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Los Angeles

Neighborhood council opinions will weigh more

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The Los Angeles City Council approved a plan Wednesday giving prominence to statements made by the new neighborhood councils by allowing them to appear directly on agendas of city committees, commissions and the City Council.

The "community impact statements" will represent the official view of neighborhood councils on particular items that come before city panels. An excerpt will appear on the agendas distributed before a meeting, while the full statement will be made part of the official record and given the same prominence given to reports from city departments.

But at least one City Council member was concerned the measure would overemphasize neighborhood councils to the point that views of residents who are not neighborhood council members would be ignored.

"I want to make sure the City Council doesn't devolve into thinking the only ones they need to pay attention to are the ones in the neighborhood council," said Councilwoman Ruth Galanter, who represents the East San Fernando Valley.

But other council members said the city has chosen to create neighborhood councils in the new charter and should recognize their importance, although they will not ignore individuals.

"I hope more people get involved with the process of neighborhood councils, but I'm certainly going to respect the one individual who

may have a thought or the one block group that may be different,"
said Councilman Tom LaBonge.