



**Doug Fitzsimmons**  
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**Kevin Gres**  
Vice-President

**Terrence Gomes**  
Treasurer

**Beth Hirsch**  
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# Motion to improve safety on SORO streets

**Agenda Item:** GB041615-2

**Date:** April 16, 2015

**Proposed By:** Jon Liberman

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## Full Proposal

The Transportation Committee at the March 26, 2015 meeting considered several ways to improve safety on the streets within our boundaries. We have located four (4) specific items that we feel would improve safety. They are:

1. Request the Department of Transportation (DOT) to install “Continental Style” cross walks with solar powered electric stop signs at these two locations:
  - (a) Robertson Blvd and Gibson Street
  - (b) Bagley & Harlow.
2. Request the Council Office (Koretz) to schedule the periodic clean up and pruning of excess growth of plants/trees by the California Conservation Corp on the west side of Robertson Blvd going two blocks north and two blocks south of the intersection Robertson Blvd and Hillsboro. The plants/trees need to be topped so that drivers can see traffic and parking signage. They also need to be thinned where the plants impede pedestrians from walking on the sidewalks.
3. The area around Hamilton High School on Robertson is extremely dark at night. Hamilton High should be asked if the Ficus trees facing Robertson Blvd can be trimmed and have the foliage thinned so that the existing lighting would be better utilized. The City Department of Street Lighting should also be requested to see if more efficient lighting could be installed at the school.

On a separate note, the same Ficus trees have created unsafe sidewalks for pedestrians. The City should be requested to categorize this location as a priority for fixing under the City’s sidewalk repair program.

4. The High School should be asked to consider the possibility of creating a common bus pick up area covering all bus lines.

## Proposed Motion

The Board having considered the proposal outlined above requests the President issue the following letters:

- I. A letter to DOT to implement the creation of the two cross walks located at
  - (a) Robertson Blvd and Gibson Street
  - (b) Bagley & Harlow
- II. A letter to CD 10 to ask that CCC be requested to clean up the West Side of the intersection of Robertson & Hillsboro going two blocks North and two blocks South of the intersection.
- III. A letter to Hamilton High School Administrators requesting that:
  - (a) the Ficus trees on Robertson be topped and thinned so that lighting at night could be improved.



(b) the school consider the possibility of working with the various bus lines (Metro/SM/Culver City/LAUSD owned or contracted) to establish a common pick up area.

- IV. A letter to the City requesting that the sidewalk on Robertson Blvd on the West Side of the street directly in front of Hamilton High School be designated as a serious problem for pedestrians and requesting preferential treatment under the City's Sidewalk Repair program.

## Considerations

**Committee review:**  
*(highly recommended)*

Votes For: 5

Against:-0-

**Amount previously allocated in Committee's working budget:** \$ -0-  
*(applies to funding motions only)*

### Arguments for:

1. Improves safety of drivers and pedestrians.

2. This is a good example where we can positively impact the community by calling attention to a problem that has been overlooked for years.

### Arguments against:

We are asking others to devote their resources to solving our problems. This may be a solution that is hard to sell.



# Motion to approve the Land Use Committee's online form for project developers

**Agenda Item:** GB041615-3

**Date:** 16 April 2015

**Proposed By:** Land Use

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## Background

The Land Use Committee will present their proposed online information and form for project developers.

## Proposed Motion

- I. To approve the online information and form for project developers created by the Land Use Committee.

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## Considerations

**Committee review:**  
*(highly recommended)*

Votes For: 0

Against:

**Amount previously allocated in Committee's working budget:** \$  
*(applies to funding motions only)*

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### Arguments for:

Makes our Land Use process easier, faster and more predictable for developers.

### Arguments against:

Should have been included in the motion packet.

