

Sharing power

THE manipulation of the Valley Glen Community Council illustrates how Los Angeles city officials don't really want the neighborhood councils to have an independent voice.

To keep the group in line, the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment has tied the council members in knots with a bunch of confusing rules as it seeks to hold elections. Other neighborhood councils have complained that department officials have thrown up roadblocks when they felt the councils weren't following the city's script closely enough.

When Los Angeles voters adopted charter reform in 1999, they endorsed the idea of the

neighborhood councils as a way to give power back to the people. But City Hall doesn't like to relinquish power if it can help it. And the actions of DONE, a city department overseen by the mayor's office, show that the neighborhood councils' path toward independence is riddled with pitfalls.

FOR THE RECORD

An editorial Thursday incorrectly stated that only 2,000 of the 12,000 projects planned under Los Angeles Unified School District's Proposition BB bond issue have been completed. Rather, 2,000 projects remain incomplete.