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April 21, 2017

The Honorable Councilmember Paul Krekorian, Chair
Budget and Finance Committee
Attention: Richard Williams, Office of the City Clerk
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Krekorian:

PROPOSED BUDGET FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2017-18

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding our proposed Department on Disability (DOD) budget for FY 2017-18. We appreciate the support of the Council as well as the cooperation and assistance of the Mayor's Office, the CAO, and CLA in working with us to provide resources critical to serving the needs of people with disabilities, providing services to people living with HIV, and ensuring the City's compliance with the mandates of the Americans with Disabilities Act and other disability laws.

While many of our core functions are included in the Mayor's Proposed Budget, please allow me to highlight a few concerns and discuss related recommendations.¹

My primary concerns center around the nearly \$95,000 reduction in the Department's Contractual Services account. This account funds mandatory ADA accommodations as well as the City's AIDS Prevention contracts. Here is a breakdown of services that were reduced:

<u>Description</u>	2016-17	2017-18	<u>Reduction</u>	<u>Percent Reduction</u>
	<u>Adopted Budget</u>	<u>Proposed Budget</u>		
Disabled Employee Assistance ²	187,506	169,693	(17,813)	-9.5%
Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Assistants	50,000	25,000	(25,000)	-50.0%
Section 508 online training platform & remediation	35,000	12,500	(22,500)	-64.3%
AIDS Prevention Programs	964,305	935,000	(29,305)	-3.0%

¹ The amounts listed in each section are the difference between the proposed budget and our actual needs.

² First, we need to note that this title is a misnomer. The services for which these funds are allocated are for Employee and Constituent assistance.

1. Mandated “Disabled Employee Assistance” (\$79,813). The primary services funded herein include Sign Language Interpreting (SLI), Captioning (CART), and Video Remote Services (VRI). The need for a FY 2017-18 budget increase is based on clear metrics identifying a 46.9% increase in CART requests and a nearly 25% increase in SLI requests in the current fiscal year. We have already requested \$60,000 in additional funding through the April Financial Status Report to cover the projected costs for the remainder of FY 2016-17. Even if the increased monthly rate of requests levels off, we will need to fund this line item at \$247,506, not the proposed reduced amount of \$169,693.

2. ADA Assistant Contracts (\$10,000). This program had been funded at \$96,000 when given its own ADA Compliance line item for FY 2015-16. The funding covers the costs ADA assistants as part of a program serving a small number of employees who meet strict criteria. In the first year we segregated this funding, there were four (4) such contracts, which over time dropped to two (2), then one (1). Our subsequent savings in that line item resulted in it being reduced to \$50,000 in the current budget, and a recommendation to reduce it to \$25,000 in FY 2017-18. Knowing that the City Attorney’s Office has just approved an assistant for a City employee who will need the service full time, we anticipate spending under that program to exceed \$25,000 in FY 2017-18 and need to be certain that there is sufficient funding to act expeditiously upon any further requests without requiring mid-year budget adjustments in order to provide the accommodation.

3. CommonLook Licenses (\$55,000). All City electronic publicly-distributed documents such as agendas, notices, flyers, as well as existing City documents need to be accessible so that assistive technology, such as a screen reader, can be used in conjunction with these documents. CommonLook Office software checks Word and PowerPoint documents for accessibility and can convert them into an accessible PDF documents. In prior years, this software has been funded through the Mayor’s Office of Public Safety. In the current fiscal year, DOD is responsible for purchasing the licenses and has been authorized to use salaries savings from this fiscal year to do so. However, for the period of May 1, 2018 – April 30, 2019, we have not been budgeted for funds to cover the costs of these licenses for City employees.

4. Accessible Parking Zone (Blue Curb) Program (\$66,368-\$117,117). Council approved implementation of the Blue Curb program (CF 14-1529) on January 25, 2017. For the first three quarters of FY 2016-17 DOD staff has responded to 1,245 APZ requests, of which there are over 800 cases pending determination. If DOD is to absorb the administrative intake function of processing APZ requests in the new system – over and above our role in determining case-by-case eligibility – we are requesting funding for two (2) employees in position classification of Office Trainee (Code 1101-0) through the Mayor’s Target Hiring program; or alternatively an Administrative Clerk (Code 1358-0) and Senior Admin Clerk (Code 1368-0). As a Department of 22 employees we are not able to absorb the full intake process with our current workload.

