

Your Community Impact Statement has been successfully submitted to City Council and Committees.

If you have questions and/or concerns, please contact the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment at [NCsupport@lacity.org](mailto:NCsupport@lacity.org).

This is an automated response, please do not reply to this email.

#### Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council

Name: Kyle Ellis

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The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(11) Nay(4) Abstain(0) Ineligible(2) Recusal(0)

Date of NC Board Action: 09/04/2018

Type of NC Board Action: For if Amended

#### Impact Information

Date: 09/05/2018

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 18-0467

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Summary: Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council takes the position of 'For if Amended' pursuant to the attached letter. Please see the letter for the full report and recommendations by Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES,  
CALIFORNIA



GRANADA HILLS NORTH  
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

**Address:** 11139 Woodley Avenue  
Granada Hills, CA  
**Telephone:** (818) 923-5592  
**Website:** www.GHNNC.org

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**To:** Councilmember David Ryu  
**CC:** Los Angeles City Council  
*Sent Via Community Impact Statement*  
**From:** Board of Directors  
Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council  
**Date:** September 05, 2018  
**Regarding:** Neighborhood Council System Reform  
Council File No. 18-0467

Dear Councilmember Ryu and the Los Angeles City Council:

At Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council's September 04, 2018, General Board Meeting, the Board of Directors voted 11-4 (and 2 ineligible) in favor of adopting the recommendation and report of its *Ad Hoc* Committee regarding Councilmember Ryu's proposal for reforms to the Neighborhood Council system as described in Council File No. 18-0467.

Pursuant to this motion, Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council has drafted this letter requesting that Councilmember Ryu and the Los Angeles City Council favorably consider the attached recommendations. Accordingly, while Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council has adopted a position of supporting the motion pending amendments, the Board's position may change pending what the specific provisions of a resulting motion will ultimately be.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kyle M. Ellis  
Secretary  
Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council

Enclosure

# Neighborhood Council System Reform

Report and Recommendations by  
Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council

*September 04, 2018*  
*Council File No. 18-0467*

## Recommendations

### **(1) Name Change**

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council has no opposition to renaming the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment and the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners.

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council is in favor of phasing out the use of the “EmpowerLA” branding.

### **(2) Community Interest Stakeholder**

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council believes that the guiding principle in redefining Stakeholders should be one person, one vote.

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council recommends that NC voting should be entirely based on the residency of the voter as to Stakeholders voting for Board Members, and expresses no opinion as to requirements for participation on a Neighborhood Council Board of Directors or a Committee of a Neighborhood Council.

### **(3) Election/Selection**

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council recommends that selections are removed and that the voting system for Board Positions is more regularized.

### **(4) Review of Bylaws**

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council opposes the review of bylaws for the purposes of promoting equity as the goal of promoting equity is undefined.

### **(5) Minimum Voting & Board Member Ages**

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council recommends that neighborhood councils should be required to have a single ‘youth’ board member, who is elected solely by youth voters, and whose responsibilities as a board member are defined by each neighborhood council. The remaining board members should be elected by adult voters.

### **(6) Training Requirements**

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council recommends that training be required for Planning and Land Use Management Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs, with the possibility to obtain an exemption based on prior training, experience, or education be available.

### **(7) Roll-Over of Monies**

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council supports permitting neighborhood councils to roll-over a non-cumulative maximum of \$10,000 per fiscal year.

### **(8) Donations**

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council is in favor of allowing neighborhood councils to

accept in-kind donations upon disclosure to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment.

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council additionally supports the ability for monetary donations to be made to neighborhood councils, conditioned on any such monies (1) being unrestricted funds, (2) disclosed to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, (3) sent to the City Clerk for deposit in the recipient neighborhood council's bank account and not directly redeemable by the neighborhood council, and (4) be retained by the City Clerk without being subject to extinguishment at the end of a fiscal year.

**(9) NC Elections**

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council supports a single Citywide election day for Neighborhood Councils.

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council additionally recommends that if the definition of Stakeholder is limited to each person's residence, then the City should merge Neighborhood Council elections with regular elections, and use the County of Los Angeles to administer the elections.

**(10) NC Use of City Facilities**

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council supports allowing neighborhood councils to use City properties for offices and meeting locations.

**(11) Best Practices**

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council supports the collection and dissemination of best practices, and guides for following best practices.

**(12) Contact Lists**

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council supports the designation of contact persons for each City Department and Agency, and recommends that instead of having each neighborhood council designate a contact person for each City department or agency, the designated contact for neighborhood councils should be each neighborhood council's Executive Committee.

