



MICHAEL N. FEUER
CITY ATTORNEY

April 21, 2017

Honorable Members
Budget and Finance Committee
City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012
via Novus

SUBJECT: 2017-18 PROPOSED BUDGET

Honorable Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the impact of the Proposed Budget on the Office of the City Attorney. We are concerned that the proposal, as presented, would significantly impact the work of this Office and slow the progress we have made over the past three years.

In particular, to accommodate the proposed **\$3.3 million proposed cut** to our salary account, this Office would need to hold vacant up to 20 attorney positions and/or 43 support positions. These positions support important initiatives, including:

- Working in concert with LAPD to develop a neighborhood-focused approach to keeping our communities safe
- Vigorously defending the City in high exposure litigation
- Protecting our City's funding and most vulnerable residents due to the federal government's new and evolving immigration policies
- Developing the City's first comprehensive Risk Management program, in partnership with Councilman Krekorian, to identify and address underlying causes of risk

In addition, the elimination of four filled litigation support positions would further reduce critical support for our litigators at a time when the City faces significant financial exposure.

Finally, as discussed with the Mayor's Office and CAO, litigation expenses associated with defending the City have consistently exceeded the budgeted amount, and costs will continue to rise. This increase is caused by many factors including: reduced reliance on outside counsel has generated more litigation-related expenses in-house; rates for expert witnesses have risen; the need for court-mandated transcription services have grown; and, recent demands of discovery have required the use of costly e-discovery tools to properly defend the City.

We are keenly aware of the challenges of balancing a budget in difficult financial times. With that in mind, we are confident that working together, we can develop a plan to restore critical funding and positions for this Office and continue to support our shared goals.

We appreciate your ongoing support for the Office of the City Attorney. Please feel free to contact me if we can provide any information that may assist you.

Sincerely,



Leela Kapur
Chief of Staff

cc: Honorable Members of the City Council
Sharon Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst
Richard H. Llewellyn, Interim City Administrative Officer