13.15M is to establish a permanent Office of Long COVID. The City has done this before. In 1989, Los Angeles created the AIDS Coordinator's Office in response to another federally neglected crisis. That office was created when the number of affected residents was far smaller than it is today. It coordinated services, partnered with trusted groups, identified gaps, and reduced

long-term costs through focused infrastructure. That model worked. It remains the best precedent for how to manage Long COVID today. The scale of Long COVID already exceeds that of HIV/AIDS in its early years. The severity is comparable, and the vacuum of federal infrastructure has again left cities to take the lead. It is a mistake to assume the cost will stay manageable without an organized, durable response. The \$13.15M in CF 24-0500-S3 includes \$4.23M in CARES Act CDBG-CV funds and \$8.92M in regular CDBG funds. HUD guidance allows these dollars to be used for post-COVID care coordination, case management, job reintegration, housing support, financial navigation, and related services. The CDBG-CV funds are not subject to the usual 15 percent public services cap. This is one of the last remaining federal funding sources that can legally be used for Long COVID response. If these funds are redirected away from COVID entirely, there is no alternate source waiting. The opportunity will be lost. CDBG-CV funds cover exactly what Long COVID drives: loss of income, loss of housing, need for health access, case management, and job reintegration. The match is direct. HUD gave cities this flexibility for COVID's fallout. This is the clearest and most cost-saving use left on the table. Applying this funding to a City-led Office of Long COVID would reduce service demand, protect revenue, and ensure coordination across departments already impacted by rising costs. Redirecting the funds to generic capital upgrades and broad business uses provides no protection from the \$12B in projected losses. It leaves the costliest problem of the pandemic untouched. It trades long-term stability for short-term optics. Not using this money as intended is not only a missed opportunity. It is a misuse of federal relief. These dollars were created to mitigate pandemic fallout. Long COVID is the costliest and most enduring part of that fallout. Refusing to address it does not make the crisis disappear. It makes the crisis more expensive, more fragmented, and more difficult to contain. I urge you to amend Council File 24-0500-S3 to allocate the full \$13.15M to the creation of an Office of Long COVID. Doing so would reduce long-term liability, use federal dollars as intended, and apply a proven model from the City's own history to meet this crisis with strategy, not delay. The economic case is clear. The cost is measurable. The moment is now. Respectfully, Sara Johnson Los Angeles, CA 90026

Re: CF-25-0600 and CF-24-0500-S3

May 16, 2025

Dear Council President Harris-Dawson and Council Members,

I'm submitting public comment to urge immediate action on two related issues: the City's \$1 billion budget crisis (CF-25-0600) and the \$13 million in unspent pandemic relief that could directly mitigate it (CF-24-0500-S3), if applied where it's needed most. More than 268,000 Angelenos live with Long COVID¹. It is the most disabling and costly outcome of the pandemic, yet it is not mentioned once in the City's budget. Not a single dollar has been allocated to address it.

At the same time, Council File 24-0500-S3 proposes to reprogram \$13.15 million in unspent federal pandemic funds originally intended for COVID response². Choosing to ignore this crisis and redirect the funds to superficial building improvements and unrelated business programs is a failure of public duty and a misuse of federal emergency relief.

This money is on the table now and eligible for Long COVID response:

- \$4,230,880.26 in CDBG-CV (CARES Act) funds³
- \$8,921,083.88 in regular CDBG funds³

Harvard economist David Cutler projects that failure to address Long COVID will cost LA over \$12 billion in five years⁴. The \$4.23 million in CDBG-CV is just 0.4 percent of the City's general fund and 1.3 percent of the current budget gap. Allocating it to Long COVID is both legally sound and fiscally strategic. Not doing so will deepen the crisis.

CDBG-CV funds were created specifically to respond to COVID-19. According to HUD guidance, they can be used for post-COVID care, navigation, case management, mental health, and long-term recovery, and they are not subject to the 15 percent public services cap³. CDBG funds also support eligible Long COVID uses such as housing modifications, clinic improvements, and microenterprise support for disabled workers. Both funding streams are legally applicable, but CDBG-CV is the most direct and underused option.

