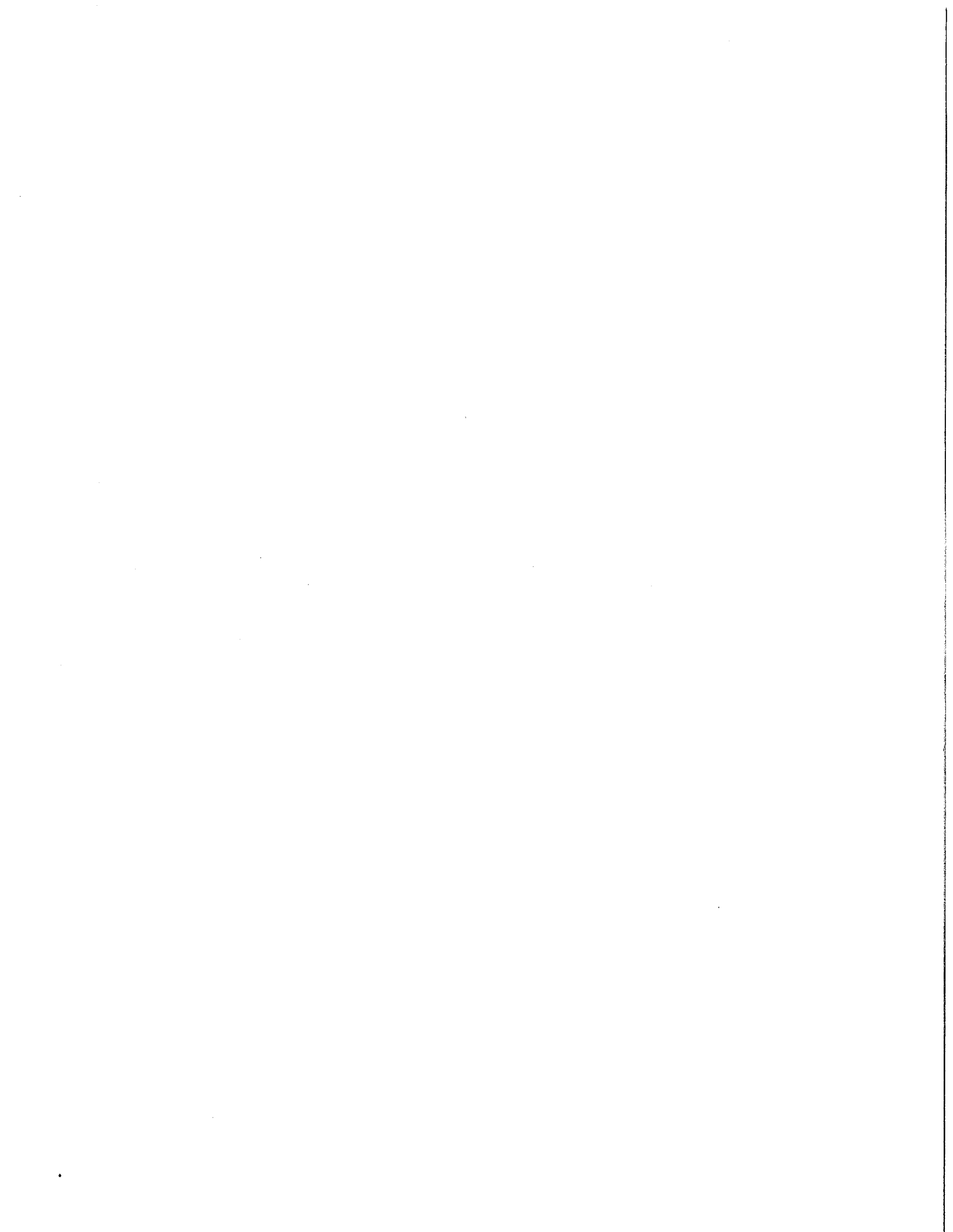




Weekly Management Report

October 20, 2023

- 1. Memo** Small Claims and Unlawful Detainer Court Divisions
City Attorney's Department
- 2. Synopsis** Transportation Commission
Meeting on September 18, 2023
Community Development Department
- 3. Memo** Burbank Hospitality Association
Meeting on September 20, 2023
Community Development Department



MEMORANDUM



CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Date: October 18, 2023

To: City Council and City Manager

From: Joseph H. McDougall, City Attorney
Ashlee P. Clark, Senior Assistant City Attorney

Subject: Status of Small Claims and Unlawful Detainer Court Divisions

A member of the public recently queried City Council about the possibility of re-establishing a small claims court in Burbank. This memo will provide insight into the small claims court consolidation following the 2011 Judicial Council budget cuts and the status of small claims courts following the COVID-19 pandemic. Based upon the current ability to conduct most hearings virtually and the success of the consolidation efforts, it appears the current court structure is unlikely to change.

