

## **ETHICS COMMISSION IMPOSES FINE OF \$37,500 FOR LOBBYING VIOLATIONS**

The Ethics Commission unanimously approved a stipulated order at its meeting today, imposing a fine of \$37,500 on Gary Benjamin and Alchemy Planning, LLC for failing to comply with the mandatory registration and reporting requirements in the Municipal Lobbying Ordinance.

Lobbying entities, including lobbyists and lobbying firms, are required to register with the Ethics Commission and to report their lobbying activities on a quarterly basis to help the public identify who is attempting to influence City action.

Benjamin is a former City official and the sole owner of Alchemy, a planning and land use consulting business that specializes in complex entitlement approvals and advocacy. Benjamin and Alchemy admitted that they failed to register as lobbying entities and file quarterly disclosure reports from the second quarter of 2017 through the second quarter of 2019. They agreed to pay a joint penalty of \$37,500.

“The Ethics Commission continues to uphold the public’s interest in knowing who is attempting to influence City government,” said Melinda Murray, the president of the Ethics Commission. “Today’s order underscores the importance of transparency in accountable government.”

Information about attempting to influence City land use decisions and lobbyist registration requirements for land use professionals can be found [here](#). Any person who directly communicates or plans to communicate with City employees in an attempt to influence a land use or other City decision on another person’s behalf is strongly encouraged to contact the Ethics Commission staff for advice about how to comply with the City’s lobbying laws.

All fines levied by the Ethics Commission are paid to the City’s general fund. Enforcement orders can be viewed and searched through the Ethics Commission’s [Public Data Portal](#).

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*The [Ethics Commission](#) was created by Los Angeles voters in 1990 to impartially administer and enforce the City’s governmental ethics, campaign financing, and lobbying laws.*

