

Date: February 10, 2006

To: Neighborhood Council Leaders

From: Greg Nelson, General Manager

Subject: INNOVATION GROUP VOLUNTEERS WANTED. OFFICE DEPOT DISCOUNT PROGRAM.

INNOVATION GROUP VOLUNTEERS STILL WANTED

The response to previous requests to find people, whether or not they are stakeholders or board members, to serve on one or more "innovation groups" that we are forming, is not going well. It appears that we will be able to form one or two of the groups.

The list of the groups and the invitation to participate can be found on our home page, or by clicking [here](#).

There are reasons why it is important that good people volunteer for this effort. There are some at City Hall, in pretty high-ranking positions, who believe that Neighborhood Council leaders are not able to assume the responsibility for finishing the building of this system, improving the parts that have been built, and sharing best practices with each other. To the extent that they truly believe this, they will likely feel that they, the folks at City Hall, have no choice but to return to the old "from the top down" system of governance.

Our Neighborhood Council system was purposely designed to begin without all of the details in place. To have worked out the details before launching the system would have meant that we'd still be working on the design, and we'd be doing our thinking without any real-life experience. Also, the system envisioned that the Neighborhood Councils, their leaders, and their stakeholders should at least be partners in the further design of the system. And that doesn't mean holding a meeting in the middle of a workday at City Hall to receive input from people in three minute increments.

It is my guess that when the neighborhood council review commission (aka: 912 commission) begins its work in July, that they will be looking at the subject matter that the innovation groups are being invited to work on. It would be great for the Neighborhood Council leaders if they could tell the commissioners what they have done as Neighborhood Councils, and what they have done as individuals to address some of the critical issues of the day through the innovation groups and other means.

Some of you wrote back and said that you would be happy to volunteer, but you didn't indicate which group(s) you'd be interested in. We will be contacting each one you next week to remind you.

Remember that participating in a group doesn't mean that you have to attend all or any meetings. You may have something valuable to contribute through e-mail or with other

written documents. It will be important the each person with something of value to offer being given an easy way to do it.

REMINDER: OFFICE DEPOT DISCOUNTS

We would like to remind you of one of the great benefits of Neighborhood Councils being part of the city family. Because of the city's contract with Office Depot, a Neighborhood Council can take advantage of the same discount pricing by using its commercial prepaid card for store purchases. When your card is used as a credit card, the Office Depot discount will apply. To take advantage of this benefit, your treasurer should contact Ken Meyer, Account Manager, to make sure your commercial prepaid card is registered with Office Depot. You can contact Ken at KMeyer@OfficeDepot.com or by calling him at (818) 557-1724.

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