

Neighborhood Council System Reforms

This past year, the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council System turned fifteen years old. This one-of-a-kind civic experiment has fostered grassroots activism, civic innovation, and provided a stronger voice to communities that otherwise would have less influence at City Hall.

Fifteen years of evolution has also uncovered areas where the system can be improved. Some of these improvements are fundamental, stemming from the charter section that empowers Neighborhood Councils, and others are simpler matters of policy change that can be implemented by city departments or by ordinance.

In July of 2017, I assumed chairpersonship of the City Council Committee that oversees the Neighborhood Council System, the Health, Education and Neighborhood Councils Committee. Having previously served on a Neighborhood Council, I have a strong interest in ensuring their continued viability.

To determine what changes may be needed in the system going forwards, I embarked on a listening tour to many of the Neighborhood Council Alliances. Additionally, my office sent a survey to all Neighborhood Council listservs soliciting feedback from Neighborhood Council members and the interested public. Over 160 Neighborhood Council stakeholders responded. Reviewing these submissions, evaluating the information presented in the committee hearings I have held over the past nine months on pending Neighborhood Council policy matters, and meeting with the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment and the City Clerk, I have developed a list of policy ideas for the Neighborhood Council System that should be reviewed.

As these ideas will need substantial input from Neighborhood Council members and stakeholders before determining which should move forward. To ensure enough time is provided to develop that input, this motion will not be heard in committee until at least 90 days after it is introduced in order to provide Neighborhood Councils time to deliberate on the proposals and submit Community Impact Statements.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment be INSTRUCTED, with assistance as needed from the CLA, CAO, City Clerk and City Attorney, to report back within 60 days on the following:

- Recommendations and next steps for amending City Charter Article IX to change the name of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) to the Neighborhood Councils Department (NCD), the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC) to the Neighborhood Councils Commission (NCC), and phasing out the use of the term/branding 'EmpowerLA' due to the confusion reported by the public and the perception of Neighborhood Council members that DONE's role should be primarily to support Neighborhood Councils, which the name Neighborhood Councils Department would better reflect.
- Recommendations and next steps for amending the Los Angeles Administrative Code to remove the "Community Impact Stakeholder," which has caused substantial confusion and disputed elections, and recommendations and next steps for including specific additional definitions by ordinance of eligible voters and board members of Neighborhood Councils, such as student or parent/guardian of a student.
- Recommendations and next steps for amending City Charter Article IX Section 901.d and 904.f to remove any reference to "selections" and clarify that Neighborhood Council board members will be elected. Neighborhood Council "selection" processes are utilized by a limited and decreasing number of councils and are not viewed by the public as being as democratic as elections as they do not provide for a secret ballot or equitable participation.
- Recommendations and next steps for creating a one-time review process, overseen by the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, to evaluate Neighborhood Council bylaws to determine if board seats

are equitably allocated amongst stakeholder types and provide formal suggestions to Neighborhood Councils on ways to adjust board seats as needed to increase equity.

- Recommendations and next steps for adopting regulations to provide a uniform minimum voting age and board member age to allow consistent participation across the City, and what that age should be.
- Recommendations and next steps for developing and adopting a planning and land use training required for all Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Neighborhood Council planning and land use committees.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Clerk be INSTRUCTED, with assistance as needed from the CLA, CAO, DONE and City Attorney, to report back within 60 days on the following:

- Recommendations and next steps on a process for Neighborhood Councils to be able to roll-over a non-cumulative maximum of \$10,000 in any given fiscal year.
- Recommendations and next steps for removing Section 5.485.h of Chapter 88 of Division 5 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code (Ordinance 179545; see Council File 03-1260), and recommendations for other amendments to that Chapter, in order to remove the expiration of the ability for Neighborhood Councils to accept in-kind or monetary donations.
- On the costs and other implications of holding all Neighborhood Council elections on the same day in order to provide for a uniform citywide advertising and outreach campaign.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, and all relevant departments denoted below, be INSTRUCTED to:

- Develop a process, with the assistance of GSD and the City Clerk, to assist Neighborhood Councils with accessing shared space in City facilities, as envisioned in Council File 16-0298.
- Develop an ongoing compendium of best practices generated from Neighborhood Councils and share those on a periodic basis with all Neighborhood Councils and include 'how-to guides' for accomplishing those best practices.
- Develop point of contact lists for key city departments and agencies, including DCP, DOT, Public Works' Bureaus, Aging, Disability, HCID, DCA, LADWP, Port, Airport, Cannabis Regulation, Emergency Management, Animal Services, LAPD, LAFD, Recreation and Parks, Zoo, Finance, Library, Economic and Workforce Development and BIDs, with assistance from those listed departments and agencies, and share those lists with Neighborhood Councils, facilitate the training of those points of contact at those relevant departments on the most fruitful ways to assist and communicate with Neighborhood Council members, and coordinate with Neighborhood Councils to formally appoint a point of contact at each NC to communicate between each NC and the point of contact at each department, thus creating a single line of communication.

I FURTHER MOVE that Neighborhood Councils and Neighborhood Council Alliances be REQUESTED to provide feedback and/or Community Impact Statements (CISs) to the Health, Education, and Neighborhood Councils Committee within 90 days.