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# Motion to support Council File 14-0366-S2: No business Tax Registration Certificates for non-compliant marijuana dispensaries

**Agenda Item:** GB041615-4  
**Date:** 16 April 2015  
**Proposed By:** Doug Fitzsimmons

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## Background

In 2013, City voters passed Proposition D, which effectively limits the number of medical marijuana dispensaries citywide to 135. Nevertheless, hundreds of non-compliant dispensaries continue to operate.

Business Tax Registration Certificates (BTRCs) are issued by the City's Office of Finance to LA businesses as a way of tracking the collection of business taxes. They are not business licenses.

Since the Office of Finance does not check to see if a business is authorized to operate, they regularly issue BTRCs to these illegal dispensaries. Indeed, many dispensaries display their BTRCs prominently, giving the appearance that they are sanctioned to operate.

The motion supports City Council File 14-0366-S2, which would allow BTRCs to be issued only to the 135 legal dispensaries. The full motion is attached.

## Proposed Motion

- I. The South Robertson Neighborhoods Council supports LA City Council File 14-0366-S2, and authorizes communication to that effect.

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## Considerations

**Committee review:**  
*(highly recommended)*

Votes For: 0

Against:

**Amount previously allocated in Committee's working budget:** \$  
*(applies to funding motions only)*

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### Arguments for:

Reduces confusion about which dispensaries are legal in the City.

### Arguments against:

Could reduce the City's ability to collect taxes from these illegal businesses.

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14-0366-52

MOTION

BUDGET & FINANCE

On May 21, 2013, the voters of Los Angeles overwhelmingly passed Proposition D, a comprehensive measure to manage medical marijuana dispensaries in the City. This measure was drafted in a manner intended to balance the needs of patients while protecting neighborhoods and communities by limiting dispensaries' proximity to sensitive locations such as parks, schools and churches. Under this measure, a limited number of dispensaries who have been registered with the City since 2007, and met specific requirements and operational standards would be allowed to continue to operate. All other medical marijuana dispensaries would be banned and remain outlawed in the City of Los Angeles. Following the enactment of Proposition D, the City Council and the Mayor adopted Ordinance No. 182580 in June of 2013 detailing the requirements of Proposition D.

Unfortunately, despite the City's concerted efforts through Proposition D and contrary to the demands of voters, scores of illegal medical marijuana dispensaries continue to operate throughout Los Angeles. Through consistent enforcement by the City Attorney and the Los Angeles Police Department many non-compliant dispensaries have been closed down in accordance to the regulations set forth by Proposition D. However, certain actions and practices by other City agencies have undermined enforcement efforts. Hundreds of dispensaries have been able to obtain Business Tax Registration Certificates (BTRC) from the Office of Finance, a number far beyond the approximately 135 maximum number of medical marijuana businesses indicated in Proposition D.

The Office of Finance has attempted to clarify that a BTRC is only a mechanism for their collection of business taxes and is not a license to operate. Still, to the general public, an official City of Los Angeles BTRC displayed in a local business gives the appearance that the location is operating legitimately. Immediate clarification of the law is needed to discontinue the practice of issuing BTRCs to these illegal operations, and limit the number of certificates issued to 135, the number of businesses that voters understood would be the maximum limit when they approved Proposition D.

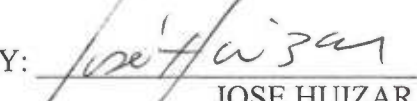
I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the Office of Finance to immediately cease the issuance of any new Business Tax Registration Certificates to any medical marijuana dispensary not compliant with Proposition D.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Attorney be requested to prepare and amend the ordinance as needed to immediately cease the issuance of new Business Tax Registration Certificates to non-Proposition D dispensaries.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Attorney, develop a verification process to be used by the City for determining potentially eligible dispensary operators.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Office of Finance and the City Attorney revise the language or appearance of the BTRC in order to prevent the perception and misrepresentation of the certificate's intent and that it is not a license to operate.

