

April 8, 1998

TO: Members of the Governmental Efficiency Committee

FROM: Ronald F. Deaton *RFD*
Chief Legislative Analyst

RE: Neighborhood Councils

In response to comments from the Committee at previous meetings, our office has drafted the attached charts listing some of the general issues which are inherent in the design of any neighborhood council system for the City of Los Angeles. For each issue we have noted questions which will have to be addressed in any neighborhoods system and in some instances have listed alternative approaches in those areas.

For drafting purposes, it is assumed, although certainly not required, that it would be a two-tiered system. That is, the City would initially be divided into relatively large areas which for purposes of this discussion we have called "Community Districts." Within each of these areas, neighborhoods would be free to organize in smaller units which we are calling "Neighborhood Associations" and select their local officers or "Neighborhood Councils." A "Community Board" would be selected for each Community District with responsibilities related to coordination and communication among and between neighborhoods, and generally assisting neighborhoods in establishing themselves.

It should be emphasized that the attached is by no means inclusive of all the issues involved in neighborhood councils nor do we claim that all the possible alternatives for each area are listed. This list only covers some of the basic facets of a system and is offered as a way to assist the Committee in framing its discussion of this issue. It is hoped that, if the Committee makes at least tentative choices in these areas, staff will be able to focus on those options which the Committee wishes to explore further and will be able to develop similar listings for the more detailed design features which incorporate those choices. We feel that these preliminary decisions will guide staff as it begins to develop the specifics of a neighborhood Council proposal which reflects the views of the Committee members.

RD:mab

cc. CAO
City Clerk

*Submitted in Committee
4/8/98*

1 - Role/Responsibilities

ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS		
<u>Actual power</u>	<u>Advisory only</u>	<u>Advisory w/o “Early Warning”</u>
<p><i>Approval/concurrence required for:</i> Land use decisions Liquor license issuance Infrastructure changes, e.g. libraries, recreation & parks facilities Expenditure of funds within neighborhood area ...</p>	<p><i>Non-binding recommendation sought in areas such as:</i> Land use decisions Liquor license issuance Infrastructure changes, e.g. libraries, recreation & parks facilities Expenditure of funds within neighborhood area ...</p>	<p><i>Council can advocate actions/positions on matters impacting neighborhood. In addition to the example cited under the other two options, Council’s could:</i> Lobby on City policies of concern to the neighborhood Comment on budget priorities Raise issues of local concern Bring neighborhood problems to City’s attention</p>
<p><i>Advance notification pending actions (“early warning ”):</i> City processes would be revised to add a step requiring neighborhood review and approval/disapproval.</p>	<p><i>Advance notification of pending actions (“early warning ”):</i> City processes would have to be revised to include referral to the involved neighborhood(s) of pending matters. Could either: Require that the City not act until recommendation is received, OR Allow neighborhood(s) a specified period of time during which they can submit input. (No obligation to consider any neighborhood input received after the deadline.)</p>	<p><i>No early warning</i></p>

2 - Organization/Initiation

ORGANIZATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS		
<u>Strict Rules Specified by City</u>	<u>Each Neighborhood Sets its Own</u>	<u>City adopts General Guidelines/Requirements</u>
<i>City specifies:</i> Language of by-laws Member requirements Method of selecting Offices Frequency of meetings	<i>Each Neighborhood specifies its own:</i> Language of by-laws Member requirements Method of selecting Offices Frequency of meetings	<i>City sets basics such as:</i> Open meetings Non-discrimination <i>Each Neighborhood adopts detailed rules and procedures in their by laws</i>

INITIATION OF A NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION		
<u>City Must Recognize</u>	<u>Community Board Recognizes</u>	<u>Open to Any Existing Bona Fide Neighborhood Group</u>
<i>Group petitions City for recognition</i>	<i>Group petitions Board for recognition</i>	<i>Homeowners groups</i> <i>Merchants associations</i> <i>Apartment owners associations</i>

3A - Boundaries (Communities)

BOUNDARIES --- “COMMUNITIES” (First tier)		
<u>Utilize existing boundaries</u>	<u>Draw New Boundaries</u>	<u>Adjustments</u>
<i>Council District Lines</i> <i>Planning Areas</i> <i>Library Districts</i>	<i>How many?</i> <i>Maximum/minimum size</i>	<i>Allowed?</i> <i>Who determines?</i> <i>What triggers?</i> <i>Frequency?</i>
	<i>Who determines?</i> City Residents City & residents jointly	
	<i>Basis for lines:</i> Population Geography # residences	

BOUNDARIES --- “NEIGHBORHOODS” (Second tier)		
<u>Create Boundaries</u>	<u>Adjustments</u>	<u>Additional Restrictions:</u>
<p><i>How many?</i> <i>Maximum/minium size?</i> <i>Basis for lines:</i> Population Geography # residences Location of businesses</p>	<p><i>Allowed?</i> <i>What triggers?</i> <i>Frequency?</i></p>	<p><i>Respect CD lines?</i> <i>May not overlap?</i></p>
<p><i>Who determines:</i> City Residents City & residents jointly Businesses</p>	<p><i>Who determines?</i></p>	

4A - Board Member Selection (Communities)

SELECTION OF COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBERS/OFFICERS		
<u>Each Neighborhood Assn. Elects a Representative on the Community Board</u>	<u>Each Neighborhood Assn. Appoints a Representative on the Community Board</u>	<u>Each Council decides method of selection</u>
<p><i>Requirements for holding office:</i> Active members of neighborhood assoc. Live in neighborhood area Work in the neighborhood area Own a business in the neighborhood area Minimum age Registered voter</p>	<p><i>Requirements for holding office:</i> Active members of neighborhood assoc.</p>	<p><i>Could be appointed, elected, or a combination.</i></p> <p>Specifics would be established in the by-laws and operating rules adopted by the neighborhood associations within each Community Board area</p>
<p><i>Who gets to vote:</i> Active members of neighborhood assoc. Live in neighborhood area Work in the neighborhood area Own a business in the neighborhood area Minimum age Registered Voter</p>	<p><i>How selected?</i> Chair of neighborhood council is <i>ex officio</i> member of Community Board. Members of each neighborhood council chose one of their own to serve on the Community Board.</p>	
<p><i>How to become a Candidate</i> Simple application Nominated by petition Nominated at meeting</p>		
<p><i>Election process:</i> Town hall By mail Precinct conducted</p>		

4B - Council Member Selection (Neighborhood Associations)

SELECTION OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MEMBERS/OFFICERS		
<u>Elected</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Each Council decides</u>
<p><i>Requirements for holding office:</i> Live in neighborhood area Work in the neighborhood area Own a business in the neighborhood area Minimum age Registered voter</p>	<p><i>Requirements for holding office:</i> Live in neighborhood area Work in the neighborhood area Own a business in the neighborhood area Minimum age Registered voter</p>	<p><i>Could be appointed, elected, or a combination.</i></p>
<p><i>Who gets to vote:</i> Live in neighborhood area Work in the neighborhood area Own a business in the neighborhood area Minimum age Registered voter</p>	<p><i>Who appoints?</i></p>	<p><i>Specifics would be established in the by-laws and operating rules adopted by each neighborhood association.</i></p>
<p><i>How to become a Candidate:</i> Simply apply Nominated by petition Nominated at meeting</p>		
<p><i>Election process:</i> Town hall By mail Precinct conducted</p>		