

## ATTACHMENTS

# NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL SUNSHINE ORDINANCE (DRAFT)

## Section 1: Purpose

The system of neighborhood councils exists to promote stakeholder involvement and participation in City governance, decision-making and problem-solving processes that affect their neighborhoods.

Because neighborhood councils serve as Charter-recognized voices for their communities, neighborhood councils must operate as openly and transparently as possible, and should maximize opportunities for stakeholder participation in their own decision-making and problem-solving processes.

However, because neighborhood councils have an advisory role and are volunteer-based, neighborhood councils should not be subject to unnecessary restrictions that hinder, rather than enhance, the ability of neighborhood councils to participate in City governance, decision-making and problem-solving processes.

This ordinance balances the public interest in openness, transparency and public participation with the equally important public interest in having neighborhood councils' that are effective voices for their community.

## Section 2: Definitions

For purposes of this ordinance:

- (a) "Neighborhood council" or "council" is defined to include a certified neighborhood council formed pursuant to Article IX of the Los Angeles City Charter, the board of directors of a certified neighborhood council, any of a neighborhood councils' standing committees which have a continuing subject matter jurisdiction, or any member of a neighborhood council's standing committees.
- (b) "Meeting" is defined as any congregation of a majority of the members of a neighborhood council board or committee at the same time and place to make a collective decision, or to adopt or take any formal position, decision or recommendation on any item within the subject

matter jurisdiction of the neighborhood council board or committee.

- (c) "Records" includes any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the neighborhood council's business prepared, owned, used, or retained by any neighborhood council, regardless of physical form or characteristics.
- (d) "Writing" means any handwriting, typewriting, printing, photographing, photocopying, transmitting by electronic mail or facsimile, and every other means of recording upon any tangible thing any form of communication or representation, including letters, words, pictures, sounds, or symbols, or combinations thereof, and any record thereby created, regardless of the manner in which the record has been stored.
- (e) "Department" means the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment.
- (f) "Board" means the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners.

## Section 3: Public Meetings

- (a) Any formal position, decision or recommendation of a neighborhood council must be made, taken or adopted at a meeting.
- (b) Members of neighborhood councils may exchange information, ideas and positions with each other on matters within the subject matter jurisdiction of the neighborhood council. However, such exchanges shall not be used to develop a collective concurrence on any such matter other than at a meeting. To the greatest extent feasible, members of neighborhood councils should exchange information using methods, such as Internet message boards or blogs, that make such exchanges available to the public. The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners shall promulgate regulations to give effect to this subsection.
- (c) Any meeting of a neighborhood council shall be subject to the following requirements:
  - (1) The meeting shall be open to the public;
  - (2) The meeting shall be held within the

boundaries of the neighborhood council, except that:

- (a) a neighborhood council may meet in any facility owned or operated by the City of Los Angeles that is within three (3) miles of the neighborhood council boundaries;
  - (b) if a neighborhood council does not have access to a meeting facility within its boundaries, it may meet in a meeting facility within three (3) miles of the neighborhood council's boundaries;
  - (c) a neighborhood council may meet in office space it maintains that is within 3 miles of its boundaries; and
  - (d) in the case of a joint meeting of more than one neighborhood council, the meeting shall be held at a location where it would be permissible for one of the participating neighborhood councils to hold a meeting.
- (3) At least 72 hours before the time set for the meeting:
- (a) Notice of the meeting shall be posted at a regular, fixed location, appropriate and accessible to the public within the boundaries of the neighborhood council;
  - (b) Notice of the meeting shall be made available on the neighborhood council's Internet site, if any; and
  - (c) Notice of the meeting shall be distributed electronically by means of the Early Notification System to persons who have requested notification.
- (4) The notice shall:
- (a) specify the date, time, and location of the meeting;
  - (b) include the name, address, and telephone number of any person who can provide further information prior to the meeting;
  - (c) include the address of the Internet site where notices and other information

required by this section are available;