PRESENTED BY:   
NURY MARTINEZ  
Councilmember, 6<sup>th</sup> District

PRESENTED BY:   
JOSE HUIZAR  
Councilmember, 14<sup>th</sup> District

SECONDED BY: 

DEC 09 2014

ORIGINAL



# Motion to advocate for a searchable online database of BTRCs for City businesses

**Agenda Item:** GB041615-5  
**Date:** 16 April 2015  
**Proposed By:** Doug Fitzsimmons

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## Background

Business Tax Registration Certificates (BTRCs) are issued by the City to LA businesses as a way of tracking the collection of business taxes. They are required of all businesses.

It is in the public interest for citizens to be able to find out which businesses have a BTRC and therefore pay taxes to the City. Further, making the current status of a business's BTRC public would help coordinate enforcement efforts between the Office of Finance and other City departments. This has been an issue recently with illegal medical marijuana dispensaries.

As a side note, such a database could also be used by City departments (including the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment and individual Neighborhood Councils) in vetting possible vendors.

## Proposed Motion

- I. In an effort to promote public transparency and facilitate cooperation between City departments, the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council calls upon the Office of Finance and the City Controller to expeditiously create a searchable and public online database of Business Tax Registration Certificates, including each business's current compliance status.

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## Considerations

**Committee review:**  
*(highly recommended)*

Votes For: 0

Against:

**Amount previously allocated in Committee's working budget:** \$  
*(applies to funding motions only)*

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### Arguments for:

Reduces confusion about which businesses are legal in the City.

### Arguments against:

Putting the records online could be expensive.

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# Motion to support Council File 14-1624: City aid for community improvement projects

**Agenda Item:** GB041615-6  
**Date:** 16 April 2015  
**Proposed By:** Doug Fitzsimmons

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## Background

Despite the laudable time and effort Neighborhood Councils, non-profits and community groups expend to improve their neighborhoods, the City—with its multiple regulations, departments and points of contact—makes it difficult for those improvement projects to move forward.

The motion supports City Council File 14-1624, which asks that City departments report on ways they can streamline their processes and remove roadblocks for community-driven projects.

## Proposed Motion

- I. The South Robertson Neighborhoods Council (SORO NC) supports City Council File 14-1624: report on ways and means for the City to better support community improvement projects.
- II. SORO NC further calls on the City departments to complete the Council motion's requested report—including timelines for implementing the recommendations—within 90 days of the motion being approved by the City.

**Doug Fitzsimmons**  
President

**Kevin Gres**  
Vice-President

**Terrence Gomes**  
Treasurer

**Beth Hirsch**  
Secretary

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## Considerations

**Committee review:** Votes For: 0 Against:  
*(highly recommended)*

**Amount previously allocated in Committee's working budget:** \$  
*(applies to funding motions only)*

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### Arguments for:

First step to reducing the red tape

### Arguments against:

Time required by City departments to complete the report

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14-11624

**Motion**

Throughout the City, non-profits, homeowner associations, neighborhood councils, local schools and other community groups undertake community improvement projects and make significant investments in their local neighborhoods. These community groups are important partners in the City's ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance neighborhood quality of life.

Community participation in the planning and implementation of neighborhood improvement projects should be fostered and encouraged, and not hampered by City policies and processes that create inordinate burdens on such efforts. However, depending on the location, and scope of the project, the process, permit and fee structure can vary and are sometimes inconsistent. And sometimes, depending on the complexity of the project, community beautification efforts are discouraged or hindered solely based upon the "red tape" that exists within the City.

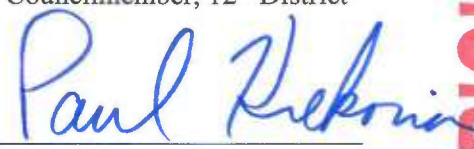
For example, when Council District 12 partnered with Northridge South Neighborhood Council, Napa Elementary School, local neighbors and businesses to clean up an unimproved parcel of land, which was a magnet for illegal dumping and an area of blight (photos attached), navigating the different jurisdictions, departments, points of contact, and applications was a feat that required significant effort and time.

