



COUNCILWOMAN MONICA RODRIGUEZ  
SEVENTH DISTRICT

May 7, 2025

Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky, Chair  
Budget & Finance Committee  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: CAO Budget Memo 40, Departmental Consolidations**

Dear Honorable Budget & Finance Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to once again comment on the 2025-26 proposed budget. As stated in my previous letter, I have serious concerns about the elimination of the Youth Development Department (YDD) as a standalone and transparent entity. I am similarly concerned about the proposed consolidation of the Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD), which I strongly believe must remain an independent entity.

The recommendation outlined in Budget Memo 40 regarding departmental consolidation allows the City Council to review this proposal and determine if there are cost savings and/or efficiencies that can be realized by consolidation. When Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson became President of the Los Angeles City Council, one of his first actions was appointing me as the Chair of a new committee that solely focuses on finding efficiencies and cost savings in City government, the Government Efficiency, Innovation and Audits Committee. I encourage the committee to adopt Memo 40 and refer this matter to the relevant policy committees, including the Government Efficiency, Innovation and Audits Committee for further review.

Within Exhibit H, the Mayor's proposed budget includes instructions for the consolidation of the Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD), the Youth Development Department (YDD), and the Department of Aging under the Community Investment for Families Department (CIFD). To effectuate the consolidation, Exhibit H also includes position deletions that would cripple, if not eliminate, an unknown number of workforce development programs and economic development functions.

At a time when revenues and new investment—from housing to hotel development—are depressed in the City, we should be enhancing EWDD's functions, not diluting their purpose.

Key concerns include:

- The proposed consolidation includes cuts that threaten the foundation of the City's workforce and economic development programs.
- EWDD is nearly 98% special funded, so the proposed cuts yield minimal General Fund savings, yet risk major negative ripple effects on programs and service delivery.
- Eliminating leadership with institutional knowledge and deep understanding of complex federal funding sources jeopardizes the City's ability to attract and manage future federal funding.
- Potential redistribution of grant funds could reduce or eliminate certain programs, with no clarity yet on which programs will be impacted.
- EWDD's economic development initiatives, including property redevelopment, require specialized expertise not currently found within CIFD. The loss of EWDD's leadership would hamper future public-private development opportunities.
- With global events like the World Cup and Olympics on the horizon, robust support for small businesses and workforce development is critical. Without EWDD's expertise, capitalizing on these economic opportunities becomes more challenging.
- The merger threatens longstanding partnerships with Organized Labor that have been instrumental in building job training and placement pipelines for youth and workers across the city.
- Additionally, with uncertainty at the federal level regarding the future of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, dismantling EWDD and YDD into CIFD at this time would be premature and potentially short lived, as those cuts would impact staffing directly.

I urge you to adopt Budget Memo 40 and postpone any departmental consolidations until this matter is studied financially and the results are reviewed within the impacted policy committees. The long-term success and sustainability of our workforce and economic development efforts depend on preserving the structure and leadership of EWDD.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Monica Rodriguez".

Monica Rodriguez  
Councilwoman, District 7

Cc: Councilmember Bob Blumenfield  
Councilmember Heather Hutt  
Councilmember Tim McOsker  
Councilmember Eunisses Hernandez