

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIR, PUBLIC WORKS AND GANG REDUCTION COMMITTEE relative to helping community organizations undertake community improvement projects.

Recommendations for Council action, as initiated by Motion (Englander – Krekorian):

1. DIRECT the Department of Public Works, with the Assistance of the Information Technology Agency (ITA), to develop a proposal for improved marketing of existing city resources and services available to assist community groups wishing to perform beautification projects, including:
 - a. A new, user-friendly, robust and visually-appealing webpage.
 - b. A comprehensive list of all possible community improvement projects.
 - c. Step-by-step instructions on how to complete each community improvement project from start to finish, including the key City departments involved.
 - d. The removal of dead links to old City websites that exist on search engines.
 - e. Identifying ways to increase Search Engine Optimization with new webpage.
 - f. A method of tracking web traffic before and after launch of new webpage to help measure success of webpage and identify areas of improvement.
 - g. Identifying common roadblocks community groups encounter when seeking to undertake beautification projects and recommend potential solutions.
2. DIRECT the ITA, with the assistance of the Department of Public Works, to report relative to:
 - a. Existing department protocols for responding to 311 inquiries about community improvement projects.
 - b. The number of calls and types of requests 311 has received over the past two years.
 - c. Recommendations for tracking the types of calls received and their outcomes.

Fiscal Impact Statement: Neither the City Administrative Officer nor the Chief Legislative Analyst has completed a financial analysis of this report.

Community Impact Statement: Yes

Support: Mid-town North Hollywood Neighborhood Council
Bel Air - Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council
Venice Neighborhood Council
Northridge East Neighborhood Council

SUMMARY

On November 26, 2014, Council considered Motion (Englander – Krekorian) relative to helping community organizations undertake community improvement projects. Motion states that non-profits, homeowner associations, neighborhood councils, local schools, and other community groups undertake community improvement projects and make significant investments in their local neighborhoods. Motion movers believes that community participation in the planning and implementation of neighborhood improvement projects should be fostered and encouraged, and not hampered by City policies and processes that create inordinate burdens on such efforts. However, depending on the location, and scope of the project, the process, permit, and fee structure can vary and are sometimes inconsistent. And, depending on the complexity of the project, community beautification efforts are discouraged or hindered solely based upon the red tape that exists within the City.

Motion goes on to state that City departments should be responsive and willing to assist community groups seeking to improve their neighborhoods and City staff should serve as a meaningful resource to resolve problems and find solutions. City policy, rules, regulations, and processes should enhance and foster these community improvement activities, and not become barriers. Motion recommends that Council direct the Department of Public Works to report relative to how the City can best help community organizations seeking to undertake community improvement projects. Council referred Motion to the Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee for consideration.

At the Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee meeting held October 24, 2016, the Committee Chair discussed this matter with representatives of the 12th and 15th Council Districts. Speakers discussed the challenges community groups face when undertaking neighborhood improvement projects. Permit approvals can take up to 90 days. Information on how community groups can engage a project is difficult to find. The Council District Office representatives recommended that Council direct the Department of Public Works and ITA begin the process of streamlining the approval process for neighborhood improvement projects, update the appearance and functionality of related web-sites, and report relative to how departments respond to inquiries made by community groups. The Committee Chair recommended that Council approve their recommendations, as listed above.

Respectfully Submitted,



COUNCILMEMBER JOE BUSCAINO, CHAIR
PUBLIC WORKS AND GANG REDUCTION COMMITTEE

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
BUSCAINO:	YES
MARTINEZ:	ABSENT
PRICE:	ABSENT
O'FARRELL:	ABSENT
RYU:	ABSENT

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-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-