

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.

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

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Mid-City Neighborhood Council

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The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(8) Nay(0) Abstain(1) Ineligible(0) Recusal(0)

Date of NC Board Action: 05/09/2022

Type of NC Board Action: For if Amended

Impact Information

Date: 07/19/2022

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 22-0600

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Summary: Neighborhood councils are the boots on the ground for LA city government and are often the first place stakeholders turn when having issues. Our service to the City and our communities is on a volunteer basis, but there is a limit to how much time and labor each of us can give. When the pandemic hit and all departments were asked to cut their budgets, Neighborhood Councils took a disproportionate 24% reduction. We need our budgets restored to their original \$50,000. It is very hard to function on our current \$32,000 a year allocation and make a significant difference in our communities. If we send out a single mailer that's over 15% of our yearly budget. A financial literacy workshop would be about 20% of our budget. MINC is known for hosting a neighborhood arts and musical festival and we may not be able to do that again because it will be over 60% of our budget. If we need a storage unit that is 10% of our budget. We can't afford to rent a meeting space, we can't afford someone to do web updates for us or manage our social media. We have to decide between basic operational expenses and making a difference in our neighborhoods. Most NCs are making this up by over relying on the free labor of our board member volunteers and we are getting exhausted and worn out. This has a disproportionate effect on disadvantaged communities where board members do not have the luxury and privilege of time to dedicate hours upon hours to service of their communities. It has become clear that the City is leaning very heavily on our free labor and the situation is untenable and will drive active volunteers out of the NC system. It was especially disheartening to hear Capri Maddox exemplify this point during the Budget Hearings on May 2nd, saying that the Civil, Human Rights, and Equity Department was leveraging the free labor of Neighborhood Councils to save money in their outreach budget. If the NC system is to survive, we need our budgets reinstated to \$50,000 a year.

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Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council
Honorable Members of the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners
Honorable Members of the Board of Civil and Human Rights Commissioners
Honorable Members of the City Ethics Commission
Honorable Members of the Board of Transportation Commissioners

**RE: Los Angeles City Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023
CF 22-0600**

Neighborhood councils are the boots on the ground for LA city government and are often the first place stakeholders turn when having issues. Our service to the City and our communities is on a volunteer basis, but there is a limit to how much time and labor each of us can give. When the pandemic hit and all departments were asked to cut their budgets, Neighborhood Councils took a disproportionate 24% reduction. We need our budgets restored to their original \$50,000. It is very hard to function on our current \$32,000 a year allocation and make a significant difference in our communities.

If we provide simple snacks for a trash clean up that's 2% of our budget. We send out a single mailer that's over 15% of our yearly budget. A financial literacy workshop would be about 20% of our budget. MINC is known for hosting a neighborhood arts and musical festival and we may not be able to do that again once it feels safe to do so because it will be over 60% of our budget. If we need a single 10x10 storage unit that is 10% of our budget. We can't afford to rent a meeting space, we can't afford someone to do web updates for us or manage our social media. We have to decide between basic operational expenses and making a difference in our neighborhoods. Most NCs are making this up by over relying on the free labor of our board member volunteers and we are getting exhausted and worn out.

This has a disproportionate effect on disadvantaged communities where board members do not have the luxury and privilege of time to dedicate hours upon hours to service of their communities. It has become clear that the City is leaning very heavily on our free labor and the situation is untenable and will drive active volunteers out of the NC system. It was especially

disheartening to hear Capri Maddox exemplify this point during the Budget Hearings on May 2nd, saying that the Civil, Human Rights, and Equity Department was leveraging the free labor of Neighborhood Councils to save money in their outreach budget. If the NC system is to survive, we need our budgets reinstated to \$50,000 a year.

The Mid-City Neighborhood Council is also very concerned about the capacity of the Emergency Management Department. Los Angeles County was ranked highest in the nation for natural disasters in FEMA's 2020 Natural Risk Index and while experts on urban emergency response recommend that cities the size of Los Angeles have 100 people for emergency management, as of November 2021, the Emergency Management Department had 18 filled positions.

We ask that, in addition to proper funding and access to immediate funds in emergencies, that the Emergency Management Department develop a five-year plan to bring itself up to the basic level of being able to protect Los Angeles and that the City Council work with the Department to implement it. To save lives, we urge the creation of a revolving fund of \$10 million that can be drawn on without delays.

Furthermore, given the City's well-publicized ethics issues, the Mid-City Neighborhood Council asks that the City strengthen the Ethics Department by increasing its authority and independence. Angelenos should not settle for less. **Two of the three following recommendations should be implemented:**

- Give the Ethics Department the ability to place legislation directly on the ballot.
- Give the Ethics Department its own independent legal counsel outside of the City Attorney.
- Give the Ethics Department a steady source of funding not under City influence.

We recommend that LADOT be funded to work towards Vision Zero and Mobility 2035 goals.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best Regards,
Mid City Neighborhood Council