

Demands for a Democratic Process to Consider the LA 2028 Olympic Bid

The Olympics are a multi-year, multi-billion-dollar effort requiring enormous amounts of resources from local City and State officials. Thus far, only one public discussion has been held on 8/4 and no financial studies have been completed regarding the 2028 Olympic bid. There are significant community concerns regarding the impact of the Olympics on housing affordability, displacement, homelessness, sanctuary city status, and policing in Los Angeles. We shared these concerns with City Council at last week's Ad Hoc Committee on the 2024 Summer Olympics and asked that City Council consider them in its next steps. Below, we have prepared a number of specific demands:

1. Delay the City Council vote regarding the revised MOU between the City, LA28, and the USOC, and the guarantee that the City will execute the Host City Contract (HCC) for the 2028 Games. Given that Los Angeles is the only city bidding for the 2028 Olympics and there is an unprecedented eleven-year gap between the bid and the Games themselves, Los Angeles is in an extremely favorable negotiating position. City Council has provided no acceptable reasons to rush a decision by August 18th, without the completion of financial studies, public forums, and a state guarantee for cost overruns, in order to meet the International Olympic Committee's arbitrary deadline.
2. Conduct robust reviews of the new HCC **and updated proposal from LA2028** with independent experts, including but not limited to financial studies, and publish the results widely and in multiple languages, including English, Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Korean, and Armenian. The completed reviews and analyses should include the following:
 - a. Potential impact on rental/housing costs and housing supply and the subsequent potential impact on the number of displaced residents and rate of homelessness. This analysis should be completed with consideration to L.A.'s existing affordable housing and homelessness crisis, the conversion of existing housing units into short-term rental units, and the Olympics' historical impact on rent acceleration, eviction, and displacement.
 - b. Potential impact on the treatment of homeless individuals with consideration to the Olympics' historical impact of exacerbating homelessness and increased criminalization of homelessness in host cities (including Los Angeles in 1984), and LA's recent 23% spike in homelessness over the last year.
 - c. Potential impact on undocumented immigrants and mixed citizenship status families in light of the likely NSSE designation of the 2028 Olympics. This review should document any direct conflicts between NSSE designation and City Council directives, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors motions, and any current/upcoming immigration-related measures or bills prohibiting local law enforcement from cooperating with DHS and its branch agencies. It should also clearly indicate the number of individuals who are at an increased risk of deportation and the number of families that could be separated as a result.
 - d. Potential impact on city finances. This should include which programs and/or services are most at risk of being cut or defunded should the Games incur cost overruns and require the taxpayer guarantee, as well as a detailed breakdown of

where the taxpayer guarantee funds are expected to come from (e.g., existing City resources, new taxes, etc.).

It is critical to conduct these reviews alongside the updated proposal and budget from LA2028, as there may be a number of potential conflicts between the HCC terms and addressing the community concerns we have identified. For example, the NSSE puts all residents, particularly immigrants, at risk; however, adjusting or removing the designation under the current budget and HCC, if executed, would result in the taxpayer guarantee and an undue burden on local and state taxpayers. It is City Council's responsibility to identify and rectify these potential conflicts and community concerns before authorizing Los Angeles to sign any contract with the International Olympic Committee.

3. Hold extensive public hearings and solicit feedback from the public, especially communities who are most likely to experience the negative impacts of the Games. At a minimum, public hearings should be convened in neighborhoods and City Council districts: 1) hosting prominent Olympic venues, 2) whose populations include a high percentage of immigrants (10% or more), and 3) with a high homelessness rate or high eviction rate. This should include, at minimum, Boyle Heights, Chinatown, Downtown Long Beach, Downtown Los Angeles, East Los Angeles, Historic South Central, Inglewood, Lincoln Heights, and South Park.

Community Concerns and Opposition to Hosting the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics

The Olympics are a multi-year, multi-billion-dollar effort requiring enormous amounts of resources from local City and State officials. Thus far, no public discussions have been held or financial studies completed regarding the 2028 Olympic bid and there are significant community concerns regarding the impact of the Olympics on housing affordability, displacement, homelessness, sanctuary city status, and policing in L.A.

