COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Council File 09-0969-S4
Planning Land Use Fees Update / Annual Inflation Adjustment

Received Sunday, November 8, 2026
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Casey Maddren • November 8, 2026 at 8:35 AM

Re:Planning Land Use Fees Update / Annual Inflation Adjustment, Council File: 09-0969-S4

Members of the City Council,

I'm writing to express the following objections to the Council's proposed increase in non-applicant appeal fees from $229 to $1,145 for appellants who live within the project's notification area, and $2,289 for those who live outside the area.

1.
The council file is deceptively named "Planning Land Use Fees Update / Annual Inflation Adjustment" and does not indicate the actual size of the proposed increases. An "Annual Inflation Adjustment" would be around 3% or 4%. The increases proposed for non-applicant appellants is FAR beyond an adjustment for inflation. The title of the council file is misleading and therefore does not provide the public with adequate notice of the intended change.

2.
The language of the Final Ordinance No. 188899, posted to the council file on June 9, 2026, described much smaller changes. The recommendation to increase non-applicant fees was not made until the August 25, 2026, Planning and Land Use Management Committee meeting. The amended language to significantly increase non-applicant fees was not mentioned in the PLUM agenda, and therefore the public did not have adequate notice, again, because the item was misleadingly titled "Planning Land Use Fees Update / Annual Inflation Adjustment".

3.
The distinction between appellants within the notification area and those outside the notification area is arbitrary, and has no justification.

4.
The Department of City Planning is inconsistent in the manner in which it sends notifications, and at times fails to send required notifications. Basing the amount of the appeal fee on whether or not the appellant lives within or outside the notification area will create confusion.

5.
According to US Census Quick Facts [https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/losangelescitycalifornia/PST045224], 2024, the median household income in the City of LA is $81,939. Under the increased rates, an appellant living within the notification area would be required to

spend well over one percent of their household's income to file an appeal, while an appellant outside the notification area would be spending well over two percent of their household income. The percentage would be far greater for the 16.5% that live in poverty. This is an undue burden that would unfairly prevent LA citizens from appealing a project in their community, especially those in low-income households.

For these reasons, I oppose the revised increase in the costs for filing an appeal.

Sincerely,
Casey Maddren