**(\*) Additional Recommendation**

Upon consideration that the purposes for these reforms is to empower neighborhood councils to perform their function of advising the City Council, the *ad hoc* committee further recommends that the City Council adopt a mechanism for neighborhood councils to directly propose their ideas and recommendations to the City. The *ad hoc* committee recommends the following system be adopted and administered through the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment:

- (1) DONE set up a type of 'Neighborhood Council Assembly' where, on a yearly basis, any Neighborhood Council with proposals that they want to introduce to the City submit their proposals to DONE by a pre-designated deadline.
- (2) DONE then sends the submitted proposals to all neighborhood councils for review and consideration.
- (3) After a review period of 2-3 months, DONE organizes a gathering where each neighborhood council sends a representative to discuss and vote on the proposals.
- (4) Each proposal is voted on by the representatives in turn, and those proposals that achieve a majority vote are then given a City Council file number, and the

City Council will be required to consider the proposal in the regular course of its business.

# Report

## Summary of Proposed Reforms:

### **(1) Name Change**

*(Inferred Goal: Reduce name-related confusion)*

Department of Neighborhood Empowerment to Neighborhood Councils Department.  
Board of Neighborhood Commissioners to Neighborhood Councils Commission.  
Phase out 'EmpowerLA'.

### **(2) Community Interest Stakeholder**

*(Inferred Goal: Clearly identify Stakeholders to allow for less-contested elections)*

Specific Additional Definitions for (1) eligible voters & (2) Board Members.  
Possibly include students or the parent/guardian of a student.

### **(3) Election/Selection**

*(Inferred Goal: Create a more democratic and equitable process)*

Remove the availability of 'selection' to the Board of a Neighborhood Council from City Charter Art. IX, §901(d) "assist neighborhood councils with the election or selection of their officers"; and City Charter Art. IX, §904(f) "Regulations shall not restrict the method by which the members of a neighborhood council are chosen, if the process otherwise satisfies the requirements of this Article."

### **(4) Review of Bylaws**

*(Inferred Goal: Regularize NC Bylaws based on equitable considerations)*

Establish a one-time review process overseen by BONC to determine if Board positions are equitably allocated amongst shareholder types.  
Based on the review, BONC to submit recommendations on ways to adjust Board positions to promote equity.

### **(5) Minimum Voting & Board Member Ages**

*(Inferred Goal: Establish uniform standards for voting and Board membership)*

Determine whether and what minimum age there should be for (1) voting in Neighborhood Council Elections, and (2) participation as a Board Member on a Neighborhood Council.

### **(6) Training Requirements**

*(Inferred Goal: Improve ability of NCs to address Stakeholder concerns re: developments)*

Development and adoption of minimum training standards for Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Planning and Land Use Committees.

### **(7) Roll-Over of Monies**

*(Inferred Goal: Allow NCs some additional flexibility with funds)*

Whether Neighborhood Councils should be permitted to roll-over a non-cumulative maximum of \$10,000 per fiscal year.

### **(8) Donations**

*(Inferred Goal: Allow the current process to continue without sun-setting)*

Whether Los Angeles Admin. Code Div. 5, Ch. 88, §5.485<sup>1</sup> should be amended to remove the sunset provision in subdivision (h), and continue to permit in-kind and monetary donations to Neighborhood Councils.

**(9) NC Elections**

*(Inferred Goal: Increase participation in NC elections)*

Whether the City should establish a citywide Neighborhood Council election day.

Whether the City should provide a uniform citywide advertising and outreach campaign for neighborhood Council elections.

**(10) NC Use of City Facilities**

*(Inferred Goal: Reduce the amount of money spent on rental costs)*

Pursuant to Council File No. 16-0298 allow Neighborhood Councils to use shared City facilities for meetings and activities.

**(11) Best Practices**

*(Inferred Goal: Improve the ability of NCs to competently advise the City)*

Establish a database of best practices for Neighborhood Councils.

Periodically update and share best practices with all Neighborhood Councils.

Develop ‘how-to’ guides to implement any best practices by Neighborhood Councils.

**(12) Contact Lists**

*(Inferred Goal: Create a single line of communication between City Depts. & Agencies and NCs)*

Develop a contact list for ‘key’ City Departments and Agencies.

Share any such lists with Neighborhood Councils.

Train all listed ‘contacts’ in best practices as to how to communicate with and assist Neighborhood Councils

Require that each Neighborhood Council formally appoint a point of contact to communicate with each City Department and Agency.

**NCs with CISOs:<sup>1</sup>**

Zapata-King Neighborhood Council  
Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council  
P.I.C.O. Neighborhood Council  
Greater Valley Glenn Neighborhood Council  
Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council  
Echo Park Neighborhood Council  
Historic Highland Park Neighborhood Council  
Hollywood Hills Neighborhood Council  
Atwater Village Neighborhood Council  
Bel Air-Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council  
Westside Neighborhood Council  
NoHo Neighborhood Council  
Greater Toluca Lake Neighborhood Council

Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council  
East Hollywood Neighborhood Council  
Van Nuys Neighborhood Council

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<sup>1</sup> As-of August 31, 2018.