Additionally, neighborhood council funding is limited to the fiscal year, and the red tape associated with community projects often makes it difficult to properly budget or encumber funds within the given timeframe.

City departments, bureaus and agencies need to be responsive and willing to assist community groups seeking to improve their neighborhoods and City staff should serve as a meaningful resource to resolve problems and find solutions. City policy, rules, regulations and processes should enhance and foster these community improvement activities, and not become a barrier.

**I THEREFORE MOVE** that the Department of Public Works, with the assistance and cooperation of the Department of Transportation, City Planning, City Attorney, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, City Administrative Officer and the Chief Legislative Analyst, be instructed to prepare and present a report setting forth ways and means by which the City of Los Angeles may best serve community organizations seeking to undertake community improvement projects. The report should include but not be limited to a discussion of the following key elements: establishing a single point of contact for inquires and technical assistance, identifying efficiencies and streamlining of all existing processes and permits, resolution of liability responsibilities which can hinder volunteer efforts, and outreach strategy for stakeholder input.

PRESENTED BY:   
MITCHELL ENGLANDER  
Councilmember, 12<sup>th</sup> District

SECONDED BY: 

  
NOV 26 2014

ORIGINAL





# Motion to support Council action to allow Neighborhood Councils to have adequate presentation time at City meetings

**Agenda Item:** GB041615-7  
**Date:** 16 April 2015  
**Proposed By:** Terrence Gomes

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## Background

Currently, Boardmembers representing official NC opinions are allowed the same amount of time to speak at City Council, Committee meetings, Commission hearings and departmental meetings as the general public: usually 1-2 minutes. Other City representatives, however, are often given unlimited time.

The motion supports a resolution currently working its way through City Hall to change that.

## Proposed Motion

- I. To supports a resolution in City Council that would give Boardmembers adequate time to present an NC's official position at City meetings, hearings, and functions.

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## Considerations

**Committee review:**  
*(highly recommended)*

Votes For: 0

Against:

**Amount previously allocated in Committee's working budget:** \$  
*(applies to funding motions only)*

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### Arguments for:

We've supported this idea in the past.

Gives our community a larger voice.

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### Arguments against:

Should have been included in the motion packet.

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# Motion to support a hiring exemption for the Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE)

**Agenda Item:** GB041615-8  
**Date:** 16 April 2015  
**Proposed By:** Terrence Gomes

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## Background

It is difficult for DONE to fill its current empty positions with qualified candidates due to City hiring rules.

## Proposed Motion

- I. To support a resolution in City Council that would give the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment a hiring exemption in order to fill its authorized staffing vacancies.

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## Considerations

**Committee review:**  
*(highly recommended)*

Votes For: 0

Against:

**Amount previously allocated in Committee's working budget:** \$  
*(applies to funding motions only)*

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### Arguments for:

The NC system is suffering due to DONE's lack of resources.

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### Arguments against:

Should have been included in the motion packet.

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# Motion to endorse the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates' FY 2015-16 white paper

**Agenda Item:** GB041615-9  
**Date:** 16 April 2015  
**Proposed By:** Terrence Gomes

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## Background

An important role of the NC system is to provide input on the City's annual budget. The recommendations from this year's NC Budget Advocates are attached.

## Proposed Motion

- I. To endorse the recommendations of the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates for fiscal year 2015-16 as contained in their white paper.

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## Considerations

**Committee review:**  
*(highly recommended)*

Votes For:

Against:

**Amount previously allocated in Committee's working budget:** \$  
*(applies to funding motions only)*

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### Arguments for:

The recommendations reflect a neighborhood-centric viewpoint, tempered by the realities of the City budgeting process.

### Arguments against:

Should have been included in the motion packet.