ORIGINAL

MAY 25 2018

PRESENTED BY: David E. Ryu
DAVID E. RYU
Councilmember, 4th District

SECONDED BY: Monica Rodriguez

Paul Kubi
Paul Kekoni
Bob Blumenthal

ENTERTAINMENT AND FACILITIES
MOTION RULES, ELECTIONS & INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners has advised that since the first neighborhood councils were certified fourteen years ago they have often struggled to acquire office space and find locations for their board and committee meetings.

The Board also advises that neighborhood councils have been spending nearly \$200,000 yearly for office space and meeting locations. This amount includes money paid to other government agencies including Metrolink and LAUSD. One neighborhood council without an office and limited meeting space reportedly holds its committee meetings in its rented storage unit.

The Board further advises that neighborhood councils as members of the City family should be able to use shared City space for offices and meetings; and that the public funds for rental of office / meeting space can be better used for outreach and other matters within neighborhood councils' jurisdiction.

The Board indicates that there are many public buildings throughout the City, but information about surplus space or whether they are used in the evenings when neighborhood councils generally hold their meetings seems difficult to obtain; but that neighborhood councils as Charter created City entities should have priority to use available public space.

To this end, at its December 1, 2015 meeting the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners acted to request that the City Council explore the feasibility of providing neighborhood councils with priority in the use of shared space at City facilities for board and committee meetings and office space where available.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Administrative Officer, with the assistance of the Department of General Services and the Chief Legislative Analyst be directed to report on what shared spaces might be available for use by neighborhood councils and the feasibility of providing neighborhood councils with priority in the use of such spaces at City facilities for board and committee meetings and office space where available.

PRESENTED BY 
HERB J. WESSON, Jr.
Councilman, 10th District

SECONDED BY 

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MAR 15 2016

ORIGINAL

ORDINANCE NO. _____

An ordinance amending Sections 22.806 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code relating to the Board of Neighborhood Commission's authority to define community interest stakeholders.

**THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. Section 22.806 of Chapter 28, Article 2 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code is amended in its entirety to read as follows:

Sec. 22.806. Powers and Duties of the Board.

(a) The Board shall be responsible for setting and overseeing policy, approving contracts and leases, and promulgating rules and regulations. It shall not be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Department.

(b) The Board is authorized to define the types and duration of contacts that constitute "substantial and ongoing participation" for a community interest stakeholder under Section 22.811(a)(1). The Board's definition of a community interest stakeholder shall be subject to the concurrence of the City Council and the Mayor. Any change to the definition of a community interest stakeholder shall not be implemented during an election cycle where the Candidate Filing period has already opened and, instead, will be implemented prior to the start of the next election cycle.

Sec. 2. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this ordinance and have it published in accordance with Council policy, either in a daily newspaper circulated in the City of Los Angeles or by posting for ten days in three public places in the City of Los Angeles: one copy on the bulletin board located at the Main Street entrance to the Los Angeles City Hall; one copy on the bulletin board located at the Main Street entrance to the Los Angeles City Hall East; and one copy on the bulletin board located at the Temple Street entrance to the Los Angeles County Hall of Records.

I hereby certify that this ordinance was passed by the Council of the City of Los Angeles, at its meeting of _____.

HOLLY L. WOLCOTT, City Clerk

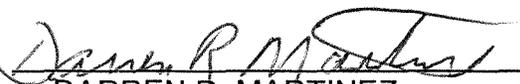
By _____ Deputy

Approved _____

Mayor

Approved as to Form and Legality

MICHAEL N. FEUER, City Attorney

By 
DARREN R. MARTINEZ
Deputy City Attorney

Date 11/20/15

File No. 15-1022

Date: 6/18/13

Submitter: E+N Committee

Council File No: 12-1682 + 11-0600-539

Item No.: 3

Dept: Communication from Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment

Los Angeles Administrative Code, Chapter 28

Sec.22.811. Certification of Neighborhood Councils.

(a) By Laws. Each neighborhood council seeking official certification from the City shall submit an organization plan and by-laws to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment showing, at a minimum:

(2) that neighborhood council membership will be open to everyone who lives, works, owns property in the neighborhood and also to those who ~~declare a stake in the neighborhood and affirm the factual basis for it~~ are community interest stakeholders, defined as persons who affirm a substantial and ongoing participation within the neighborhood council boundaries and who may be in a community organization such as, but not limited to, educational, nonprofit, and religious.



DAVID E. RYU
COUNCILMEMBER, FOURTH DISTRICT

July 16, 2018

The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners
200 North Spring Street, Suite 2005
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Public Input for Neighborhood Council System Reforms

Dear Board of Neighborhood Commissioners:

I want to thank you for holding this meeting on improving our Neighborhood Council System. As the Chairman of the Committee on Health, Education, and Neighborhood Councils, and as a former Neighborhood Council Board Member, I know how crucial our neighborhood councils are in serving our neighborhoods, improving our City, and making sure voices are heard.