## Summary NC Community Interest Statements:

### (1) *Name Changes*

- (a) Generally, all NCs are willing to accept the newly proposed names for DONE and BONC;
- (b) Some NC want DONE and BONC to be repurposed from their current roles to be a support agency for NCs rather than a regulatory agency in charge of NCs;
- (c) Some want “EmpowerLA” branding to remain in use;
- (d) Others want “EmpowerLA” branding to be phased out.

### (2) *Community Interest Stakeholder*

- (a) Some support the motion to definitively define Stakeholders and remove reference to Community Interest Stakeholders;
- (b) Others suggest that Community Interest Stakeholders should remain as-is and be determined on a NC bylaw basis;
- (c) Still Others suggest that ‘Community Interest Stakeholders’ be removed as a defined category, but the category of ‘Stakeholder’ be enlarged to encompass individuals who would have been Community Interest Stakeholders prior to redefinition;
- (d) Yet Others suggest that each individual can determine where they are a ‘Stakeholder’ and then may only vote in one NC election on their designation.

### (3) *Election/ Selection*

- (a) Some completely oppose the removal of the ability of NCs to use a selection process for Board Members;
- (b) Others suggest that any selection process should be available on a limited basis, based on the needs of each NC;
- (c) Still Others agree with the complete removal of any ‘selection’ process of Board Members.

### (4) *Review of Bylaws*

- (a) Some support the bylaw review as a step towards the goal of setting uniform bylaws across the City;
- (b) Others support the one time review as a means to improve equitable distribution of Board seats;
- (c) Still Others oppose bylaw review as redundant of the approval process that already exists;
- (d) Yet Others oppose bylaw review on the basis that equity and equal apportionment of seats should be assessed on a community level and not a City level;
- (e) Even Others oppose the review on the basis that their own NC’s Bylaws already provide equitable representation for their Stakeholders.

### (5) *Minimum Voting & Board Member Ages*

- (a) Some want there to be a uniform Citywide minimum voting/Board Member age of 16 years old;
- (b) Others do not advocate for a particular age, but support a uniform Citywide voting age;
- (c) Still Others do not want there to be a uniform Citywide voting age, and instead want each NC to determine the minimum age for their own NC.

### (6) *Training Requirements*

- (a) Generally, all NCs agree that some additional training for Planning and Land Use Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs is warranted;
- (b) Some want exceptions to training based on pre-existing knowledge, skills, and expertise of Chairs and Vice Chairs;
- (c) Some want additional, required training for other Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs in addition to PLUM Chairs and Vice Chairs.

### (7) *Roll-Over of Monies*

- (a) Generally, all NCs agree that allowing there to be a roll-over of funds will be beneficial;



- (b) Some request that instead of the roll-over amount being capped at \$10,000.00, the amount should be capped at a higher number, such as \$15,000.00.

(8) *Donations*

- (a) Some do not want donations in kind and monetary donations to be available to NCs in any manner whatsoever;
- (b) Others agree that in-kind and monetary donations should remain available;
- (c) Still Others consider that in-kind and monetary donations should only be available when combined with a strict oversight process.

(9) *NC Elections*

- (a) Some oppose the notion that the City should fund elections and advertising for elections;
- (b) Others oppose a single election day based on the possibility that different NC areas will have different availabilities for electioneering and voting based on work habits and cultural practices;
- (c) Still Others oppose a single election day on the basis that some Stakeholders may be Stakeholders of multiple NCs, and so would be unable to cast multiple ballots if all elections were held on the same day;
- (d) Yet Others support a single Citywide election day as a means to foster greater voter participation;
- (e) Even Others support a single Citywide election day and advertising campaign as a means to conserve NC funds for the benefit of Stakeholders.

(10) *NC Use of City Facilities*

- (a) Generally, all NCs agree that NCs should be able to use shared City facilities.

(11) *Best Practices*

- (a) Generally, all NCs agree that best practices should be gathered and shared.

(12) *Contact Lists*

- (a) Generally, all NCs agree that there should be direct points of contact with City Departments and Agencies;
- (b) Some suggest that the corresponding requirement that each NC designate a point of contact for each City Department and Agency is unduly burdensome on the NC and should not be adopted.