Lack of Transparency, Planning, and Meaningful Community Input

1. While the LA24 Bid Committee has hosted community meetings for the 2024 bid, there is no evidence that substantial discussions were held regarding the potential negative consequences of hosting the Olympics. There have been no documented discussions with vulnerable communities and related community organizations regarding the impact of the Olympics on housing and rental costs, displacement, homelessness, immigration, and policing in L.A.
2. City Council meetings related to the 2024 Olympic bid occurred over an approximately 18-month period (August 2015 - January 2017), with the completion of several financial analyses. **The Bid Committee and City Council have held no community meetings or conducted financial studies specific to the 2028 Olympics.** Our understanding is that upon City Council approval of signature of the Host City Contract, there will be no further opportunities for Council members to raise constituents' concerns and request amendments to the IOC's contract. Signing a Host City contract eleven years in advance of hosting the Games is unprecedented in Olympic history and should involve significant public discussion and study prior to a City Council vote.
3. The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) July 2017 Update¹ regarding the L.A. bid for the Olympics reported **a number of areas of concern related to hosting the Olympics in 2028, which point to a lack of certainty regarding the Games' "risk-free" financial plan:**
 - a. "Four more years means there is a possibility that some existing venues will not be available or viable as the needs of Olympic sports evolve. There is a possibility, furthermore, that the Olympic and Paralympic program of events will change more with the passage of four more years—with events added or dropped—necessitating further changes in the Los Angeles venue plan."
 - b. "The lack of fixed venue costs emphasizes the possibility that Games budgets could rise in the years between now and 2024 [and 2028]."
 - c. "One question in that event [that SB 1465 would need to be amended for 2028] would be whether a larger backup guarantee is needed. Put simply, due to the time value of money, \$250 million from the state will buy less stuff in 2028 than it would in 2024."
 - d. "Finally, with the Games funded largely by broadcast contracts, corporate sponsorships, and ticket revenues, there is the possibility that the Olympic brand will become less popular over time, reducing the amount of money flowing into IOC and Olympic organizing coffers. "

Impact of National Special Security Event Designation on Sanctuary City, Militarization

1. **The 2028 Olympics is expected to be designated a National Special Security Event (NSSE), which places local law enforcement under federal jurisdiction of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Secret Service.** Given the July 2017 Immigration and Customs Enforcement internal memo instructing agents to detain and deport all undocumented immigrants encountered, regardless of criminal record, all undocumented residents and families are at risk of deportation.
2. **The collaboration between local law enforcement and federal immigration agencies is in direct conflict with L.A. City Council directives,** including the prohibition of officers from inquiring about a suspect's immigration status and the barring of city firefighters and airport police from cooperating with federal immigration agents.
3. The fear of deportation due to collaboration between local officials and federal agents puts communities at risk. Sexual assault reports have decreased by 25% and domestic violence reports have decreased by 10% among L.A.'s Hispanic population since January 2017, compared with the same period last year². With one in five children in L.A. being U.S. born and having at least one undocumented parent, children and families will be put at risk of not receiving essential services.
4. Implementation of NSSE requirements will encompass years of planning with federal authorities, but there is no proposed timeline for establishing a unified command between federal and local agencies. **No information has been provided regarding the extent to which DHS will have access to local law enforcement databases and personnel or how DHS oversight will reconcile with any Sanctuary City statutes that are enacted over the next eleven years.**
5. A 2013 analysis by the National Lawyer's Guild (NLG) of NSSEs³ detailed **concerns of violations of civil rights, excessive security expenditures, and lack of transparency:**
 - a. "Security measures used [...] were in violation of First Amendment protected assembly and expression rights, Fourth Amendment protection from searches and seizures, and international laws regarding the right to engage in political protests. The NSSE designation allows federal and local authorities to impose excessive security measures that limit the ability of people to assemble and express grievances."
 - b. "The massive expenditures [\$50 million] on security were unnecessary and created militarized conditions. The new weaponry and surveillance equipment purchased for the conventions will remain in host cities, continuing the trend of militarizing U.S. police departments."
 - c. "Event-justified ordinances became permanent in [cities] following NSSEs in 2012, representing a trend that appears intended to limit future political protests in these cities. The lack of transparency in drafting these ordinances and in spending federal money, sets a troubling precedent for democracy in host cities. Allowing special ordinances to be written behind closed doors and to remain in place indefinitely creates anti-democratic local legacies that persist long after NSSEs."