- (d) include an agenda containing a brief description of the items of business to be discussed or acted upon. A brief general description of an item generally need not exceed 20 words.
  - (e) be made available in appropriate alternative formats, as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12132), and the federal rules and regulations adopted in implementation thereof, upon request by any person with a disability. The notice shall include information regarding how, to whom, and by when a request for any disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services may be made by a person with a disability who requires these aids or services in order to participate in the public meeting.
- (5) Neighborhood councils should maximize opportunities for stakeholder participation in meetings. At a minimum:
- (a) During the meeting, members of the public shall be given an opportunity to directly address the neighborhood council on any agenda or non-agenda item within the subject matter jurisdiction of the council.
  - (b) On agenda items, members of the public shall be given an opportunity to directly address the neighborhood council before or during the council's consideration of each agenda item.
  - (c) Neighborhood councils may adopt reasonable policies to ensure that the intent of subdivisions (a) and (b) are carried out, including policies limiting the total amount of time allocated to public testimony on particular issues and for each individual speaker.
  - (d) No person shall be required, as a condition to attendance at, participation

- in, or speaking at a meeting of a neighborhood council, to register his or her name, to provide other information, to complete a questionnaire, or otherwise to fulfill any condition precedent to his or her attendance.
- (e) If an attendance list, register, questionnaire, or other similar document is posted at or near the entrance to the room where the meeting is to be held, or is circulated to persons present during the meeting, it shall state clearly that the signing, registering, or completion of the document is voluntary, and that all persons may attend the meeting regardless of whether a person signs, registers, or completes the document.
- (6) The council may not take any action on any item of business unless that item appeared on the posted agenda or unless the council members present, by two-thirds vote, make specific findings stating why there is a need to take immediate action and that the need for action came to the attention of the council subsequent to the posting of the agenda.
- (7) Questions or brief statements made at a meeting by members of the council or public that can be resolved solely by the provision of information need not be described on an agenda as items of business, and may be addressed by the neighborhood council at that meeting.
- (d) All meetings of a neighborhood council that are open and public shall meet the protections and prohibitions contained in Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12132), and the federal rules and regulations adopted in implementation thereof.
- (e) Records of Meetings:
- (1) Agendas of public meetings and other writings, when distributed to all, or a majority of all, of the members of a neighborhood council by any person in connection with a matter subject to discussion or consideration at a public meeting of the body shall be made available without undue delay to any member of the public who requests the materials.
- (2) Writings that must be made available to the public under subdivision (1) and that are distributed to all, or a majority of all, of the members of a neighborhood council prior to or during a meeting, pertaining to any agenda item, shall be made available for public inspection at the meeting if prepared by the neighborhood council, or after the meeting if prepared by some other person.
- (3) At or within a reasonable time after a meeting, the neighborhood council shall prepare minutes that clearly indicate what action was taken with respect to each agenda item.
- (f) Any person attending an open and public meeting of the neighborhood council shall have the right to record the proceedings with an audio or video tape recorder or a still or motion picture camera in the absence of a reasonable finding by the neighborhood council that the recording cannot continue without noise, illumination, or obstruction of view that constitutes, or would constitute, a persistent disruption of the proceedings.
- (g) No neighborhood council shall prohibit or otherwise restrict the broadcast of its open and public meetings in the absence of a reasonable finding that the broadcast cannot be accomplished without noise, illumination, or obstruction of view that would constitute a persistent disruption of the proceedings.
- (h) Neighborhood councils may impose requirements on themselves which allow greater access to their meetings than prescribed by the minimal standards set forth in this section.
- (i) Enforcement of Requirements:
- (1) If a council violates the procedural meeting requirements of this ordinance, and upon demand of any person, the council shall reconsider the item at its next meeting, after allowing for public input on the item.
- (2) If a neighborhood council does not comply with a demand made pursuant to

paragraph (1), within 30 days following the failure to comply, any person may file a written complaint with the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, stating forth the facts supporting the complaint.

- (3) The Department shall have 30 days to investigate the complaint and, if it is determined that the complaint is valid, to direct the neighborhood council to reconsider the item at its next meeting, after allowing for public input on the item. The Department shall promptly notify the complainant, in writing, of its decision regarding the complaint.
- (4) Any person or council who disagrees with the result of the Department's investigation shall have 30 days from the date of the Department's decision to file a written appeal to the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, on a form to be provided by the Board.
- (5) The Board shall have 60 days to investigate and make a decision regarding the appeal.
- (6) Decisions of the Board shall be final, except as provided under Charter section 245.

