

TO: Neighborhood Council Board Members

FROM: BongHwan (BH) Kim, Interim General Manager, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE)

RE: Neighborhood Council Elections to be Administered by City Clerk Beginning in April, 2008

December 21, 2007

Dear Neighborhood Council Board Members,

On December 18, 2007, the Los Angeles City Council approved a package of recommendations from the Neighborhood Council Review Commission (NCRC). Perhaps most significant among those adopted recommendations, with possible immediate impact on your Neighborhood Council, is the recommendation that the City Clerk of Los Angeles assume responsibility for conducting Neighborhood Council elections beginning in 2008.

The adoption of this recommendation is a groundbreaking change to the Neighborhood Council system and will usher in an era of new partnerships with City Departments, an expansion of resources available to Neighborhood Councils, and a re-orientation of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment towards assisting Neighborhood Councils with the community engagement mission for which they were created.

This adopted reform will also mean a time of transition for Neighborhood Councils and the Department. In the coming weeks, our Department, in conjunction with the Offices of the City Clerk and the City Attorney, will share with you all relevant information as it becomes available. *In the meantime, your board should immediately consider the following information:*

- 1) **Summary of the transitional phases** adopted by the City Council, and how they will affect Neighborhood Council election schedules.
- 2) **Summary of the immediate actions your board may wish to take in the first month of 2008.**
- 3) **List of additional resources** you may refer to for more comprehensive information on the election transition program.

Above all, we look forward to partnering with you as we move into the next phase of neighborhood empowerment. Please do not hesitate to contact your Neighborhood Council Advocate for assistance or for further information regarding any aspect of the election transition.

PHASES OF ELECTION TRANSITION

The NCRC election recommendation approved by City Council, when adopted by ordinance, will result in the City Clerk conducting Neighborhood Council elections during the 2nd quarter of 2008 and in every even-numbered year thereafter for all Neighborhood Councils.

During the transitional year, 2008, the City Clerk's office will begin to assume the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment's administrative election duties. In 2008, the City Clerk's office will be responsible for conducting some NC elections and the Department will have the responsibility for approving and assisting others according to

the transitional phases below:

- **Elections in January-March, 2008:** Neighborhood Councils scheduled to elect board members during the first quarter of 2008 will hold elections under the current process outlined in the Citywide Election Procedures, conducted by an Independent Election Administrator with administrative approval and assistance from DONE.
- **Elections in April-June, 2008:** The City Clerk will conduct elections scheduled during the second quarter of the year, under procedures recommended by the City Clerk
- **Elections in July- December 31, 2008:** Neighborhood Councils whose elections are scheduled for these months may select one of the three (3) options listed below. **Neighborhood Councils must notify the City Clerk of their election option NO LATER THAN February 1, 2008:**
 - (i) **Move election forward to 2nd quarter of 2008 to be conducted by the City Clerk.** To do this, your board must make, **DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY, 2008**, the necessary bylaw amendments to adopt the new election schedule.
 - (ii) **Extend the terms of current board members to 2010, so that the City Clerk conducts your election in 2010.** To do this, your board must amend its bylaws to adopt the schedule change.
 - (iii) **Proceed with elections as currently scheduled under the current process in the Citywide Election Procedures.** Your Independent Election Administrator will conduct these elections with administrative approval and assistance from DONE.

ACTION STEPS YOUR BOARD MAY WISH TO TAKE IMMEDIATELY

1. **Ensure that any election-related bylaw amendments that your board may wish or need to adopt are *placed on your January, 2008 meeting agenda.***
2. If your regular meeting schedule does not allow for sufficient time to consider possible amendments, your board may choose to ***schedule a special meeting*** at a later date in the month of January. ***Be sure to review your own bylaws to note whether your Neighborhood Council may adopt bylaw amendments at a special meeting, or whether your board MUST adopt bylaw amendments at a regular meeting of the board.***
3. Review attached information for a more comprehensive background on the election transition.
4. Consult with your Neighborhood Council Advocate for additional assistance and/or information. In particular, your Neighborhood Council Advocate can help with any bylaw amendments your board may need to make quickly in order to modify your current election schedule and/or provisions.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES FOR YOUR BOARD

Please find the below-listed documents on our Department's website. Our website address is: www.lacityneighborhoods.com

You may also request that the Department forward the following documents to your electronic mail address.

- 1) **Addendum re: Election Transition for Neighborhood Councils**—This correspondence outlines more comprehensive election-related bylaw adjustments your board should consider immediately and in the longer term.
- 2) **Report from the City Clerk**—This report outlines the City Clerk's vision of how his office will conduct Neighborhood Council elections during and after the transitional phases.
- 3) **Department of Neighborhood Empowerment Report to City Council Re: NCRC Recommendations**—This report summarizes the Department's anticipated reforms and activities as related to NCRC recommendations.
- 4) **Report from the Chief Legislative Analyst**—This report analyzes the procedural and legislative aspects of City Council's adoption of the NCRC recommendations.

For more information, please contact your DONE Neighborhood Council Advocate. Our main phone line is: 213-485-1360. You may also reach us via the toll-free City of Los Angeles access line: 3-1-1.

CC: Frank Martinez, City Clerk
Gwen Poindexter, Office of the City Attorney
Peter King, Office of the City Attorney
Darren Martinez, Office of the City Attorney
Linda Lucks, President, Board of Neighborhood Commissioners