This is also a chance for City leadership to act where federal infrastructure has receded. In March 2025, HHS shuttered its Office of Long COVID Research and Practice⁵, which had been coordinating national response efforts. That closure creates a gap that cities like Los Angeles must now step up to fill.

We don't need to start from scratch, but we do need to take a wise and effective approach. Federally funded Long COVID clinics exist in Los Angeles, and patients have consistently reported that they are out of date, hard to access, and ineffective. These concerns were expressed clearly during the LACDPH April Long COVID Town Hall⁶. The City can step in to respond with what those programs haven't: setting clear goals, establishing accountability, and making sure people with lived experience help define what matters. That is how we build something that works.

I urge you to:

1. Revise Council File 24-0500-S3 to allocate CDBG-CV and relevant CDBG funds exclusively to Long COVID services: patient education, clinical guidance, disability navigation, return-to-work support, financial and legal help, and case management.
2. Create a Long COVID Office or Task Force for the City of LA, modeled on the City's 1989 AIDS response⁷.
3. Ensure Long COVID patients and disability justice leaders are paid to help design and oversee any program. Lived experience improves efficiency and trust.
4. Make Long COVID a standing agenda item in public health discussions, with clear goals, timelines, and transparency.

Over 268,000 Angelenos live with Long COVID. During the AIDS crisis, Los Angeles faced another public health emergency marked by stigma and federal neglect. In 1989, Mayor Tom Bradley appointed Dave Johnson, a person with AIDS, to lead the City's first AIDS Coordinator's Office. That office identified gaps, partnered with trusted groups, and built new systems for outreach, prevention, and care. It helped change the trajectory of the crisis. We need that kind of leadership again. Long COVID now affects far more people, with studies showing lower quality-of-life scores than Stage IV cancer and fatigue as severe as in HIV⁸. Yet the City still has no Long COVID plan, no office, and no budget line. We cannot afford to wait five more years.

A 2024 California study found that 31% (or 3.3 million residents with confirmed COVID cases) developed Long COVID⁹. This is most likely an undercount due to the lack of testing access and unwinding of mandatory case reporting. Most had "mild" infections. This is almost certainly an undercount given the dismantling of testing, reporting, and publishing programs.

Long COVID is a leading cause of new disability and is driving racial and economic disparities even deeper. It hits hardest in frontline, low-wage jobs and among Black, Latine, Indigenous, immigrant, and disabled residents. Only 6 - 9% recover. One in four are unable to work. Nearly half lose income. As benefits run out and discrimination worsens, housing loss is rising. A 2025 study found that patients with Long COVID lose nearly 100 work hours every three months¹⁰. Black Americans are more likely to be dismissed, misdiagnosed, or denied care¹¹. An equitable response must reflect these realities in every funding and program decision.

"Get vaccinated" cannot be the City's response to Long COVID. It does nothing for the hundreds of thousands already disabled, and it does not prevent Long COVID in any meaningful way. The strongest studies show only a small drop in risk with one in seven breakthrough infections still leading to Long COVID¹³. Stop leaning on slogan messaging as a public health solution, especially while reducing access to these. Build real systems of care for post-viral disability.

This is a critical moment for the budget and for people. The funding exists and the need is urgent for both. Long COVID is a test of your equity commitments, your leadership, and your budget priorities. I ask you to meet it.

Sincerely,
Sara Johnson
Los Angeles, CA 90026

References

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7. Los Angeles County HIV Epidemiology Annual Report 1990.
8. Walker, Sarah et al., "Impact of fatigue as the primary determinant of functional limitations among patients with post-COVID-19 syndrome," *BMJ Open*, June 7, 2023, doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2022-069217; Robby Berman, "Long COVID May Impact Quality of Life Worse than Cancer, Other Diseases," *Medical News Today*, June 12, 2023.
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11. Smith J. et al., "Workplace Productivity Loss in Long COVID," *JAMA Network Open*, 2025;8(4).
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Communication from Public