## **Section 4: Neighborhood Council Records**

- (a) Each neighborhood council shall maintain records in compliance with a records retention schedule adopted by the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners.
- (b) Every person has a right to inspect or obtain copies of records maintained by a neighborhood council. However, there is no right to inspect or obtain copies of records that would be exempt from release under the Public Records Act, California Government Code sections 6250 *et seq.*
- (c) Any reasonably segregable portion of a record shall be available for inspection by any person requesting the record after deletion of the portions that are exempted by law.

- (d) When a person makes a written request to inspect a record or to obtain a copy of a record to a neighborhood council that reasonably describes an identifiable record or records, the neighborhood council shall make the records available to that person within 30 days of the request, except with respect to records exempt from disclosure by express provisions of law, upon payment of fees covering direct costs of duplication. Upon request, an exact copy shall be provided unless impracticable to do so.
- (e) When a member of the public makes a written request to inspect a record or obtain a copy of a record, the neighborhood council shall assist the requester in making a focused and effective request that reasonably describes an identifiable record or records, by doing the following, to the extent reasonable under the circumstances:
  - (1) Assisting the member of the public to identify records and information that are responsive to the request or to the purpose of the request, if stated.
  - (2) Describing the information technology and physical location in which the records exist.
  - (3) Providing suggestions for overcoming any practical basis for denying access to the records or information sought.
- (f) When a person makes a written request to inspect a record or obtain a copy of a record, the neighborhood council shall, within 21 calendar days from receipt of the request, determine whether the request, in whole or in part, seeks copies of disclosable records in the possession of the neighborhood council, and shall promptly notify the person making the request of the determination and the reasons therefor.
- (g) Upon a determination of good cause, the General Manager of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment may extend the time periods set forth in subsections (d) and (f). The neighborhood council shall give written notice to the requester setting forth the reasons for the extension and the date on which a determination is expected to be dispatched.

- (h) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to permit an agency to delay or obstruct the inspection or copying of public records.
- (i) Any inspection of an audio or video recording shall be provided without charge on an audio or video player made available by the neighborhood council.
- (j) Unless otherwise prohibited by law, any agency that has information that constitutes an identifiable record, that is subject to disclosure pursuant to this ordinance, which is in an electronic format shall make that information available in an electronic format when requested by any person.
  - (1) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a neighborhood council to reconstruct a record in an electronic format if the council no longer has the record available in an electronic format.
  - (2) If the request is for information in other than electronic format, and the information also is in electronic format, the agency may inform the requester that the information is available in electronic format
- (k) The General Manager of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment may authorize a neighborhood council to withhold a record if he or she finds that, on the facts of the particular case, the public interest served by not disclosing the record clearly outweighs the public interest served by disclosure of the record. Among the factors the Department may consider are:
  - (1) whether the nature or scope of a request for documents makes compliance unduly burdensome for the neighborhood council.
  - (2) whether the request is duplicative or harassing; and
  - (3) whether the request invades legitimate privacy interests of a person participating in a neighborhood councils with respect to materials in that person's personal possession, including material stored on a personal computer or a personal e-mail account.
- (l) If a neighborhood council withholds any record or portion thereof requested by any person, or determines that it does not possess any of the requested documents, the neighborhood council shall notify the requester in writing, setting forth the reasons for not producing the document for inspection or copying.
- (m) Except as provided in section (k), this ordinance does not allow limitations on access to a record based upon the purpose for which the record is being requested, if the record is otherwise subject to disclosure.
- (n) Enforcement of Requirements:
  - (1) If a neighborhood council fails to comply with the time periods set forth in this section, the person who requested that record may submit a written complaint to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, on forms to be provided by the Department, within 30 calendar days after the time period has elapsed.
  - (2) Enforcement of violations of this act should be consistent with the grievance procedure established by the NCRC.
- (o) Some neighborhood council board members might represent, be an officer of, or belong to other organizations, including but not limited to homeowners or residents associations; public or private schools; chambers of commerce; or religious, cultural or social institutions. Nothing in this ordinance gives any person any right of access to records of any organization other than the neighborhood council itself.