Small claims and unlawful detainer courts in the state of California, like other courts, are governed by the Judicial Council. There are currently 12 judicial districts within Los Angeles County's Superior Court, which each handle matters at different locations by case type. Within the 12 districts, there are 36 courthouse locations within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles Superior Court currently operational.

In 2011, following extreme budget cuts for judicial resources totaling \$350 million dollars, the Judicial Council cut operating costs by closing courthouses and by consolidating divisions within districts. In February 2013, small claims divisions around the County were consolidated to 11 regional hub locations, including: Chatsworth, Compton, Downey, Long Beach, Inglewood, Lancaster, Pasadena, Santa Monica, Stanley Mosk, Van Nuys, and West Covina. As a result of this change, Burbank's small claims court was closed, and the staff and case load were re-assigned to the Pasadena regional hub. Then, in October 2017, unlawful detainer filings were also re-assigned to regional hub locations in a further effort to support budget and staffing cuts.

Although the Burbank Courthouse previously handled small claims and unlawful detainer matters, the current services are limited to Criminal, Civil, Traffic, Infractions, Juvenile matters, and restraining orders. Due to its size, the Pasadena Courthouse, on the other hand, provides Family Law, Probate, Small Claims, Criminal, Civil, Traffic, Infractions, and Juvenile services. Currently, all small claims and unlawful detainer matters filed by City of Burbank residents/businesses, with the exclusion of Warner Bros., are filed in



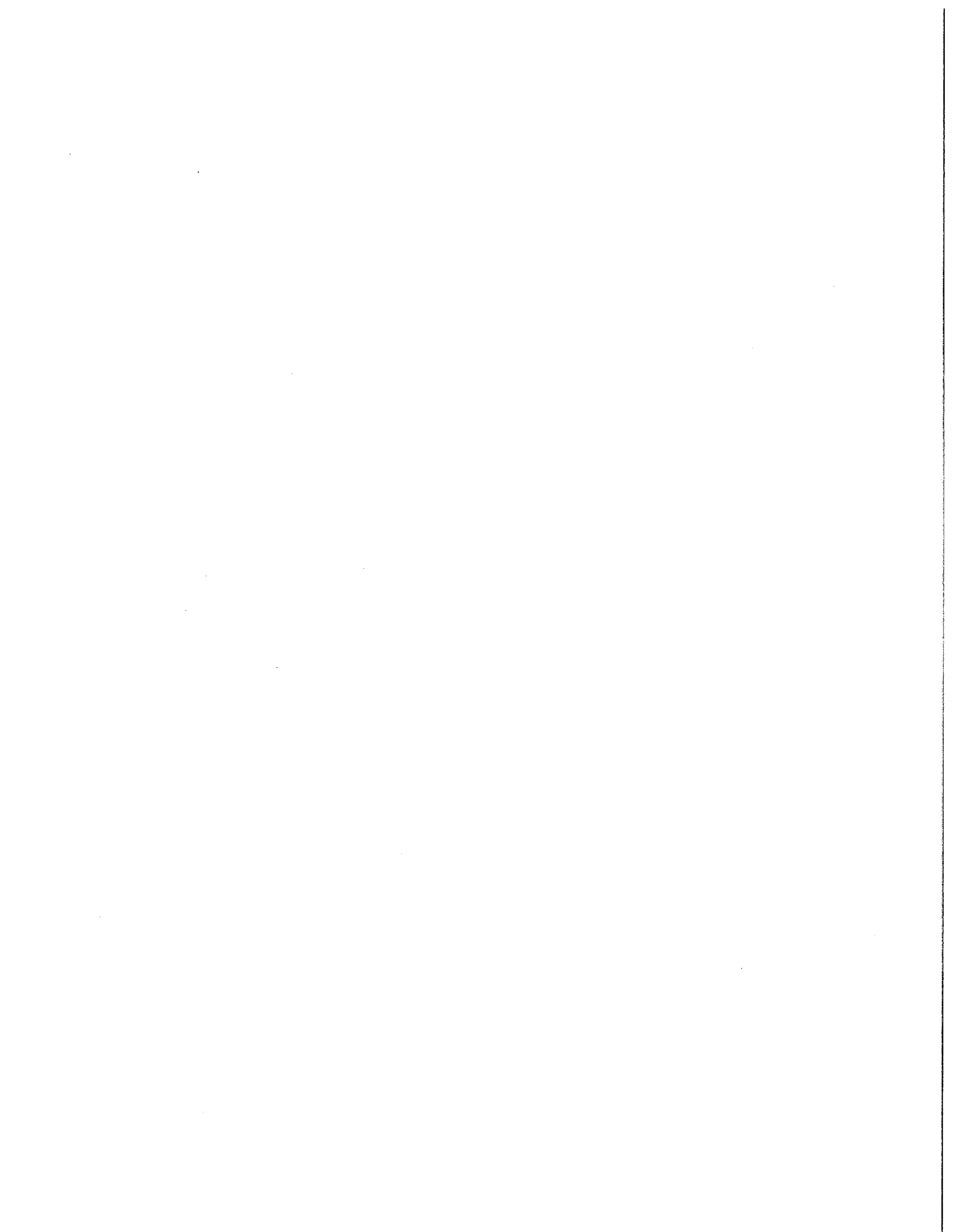
Pasadena. (All Family Law, Probate, and Restraining Orders are also filed in the Pasadena hub.)