I'm also familiar with many of the challenges facing this growing system. The Neighborhood Council System was established in the 1999 City Charter as a way for residents and communities to be more directly involved in their government. Turning this ideal into a functioning reality can be difficult, but it is our mission as City officials to be responsive to our neighborhoods, and to ensure the arc of history bends toward a more democratic and empowered Los Angeles.

I believe that the most important ingredient in fostering the growth of our Neighborhood Council System is listening. That is why I asked for input on potential reforms from neighborhood council members in December, 2017, and then again asked for feedback in May on the issues raised in the motion (CF 18-0467) being considered today. We're currently in the middle of a public comment period, which I am extending by 45 days, and I look forward to reviewing all the letters and community impact statements submitted by board members and stakeholders alike.

July 16, 2018
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It is also why I am grateful to this Board for making ample time, not just today, but in multiple meetings throughout the City, to receive public input on these and other reform ideas. However, I urge this Board not to take any action on these reforms to our Neighborhood Council System until after every voice has been heard and every opportunity for public input has been spent. Likewise, I am adding an additional 45 days for feedback on these reforms for a total of 135 days in which Neighborhood Councils and the public are encouraged to offer input.

This is only the beginning of the discussion. It is my hope and my goal that every neighborhood is heard and every opportunity for public input is exhausted before any action is taken in reforming our Neighborhood Council System.

Sincerely,



David E. Ryu
Councilmember, District Four

Proposed Reforms to the Neighborhood Council System

The 12 reforms below reflect the ideas called for by various Neighborhood Councils to improve the Neighborhood Council System and make for more empowered Neighborhoods. These reforms were introduced as a motion by Councilmember Ryu on May 25, 2018, with an opportunity for Neighborhood Councils and the public to provide input. The public comment period is still ongoing. The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners is also reviewing these ideas in their public meetings.

Reform 1: Rebranding the Departments to Clear Up Confusion

This reform would change the name of Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) to Neighborhood Councils Department (NCD) and Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC) to Neighborhood Councils Commission (NCC) and remove the term 'Empower LA' from branding. Neighborhood Councils called for this because the current names and branding were confusing.

- Reform text: Recommendations and next steps for amending City Charter Article IX to change the name of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) to the Neighborhood Councils Department (NCD), the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC) to the Neighborhood Councils Commission (NCC), and phasing out the use of the term/branding 'EmpowerLA' due to the confusion reported by the public and the perception of Neighborhood Council members that DONE's role should be primarily to support Neighborhood Councils, which the name Neighborhood Councils Department would better reflect.

Reform 2: Clearing Up Confusion on 'Eligible Voter'

This reform would remove the "Community Interest Stakeholder" definition and replace the term with one that provides more clarity and uniformity for all neighborhood councils, and was called for by Neighborhood Councils because the vague definition led to confusion and contested elections.

- Reform text: Recommendations and next steps for amending the Los Angeles Administrative Code to remove the "Community Impact Stakeholder," which has caused substantial confusion and disputed elections, and recommendations and next steps for including specific additional definitions by ordinance of eligible voters and board members of Neighborhood Councils, such as student or parent/guardian of a student

Reform 3: Ensuring Neighborhood Council Board Members are Elected, not Selected

This reform would ensure Neighborhood Council Board Members are elected, not selected. The selection process of board members is used by very few Neighborhood Councils and are seen as unfair by many boards.

- Reform text: Recommendations and next steps for amending City Charter Article IX Section 901.d and 904.f to remove any reference to “selections” and clarify that neighborhood council board members will be elected. Neighborhood council “selection” processes are utilized by a limited and decreasing number of councils and are not viewed by the public as being as democratic as elections as they do not provide for a secret ballot or equitable participation.

Reform 4: Building Stronger Neighborhood Council Boards

This reform would allow the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners to provide suggestions to Neighborhood Councils on how to allocate board seats to allow for more equitable and empowered Neighborhood Councils.

- Reform text: Recommendations and next steps for creating a one-time review process, overseen by the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, to evaluate Neighborhood Council bylaws to determine if board seats are equitably allocated amongst stakeholder types and provide formal suggestions to Neighborhood Councils on ways to adjust board seats as needed to increase equity.

Reform 5: Choosing a Voting Age

This reform would establish a uniform voting age. Many neighborhood councils use different ages to establish voter eligibility, which is confusing for many voters.

- Reform text: Recommendations and next steps for adopting regulations to provide a uniform minimum voting age and board member age to allow consistent participation across the City, and what that age should be.

Reform 6: Training for Chairs and Vice Chairs of Planning Committees

This reform would require Chairs and Vice Chairs of Neighborhood Council planning and land use committees to take a planning and land use training so that they can be informed and empowered to make the best decisions for their communities.

- Reform text: Recommendations and next steps for developing and adopting a planning and land use training required for all Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Neighborhood Council planning and land use committees.

Reform 7: Allow Neighborhood Councils to Hold on to Funds

This reform would allow Neighborhood Councils to roll-over funding they had not spent into the next fiscal year, so long as it does not exceed \$10,000.

- Reform text: Recommendations and next steps on a process for Neighborhood Councils to be able to roll-over a non-cumulative maximum of \$10,000 in any given fiscal year.

