

# DRAFT

Re: Council File # 22-0560

Municipal Lobbying Ordinance

Dear Members of the Los Angeles City Council,

The Central San Pedro Neighborhood Council ("CeSPNC") supports the changes to the municipal lobbying ordinance ("MLO") regarding neighborhood councils with minor changes to the draft MLO that will benefit transparency.

Under section 48.08.8 of the current lobbying ordinance, a lobbyist disclosure is only required for written communication to NCs. Given the move to Zoom meetings, the ordinance's lobbyist disclosure requirement should also apply to an oral presentation and/or public comment to an NC.

Under AB 361, NCs are prohibited from requiring "speaker cards," which is traditionally where lobbying disclosures are made. While the CeSPNC can request lobbyist disclosures, the CeSPNC has no enforcement mechanism. The lack of an enforceable oral lobbyist disclosure requirement leaves many NC board members at an information disadvantage which should be addressed for the following reasons:

- 1) **Transparency:** Every board member has the right to know if a speaker compensated for speaking on an item.
- 2) **Diffusion of responsibility:** Even if a lobbyist sends a correct written disclosure either via mail or email, these communications do not generally go to every board member of the board. Further, the responsibility to disclose should be on the paid lobbyist rather than being put on the volunteer board members to find out themselves.
- 3) **Lack of training:** The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment ("DONE") does not provide training on identifying or looking up lobbyist activities in the city's lobbyist registration web portal. The onus should be on the lobbyist to be as upfront and straightforward with the board. A lobbyist should orally advise the board of their lobbyist status whenever they present or provide oral comment.

In addition, the CeSPNC requests 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 to ensure that the public is fully aware of the associations of paid lobbyist speakers. NC board members frequently listen to City Council Meetings or recordings of those meetings. This minor addition would bring greater transparency to City processes. The CeSPNC urges the City Council to adopt this minor change.