

CITY CLERK'S RECORD OF MEETING

City Council Finance & Budget Subcommittee
August 13, 2025

Present: Mayor Chelsea Byers, Vice Mayor John Heilman, City Manager David Wilson, Community & Legislative Affairs Manager Andi Lovano, Budget Officer Melissa Lindley, Director of Administrative Services Janet Jimenez, and City Clerk Melissa Crowder.

The meeting was called to order at 10:33 a.m.

Hernan Molina, President of the West Hollywood Municipal Employees Union, addressed staff workload concerns, noting frustration from new initiatives added after the budget is approved. He requested that Council work more closely with Staff before adding initiatives and include the Union in discussions on managing workload expectations.

City Manager David Wilson introduced the agenda item on Organizational Priorities. He, Community & Legislative Affairs Manager Andi Lovano, and Budget Officer Melissa Lindley reviewed pending Council-initiated items and proposed closures. The Subcommittee provided direction and outlined next steps for Staff.

The Subcommittee members expressed agreement with the recommendations that Staff proposed for closing certain Council-initiated items. They requested clarification with some of the items that were being folded into larger initiatives rather than being completed individually.

City Directive Prioritization Strategy

Acting Director of Community Development Jennifer Alkire and Long Range Planning Manager Francisco Contreras presented a strategy for organizing and prioritizing the approximately 100 active directives and Work Plan items. Mr. Contreras explained how the Long Range Planning Division ranks projects based on impact, urgency, feasibility, and alignment with Council goals, emphasizing that adding new initiatives mid-stream disrupts ongoing work and extends timelines. Staff is seeking the Subcommittee's input on how to incorporate new initiatives, amend priority rankings, and evaluate whether the provided timelines and cost estimates are sufficient for decision-making, acknowledging that prioritization will inevitably mean some projects will be delayed based on existing resources.

The Subcommittee discussed project prioritization. The Subcommittee inquired about the definition of 'major project'. They also expressed concern that transportation priorities focus heavily on bike projects while issues like Sunset Boulevard gridlock are not addressed. Staff explained that only standalone projects are listed, not routine upgrades.

The Subcommittee discussed the relationship between housing initiatives. Staff explained that the Zoning Improvement Program (ZIP) addresses Development Standards, the Housing Reform

Package focuses on process issues, and the Inclusionary Housing Study will inform zoning. The Subcommittee suggested consolidating related efforts, noting that density bonus discussions impact housing reform. They also identified addressing vacant spaces and business retention as their top economic development priority.

Staff mentioned the challenge of managing the workload of the Long Range Planning Division which is currently responsible for numerous projects. The Subcommittee suggested potentially dividing responsibilities by creating separate departments for housing, community development, and transportation. Staff noted that a transportation division was already established in this year's budget. They also discussed how projects from the Climate Action Plan, Economic Development Plan, and Housing Element are incorporated into the work plan, with Staff explaining that projects are scheduled across fiscal years and prioritized during each budget cycle.

The Subcommittee discussed improving efficiency in City operations, suggesting clearer communication of strategic plans, regular project updates, more targeted engagement, and indicating how new Council initiatives align with existing work. They questioned the need for all staff at every meeting and suggested streamlining staff reports. While recognizing the budget and Work Plans as guides, they emphasized the need for Council responsiveness to evolving community needs.

The Subcommittee discussed scheduling the next meeting where they will discuss events and co-sponsorships.

The meeting adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

Melissa Crowder
Melissa Crowder, City Clerk