Reform 8: Allow Neighborhood Councils to Accept Donations

This reform would allow Neighborhood Councils to accept monetary or in-kind donations to help them do their positive work in the community and remove the sunset clause on the ordinance that allows neighborhood councils to accept donations.

- Reform text: Recommendations and next steps for removing Section 5.485.h of Chapter 88 of Division 5 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code (Ordinance 179545; see Council File 03-1260), and recommendations for other amendments to that Chapter, in order to remove the expiration of the ability for Neighborhood Councils to accept in-kind or monetary donations.

Reform 9: Same Day Elections

This reform would put all Neighborhood Elections on the same day, to clear up confusion and to allow the City to empower citizens to vote through community outreach and advertising campaigns.

- Reform text: On the costs and other implications of holding all Neighborhood Council elections on the same day in order to provide for a uniform citywide advertising and outreach campaign.

Reform 10: Allow Neighborhood Councils to Use City Space

This reform instructs the City to assist Neighborhood Councils in accessing shared space owned by the City of Los Angeles to use for office space, meetings, community town halls and storage of neighborhood council property.

- Reform text: Develop a process, with the assistance of GSD and the City Clerk, to assist Neighborhood Councils with accessing shared space in City facilities, as envisioned in Council File 16-0298.

Reform 11: Share Best Practices with All Neighborhood Councils

This reform would allow Neighborhood Councils who are doing great work to share their best practices, and help newer Neighborhood Councils learn how to effectively serve their communities with a helpful 'how-to' guide.

- Reform text: Develop an ongoing compendium of best practices generated by Neighborhood Councils and share those on a periodic basis with all Neighborhood Councils and include 'how-to guides' for accomplishing those best practices.

Reform 12: Develop a Point of Contact between Neighborhood Councils at City Departments

This reform would create designated points of contacts for Neighborhood Councils to go to in order to access City Departments and City data to help assist them in better serving and representing their communities.

- Reform text: Develop point of contact lists for key city departments and agencies, including DCP, DOT, Public Works' Bureaus, Aging, Disability, HCID, DCA, LADWP, Port, Airport, Cannabis Regulation, Emergency Management, Animal Services, LAPD, LAFD, Recreation and Parks, Zoo, Finance, Library, Economic and Workforce Development and BIDs, with assistance from those listed departments and agencies, and share those lists with Neighborhood Councils, facilitate the training of those points of contact at those relevant departments on the most fruitful ways to assist and communicate with Neighborhood Council members, and coordinate with Neighborhood Councils to formally appoint a point of contact at each NC to communicate between each NC and the point of contact at each department, thus creating a single line of communication.

**Valley Alliance of
Neighborhood Councils**
VANC

TO: Joy Atkinson, President, Board of Neighborhood Commissioners

Commissioners: Eli Lipmen, Susan Avakian-Koroghlyan, Leonard Shaffer,

Debbie Wehbe, Maggie Darette-Quiroz, Ray Regalado

FROM: Jill Banks Barad, Founder and Chair, VANC

RE: Feedback on Proposed Neighborhood Council System Reform

CF 18-0467

DATE: July 23, 2018

On behalf of the Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils, which represents the 34 councils throughout the Valley, I am submitting our recommendations as requested by Councilmember David Ryu on his motion to consider reforms of the Neighborhood Council system.

It is apparent from our recommendations that VANC is consistent in our belief that no additional definitions by Ordinance are required. Local neighborhood councils should have the right, by Charter, to define their own stakeholders and Board members by classes. Each neighborhood council should decide for itself what is best for that community. This was the *original intent* of neighborhood councils when they were created; each one unique and reflective of its community.

What has become clear in the evolution of neighborhood councils in the last several years is the attempt at over-regulation and the enforcement of one-size-fits-all in bylaws, structure and operating policies. Our recommendations attempt to address these issues.

Jill B. Barad



Neighborhood Council System Reforms CF 18-0467

Attached are comments and recommendations from VANC concerning the Neighborhood Council System Reforms contained in Councilmember Ryu's motion (May 25, 2018), and the deliberations and responses to those recommendations from *both* the VANC Executive Committee, and from the *full* Alliance.

1. *Unanimous Support*

Excellent idea to change the names of DONE and BONC to Neighborhood Council Department (NCD) and Neighborhood Council Commission (NCC).

It's misleading to use the word "Empower" in connection with the DONE department. The LA Charter "empowers" neighborhood councils, NOT the department.

2. *Divided Opinion*

NOTE: "Community Impact Stakeholder" *Impact* is the *wrong* word, should be "Community Interest Stakeholder."

Further NOTE: "Community Interest Stakeholder" does NOT have the same meaning as "At-large". They are NOT the same thing. There needs to be a clarification of the term "At-large".

Unanimous Agreement: the definition of seats should be defined as *REFLECTIVE* of the community for that individual neighborhood council.

The Neighborhood Council System Reform motion states that this term has caused "substantial confusion and disputed elections." *The reason for this confusion is the lack of clear definition and the incorrect term being used.*

(See Addendum and further discussion on Page 4).

