



# EMPOWER LA™

Department of  
NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT



Thank you for your interest in becoming a candidate for the Los Angeles' Neighborhood Council system! If elected, you will be joining a history making grassroots civic engagement movement like no other in the world.

Neighborhood Councils were created in 1999 by Angelenos who voted to change the City Charter so they could have a stronger voice at City Hall. Today, there are 96 certified Neighborhood Councils with over 1800 board members throughout the City of Los Angeles. As official advisory bodies to the City government, their mission is to increase civic engagement and make government more responsive to local needs. Neighborhood Councils do this by monitoring the City budget, the delivery of City services and acting as a liaison between the community and the City electeds and departments.

Neighborhood Councils represent the stakeholders in their community. Unlike municipal, state or federal elections where only residents get to vote, Neighborhood Council stakeholders include people of all ages who live, work, own property or have a significant and ongoing community interest, such as those who go to school, board horses or worship in an area. Because every neighborhood is different, so are the Neighborhood Council boards and boundaries, which were created by their stakeholders to represent the uniqueness of their community. Be sure to check out the website and bylaws of the Neighborhood Council you're wanting to represent so you know all about them. Also, attend their meetings so you can see how the board works and the issues they are tackling for their community.

To be a Neighborhood Council board member, get ready to roll up your sleeves and work! Besides attending monthly board meetings, you'll be expected to participate in Neighborhood Council committee meetings, events, special projects and outreach to your stakeholders each month. You'll also need to track what's going on at City Hall so you can weigh in on it on behalf of your stakeholders. Expect to spend ten to twenty hours a week on Neighborhood Council activities because you're representing thousands of stakeholders in your community, and they need you to help voice their concerns to their City representatives.

Even though you're a volunteer, as a Neighborhood Council board member, you'll need to take some mandated trainings, such as ethics and open government and Neighborhood Council funding on how to properly spend public funds, as well as sign a Neighborhood Council Board Member Code of Conduct. This is to ensure that you know the rules and responsibilities to effectively represent your community while on the Neighborhood Council. You'll find that the more you know about how to get things done, the better you'll be as an advocate for your community. You may even become



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inspired to work on a City commission or run for higher office like many other Neighborhood Council board members.

Once you sign up to run as a candidate, we encourage you to run a friendly and positive campaign. Remember, the other candidates are still your neighbors and community members in the end. For more information on candidate guidelines or Neighborhood Councils, please go to [www.EmpowerLA.org](http://www.EmpowerLA.org) or click on the link below.

Lastly, there are many roles on a Neighborhood Council. If you have limited time to volunteer or if you run and don't win a seat, you can still participate on your Neighborhood Council by becoming a committee member, serving as a Neighborhood Council Budget Advocate, helping out at events and attending board meetings to weigh in on community issues. There's a place for everyone on a Neighborhood Council.

Welcome to the Neighborhood Council family! Thank you again for stepping up to Empower Yourself, Empower your Community and Empower LA!