*At a minimum, a new Sunshine Law in regard to neighborhood councils should not prevent neighborhood councils from lobbying a majority of members of the city council on an issue of concern to the neighborhood council.*

FRANK T. MARTINEZ  
CITY CLERK

KAREN E. KALFAYAN  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

# CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA  
MAYOR

OFFICE OF THE  
CITY CLERK

ROOM 360 CITY HALL  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012  
(213) 978-1020  
FAX (213) 978-1027

April 26, 2007

Neighborhood Council Review Commission  
C/o Patrice Lattimore, Legislative Assistant  
Room 395, City Hall  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

## CITY CLERK CONDUCT OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL ELECTIONS

On April 17, 2007, the Neighborhood Council Review Commission (NCRC) voted to recommend that the Los Angeles City Clerk assume responsibility for the conduct of Neighborhood Council (NC) board member elections. As part of that action, the NCRC requested that the City Clerk submit a report describing how the City Clerk's office would approach the administration of NC board member elections including the issue of standardizing certain aspects of the NC board member elections process. This report represents a preliminary analysis of the approach the City Clerk's office would take in administering NC board member elections. We would anticipate that the actual implementation would require additional fine-tuning of various aspects of the program.

As stated by the City Clerk during the April 17, 2007 NCRC meeting, the City Clerk has not sought out this assignment nor does the City Clerk recommend that the assignment of responsibility for NC board member elections be given to the City Clerk. Rather, the City Clerk is willing to take on this responsibility if, and only if, certain pre-conditions are met as follows:

- The NC board member elections are conducted every other year (in the off year from the City of Los Angeles municipal elections).
- The City Clerk is provided staff resources to perform the function.

If these pre-conditions are met, we believe that a "win-win" situation can be created whereby: 1) the NC board member elections are provided with a full range of professional election administration services utilizing the support of the City Clerk's entire Election Division; and 2) the City Clerk gains additional, and sorely needed, resources for the conduct of the City's regular municipal elections. To ensure that these pre-conditions are met (if the NCRC ultimately includes the assignment of responsibility for NC board member elections to the City Clerk in its final recommendations to the City



Council) we strongly urge the NCRC to include in the actual “recommendation language” these specific pre-conditions and a statement that without the approval of the pre-conditions the NCRC withdraws the recommendation.

As discussed in the April 17, 2007 NCRC meeting, the administration of NC board member elections will reflect other decisions made in regards to the overall System of Neighborhood Councils (e.g. definition of stakeholder, the amount of standardization that can be imposed under Charter Section 904(f), etc.). Accordingly, the following information represents our preliminary recommendations on the administration of NC board member elections with the understanding that these recommendations do not include an exhaustive list and they will have to be adjusted based on the final NCRC recommendations and issues that arise during the implementation/transition phase.

### **Customization Versus Standardization of NC Board Member Elections**

In general, the City Clerk will seek to standardize as many aspects of the NC board member elections as possible while still respecting the basic autonomy of the Neighborhood Councils and their inherent right to structure their Board to best meet the needs of the particular Neighborhood Council. Standardization has several inherent advantages in terms of cost efficiency, facilitating the administration of the elections, and transparency of the overall election process.

#### **A. Customization**

We would recommend that, at a minimum, the following aspects of the NC board member elections remain customized based on the needs and decisions of each Neighborhood Council.

- The number and type of seats/offices on the Board.
- Whether the officers of the Board are elected directly or by the entire Board once the members are seated after the election.
- Whether elections are held at large, by district or by stakeholder category or some combination of these methods.
- What stakeholder verification method should be utilized for the election (although the City Clerk strongly recommends self-affirmation as the preferred method).
- Voter outreach will have to be customized to meet the unique demographics of each Neighborhood Council but we believe we can take advantage of regional elections and the City’s overall public relations and outreach capability (see below).
- The City Clerk election administrators would offer the full range of voting options for all NC board member elections including at polls, vote by mail, or town hall

format. The City Clerk election administrators should remain open to innovative election processes (e.g. on-line voting) that could be implemented on a pilot project basis.

## **B. Standardization**

We would recommend that the following aspects of the NC board member elections be standardized or reviewed for possible standardization.