3. *Unanimous Against*

Do not Remove reference to "Selections"

Neighborhood Councils should have the right to conduct "elections" or "selections" that have historically worked in that community. It is irrelevant that there are a limited number of councils utilizing the selections method of voting.

When councils were formed, the idea was that they have as much latitude as possible to conduct elections/selections. Since then, DONE has forced more uniformity on the system.

4. *Unanimous Against*

BONC should not have this authority to evaluate council bylaws. The *certification* process includes the determination that Board seats *are equitably allocated* and reflective of the community.

This policy would misdirect resources, the Commission, and staff, and is not realistic to expect the neighborhood commission to review sets of bylaws for all 99 councils.

5. *Unanimous Against*

Neighborhood Councils should have the choice to provide a minimum voting age and participation, and determine what that age should be.

6. *Unanimous Support*

Planning and Land Use committee training is an excellent idea and a major step forward in educating a very important neighborhood council committee. It is further recommended that members attend VANC's Planning Forum that includes many substantive breakouts for training, and/or PlanCheck training sessions.

Furthermore, VANC representatives support requiring *all PLUM Committee members*, whether *elected* Board members or community members, to take the Ethics and Conflict of Interest training that is *required* of Board members on the PLUM committee.

7. *Unanimous Support for roll-over*

VANC is **against** a fixed amount to roll-over. Recommendation: Up to 35% of annual allocation of that fiscal year (approximately 1/3 of the budget) be rolled over.

8. Unanimous Support

Remove expiration date for councils to accept non-monetary/in-kind contributions.

Add amendment: *Include* recognized neighborhood council alliances , as provided for by Ordinance, in the ability to accept funds and establish an account . There is precedence for this with Congress of Neighborhood Councils, and the Budget Advocates.

9. Divided Support/ Not unanimous

It is NOT realistic to expect staff and available resources to conduct all 99 elections on the same day. There were many serious problems with DONE staff recruiting candidates. Furthermore, based on past experience, neighborhood councils can not depend on the City to do advertising.

We need to advertise by *regions* to recruit candidates and run elections.

VANC recommendation: to continue to publicize elections in LADWP inserts citywide.

10. Unanimous Support

Shared space agreement with the City.

11. Unanimous Support

The District needs to *publicize and encourage* Best Practices.

The VANC" Best of ..." Awards are perfect examples of extraordinary accomplishments by neighborhood councils.

12. Unanimous Support

Points of Contact

Recommendation to add Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) and to notify Councilmembers and the neighborhood councils of the intent to sell alcohol.

VANC strongly urges the City to educate department heads on the purpose and mission of neighborhood councils and to act in the capacity of governmental liaisons.

Addendum :

#2 “Community Interest Stakeholder” is a local issue, the “community interest “seat is what is best for that community. The Charter defines stakeholders as lives, works or has a substantial participation in a community organization.

Verbiage adopted by Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council (SONC), and then by BONC :

*“**Community Interest Stakeholder**” shall be any person who affirms a substantial and ongoing participation in a community organization, such as, but not limited to, educational, non-profit and/or religious organizations, within the area defined by the neighborhood council boundaries.*

*“**At-large**” is a designation for **members of a governing body** who are elected or appointed to represent the **whole membership of the body** (for example, a city, state or province, nation, club or association) rather than a subset of that membership, At-large voting is in contrast to voting by electoral districts.*

*“**At-large**”- (Legal definition) Chosen by the electorate of, or representing the residents of, an **entire political unit**, such as a state, country, or city, **as opposed to a subdivision of the unit, such as a district, or ward.***

All parties need an *agreement* of what it means, and who qualifies to run” at-large”. Can the person live “outside the boundaries of the Neighborhood Council”? Are they still a stakeholder?

The *Resident* seat lives within the boundaries, the *Business* seat works within the boundaries, and the “*Community Interest*” seat belongs to an organization within the boundaries.