5. Staff Development Training and Related Travel (\$20,000). \$20,000 is requested to support continuing staff development and training. Given the role of DOD regarding compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and targeted services to meet the specific needs of people with disabilities; an exceedingly high level of

expertise is required of the Department's staff. Ongoing training and development is vital in advising the City on evolving ADA rules while minimizing exposure to risk for the City. DOD provides over two thousand instances of "technical assistance" every year. Being able to provide accurate and up to date ADA related information to departments is necessary in order to comply with the ADA and related laws, and to reduce the number of ADA-related lawsuits the City receives in any given year. Training resources have included; the National Association of ADA Coordinators; California Department of State Architect's (DSA) Training Academy; Domestic Violence and Women with Disabilities and federal/state/county benefits.

6. AIDS Coordinator's Office HIV Prevention Contracts (\$29,305). The ACO was budgeted for \$965,305 in HIV Prevention contracts for the current fiscal year, a portion of which was dedicated to a shortfall that occurred when the funding shifted from CDBG to General Fund (April-March fiscal year to July-June fiscal year, respectively). The proposed FY 2017-18 budget recaptures \$29,305 of this allocation (\$965,305 reduced to \$935,000). In light of several years of reductions in funding for the City's HIV/AIDS programs (from over \$1,200,000), DOD is requesting that the full allocation of \$965,305 be reinstated.

a. **AIDS Coordinator's Office HIV Prevention Contract Authority.** Authorize the General Manager, Department on Disability, or designee to negotiate and execute contract amendments for one additional year for 16 existing HIV Prevention contracts³ in the AIDS Coordinator's Office (ACO), for twelve months beginning July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2018. In accordance with Executive Directive 3, the Department will seek review and approval of the amendments by the Mayor, CAO, and the City Attorney as to form and in compliance with all necessary City requirements. Funding for these contract amendments will be provided through the general fund allocation to the ACO as recommended for FY 2017-18.

b. **ACO Position Authorities (no cost).** Authorize the conversion of four (4) staff positions in the ACO from Resolution Authorities to Regular Position Authorities. Until recently the ACO was fully funded through the Community Development Block Grant which necessitated the positions to be Resolution Authorities. Now that the office is fully funded through the general fund, DOD is requesting that these positions be made Regular Authority.

7. \$23,332 Department Re-alignment. A total of \$23,332 is requested to re-organize the department by assigning employees to key roles and the commensurate compensation to fulfill those roles. Without these changes DOD's Organization chart will remain out of sync with the basic structure and functioning of the Department, and risk employees working outside their class and job descriptions. Currently, two of our divisions have division managers (ACO & GASP), but for the other two the Chief of Staff is acting division manager – this is not sustainable and continues to hamper the growth and effectiveness of our Department.

³ See Attachment 1

a. \$16,546 Reallocation of MA I to Sr. Project Coordinator. We are seeking reallocation of the position filled by Lourdes Sinibaldi from Management Analyst to **Senior Project Coordinator**. This request would re-create a division manager for our CORE Division. She would continue her exceptional work and her key role in co-hosting and participating in dozens of Community events (including developing the City's Disability Job Fair; leading the APZ (blue curb) process within the department and serving approximately 550 constituents (unique #'s) on the APZ program; and she is our current lead on the Office of Violence Against Women with Disabilities Grant, Purposeful Aging, and Homeless Initiative. Although it creates an increase in salary, we believe that the expertise and vision provided by Ms. Sinibaldi will make this division far more efficient and effective in serving our city as well as bring the Department's Org Chart closer into alignment with the basic principles of organizational structures.

b. \$6,786 for Step Increase. Our ADA Coordinators were hired with a significant gap in salaries. One particular employee, John Rodriguez, sits three (3) steps below the other similarly situated ADA Coordinators in our office with the exception that John, in addition to being an ADA Coordinator, is director of the Mediation component of our Title III Program. In order to launch the revenue generating Title III program he personally trained DOD's staff through the 30 hour Los Angeles County Bar Association Certification Mediator program; developed a fee schedule and obtained and reviewed all forms, waivers, and disclosures necessary to start the mediations; and will lead the mediations. While he is outperforming staff in his classification in our Department, he is paid annually \$6,786 less than his counterparts who were hired at the time with similar experience and even less than another staff hired at the same time with substantially less experience.

