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Van Nuys Neighborhood Council



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COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT

[Council File 22-0560](#)

(Municipal Lobbying Ordinance/Updates)

The Van Nuys Neighborhood Council supports the changes to the municipal lobbying ordinance (MLO) regarding neighborhood councils. We also request the consideration of changes to a few minor areas of the draft MLO that we believe will benefit transparency in the city.

Under section 48.08.8 of the [current lobbying ordinance](#), a lobbyist disclosure is only required for written communications to neighborhood councils. We believe the ordinance should be updated to include the same disclosure when a lobbyist makes an oral presentation or public comment to a neighborhood council that is related to their lobbying efforts. Therefore, we deeply agree with section 48.11 of the [draft municipal lobbying ordinance](#) under consideration.

We believe the lack of oral lobbyist disclosure requirement leaves many neighborhood council board members at an information disadvantage and that it should be addressed due to lack of training. Neighborhood Council members do not receive training on identifying or looking up lobbyist activities in the city through the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment. We believe the legal onus should be on the lobbyist to be as upfront and straightforward with the board as possible. Additionally, the responsibility is then on the paid lobbyist rather than the volunteer board member when it comes to the pursuit of this information.

In addition, the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council would like to request a similar lobbying disclosure for city council and committee meetings. This announcement could either be done by the lobbyist or by the presiding officer of the meeting in order to ensure that the public is fully aware of the associations of all speakers who are paid lobbyists. Neighborhood council members frequently listen to city council meetings or recordings of the meetings, and we strongly feel that this minor addition would bring greater transparency to the City processes. We urge the City Council to adopt this minor change.

Lastly, the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council urges the City Council to adopt a non-profit exemption of \$200,000 in revenue or \$500,000 in assets instead of the proposed \$2,000,000. This change aligns with the IRS tax filing system and would essentially allow any non-profit that files a 990-N or 990-EZ to gain exemption. This change also reflects the current San Francisco ethics ordinance. The current recommendation of \$2 million in revenue is far too high and would exempt the vast majority of non-profits in Southern California. Only 16% of Southern California non-profits have revenues above \$1 million, so an exemption set at twice that amount would have a grave effect on transparency.

Thank you for your consideration of this topic,

Van Nuys Neighborhood Council

This CIS was approved by a Roll Call vote of 15 “yes”, 0 “no” on September 14, 2022.