Following the Court's 2013 and 2017 consolidation efforts, in approximately 2018-2019, the Los Angeles Superior Court began requiring electronic filing of case-related documents; this system allowed not only ease of use and increased accessibility but also required less on-site staff at physical locations. Shortly after electronic filing became required, video conferencing and virtual appearance capabilities were added to the Los Angeles Superior Court services. The program, called LA CourtConnect, allowed parties to avoid the unnecessary time and costs of travel, and provided more accessibility to the elderly and disabled. Court hearings may now be completely virtual.

In March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic required closure of physical locations for non-urgent matters, the Court's electronic and video conferencing programs were put to the test. They proved, over the next year, to be a huge success in keeping the Court system open and available to California residents. Even though the courthouses have all re-opened to the public, the Court continues to encourage all Los Angeles County residents to utilize these programs rather than appearing at the courthouse in-person. City staff in both the City Attorney's Office and Finance (who currently handles the City's small claims matters) routinely use the virtual appearance CourtConnect system to attend hearings for convenience, efficiency, and to limit unnecessary use of public funds.

Although the recent budget approved by Governor Newsom provides \$1.2 billion in new funding to the Judicial Council over the next few years, the funding has been earmarked for projects such as continued technology modernization, creating new judgeships, building new courthouses and expanding location facilities, promoting fiscal equity among the 58 trial courts, supporting untreated mental health and substance abuse, expanding legal aid, offsetting expected decline in fine and penalty revenues, and funding dependency counsel and Court Appointed Special Advocates.

Given the success and effectiveness of Los Angeles County's consolidation efforts, electronic filing, and virtual appearance programs, and the budget's earmarked funds to support longstanding priorities directed at expanding access to justice around the State, it appears the current court structure is unlikely to change; and it is doubtful that the Burbank small claims or unlawful detainer division will be re-opened.




