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Pat Healy
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(file transmitted)

May 7, 1998

Ad Hoc Committee on the City Budget
Council Member Alatorre, Chair
Room 504, City Hall

BUDGET CONSIDERATION OF FUNDS FOR A DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS

At its May 6, 1998 meeting, the Governmental Efficiency Committee discussed budgetary needs related to ongoing efforts to create and implement a system of neighborhood councils.

The Committee (Wachs, Ridley-Thomas voting "yes"; Chick voting "no") recommends the allocation of \$1.8 million in the first year (FY 98-99), which represents a prorata amount of a \$3 million annualized budget. This amount would allow for the staffing of a Department of Neighborhoods which would be responsible for the organization and implementation of a system of Citywide neighborhood councils by the end of the fiscal year. The Department of Neighborhoods would proceed with its task under parameters still to be determined by City Council.

Inasmuch as the Motion (Ridley-Thomas - Wachs) initiating this Council File was dually referred to the Governmental Efficiency and Budget & Finance Committees, this item is now being transmitted to the Ad Hoc Committee on the City Budget for deliberation during the budget process.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Rhoda Lukjaniec

Rhoda Lukjaniec
Legislative Assistant
Governmental Efficiency Committee

cc: Council Member Joel Wachs
Attn: Greg Nelson



Budget for Department of Neighborhoods

	First Year	Full Funding
Salaries		
General	615,146	1,331,400
Total	615,146	1,331,400
Expense Items		
Printing & Binding	150,000	150,000
Travel	20,000	25,000
Contractual Services	30,000	35,000
Transportation	5,000	10,000
Office & Administration	10,000	10,000
Operating Supplies	10,000	10,000
Total	225,000	240,000
Furniture, Office Technical Equipment		
Furniture	50,000	75,000
Equipment	120,000	194,000
Total	170,000	269,000
Interdepartmental Chargebacks		
Interdepartmental Charges*	600,000	900,000
Total	600,000	900,000
Total Office of Neighborhoods	1,610,146	2,740,400
Related Costs	188,522	259,575
Total	1,798,668	2,999,975

*Postage costs estimated at \$260,000 & handling at \$17,000

Councilmember Laura Chick's Proposal for Community Councils and Neighborhood Councils

	"Community Councils"	"Neighborhood Councils" ***
Number	45 – 3 per City Council district. Two or three geographically contiguous "neighborhoods" would be combined into each community council.	No set number, but potentially 100 or more, one for each "neighborhood" as self-defined.
Purpose/ Structure	To provide an organized, regular forum for community involvement and addressing City issues of concern to local neighborhoods. In order to assure adequate staffing and to minimize fragmentation and confusion, the community councils, rather than the neighborhood councils, would address planning and land use issues, resource allocation and neighborhood infrastructure decisions, and citywide policies through the "early warning" system. All meetings would be open and include time for public comment and discussion.	To serve as a more self-sustaining, informal, truly grass-roots organization encompassing all neighborhood stakeholder groups – homeowners, tenants, business owners, non-profits, schools. Neighborhood councils would meet regularly to work on common problems, exchange neighborhood information, become a lobbying force, and feed into the community council system.
Selection	12 to 15 members on each council chosen for two- and three-year terms through a combination of self-selection and appointment. A majority (roughly eight members) to be self-selected by neighborhood councils within the community council area. Remaining four to seven seats appointed by Councilmember to assure that the appointments fill "holes" in stakeholder representation after self-selection process is completed.	Completely self-selected based on City criteria to assure that all community stakeholder groups are represented on the council.
Bound-aries	In order to minimize border disputes and facilitate good coordination with Council offices, would remain within single Council districts. In CD 3, for example, the community councils could be: 1) Woodland Hills-West Hills; 2) Canoga Park-Winnetka; 3) Reseda-Encino-Tarzana-West Van Nuys.	Would respect accepted neighborhood boundaries. Neighborhood councils could cross over Council district lines (Woodland Hills neighborhood council, for example, would send representatives to CD 3 and CD 11 community councils).
Staffing	15 staff members (one per Council district), with three clerical/support staff, to help organize the community councils, arrange issues to be discussed, staff meetings, and provide follow-up. While some central administration work from City Hall may be necessary, most staff time would be spent in the community, perhaps based from buildings housing Council members' offices.	No city staff would attend meetings, in part because staffing over 100 meetings monthly would prove difficult and expensive, and also because the neighborhood councils should function as true grass-roots organizations.
Funding	The \$2.3 million proposed price tag for the community/neighborhood council function of the Office of Neighborhoods is too high. Limiting the staff to 15 will reduce the total cost at about \$1 million. In addition, to make the proposal revenue neutral, Council offices could turn over the equivalent of one staff person to this effort, as the Community Councils' work should free up some functions currently performed by Council staff.	Same as for Community Councils

*** The Neighborhood Council level may be considered optional if this structure of Community Councils is created. Under such an alternative option, existing community organizations may continue to define themselves, partner and flourish without City involvement, feeding into the Community Council structure directly.

Rec'd in Committee
11/10/02