- All NC board member elections should be held during an even numbered year opposite from the City's regular municipal elections. The City Clerk recommends conducting the elections for all the Neighborhood Councils in one planning region on the same day(s) and that the elections for the seven regions be spread out over a two to three month period in the spring of the even numbered years.
- Candidate filing times and processes, including candidates' stakeholder verification and write-in candidate procedures, should be standardized.
- Voter registration forms/processes should be reviewed for possible standardization.
- The vote by mail process should be standardized and handled directly by the City Clerk's election administrators.
- Every opportunity to standardize the various administrative forms and signs that support the election operation should be analyzed and implemented where possible (e.g. ballots, voter sign in rosters, polling place signage, vote counting forms, vote by mail packages, election challenge forms, etc.). This will reduce costs in terms of production and translation and will allow for re-use in subsequent elections.
- Provisional Voting process should be standardized.
- The time frame and process for certifying each election should be standardized.
- The election challenge process should be standardized (perhaps by incorporating it into the overall grievance process). The City Clerk election administrators would act as a resource to the election challenge process by making available all relevant information and documents and providing testimony as necessary to the election challenge review bodies.

## **Resource Requirements**

The City Clerk recommends that a budget for NC board member elections be established within the City Clerk's office so that the entire election expense can be handled by the City as opposed to the individual Neighborhood Councils (some of whom have differing

needs in the areas of translation and outreach that impact costs). Such a NC board member elections budget, at a minimum, should include:

- A NC board member elections unit in the City Clerk's Election Division consisting of **1 Senior Project Coordinator and 4 Project Coordinators**.
- Materials, supplies and contractual services funds to cover forms, signage, translation, etc. to support the basic election processes (amount to be determined).
- Contractual services funds to obtain consulting services from the current experienced Independent Election Administrator(s) to assist the City Clerk in designing and implementing the standardized regional NC board member elections system (amount to be determined).
- Dedicated budget for voter outreach that should be housed within the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) consistent with DONE's focus, as recommended by the NCRC, on outreach (amount to be determined).

### **Coordination with DONE and the Neighborhood Councils**

If the responsibility for conducting NC board member elections is assigned to the City Clerk, then the City Clerk will be ultimately accountable for the administration of these elections. However, the City Clerk would still need to closely coordinate our work with both DONE and the Neighborhood Councils as follows:

- It is our understanding that the NCRC is considering recommending that DONE have the primary responsibility for outreach to help expand overall participation in the Neighborhood Council movement. Consistent with that focus, we would expect to work closely with DONE in the time period leading up to the regional elections to take advantage of DONE's ongoing outreach efforts to focus our election announcements, confirm voter mailing lists, and to undertake other election outreach strategies targeted to the needs of specific Neighborhood Councils. Regional elections could also facilitate leveraging the public relations and outreach capability of City offices to increase election awareness (e.g. Mayor's Office, Council Offices, City departments). The exact demarcation line between DONE's ongoing outreach efforts and the election specific announcements/notifications would be worked out with DONE and the City Clerk election administrators.
- We would expect the DONE field staff (Project Coordinators) to be available to assist the City Clerk election administrators (under the direction of those administrators), if necessary, on the regional election days.
- In line with the existing Neighborhood Council Election Procedures, the City Clerk still believes that Neighborhood Councils can be empowered by participating in the conduct of their NC board member elections. The City Clerk

anticipates drawing volunteers from the greater Neighborhood Council community, providing training to those volunteers and then fully integrating the volunteers into the administration of the NC board member elections. The regional election structure should facilitate this participation, since the Neighborhood Council volunteers could help administer the elections for regions outside of where their own Neighborhood Council is located.

- The ultimate design of the election challenge process will, if it is incorporated into the overall grievance process, necessarily involve the participation of the Neighborhood Councils, BONC and the greater Neighborhood Council community. The City Clerk election administrators will be available to provide training on election challenge review techniques and methodologies and will act as a resource for specific election challenges by making available all relevant information and documents and providing testimony as necessary to the election challenge review bodies.

### **Transition Time Frame and Implementation Issues**

Beyond the pre-conditions set forth in the beginning of this report, there are several factors that could complicate or delay the transition of responsibility to the City Clerk for conducting NC board member elections. The first available window to implement the standardized regional NC board member elections as envisioned in this report is the spring of 2008. After that period, the next available window will be the spring of 2010 (from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 the City Clerk will be engaged in conducting the City's municipal elections). It is likely that the final NCRC report on the System of Neighborhood Councils will not be submitted to the City Council until late September or early October 2007. Allowing for City Council consideration, it is likely that the City Council will not take final action on the NCRC recommendations until late 2007.