Displacement of Residents and Increased Homelessness

1. The Olympics will exacerbate the housing and homelessness crisis in Los Angeles. L.A. ranks 5th in the nation for cost-burdened renters, has one of the highest eviction rates in the nation, and has the greatest number of unsheltered homeless residents nationally. The recent spike in homelessness rates in L.A. is largely attributed to the lack of affordable housing units. Hosting the Olympics empirically leads to significant land speculation and increases in rental costs. For example, in period between receiving the Olympic bid and hosting the Olympics Sydney experienced a 40% increase in rental costs with triple the rate of homelessness⁴; Vancouver experienced a 30% increase in rental costs with double the rate of homelessness⁵; Newham, London experienced a greater than 40% increase in rental costs with seven times the rate of homelessness⁶⁷. A recent study by Zillow, reported in the LA Times, notes that a 5% increase in rental costs would drive 2,000 more people into homelessness⁸. **An increase in rental costs related to the Olympics will lead to a greater rates of homelessness prior to and following the Games.**
2. Real estate speculation in neighborhoods hosting Olympic venues leads to accelerated gentrification and the development of luxury housing that displaces existing affordable units and does not meet the affordable housing needs of the community. **Minimally, the Olympics will likely lead to the displacement of vulnerable low-income residents in Inglewood, Historic South Central, South Park, Downtown Los Angeles and Downtown Long Beach.**
3. As experienced in past and current Olympics, the Games lead to the proliferation of short-term rentals (STRs), such as AirBnB. Approximately 64% of L.A. AirBnB listings are STRs that are never occupied by their owners or leaseholders and a 2015 study estimates that more than 7,000 units have been taken off the rental market in metro L.A. for use as STRs⁹. Hosting the Olympics will lead to a greater conversion of existing housing units to STRs and subsequent higher rental costs due to the reduction of housing unit supply.
4. **The Olympics places pressure on the host city to appear clean, safe and prosperous for visitors, leading to the militarization of public spaces, worsened relationships between law enforcement and local communities, and the displacement of vulnerable people.** The 1984 L.A. Olympics led increased stopping and questioning of homeless individuals on Skid Row in order to “clean up the city”¹⁰; “gang sweeps” and the unlawful imprisonment of thousands of African-American and Latinx people without due process or official charges; and a significant increase of complaints of police brutality¹¹.
5. Increased police militarization is in direct conflict with community policing and public health models. City “sanitation” efforts, including stop and search and citations for minor “quality of life” offenses, further criminalize people of color and homeless individuals which contributes to cycles of poverty and homelessness rather than effectively addressing underlying social issues.

Growing Opposition to LA 2028 Olympic Bid

1. In February 2016, a poll of 2,425 respondents found 88% public support for an Olympics in L.A., of which 32% reported only “somewhat” support. However, a recent July 2017 CurbedLA online Twitter poll surveyed 5,466 respondents and found that 69% (3,771) did not support the 2024 or 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles¹². **Historically, when a city’s residents learn about the details of the Host City Contract or bid, they strongly oppose certain aspects of the Olympic bid/contract or the Games entirely.** For example, in New York City, residents who were polled about the city’s 2012 bid were receptive to the Olympics in general but opposed key aspects of the bid, such as using taxpayer funds to build new stadiums (68% opposed)¹³. Similarly, a poll completed prior to the 1984 L.A. Olympics showed 70% public support but support dropped to only 35% when respondents were informed that taxpayers had to share the costs of hosting the Olympics¹⁴.
2. NOlympicsLA is a coalition of more than 20 community organizations which includes Black Lives Matter-LA, Crenshaw Subway Coalition, Democratic Socialists of America-LA, Democratic Socialists of America-Long Beach, Ground Game LA, Los Angeles Community Action Network, Los Angeles Tenants Union - Northeast, Hollywood, Vermont y Beverly, Westside and Eastside, Strategic Actions for a Just Economy, San Fernando Valley Greens, SOCAL 350 Climate Action, and Union De Vecinos. **The diverse, large, and quickly-growing coalition of organizations in opposition to the Olympics being hosted in L.A. indicates the lack of community support for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic bid.**
3. Given the extended timeframe for the 2028 Olympics, there is ample opportunity for City Council to survey Angelenos about the details of the Olympic Bid and Host City contract that residents may have been previously unaware of, such as the NSSE designation or the taxpayer guarantee. **It is essential that City Council and other officials seek to adequately understand constituents’ concerns regarding key aspects of the bid proposal and Host City contract and address such concerns before signing a binding contract for a multi-year, multi-billion-dollar.** Given the absence of alternative host cities bidding for the 2028 Olympics, Los Angeles is in an extremely favorable negotiating position and should ensure that any possible Host contract and bid truly benefits and protects all constituents and communities, especially its most vulnerable.

1 <http://www.lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/3695>

2 <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-california-immigration-idUSKBN16T070>

3 www.nlg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/NLG-Report-Developments-in-the-Policing-of-NSSEs-at-2012-RNC-and-DNC_1.pdf

4 Lenskyj, H. J. (2002). *The Best Olympics Ever ? social impacts of Sydney 2000*. New York: State University of New York Press.

5 Kennelly, J. (2016). *Olympic exclusions: youth, poverty and social legacies*. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

6 <http://www.propertywire.com/news/europe/ul-residential-property-rents/>

7 <http://www.londonpovertyprofile.org.uk/indicators/boroughs/newham/>

8 <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-rent-increase-homelessness-20170802-story>

9 http://harvardlpr.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/10.1_10_Lee.pdf

10 Ray, Nancy (1984, July 21). *Horse Patrols Ride Herds on Transients*. *Los Angeles Times*, p. 432.

11 Davis, Mike (1990). *City of Quartz: excavating the future in Los Angeles*. New York: Vintage Books.

12 <https://twitter.com/CurbedLA/status/887356578231463936>

13 <https://poll.qu.edu/new-york-city/release-detail?ReleaseID=284>

14 <http://www.chicagotribune.com/sports/columnists/ct-los-angeles-2024-bad-history-repeat-20150817-column.html>