

April 29, 2021

To: Los Angeles City Council Budget and Finance Committee  
Attention: City Councilmember Paul Krekorian, Chair  
200 North Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: City Planning's Wildlife Corridor Program**

Dear Honorable Chair Krekorian and Members of the Los Angeles City Council Budget and Finance Committee,

Thank you for undertaking the important task of reviewing the City's proposed annual budget. Among many important priorities, my office and constituents strongly support strengthening existing and future policies addressing wildlife conservation, climate resiliency, public safety, open space preservation, ridgeline protections, and robust safety regulations and hazard mitigation in high risk fire and seismic severity zones.

Alongside Councilmember Koretz, who has been a leader on this issue, I also support City Planning's request for the Budget and Finance Committee to restore the position authorities and funding for one (1) Environmental Specialist and one (1) City Planning Associate. I further request adding to the Planning Department's Budget the appropriate funding and position authority for one (1) additional Environmental Supervisor II and one (1) City Planning Associate, in September 2021, for a total cost of \$786,449 for the completion and implementation of the Wildlife Corridor Program approved by the full Council in 2016 and amended by Councilmember Krekorian to include Congressman Adam Schiff's Rim of the Valley areas.

Community stakeholders and elected officials are excited to see years of hard work come to fruition with the forthcoming draft ordinances for both the Wildlife Corridor Pilot Study and Ridgeline Protections. This is in addition to constituents advocating for stronger protections of hillside areas through the Housing Element Update, the Hollywood Community Plan Update, the Safety Element Update, and expansion of the Hillside Construction Regulation Supplemental Use District among other policies.

I understand that City Planning is exploring opportunities to temporarily preserve these positions for a short period through a timely regional housing grant. While I commend the Department for looking into creative solutions, our council office would like to see these positions be sustained, made permanent, and potentially increased, and complemented by a comprehensive effort to expand this program beyond the pilot area to other potential Protection Areas for Wildlife (PAWS) in order for there to be a citywide strategy for biodiversity and habitat preservation.

Thank you again for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,



Los Angeles City Councilmember Nithya Raman, 4th District