Accordingly, if we are trying to implement this program in the spring of 2008, the NCRC should take the following issues into account as it continues its review of this matter:

- What steps can be taken by DONE and the Neighborhood Councils now, with the assistance of the City Clerk, to set the stage for moving to a system of standardized regional NC board member elections.
- The issue of whether Charter Section 904(f) will have to be amended to allow for the more standardized election administration envisioned in this report, and the timing of such a Charter amendment election if one is required, could impact the implementation time frame. The NCRC should consider requesting the City Attorney to review this issue now to see if the program can be implemented without a Charter amendment.
- A more standardized election administration process will conflict with existing bylaws of the Neighborhood Councils. The process of amending these bylaws on an individual basis would be very time consuming and cumbersome and could

delay implementation of the standardized regional NC board member elections. The NCRC should consider asking the City Attorney for advice on a method to make a "macro" change to the NC board member election process that could be implemented without first amending the individual Neighborhood Council bylaws. It should also be noted that once the standardized regional NC board member elections are implemented, the Neighborhood Councils might have to address other bylaw amendments beyond just the conduct of the elections (e.g. terms of office, staggered terms, etc.).

### **Conclusion**

Having the City Clerk conduct the NC board member elections has the potential for creating a win-win situation whereby the Neighborhood Councils are provided with professional full range election services; the City Clerk gains additional resources for the conduct of municipal elections; and DONE is able to focus on its outreach efforts to improve overall participation in the Neighborhood Council program. As a side benefit, closer interaction between the City Clerk and the Neighborhood Councils could facilitate the recruitment of poll workers and polling places for the municipal elections. However, to obtain these benefits the Neighborhood Councils will have to accept some level of standardization in their elections.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact me directly at (213) 978-1020.

Sincerely,



Frank T. Martinez  
City Clerk

That the City Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:

1. Authorize resolution authority for the period July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008, and eight months funding, and election expenses for one (1) Senior Project Coordinator (Code 1538) and four (4) Project Coordinators (Code 1537) for the Office of the City Clerk to conduct Neighborhood Council elections.
2. Authorize the transfer of \$1,174,946 from the Reserve Fund to the Unappropriated Balance and appropriate therefrom to Fund 100, City Clerk Department 14 to the following accounts:

<u>Account</u>	<u>Account Title</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1010	Salaries General	\$343,727
1090	Salaries Overtime	\$198,254
1070	Salaries, As-Needed	\$287,462
4170	Election Expense	\$345,503

3. Authorize the City Clerk or designee(s) to prepare Controller instructions and any necessary technical adjustments or clarifications that are consistent with the Mayor and City Council actions on this matter.

## Further Reading: Neighborhood Democracy

Berry, Jeffrey M., with Kent E. Portney and Ken Thomson. The Rebirth of Urban Democracy. Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1993.

*This book is the "bible" of neighborhood council studies. It examines cities that have created systems of neighborhood government and incorporated citizens in public policymaking. Through careful research and analysis, the authors find that neighborhood based participation is the key to revitalizing American democracy.*

Bickhart, Jim. "Taking It to the Streets: The Debate over Neighborhood Governance in Los Angeles." Center for Government and Public Policy Analysis, Occasional Paper no. 002, August.

*An account by a knowledgeable City Hall insider of how the two charter reform commissions considered proposals for neighborhood councils, and the politics that were involved.*

City of Los Angeles. City Charter, 1999.

*Article IX contains provisions regarding the neighborhood council system. Further elements of the system are detailed in the Administrative Code.*

City of Los Angeles Elected and Appointed Charter Reform Commissions. Files and records maintained in the City Records Management Division.

*The files of the two Commissions indicate considerable debate and negotiation over the nature of the proposed neighborhood council system.*

Cooper, Terry L., with Thomas A. Bryer and Jack W. Meek. "Citizen-Centered Collaborative Public Management," Public Administration Review, Vol. 66, Special Issue on Collaborative Public Management, pp. 76-88; 2006

*The authors adopt definitions of civic engagement and collaborative public management that are centered on the citizen and the potential for active citizenship.*

Cooper, Terry L., with Pradeep Chandra Kathi. "Neighborhood Councils and City Agencies: A Model of Collaborative Coproduction," National Civic Review, Vol. 94, No. 1, pp. 43-53, 2005.