MEMORANDUM



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

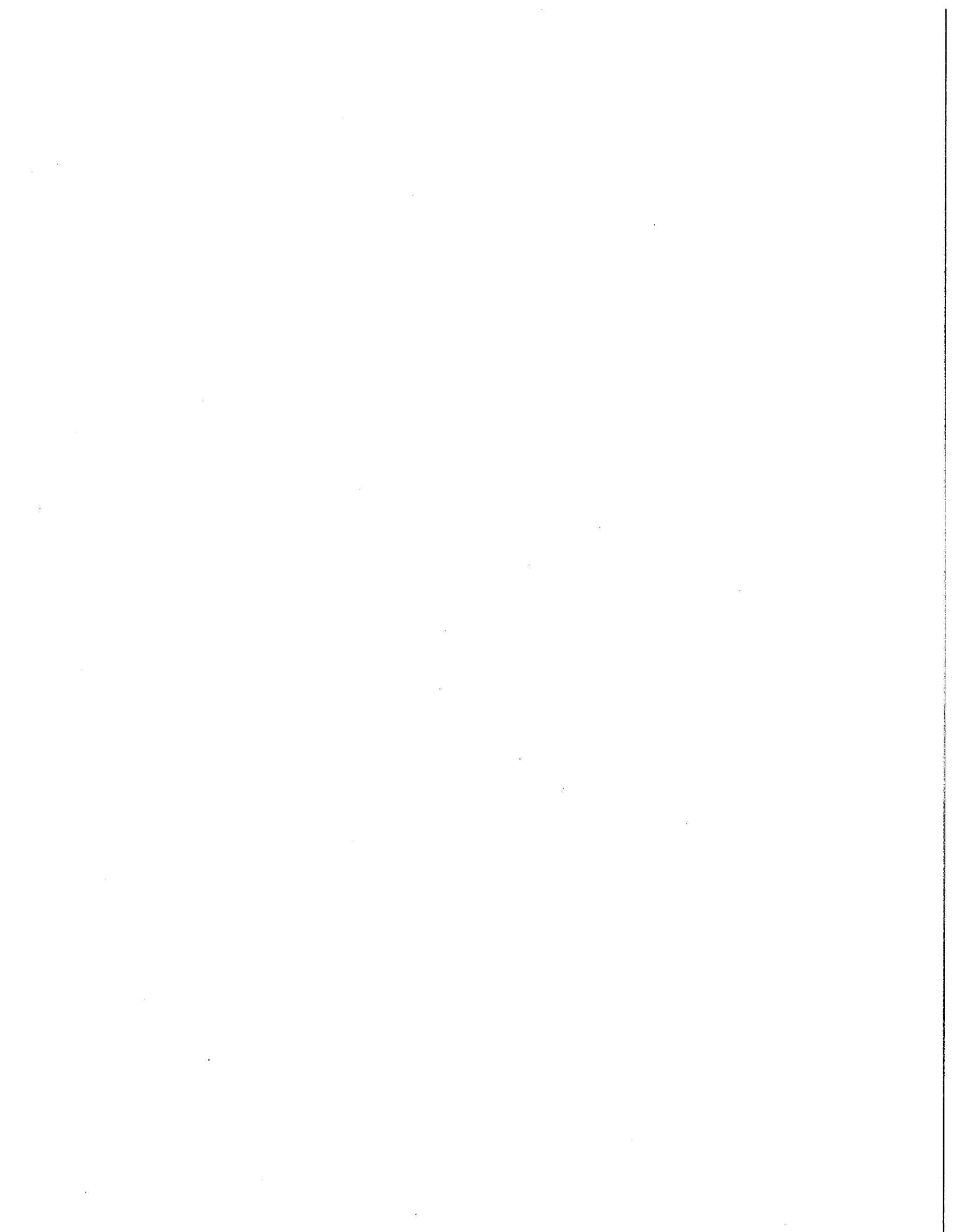
DATE: September 19, 2023

TO: Justin Hess, City Manager

FROM: Patrick Prescott, Community Development Director 
VIA: David Kriske, Assistant Community Development Director –
Transportation
BY: Nick Burant, Administrative Analyst

SUBJECT: Transportation Commission Meeting Synopsis – September 18, 2023

- Jim Uhl from Breaking the Chain Consulting led the Commission in a team development training activity.
- Transportation staff presented an update on the Complete Streets Dashboard and the status of several projects that implement the Complete Streets Plan. As part of the update, staff also presented on the status of the Los Angeles River Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge Project, including the project's history and some alternatives to the project. As part of that update, staff indicated that the project was placed on administrative hold due to a significant amount of concern from nearby residents that the project would negatively impact their neighborhood due to safety issues on the Los Angeles side of the proposed bridge. The Commission discussed the project and the concerns raised. The Commission passed the following motion regarding the LA River Bridge project:
 - The Commission recommends the City Council direct staff to:
 - Retain the funding currently allocated towards the LA River Bridge and
 - Continue the search for a bicycle crossing from Burbank to Griffith Park as an alternative to the project
 - The motion was passed 4-0-1, with Commissioner Ehrhardt abstaining.



MEMORANDUM






COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



DATE: October 17, 2023

TO: Justin Hess, City Manager

FROM: Patrick Prescott, Community Development Director 
VIA: Simone McFarland, Asst. Community Development Director 
Mary Hamzoian, Economic Development Manager 
BY: Odette Zakarian, Administrative Analyst I

SUBJECT: Burbank Hospitality Association Meeting – September 20, 2023

- The Board did not act on any agenda items as a quorum of the Board was not met.
- John Bwarie from Stratiscope made a presentation to the Board regarding the Economic Development Strategic Plan. The Board provided feedback and recommendations regarding the future of tourism and how it relates for the Plan.