DRAFT

Reform Proposed	NWSPNC Response
<p>1. Amending City Charter to change the name of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) to the Neighborhood Councils Department (NCD), the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC) to the Neighborhood Councils Commission (NCC) and phasing out the use of the term/branding "EmpowerLA".</p>	<p>Mixed responses. Some feel this is unnecessary as current names are well known now by all NCs, no need to spend money on changing the names. Others feel the changes will help identify the 2 groups as City Departments for the Neighborhood Councils.</p>
<p>2. Amending the L.A. Admin. Code to remove the "Community Interest Stakeholder" and recommendations for including specific additional definitions by ordinance of eligible voters and board members of Neighborhood Councils.</p>	<p>No Consensus - not enough information provided to provide recommendation</p>
<p>3. Amending City Charter to remove any reference to "selection" and clarify that Neighborhood Council board members will be elected.</p>	<p>Split vote 50/50 for and against. We have, historically, favored the selection process over elections. This is due to the problems we experienced when the City Clerk was responsible.</p>
<p>4. Creating a one-time review process, overseen by the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners to evaluate Neighborhood Council bylaws to determine if board seats are equitably allocated amongst stakeholder types</p>	<p>NO - NOT IN FAVOR. DONE should work with the few Neighborhood Councils that have issues; Do not want BONC to have control over bylaws of well functioning NCs</p>
<p>5. Recommendations for adopting regulations to provide a uniform minimum voting age and board member age to allow consistent participation across the City.</p>	<p>YES - IN FAVOR</p>
<p>6. Recommendation for developing and adopting a planning and land use training required for all Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Neighborhood Council planning and land use committees.</p>	<p>YES - IN FAVOR</p>
<p>7. Recommendations on a process to allow NC's to roll-over a non-cumulative maximum of \$10,000 in any given fiscal year.</p>	<p>YES - STRONGLY IN FAVOR</p>
<p>8. Recommendation removing Section 5.485.h of Chapter 88 of Division 5 of the LA Municipal Code to remove the expiration of the ability for NCs to accept in-kind or monetary donations.</p>	<p>No Consensus - not enough information provided to provide recommendation, strong concerns over administration</p>
<p>9. Report on the costs of holding all Neighborhood Council elections on the same day to provide for a uniform citywide advertising and outreach campaign.</p>	<p>YES - IN FAVOR. We are a Selection advocate NC</p>
<p>10. Develop a process, with the assistance of GSD and the City Clerk, to assist Neighborhood Councils with accessing shared space in City facilities, as envisioned in Council File 16-0298.</p>	<p>YES - IN FAVOR</p>
<p>11. Develop an ongoing compendium of best practices generated from Neighborhood Councils and share those on a periodic basis with all Neighborhood Councils and include "how-to guides" for accomplishing those best practices</p>	<p>YES - IN FAVOR</p>
<p>12. Develop point of contact lists for key city departments and agencies, including DCP, DOT, Public Works' Bureaus, Aging, Disability, HCID, DCA, LADWP, Port, Airport, Cannabis Regulation, Emergency Management, Animal Services, LAPD, LAFD, Recreation and Parks, Zoo, Finance, Library, Economic and Workforce Development and BIDS, with assistance from the departments and agencies, and share those lists with Neighborhood Councils, facilitate the training of those points of contact at those relevant departments on the most fruitful ways to assist and communicate with Neighborhood Council members, and coordinate with Neighborhood Councils to formally appoint a point of contact at each NC to communicate between each NC and the point of contact at each department, thus creating a single line of communication.</p>	<p>NO - NOT IN FAVOR. We have concerns as communication between city departments & NCs are a two way engagement. The way the item is written it appears the line of communication is one sided, giving city departments access to NC sharing information, however, the it does not appear there is a component that allows NCs to have a single point of contact when needed to communicate NC concerns. City departments should be compelled to have open two way access as needed."</p>



Wilshire Center-Koreatown Neighborhood Council



Community Impact Statement (DRAFT)

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Wilshire Center-Koreatown Neighborhood Council

Name: Matt Agnello

Phone Number: 323-863-5249

Email: magnello.wcknc@gmail.com

The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(X) Nay(X) Abstain(X) Ineligible(X) Recusal(X)

Date of Neighborhood Council Action: [date]

Type of Neighborhood Council Action: [type]

Impact Information

Date: [date]

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 18-0467

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Summary:

A summary of WCKNC responses to each of the points in the Neighborhood Council reform proposal, including a statement on the impact of removing or revising “community interest stakeholder.”

On July 24th, our Government Relations & Bylaws committee held an open discussion on David Ryu’s motion to reform neighborhood councils. We reviewed each item, held open discussions with interested stakeholders to gather their input, and presented these recommendations to our full board on [date]. The following reflects the position of the WCKNC with stakeholder input on each bulleted item, numbered from the beginning of the motion for reference.

NC Reform Recommendations

Bullet 1: Regarding changing the name and branding for BONC, DONE, and EmpowerLA...

WCKNC supports changing the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) to the Neighborhood Council Department (NCD), changing the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC) to Neighborhood Council Commission (NCC), and retiring EmpowerLA. However, we recommend “empowering neighborhoods” remain at the center of DONE’s messaging and brand, if not in its name.

Bullet 2: Regarding recommendations for removing Community Interest Stakeholder (erroneously “Community Impact stakeholder” in the motion) and replacing it with more specific definitions...

This item had the most passionate input from WCKNC stakeholders and will be addressed separately at the end of this CIS.

Bullet 3: Regarding amending the City Charter, Article IX Section 901 .d and 904.f to remove selections as a method of filling NC board seats...

WCKNC takes no position on this and requests further clarification of the impact of removing selections as a method of filling boards, particularly for dealing with resignations. For WCKNC in particular, having the board elect stakeholders to fill vacant seats has been a necessary step toward continuing to function as a board, and we feel removing this may negatively impact a board’s ability to deal with resignations. We support stakeholders electing board members in standard elections under normal circumstances.

Bullet 4: Regarding a one-time review of NC seat allocation to increase equity...

The board takes no position on this item and requests a specific definition of “equitably allocated,” since this item is centered entirely around that definition. Does this refer to ethnicity, location, live/work/play stakeholder type, income bracket, etc.? Also, how will this equitability be enforced long-term? WCKNC needs these questions answered to take an informed position on this item.

Bullet 5: Regarding a uniform minimum voting age...