*Examines the Collaborative Learning Project that was undertaken by USC to create joint working groups and MOUs with City agencies and neighborhood councils in Los Angeles.*

Freyss, Siegrun Fox. "Learning Political Engagement from the Experts: Advocacy Groups, Neighborhood Councils and Constituency Service," PS: Political Science and Politics, Vol. 39, No. 1, pp. 137-145, 2006.

*Outlines an approach to service learning where students are placed with experts of the political advocacy process rather than with charitable institutions.*

Fulton, William and Paul Shigley. "Putting Los Angeles Together." Governing Magazine (June 2000).

*The authors explore how Los Angeles charter reform and its provisions for neighborhood councils helped keep the city together during the debates over secession.*

Fung, Archon. Empowered Participation: Reinventing Urban Democracy. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

*Utilizing six Chicago neighborhood case studies, the book is a comprehensive, empirical analysis examining the ways in which participatory democracy can be used to effect social change. Professor Fung uses the phrase "accountable autonomy" to describe the role of neighborhood councils.*

Fung, Archon and Erik Olin Wright (eds.). Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance. New York: Verso, 2003.

*This volume explores four contemporary empirical cases in which the principles of participatory democracy have been at least partially instituted: the participatory budget in Porto Alegre, Brazil; the school decentralization and community policing councils in Chicago; stakeholder councils in environmental protection and habitat management in the USA; and new decentralized governance structures in Kerala, India.*

Halle, David (ed.). New York and Los Angeles: Politics, Society and Culture: A Comparative View. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

*This edited volume is a comparative study of New York and Los Angeles and includes chapters on the school systems,*

*Los Angeles charter reform (by Raphael Sonenshein), and immigration.*

Jun, Kyu-Nahm. "Event History Analysis of the Formation of Los Angeles Neighborhood Councils," Urban Affairs Review, Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 107-122, 2007.

*This article investigates the impacts of community contexts such as divergence with the city, differences within the community, and community capacity on the successful formation of Neighborhood Councils in the City of Los Angeles.*

Kathi, Pradeep Chandra, with Terry L. Cooper. "Democratizing the Administrative State: Connecting Neighborhood Councils and City Agencies," Public Administration Review, Vol. 65, No. 5, pp. 559-567, 2005.

*Drawing on the literary tradition of public engagement and learning, this article models a developmental strategy of participation that offers one avenue for achieving meaningful partnerships between city agencies and neighborhood councils in a metropolitan environment.*

Kotler, Milton. Neighborhood Government: The Local Foundations of Political Life. With, "Critical Introduction," by Terry Cooper for the re-issued edition, 2005. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books.

*Originally published in 1969, this reissued volume is a classic of neighborhood democracy. Writing from the standpoint of the swirl of events in the 1960s, Kotler portrays neighborhood democracy as an answer to the gap between the city government and the people. Terry Cooper's introduction brings the Kotler thesis up to date with an analysis of the Los Angeles neighborhood councils.*

Levine, Peter. The New Progressive Era: Toward a Fair and Deliberative Democracy. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers. 2000.

*The author draws on recent developments in democratic theory to expand notions of citizenship and participation in today's politics.*

Musso, Juliet, Christopher Weare, Nail Oztas and William E. Loges. "Neighborhood Governance Reform and Networks of Community Power in Los Angeles," American Review of Public Administration, Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 79-97, 2006.

*This article applies network theory to consider the effects of neighborhood council reform on city governance in Los*

*Angeles. The authors argue that neighborhood councils have the potential to change elite-dominated governance through several network effects: development of bridging social capital – network relationships that cross-cut traditional community cleavages, broadening of horizontal networks that improve information required for collective action, and creation of new ties that elevate previously peripheral groups in the system of political communication.*

Musso, Juliet, and Christopher Weare. "Implementing Electronic Notification in Los Angeles: Citizen Participation Politics by Other Means," International Journal of Public Administration, Vol. 28, Issues 7-8, pp. 599-620, 2005.

*This article considers whether new information and communication technologies have significant effects on citizen participation by evaluating the development of a major innovation in electronic governance. The authors analyze the creation of an electronic system in Los Angeles to provide stakeholders a warning of upcoming political decisions and an opportunity to furnish feedback.*

Musso, Juliet, and Richard C. Box. "Experiments with Local Federalism: Secession and the Neighborhood Council Movement in Los Angeles," American Review of Public Administration, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 259-276, 2004.