Name: Heather Adams

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 11:03 AM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Council President Harris-Dawson and Council Members, The City of Los Angeles is facing a \$1B budget shortfall. At the same time, Council File 24-0500-S3 proposes to reprogram \$13.15M in unspent federal COVID relief into unrelated capital upgrades and small business programs. This is a critical mistake. The money is still eligible for pandemic response and should be used to prevent a much larger fiscal threat: the \$12B in projected costs from Long COVID. According to Harvard economist David Cutler, Long COVID is expected to cost the City more than \$12B over the next five years in lost wages, reduced workforce participation, rising disability, increased medical spending, and pressure on public benefit systems. These losses are already materializing across departments. They are growing every month the City delays a coordinated response. What is being dismissed today as a medical issue will very soon reveal a cavernous and structural budget problem if left unaddressed. Long COVID is a disabling, multi-system condition affecting over 268,000 Angelenos. One in four people with Long COVID are unable to work. Nearly half have lost income. Less than 10% ever recover. This is a large, persistent economic driver that is increasing strain on housing, labor, health, and emergency systems. Despite that, there is no City infrastructure to address it. No plan, no budget line item, no public health accountability. The silence is conspicuous. It creates disorganization and leaves departments unsupported as they absorb rising costs and unmet needs. Long COVID is not a previous historic one-time event. People are still getting Long COVID. It results from new, repeated, and ongoing COVID infections. Vaccines do not prevent Long COVID in any meaningful or reliable way. That means the risk is not behind us. It is active and compounding. As reinfection rates grow, so does the financial liability. Every delay increases the cost and the suffering. Without action, this will become one of the most expensive and embarrassing failures in the City's public health history. The clearest, most effective use of the \$13.15M is to establish a permanent Office of Long COVID. The City has done this before. In 1989, Los Angeles created the AIDS Coordinator's Office in response to another federally neglected health and humanitarian crisis. That office was created when the number of affected residents was far smaller than it is today. It was led by

patients complete with coordinated services, partnered with trusted groups, identified gaps, and reduced long-term costs through focused infrastructure. That model worked. It remains the best precedent for how to manage Long COVID today. The scale of Long COVID already exceeds that of HIV/AIDS in its early years. The severity is comparable, and the vacuum of federal infrastructure has again left patients to take the lead. It is a mistake to assume the cost will ever become manageable without an organized, durable, patient-led response. The \$13.15M in CF 24-0500-S3 includes \$4.23M in CARES Act CDBG-CV funds and \$8.92M in regular CDBG funds. HUD guidance allows these dollars to be used for post-COVID care coordination, case management, job reintegration, housing support, financial navigation, and related services. The CDBG-CV funds are not subject to the usual 15% public services cap. This is one of the last remaining federal funding sources that can legally be used for Long COVID response. If these funds are redirected away from COVID entirely, there is no alternate source waiting. The opportunity will be lost and needless and avoidable suffering will continue. CDBG-CV funds cover exactly what Long COVID drives: loss of income, loss of housing, need for health access, case management, and job reintegration. The match is direct. HUD gave cities this flexibility for COVID's fallout. This is the clearest and most cost-saving use left on the table. Applying this funding to a City of Los Angeles Office of Long COVID would reduce service demand, protect revenue, and ensure coordination across departments already impacted by rising costs. Redirecting the funds to generic capital upgrades and broad business uses provides no protection from the \$12B in projected losses. It leaves the costliest problem of the pandemic untouched. It trades long-term stability for short-term optics while leaving hundreds of thousands of Angelenos in physical and financial pain. Not using this money as intended is not only a missed opportunity, it's a misuse of federal relief. These dollars were created to mitigate pandemic fallout. Long COVID is absolutely the costliest and most enduring part of that fallout. Refusing to address it does not make the crisis disappear. It makes the crisis more expensive, more fragmented, more difficult to contain, and more painful for all. I urge you to amend Council File 24-0500-S3 to allocate the full \$13.15M to the creation of an Office of Long COVID in the City of LA Budget.