Thank you for your consideration of our budget requests. The Department stands ready to continue providing the higher quality of service expected throughout the City to reduce accessibility-related risk for all City services, programs and facilities. If you can provide additional information or answer any questions, please feel free to contact me at (213) 202-2764.

Sincerely,



Stephen David Simon
Executive Director

c: Barbara Romero, Deputy Mayor, City Services
Margaret Wynne, Mayor's Office
Andy Chen, City Administrative Office

**2017-2018 Fiscal Year
Recommendations for Contract Authorities**

Department on Disability
AIDS Coordinator's Office (ACO)
HIV/AIDS Prevention Program

Funding Source:
General Fund - \$935,000

Term of Performance:
July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

The HIV/AIDS Prevention Program, through contract services, seeks to reduce the number of new HIV infections among residents of the City of Los Angeles. This is accomplished by providing HIV/AIDS risk reduction and skills building education, HIV testing and counseling referrals, safer sex information and supplies, medical and social services referrals, syringe collection tied to substance abuse treatment, safer sex education for HIV-positive individuals, substance abuse education, and behavior modification programs.

Contractor	Council District	Project	Contract Amount
Asian American Drug Abuse Program, Inc. 2900 S Crenshaw Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90016	9	Syringe Collection/Injection Drug User (IDU) Services	\$45,000
APLA Health & Wellness 611 S Kingsley Dr. Los Angeles, CA 90005	1-15	Native American Men Who Have Sex With Men (MSM)	\$40,000
Bienestar Human Services, Inc. 5326 E Beverly Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90022	1, 6, 8, 14, 15	Syringe Collection/Injection Drug User (IDU) Services	\$50,000
Center for Health Justice, Inc. 900 Avila St., #301 Los Angeles, CA 90012	14	Incarcerated Women and Gay Men	\$45,000
Children's Hospital Los Angeles 4650 Sunset Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90027	1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14	Transgender Youth (TG ages 13-24)	\$50,000
East Los Angeles Women's Center 1255 S Atlantic Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90022	1, 8, 14	Promotora/Women at Sexual Risk (WSR)	\$55,000
Homeless Health Care Los Angeles 2330 Beverly Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90057	13, 14	Syringe Collection/Injection Drug User (IDU) Services	\$103,000

**2017-2018 Fiscal Year
Recommendations for Contract Authorities**

LA LGBT Center 1625 N Schrader Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90028	1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14	Runaway and Homeless Youth age 13-24	\$55,000
Planned Parenthood Los Angeles 400 W. 30 th St. Los Angeles, CA 90007	3, 6, 8, 9, 13	Women & Routine HIV Testing	\$55,000
Public Health Foundation Enterprises (fiscal agent for Clean Needles Now) 12801 Crossroads Parkway South, Suite 200 City of Industry, CA 91746	1, 4, 9, 14, 15	Syringe Collection/Injection Drug User (IDU) Services	\$104,000
REACH LA	1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14	Community Health Workers outreach to AA & Latino YGBM	\$40,000
Special Service for Groups (fiscal agent for Asian Pacific AIDS Intervention Team) 605 W Olympic Blvd., Suite 600 Los Angeles, CA 90015	1-15	Asian and Pacific Islander (API) Men Who Have Sex With Men (MSM) age 18+	\$50,000
St. John's Well Child and Family Center, Inc. 5701 S Hoover St. Los Angeles, CA 90037	1, 8, 9, 10, 15	Transgender Empowerment	\$50,000
Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc. 18646 Oxnard St. Tarzana, CA 91356	3, 7	Syringe Collection/Injection Drug User (IDU) Services	\$93,000
Valley Community Healthcare 6801 Coldwater Canyon Ave. North Hollywood, CA 91605	2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 12	Popular Opinion Leader (POL) for Men Who Have Sex With Men (MSM)	\$45,000
Venice Family Clinic 604 Rose Ave. Venice, CA 90291	11	Syringe Collection/Injection Drug User (IDU) Services	\$55,000
Total:			\$935,000