WCKNC supports this item and recommends a minimum voting age of 16, as long as parent/guardian consent is provided for minors under 18. We believe involving young stakeholders in local governance early is a positive for the community, but we believe it should be done with full parental consent.

Bullet 6: Regarding requiring planning and land use training for committee leadership dealing in those areas...

WCKNC supports this item, as long as it is paid for and executed by DONE. WCKNC also requests language translation be made available for trainings upon request. WCKNC stakeholders speak many languages but still deserve to lead our community in land use issues, which requires translating the highly-technical jargon of land use policy into their native language to allow them to lead best.

Bullet 7: Regarding rolling over \$10,000 of NC funds to the next year...

WCKNC supports this item, as long as the dollar amount is changed to a percentage of the total budget—we recommend 25%, which would be a little over \$10,000 with current budget rules—which will allow this amount to scale with any future budget changes. We also recommend this number be informed by a review of NC budgets showing what each neighborhood council typically spends and has left over in a year.

Bullet 8: Regarding allowing NCs to accept in-kind donations...

WCKNC does not support this item and has serious concerns about ethical issues this would bring. We recommend a solution here be specifically targeted to avoid bringing about more opportunities for conflicts of interest.

Bullet 9: Regarding holding all NC elections on the same day...

WCKNC supports this item, as long as vote by mail and online voting are made available so stakeholders in multiple NCs can easily vote in more than one election.

Bullet 10: Regarding allowing NCs to access shared space in city facilities...

WCKNC supports this item.

Bullet 11: Regarding developing and sharing best practices between NCs...

WCKNC supports this item, as long as best practices are available online with language translation available upon request. It's important to us that these materials are accessible to all stakeholders of WCKNC, regardless of their native language.

Bullet 12: Regarding developing dedicated points of contact between NCs and city departments...

WCKNC supports this item.

On Community Interest Stakeholders and WCKNC

In our open discussion, our stakeholders wrestled a long time with this question. The people involved with Koreatown identify strongly with this neighborhood. A neighborhood like Wilshire Center-Koreatown is more than just a collection of businesses, homeowners, and renters. It is a thriving culture built from many people from all over the city who volunteer here, go to church here, invest here, or make Koreatown the center of their social lives. Removing or revising community

interest stakeholder could disenfranchise many people who consider Koreatown a core part of their identity, even if their address doesn't fall on the right side of the line.

Many of the people who don't fall on the right side of the line are still deeply invested in our community. We had over 20,000 stakeholders vote in a recent subdivision election, many of them community interest stakeholders. We are an engaged neighborhood that cares deeply about its identity and the people involved in community decisions. Many of the people who voted in the subdivision election would be disenfranchised if the term "community interest stakeholder" were removed or revised thoughtlessly. For the people who do live and work in Wilshire Center-Koreatown, these people are as much a part of the community as any other. We want their involvement in the NC's decisions.

We acknowledge that the current way the LA City Clerk interprets community interest stakeholder—the "two receipts" rule—is insufficient. However, we caution the council to be extremely careful in its revision. Simply removing the term could silence a large and important part of the Koreatown community. We encourage the council to consider a person's long history within the boundaries of a neighborhood council, who would be materially affected by the decisions affecting that neighborhood because of that ongoing involvement, in revising or replacing the term "community interest stakeholder."

Think outside the address. We want to keep Koreatown, and the community that makes it Koreatown, together.



Lilian Kim <lilian.kim@lacity.org>

Feedback on Neighborhood Council Reforms - Community Interest Stakeholder

1 message

Phyllis Ling <pling@yahoo.com>
To: Commission@empowerla.org

Mon, Aug 20, 2018 at 4:28 PM

Dear Board of Neighborhood Commissioners,

I appreciate the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners taking the time to engage in a listening tour about Neighborhood Council reforms. Although I'm a board member and Secretary of the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council, I am sharing my comments below, regarding the definition of the "community interest stakeholder," as an individual and resident stakeholder.

I urge that the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners recommends to City Council that the category of "community interest stakeholder" NOT be removed. Instead, I ask that the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners focus on reforms to the definition that have broad support. One such reform might be the elimination of the "two-receipt" rule for individuals who patronize businesses, which I believe is overly broad, and doesn't demonstrate an "ongoing and substantial participation."

On the other hand, I ask that the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners not be overly restrictive in defining participation through non-profit organizations. There are a large number individuals who may not live within NC boundaries, but who are engaged and regularly participate in non-profit organizations, whether these organizations be religious, non-religious, incorporated, or not incorporated. These non-profit organizations are an integral part of our communities, and their members should be able to fully participate as stakeholders in neighborhood councils. Non-profit organizations provide numerous benefits, especially in historically ethnic and immigrant neighborhoods, such as providing social support, advocating for civil rights, combatting discrimination, promoting historic preservation, and educating people of all ages about subjects such as healthy living, tenants' rights, and immigrants' rights. Neighborhood councils should be as accountable and responsive to members of non-profit organizations as they are to the other NC stakeholders who also aren't eligible to vote in other local, government elections (unless eligible through residency), such as business owners, employees, and property owners.

