

Maricela Hernandez

Subject: FW: City Council meeting 5-10-23 – agenda item #4 – Public comments

From: Joe Chilco <joe.chilco@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, May 8, 2023 2:07 PM

To: info <info@cityofcalabasas.com>

Subject: City Council meeting 5-10-23 – agenda item #4 – Public comments

City Councilmembers,

Please consider the following in your discussion of agenda item #4, “Council discussion on conducting hybrid Commission meetings enabling the public to participate remotely or in-person.”

I agree that it is prudent to spend tax dollars wisely.

Starting with the City’s Organizational Chart, “Residents” is in the top position. This suggests that every other component of our city government is in the service of its residents. The use of taxpayer dollars to support taxpayer participation is one of the best uses of these funds.

With regard to staff overtime, the Planning Commission and City Council meetings are scheduled for one evening every two weeks, on alternating weeks. I propose that Communications Department City staff hours be adjusted on those days with a later start and finish time so that overtime hours and the cost involved are limited.

With regard to making the determination of the likelihood of greater public participation on any matter, there should be clear criteria set. I propose that the criteria include: any development project application that is for greater than one residential unit; any updates to the General Plan; any new revenue streams; annual budget reviews; any Public Works project that impacts traffic and circulation.

I believe the Chair of the various commissions should be the decision-maker in this regard. They are residents and it is an opportunity to increase public participation. I feel they have the best interests of the residents at heart.

The recent Public Works proposed roundabout at the intersection of Las Virgenes Road and Thousand Oaks Blvd. provides a good example of an ineffective approach to encouraging public participation.

As a resident who has spent the past 7 years participating in our city government’s processes, I tend to pay attention and catch most important information. It was chance that I’d attended the Traffic and Transportation Commission and the City Council meetings where the matter was raised.

The City Council correctly directed Public Works to conduct much more rigorous notifications so that the residents have a clear opportunity to participate and have significant input.

We can only all work together if all parties involved are given the opportunity to participate in ways that make it easier for them to participate. However, as our City Organizational Chart suggests, all efforts should be to the benefit of and in the best interests of our residents. Public participation will be further challenged by the fact

that future Civic Center parking will be limited and proactive planning will be vital in ensuring resident participation.

I encourage the City Council to adopt an approach to encourage, promote, and facilitate greater public participation in our City government.

Thank you for your consideration of all of the above.

Joe Chilco
Calabasas resident
(address on file)