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**BONGHWAN (BH) KIM, MPA**  
GENERAL MANAGER

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April 23, 2012

Honorable Paul Krekorian  
Chair, Budget and Finance Committee  
c/o Erika Pulst, Legislative Assistant  
Office of the City Clerk  
Room 395, City Hall  
200 North Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Krekorian,

We have received the Mayor's Proposed Fiscal Year 2012-13 Budget (Budget), which proposes the elimination of two filled Department of Neighborhood Empowerment positions: Neighborhood Empowerment Analyst (NEA) and the Senior Accountant II (SRACII). While we understand the scope of the City's financial status and the unprecedented financial challenges faced by the City, the Department has already undergone a 42.7% cut in staffing and a 50.3% decrease in funding since Fiscal Year 2010-11. The impact of losing one additional position, much less two, would be devastating to the Department and would cause service interruptions to the core function of both the Department and the Neighborhood Council (NC) Funding Program. We, therefore, request to be exempt from position eliminations.

The NEA is a position that plays a vital role in the Department as the liaison and direct link to the ninety-five NCs currently certified in the City. After the previous cuts, we only have eight NEAs to provide assistance to all the NCs, and of these eight only four are providing direct support. This NC support includes researching and answering questions through the Department's Helpline, investigating non-funding related complaints and the monitoring of NC functions and meetings to ensure that the NCs are in compliance with approved policies and procedures. In addition, the Department has focused our in person support on NCs that are struggling to maintain its operations, which requires even more staff time.

The other four NEAs are assigned to the NC Funding Program. The NEAs who support the funding program are tasked to review funding related documents, such as Demand Warrants, Neighborhood Purposes Grants and Lease Agreements, researching and answering funding related questions, investigating funding related complaints and monitoring the spending patterns of NCs to ensure compliance with policies and procedures as there is currently no electronic funding/management system.

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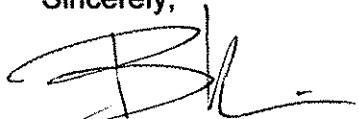
The elimination of one NEA position would be extremely detrimental to the Department and the NC system. This cut would cause delays and disruptions in the NC Funding program as NEAs are shifted to assist with struggling NCs. Further, the Department anticipates that additional NCs would be placed into exhaustive efforts, and those in exhaustive efforts would face a higher chance of possible decertification because of lack of resources to assist them. Neighborhood Council decertification and even having NCs in exhaustive efforts leaves large portions of the City disenfranchised from the NC system. These segments of the City also happen to be in areas, such as East and South Los Angeles, which are usually already disenfranchised from City government.

The SRACII position also plays a vital role for both the Department and the NC Funding Program and would have a negative impact to the day-to-day activities. The SRACII responsibilities include, but not limited to: reviewing and approving of NC Funding Program expenditures, processing of Department payments, payroll, budget assist and special projects assigned by the Department's Senior Management Analyst II (SMAII).

As the NC Funding Program continues to struggle, the loss of the SRAC II would further weaken the program. Currently, the Department is processing NC funding documents with a three week turnaround time. With the loss of the SRAC II, who also reviews and approves NC Funding program documents, the Department anticipates that the three week turnaround time would increase in excess of thirty days; processing of Department expenditures would take longer to process and possibly in excess of forty-five days; bi-weekly payroll deadlines for reviewing the Department's payroll would not be met; and, the loss of the SRACII would impact the Department's SMAII having to absorb the daily/monthly functions that are performed by the SRAC II and therefore, would cause delays in higher level priority assignments that are required from other City Departments and handled by the SMAII for the Department to complete.

In order to maintain timely support for the NCs, the Department requests that these positions not be eliminated and be reinstated back into the Department's Proposed Fiscal Year 2012-13 Budget. The Department will continue to work in a collaborative manner and, with the assistance of the Mayor's Office, City Council, and the City Administrative Officer, look for opportunities to utilize existing resources to handle the current and increasing workload. My staff and I look forward to discussing these issues in your committee and before the full City Council.

Sincerely,



BONGHWAN (BH) KIM  
General Manager