Communication from Public

Name: Jesse Wechsler

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 12:34 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: Jesse Wechsler 5365 San Vicente Boulevard, #206 Los Angeles, CA 90019 Dear Councilmembers, I am sending this email to all Councilmembers regarding concerns about how you are leaving the Department On Disability (DOD); hanging by a rope around the necks of people, members of our community, with lives in precarious positions. I am fully aware of OUR Budget. AND, the Department on Disabilities (DOD) is more than a simple group of nuts and bolts in our City's adding and subtracting. Councilmember Yaroslavsky, your Newsletter includes, "...proposal that saves over 1,000 positions, restores funding for street cleaning, tree trimming, sidewalk repairs, and protects programs like traffic safety and streetlight maintenance..." Over 20% of the DOD budget will be cut from the City of Los Angeles, eliminating 1/3rd of it's staff. There are jobs that provide Programs That Are Required By Law and essential to our most vulnerable communities. What's at stake, you ask.... - It will cut \$520,000 in HIV prevention funding, eliminating contracts. - Community outreach and referrals, connecting residents to medical equipment, housing, and vital services - Actual Life Threatening issues: Emergency Operations Center Local Assistance Centers. Limit real-time ASL interpretation and captioning. - Digital Accessibility Compliance, ensuring public websites, documents, and mobile apps are usable for all Angelenos. The Council, to provide for the DOD, must adhere to Section 508 Compliance of the Rehabilitation Act Allocate \$890,000 from the City's \$27.5 million opioid settlement fund to restore HIV. These services and retain critical staff. These funds are eligible, available, and unspent. Councilmember Yaroslavsky, I understand fellow neighbors and needs for the animals in the community, but \$5 million for Animal Services restored?? ,,,,,,, we are talking about Humans and Section 508 is the LAW!! Make it 1.5 million! The dogs.....? The disabled need it too!! Thank you all for your attention and proper action. Sincerely, Jesse Wechsler 323-974-5115 jecweeks@gmail.com

Communication from Public

Name: Rhonda Raulston

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 12:42 PM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: I urge you to reconsider budget cuts to the Barnsdall Art Facility, which provides affordable classes for both children and adults. This program is far more than a recreational option - it is a vital community resource with wide-ranging benefits. >Art classes nurture innovation and critical thinking, skills essential for success in today's world. >Participation in the arts is proven to reduce stress and improve overall well-being for people of all ages. >The facility brings together individuals from diverse backgrounds, building connections and fostering a sense of belonging, strengthening community connections. >For children, arts engagement is linked to better academic performance; for adults, it offers lifelong learning and personal enrichment. >Low-cost programs ensure everyone-regardless of income-can access the benefits of art education and creative expression. >Art programs support local artists, attract visitors, and contribute to a vibrant, culturally rich community. Personally, as a victim of the recent Altadena fires (I lost my home and art studio as well as the many other opportunities for community art encounters), the Barnsdall class that I am currently taking has been a life-line of support, encouragement, community and healing. Cutting funding to this important facility would mean losing opportunities for learning, connection, and growth that benefit our entire community. Please invest in the arts and help keep this valuable resource available to all. Thank you for your consideration.

Communication from Public

Name: Elizabeth A Roper

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 11:05 AM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: Barndall is a home to the Los Angeles people. It has been the steadfast caretaker and nurturer of countless people, myself included. It teaches us skills that we could have not learned elsewhere. Not providing Los Angeles, THE community of artists in America, a place to continue leading artistry known around the world, is like letting go of what Los Angeles and Hollywood is known for, admired, and counted on. Please keep Barnsdall, and the people in your community, alive.

Communication from Public

Name: Emily

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 11:08 AM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: Barnsdall Art Park is the only accessible resource for so many artists. Not only is it affordable, but its teachers are incredibly skilled and provide what most institutions don't have all in one place. I go here four times a year for classes and have made a home through the people and artists and cannot imagine giving up something that has been so life fulfilling and nurturing, especially since the pandemic and bleaker times. This place has given me hope when I didn't have it, a way to speak when I haven't felt my voice, and a way to connect to my community and the world in a language everyone can understand and feel.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 05/19/2025 11:26 AM

Council File No: 25-0600

Comments for Public Posting: I live in Los Angeles and I'm calling to very strongly oppose the proposed budget cuts to the LA Animal Services. We need MORE support for our LA Animal Services, not less. Our shelters are overcapacity as it is, and already severely underfunded. These cuts will result in layoffs, shelter closures (half of the city's shelters would close), and an increase in euthanasia. I urge you to REJECT these cuts and work towards a long term solution for our LA animals. We need more funding to our shelters so we can continue to serve our communities and protect our vulnerable and innocent animals that rely on these services.