

BUDGET & FINANCE

MOTION

Last year, the City of Los Angeles approved the creation of the Olivia Mitchell Youth Council (LA City Youth Council) in recognition of the importance of civic engagement and public service in positive youth development (CF 21-0182). Launching this winter of 2022, the LA City Youth Council will honor the legacy of a public servant and living icon, Olivia E. Mitchell, whose passion for mentoring young Angelenos and love for our city has shaped the lives of countless government and community leaders over four decades. Led by the Youth Development Department (YDD), the council will seat 30 youth, two from each Council District, between the ages of 16 to 25. During their one-year term, youth council members will learn about the inner workings of local government, drive special community and civic projects, and work in partnership with City officials to identify and implement solutions to citywide issues.

The work of the LA City Youth Council empowers an often-underrepresented constituency of youth leaders to apply their unique experiences, abilities, and voices to strengthen the development of City programs, policies, and practices that affect their lives and their communities most profoundly. This is an important type of public service and professional development. It is sanctioned work that is inclusive, consequential, and valuable to the City. The City should compensate the young people of the council for it. This practice of creating more paid opportunities for youth who devote their time, energy, and goodwill to support government efforts to address pressing community issues is in alignment with recommendations from the City's Executive Task Force on Youth Development report: *Framework for Youth Development in the City of Los Angeles* (CF 16-0596-S2). It is an established or emerging practice in other prominent and forward-looking municipalities with sanctioned youth advisory bodies rooted in positive youth development principles, such as L.A. County, Long Beach, and Sacramento. It is also a rallying cause of the Invest in Youth Coalition, a group of youth leaders, community members, and over 70 youth-serving organizations advocating for more public investment and equitable funding allocations to support the youth of L.A.

Additionally, financial hardships at home across our low-income communities have a tendency to force young family members to forgo often life-changing extracurricular activities, unpaid internships, and volunteer opportunities in civic engagement. This has a disproportionately negative effect on youth of color, who face more pressure to instead find paid and low-skill work opportunities to supplement household finances. The City can lead in tackling this issue that, if left unaddressed, will further erode the life prospects of disadvantaged youth at an early age and exacerbate economic inequities. The City should seek to compensate youth anytime possible for the active, responsible, and impactful public service they provide to the City, while maintaining accountability and transparency in the use of public funds for this purpose. In the case of the LA City

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Youth Council, the City has the opportunity now to take measures to authorize the compensation of members of the council. Doing so will remove a major barrier for many prospective members, particularly low-income youth, who would otherwise be deterred from applying to join due to financial need.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council allow for financial compensation to members of the LA City Youth Council on an ongoing annual basis for public service work conducted in their official capacity while on the council.

I FURTHER MOVE that the YDD, with assistance from the Office of the City Clerk, be allowed to allocate \$36,000 in General Fund funding from its Salaries General Account projected FY 2021-22 year-end balance, or its Contractual Services Account, whichever is deemed most appropriate by the Office of the City Administrative Officer, for the compensation of LA City Youth Council members.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Office of the City Clerk, with the assistance of the YDD, administers the disbursement of stipends to LA City Youth Council members as compensation on a regular basis corresponding with each meeting scheduled and held by the council.

PRESENTED BY



MONICA RODRIGUEZ
Councilmember, 7th District

SECONDED BY:

