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GENERAL MANAGER

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April 21, 2014

Honorable Members of the
Budget and Finance Committee
c/o Erika Pulst, City Clerk
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Honorable Members:

The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Department) wishes to first thank Mayor Garcetti and his budget team and City Administrative Officer Miguel Santana and his budget team for working with the Department to provide funding and resource options to maintain the majority of the services to the Neighborhood Councils for FY 2014-2015.

The Department respectfully requests the Budget and Finance Committee to consider the following changes to the Department's proposed budget:

A. Planning and Policy Staffing Service Enhancement Request BM4703

Request:

1. **Position:** one (1) new regular appointment authority for a Project Coordinator to develop and execute a new peer grievance panel system.
2. **Funding:** \$20,000 to support the annual Congress of Neighborhoods and the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates.

Impact:

1. Pursuant to Council File 11-1018, City Council approved the implementation of a Neighborhood Council Regional System of Complaint/Grievance Panels, which is to take effect on July 1, 2014. The Department will be unable to implement this much needed system without additional staffing.
2. As a partner with the Neighborhoods Councils, the Department has supported the annual Congress of Neighborhoods and Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates with staffing and funding. The Department will continue to provide staffing though the event operations may be affected without adequate funding.

Potential Funding Sources:

1. Unspent Neighborhood Council funds from FY 2013-2014.
2. For the funding of the Congress of Neighborhoods and Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates, the Department set up a fund for Neighborhood Councils to support these events themselves. In FY 2013-2014, the Neighborhood Councils raised over \$60,000. If Neighborhood Councils raise sufficient funds this current fiscal year, they may not require further Department funding support next fiscal year.

B. Neighborhood Council Administrative Services Staffing Enhancement Request BM4704

Request:

1. **Position:** two (2) new regular appointment authorities for Project Assistants to maintain, develop and support effective Neighborhood Council outreach, communication strategies and elections.
2. **Funding:** \$185,000 to support the Department's ongoing and expansion of Neighborhood Council outreach and to build a digital platform for Neighborhood Council performance metrics and online voting for FY 2015-2016 Neighborhood Council elections.

Impact:

In FY 2013-2014, the Department has so far increased Neighborhood Council election turnout by 43% from the 2012 elections using strategic partnerships with Nextdoor.com and Nation Builder with funding and staffing provided through one time election funding for this division. The Department has also facilitated requested communications between the following departments and Neighborhood Councils in the past year: Mayor's Office, City Councilmembers, Controller, City Attorney, CAO, CLA, Board of Public Works, LAPD, LAFD, Street Services, Sanitation, Engineering, Recreation and Parks, LADWP, and Planning with more departments expected next fiscal year in addition to carrying on outreach assistance for those the Department is already assisting. In addition, in partnership with the Mayor's Office, the Department will also be preparing a digital foundation in FY 2014-2015 for Neighborhood Council online voting in their FY 2015-2016 elections. Lastly, this division is also responsible for the Department website/newsletter/social media, Neighborhood Council rosters, online trainings, live streaming, performance metrics tracking and all other technology/digital needs for the Neighborhood Council system.

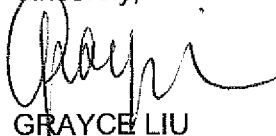
Without the requested positions and funding, this division will have only one staff and \$3,000 in funding for FY 2014-2015, and it will be impossible to maintain even the current level of services, much less develop new projects. The Department and Neighborhood Council outreach both outside the City and within will be significantly impacted for the worse, and overall, it will hinder the growth of the Neighborhood Council system and civic participation in the City.

Potential Funding Sources:

1. Unspent Neighborhood Council funds from FY 2013-2014.
2. The Department will have \$70,000-\$100,000 election funding savings from FY 2013-2014 and possible salary savings. The Department requests that all of its unspent FY 2013-2014 funds be moved to FY 2014-2015 to support this division.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (213) 978-1551.

Sincerely,



GRAYCE LIU
General Manager