Below is an excerpt from a letter from the League of Women Voters that was sent to the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council in 2004 in response to an election challenge. This excerpt highlights some of the issues with the definition of a "non-profit" organization. (The full letter is available online at <http://hcncla.org/election/resfin04.pdf>):

"Although the term "non-profit" is often defined as a corporation form [sic] under IRS regulation 501 and other designations, and registered with the California Secretary of State, this term can include community based organizations (CBO), associations, and other organizations which are not incorporated. ... Some of these unincorporated organizations provide needed services within a community and work in collaboration with a registered non-profit which in turn serves as its fiscal agent. Government and foundation grants are often awarded to unincorporated organizations through such an approved fiscal agent."

Not all non-profit organizations are incorporated or registered for tax purposes. I've heard suggestions, from individuals and NC board members, about narrowing the definition to only non-profits that are registered as a 501(c)(3) under the Internal Revenue Code. I suggest that within the "community interest stakeholder" designation, the definition of a "non-profit organization" not be revised to be this narrow.

As for how to clarify the eligibility requirements for non-profit organizations, I don't have a good answer. But whatever BONC decides, my main suggestion would be that DONE or the City maintain a database of these eligible non-profit organizations (if it doesn't already), and that it be available on the OpenData platform, so that all stakeholders can ask questions about these organizations, get to know them, and maybe even get involved.

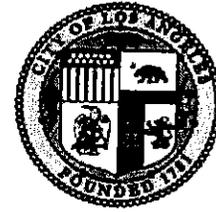
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Ling



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August 19, 2018

Re: Council Member David Ryu's Neighborhood Council System Reform Recommendations
(Council File 18-0467)

Dear Council President Herb Wesson and Council Member Paul Koretz,

The P.I.C.O. Neighborhood Council *enthusiastically* supports Council Member David Ryu's Neighborhood Council System Reform Recommendations (Council File 18-0467).

Sincerely,

Brad S. Kane
President, P.I.C.O. Neighborhood Council

- I'd like to thank the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners for the opportunity to speak.
- My name is Laura Jeon, President of the Korean American Federation of Los Angeles and elected representative of the Korean American community.
- We, the citizens of the great City of Los Angeles (and beyond), strongly oppose the City Council's recommendations for Neighborhood Council Systems Reform (Council File #18-0467, Item # 10c) to remove the "Community Interest Stakeholder" provision from the current bylaws, which allows non live/work/own stakeholders their well-deserved right to vote.
- Considering the uniqueness of each individual NC, the definition and the clarification of its community members' "stakeholder-ship" and the authority to 'Remove or Redefine' should only be enacted by the individual NC and NOT by an ordinance which is attempting to compact all current 99 NCs into one uniformed mold.
- As proven by the June 19th WCKNC Subdivision Election, the Community Interest Stakeholder provision not only allowed participation of the entire

community, but also proved that “stakeholder-ship” cannot be limited by mere boundaries of the NC map.

- Community Stakeholders (residents, employees/ employers, owners, community organizations, students, faith organization participants and consumers) of ALL diverse backgrounds have spoken! We have the ‘RIGHT’ to give our input in the decision making of our beloved town.
- We were asked to define the types and duration of contacts necessary to constitute “substantial and ongoing participation for a community interest stakeholder” [as authorized under the City’s Administrative Code Title 28, Article 2, section 22.806(b)]
- Following is proposed language-specific types of services to be included that would constitute substantial and ongoing participation for a community interest stakeholder:
 - Medical Services (MD, DDS, OD, surgeons, plastic/reconstructive surgery, medical imaging, chiropractic, podiatry, dermatology, acupuncturist, pharmacy, Eastern/Herbal)

- Legal Services (paralegal, escrow, estate, private investigator)
- Beauty Services (hair, makeup, nails, esthetician, eyebrows)
- Financial Services (CPA, banking, mortgage)
- Spas (body scrubbing, massage, sauna, crystal room, salt room, “fire” / “ice” room)
- Community Organizations (alumni, service, cultural, professional, occupational/trade)
- Faith Organizations
- Real estate (brokerage, management, leasing)
- Educational (schools, language academies, tutoring)
- Photography studios
- Medical Spas (body sculpting, fat reduction)
- Cultural Centers
- Restaurants (catering for dohls, banquet halls)
- Bars
- Markets
- Karaoke Studios (rental shops)
- Hotels
- Music Studios
- Automotive (body, mechanic, sales/brokers)
- Dance Studios
- Specific Clothing Stores (hanbok)

- Event Planning (weddings, birthdays, anniversaries)
 - Construction/Home Repair/Contractor
 - Electronic/Appliance Stores
 - Cell Phone Services (sales, repairs)
 - Elderly Care (ALF, SNF, adult daycare)
 - Counseling Services (mental, marriage, domestic violence)
 - Sporting (golf, martial arts, badminton, fencing, soccer)
 - Other Professional Services (passport, mail/shipping)
- For duration of contacts necessary to constitute “substantial and ongoing participation for a community interest stakeholder”, we propose:
 - A minimum of 1 month interval and 3 receipts per year; or
 - A letter verifying ongoing participation for all other professional services, community organizations, churches.
- Thank you.