

Sound advice

Tip for mayor: Budget more money for neighborhood councils

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Editorial

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Over the weekend, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa asked the city's neighborhood councils to help his office put together next year's budget.

Former Mayor James Hahn did the same thing the year before. Whether the various suggestions actually informed the final budget outlook is unclear, but surely it didn't hurt.

But Villaraigosa could do substantially more toward making Los Angeles a better place by giving neighborhoods councils more than just some advisory power over the budget. Give them their own budgets to spend - more than the paltry \$50,000 they get now.

That would put a spark under the city's smoldering grass-roots democracy and assure residents that at least some of the city's \$6 billion goes to their neighborhoods.

If Los Angeles is going to move ahead, it will be because neighborhoods become communities of empowerment with an increasing power to govern themselves.