(\*\*) *Additional Comments by NCs*

- (a) Greater Wilshire NC suggests that: (i) DONE employees should be required to comply with the same ethics certifications as Board Members, (ii) diversity of NC Bylaws should generally be respected, and (iii) NC Alliance leaders should be required to take Ethics Training and be knowledgeable of the Brown Act;
- (b) Bel Air-Beverly Crest NC opposes any effort to define “equity” in representation of different Stakeholder groups, as they are concerned that efforts to enforce “equity” will lead to over-representation of certain groups to the disadvantage of other groups;
- (c) Westside NC and Historic Cultural NC both want: (i) removal and moratorium of NC subdivisions until after Stakeholder definitions, funding apportionment, and election issues are resolved, (ii) the creation of a new accountability review board made up of past NC Board Members to resolve any disputes with DONE, (iii) require BONC and DONE to comply with ethics certification, (iv) completely remove the availability of vote-by-mail or online voting for NC elections, and (v) abolish current model of exhaustive efforts by placing the process under the newly proposed accountability review board and completely removed from DONE.
- (d) NoHo NC wants free Metro passes for all Board Members so that they can use the Metro to attend downtown events for free.
- (e) Van Nuys NC proposes that funding and bylaw amendments be considered on a quarterly basis rather than on a yearly basis.

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<sup>i</sup> Los Angeles Admin. Code Div. 5, Ch. 88, §5.485:

(a) There is hereby created and established within the Treasury of the City of Los Angeles a special trust fund to be known as the "Neighborhood Empowerment Trust Fund", referred to in this chapter as the "Trust Fund".

(b) The purpose of the Trust Fund is to augment the established programs and activities of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Department) or to achieve or assist in achieving the purposes and goals of the Neighborhood Councils under the Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils as stated in the City Charter, the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils (Plan) and the Regulations Implementing the Plan (Regulations).

(c) All monetary gifts, contributions, or bequests accepted by the City Council, the Department, or the Neighborhood Councils for the purposes stated in Subsection (b) above, shall be placed into an appropriate account within the Trust Fund, excluding those monies accepted by the Neighborhood Councils that have been deposited into a checking account under Section 22.815 of this Code. If City Council or the Department accepts a monetary gift on behalf of a Neighborhood Council, then the General Manager of the Department or the General Manager's designee shall inform the Controller so that any accepted monetary gift is deposited into an appropriate account within the Trust Fund. Within the Trust Fund, the accounts for each of the Neighborhood Councils shall be segregated from one another; the Department's account shall be segregated from the Neighborhood Councils' accounts, and any monetary donation with a special term, restriction, or condition, shall be placed into its own account and segregated from all other accounts. If the restricted gift pertains to a specific Neighborhood Council, then the Controller may establish a sub-account for that restricted gift under the specific Neighborhood Council's account instead of a wholly separate and segregated account. All interest or earnings accruing on money in an account within the Trust Fund shall become and remain a part of that account. Money in any account of the Trust Fund shall not revert to the Reserve Fund of the City at the end of a fiscal year.

(d) The Trust Fund shall be administered by the Department. Monies from the Trust Fund may be deposited or expended by the Department. The Neighborhood Councils may also deposit or expend monies from their account within the Trust Fund by making a request of the Controller through the General Manager of the Department, or the General Manager's designee. A special account shall be established within the Trust Fund under Subsection (c), above, for purposes of depositing 10% of all unconditional monetary gifts to Neighborhood Councils into a general fund that shall be used to disburse funds into the accounts of Neighborhood Councils that are located in economically disadvantaged areas. The determination and disbursement of funds to Neighborhood Councils that are in economically disadvantaged areas shall be determined by the Department. The Department shall report to City Council within one year of the effective date of this ordinance regarding its recommendations on improving the program designed to distribute monies to Neighborhood Councils in economically disadvantaged areas.

(e) The General Manager of the Department, or the General Manager's designee, shall inform the Controller if any monetary gift contains special terms, restrictions, or conditions on its use or under which the money was accepted. No money shall be expended from an account with a special term, restriction, or condition, unless there is compliance with those special terms, restrictions, or conditions under which that money was accepted. Any request by the Department for an expenditure of any money from any account with a special term, restriction, or condition, shall be accompanied by information to the Controller that the expenditure does not breach or violate the special terms, restrictions or conditions under which that money was accepted and placed into the special account involved. The Controller or the Department may request any further information or documents regarding any deposit or expenditure.

(f) Monies may be expended from the Trust Fund to purchase equipment, services or furnishings in support of the programs and activities of the Department or the Neighborhood Councils, or in furtherance of the purposes or goals in the City Charter, Plan, or Regulations, subject to any special terms, restrictions or conditions attached to the individual gifts, contributions, or bequests to the City. In addition, monies from the Trust Fund may be used and expended on neighborhood improvement projects that have been approved under the administrative processes established by the Department.

(g) In the event that any Neighborhood Council is decertified, abandoned, or otherwise ceases to exist, any and all accounts or funds that relate to that Neighborhood Council shall be turned over or distributed to the Department, which shall have the authority to deposit and expend the funds as stated in this section.

(h) The provisions of this section shall expire, and be deemed to have been repealed, three years after its effective date, unless earlier amended and extended by the City Council by ordinance.