*The article uses the case study of Los Angeles Neighborhood Councils to suggest that formation of intrajurisdictional units may operate as an alternative form of local federalism.*

Musso, Juliet, and Alicia Kitsuse and Terry L. Cooper. "Faith Organizations and Neighborhood Councils in Los Angeles," Public Administration and Development, Vol. 22, pp. 83-94, 2002.

*This article discusses the potential value of faith organizations' involvement in neighborhood councils, as well as the likely obstacles to their participation, and reports preliminary findings from ongoing field research on neighborhood council formation in Los Angeles.*

Musso, Juliet, Christopher Weare, Mark Elliot, Alicia Kitsuse, and Ellen Shiau. "Toward Community Engagement in City Governance: Evaluating Neighborhood Council Reform in Los Angeles." Urban Policy Brief, Civic Engagement Initiative, University of Southern California. 2007.

*Summarizes the research on Los Angeles neighborhood councils by the USC Civic Engagement Initiative, and offers recommendations for reform of the system.*

Oztas, Nail. "Neighborhood Network Structure of Social Capital: A Multilevel Analysis of the Los Angeles Experiment," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Southern California. Dissertation Abstracts International, The Humanities and Social Sciences, Vol. 65, No. 9, 2005.

*The study empirically investigates the explanatory power of different network theories of social capital in an exploratory study of neighborhood councils in Los Angeles.*

Pecorella, Robert F. "Community Governance: A Decade of Experience." In Frank J. Mauro and Gerald Benjamin, eds, Restructuring the New York City Government: The Reemergence of Municipal Reform. New York: The Academy of Political Science, 1989, pp 97-109.

*This chapter tells the story of the creation of New York City's appointed community boards, which were developed by a state charter reform process. Indicates that a high percentage of the boards' land use recommendations are adopted by the city council.*

Pitt, Leonard. "Neighborhoods: The Search for Community Empowerment in Los Angeles." In The Development of Los Angeles Government: An Institutional History, 1850-2000. Los Angeles City Historical Society, 2007: pp. 699-727.

*Pitt's historical chapter traces the movement for neighborhood empowerment from the early days of Los Angeles through the debates over charter reform and the formation of the neighborhood council system.*

Pritchett, Wendell. "Race and Community in Postwar Brooklyn: The Brownsville Neighborhood Council and the Politics of Urban Renewal," Journal of Urban History, Vol. 27, No. 4, pp. 445-470, 2001.

*The author explores the impact of societal trends on the New York City neighborhood of Brownsville on Brooklyn's Lower East Side. Attention is also given to racial issues such as changes in the racial makeup of the neighborhood, racial youth gangs, and the change of the neighborhood population from 90% White in 1940 to 90% Black & Puerto Rican in the late 1960s.*

Sandefur, Timothy. "A Gleeeful Obituary for Poletown Neighborhood Council v. Detroit," Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy, Vol. 28, No. 2, pp. 651-678, 2005.

*Discusses the scope of the eminent domain power which enables the government to seize land for the benefit of private corporations instead of for public use in the case Poletown Neighborhood Council v. Detroit.*

Schmid, Hillel, with Hatem Salam. "Citizens Perceptions of the Neighborhood Council: The Case of Arab Neighborhoods in East Jerusalem," Journal of Community Practice, Vol. 13, No. 2, pp. 61-75, 2005.

*The paper presents the findings of a study that explored an attempt to establish neighborhood councils in the Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem.*

Sonenshein, Raphael J. The City at Stake: Secession, Reform and the Battle for Los Angeles. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

*This book tells the story of how the nation's second-largest city completed a major reform of its government in the face of a movement for secession by the San Fernando Valley and details how Los Angeles, a diverse city with an image of unstructured politics and fragmented government, found a way to unify itself around a controversial set of reforms. Has a chapter on the creation of the neighborhood council system.*

Sonenshein, Raphael J. "History of Neighborhood Councils in Los Angeles." Transcribed presentation to the NCRC, November 2, 2006.

Sonenshein, Raphael J. "Representative and Participatory Democracies: Can They Talk to Each Other?" Transcribed presentation to the NCRC, December 7, 2006.

All NCRC documents, including transcripts of Commission meetings and reports of NCRC surveys, can be found at [www.ncrcla.org](http://www.ncrcla.org).

Corrected: September 27, 2007