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## **A NEW VISION for LOS ANGELES**

*Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates are committed to work with the Mayor and City Councilmembers in order to make Los Angeles*

### **A WORLD-CLASS CITY**

Mayor Eric Garcetti has called for this year's budget to be organized around five over-arching outcomes:

- Make Los Angeles the best-run big city in America
- Promote good jobs for Angelenos all across Los Angeles
- Create a more livable and sustainable city
- Ensure our communities are the safest in the nation
- Partner with residents and civic groups to build a greater city

To advance these outcomes, Budget Advocates met with key players from thirty Departments and Bureaus as well as Council Members or their key staff of the fifteen Council Districts to learn their concerns, and distilled five key action items that will help advance the Mayor's objectives, including rebuilding the confidence of residents and businesses in their elected officials and ensuring the prosperity and sustainability of our city.

These are to:

- Redefine our City's budget processes, practices and philosophy in order to lay out a clear direction for making forward-looking decisions, including resolving the retirement plans and other structural deficits, and change the way the City prepares budgets to focus on planning for economic downturns, in addition to readjusting to the present economic circumstances
- Create 21<sup>st</sup> century information management systems dedicated to providing integrated and efficient support to stakeholders and facilitation interdepartmental communication
- Rebuild and improve Los Angeles' infrastructure to standards that exceed the best in the world to take care of our citizens and attract new businesses
- Streamline the City's hiring processes to proactively anticipate future needs, including potential replacement of the 25% of employees now eligible for retirement as well as attracting and developing a sustainable workforce
- Implement a citywide collections system to realize uncollected revenue, develop more income sources to offset structural deficits, and create the permanent position of Inspector General

#### **Budget Processes, Practices, and Philosophy**

The 2020 Commission Report pointed out that Los Angeles is treading water while the rest of the world moves forward, and that the City needs to adapt to the 21st century.

The City must make better use of the great resource it has created in the Neighborhood Council system which not only empowers the public at a local level to have democratic input into all

levels of the City government but also provides the City with a depth of experience and resources unrivaled in most big cities.

In recent years the structural deficit, increasing retirement plan obligations, the impediment of a failing infrastructure and the lack of resources and personnel to implement long-term planning has led to uncertainty during the fiscal year in regards to ongoing labor negotiations, service delivery and longer term planning. In addition to the real costs associated with unsettled finances, this cloud of uncertainty has hampered productivity, impaired employee morale, and limited operational vision.

The Mayor, City Council, and all Departments must embrace a coherent and consistent philosophy that will reverse these problems and build Los Angeles into a city for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The Budget Advocates recommend:

- The City determine what is feasible under its current financial structure and what must be changed to set Los Angeles on a better course for the future
- All budgets, present and future, contain provisions to maintain every infrastructure element to ensure that the livability and safety of our City is maximized, and to justify future investments in infrastructure
- The City establish a realistic plan for ensuring the delivery of retirement benefits to past, current, and future employees and integrate this plan into all budgets
- All Departments commit to a Performance/Zero-Based Budgeting approach and using then-current data and incorporating multi-year obligations, budget only for results, starting each year at zero with each Department accepting accountability for their share of annual and long-term costs
- The City implement a realistic, balanced, five-year budget and 30-year plan, both to be updated yearly and approved together with the annual budget, with the multi-year amortized costs integrated with those of day-to-day operations so future shortfalls will be identified and addressed thoughtfully and transparently long before they can impact day-to-day operations
- The City reconfirm its commitment to the Neighborhood Council system and: 1) approve the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment's proposed exempt positions and immediately fill all vacancies so as to adequately support the councils; 2) restore annual Council budgets to previous levels and allowing a percentage of funds to rollover for continuity; and 3) fund the online voting for next year's Neighborhood Council elections, which could also be a test-run for holding city elections online
- The City immediately establish a short-term independent citizens committee pursuant to the recommendations of the 2020 Commission to address the City's overwhelming and increasing pension and healthcare obligations and to evaluate solutions which will contain that expense, take care of the City's past, present, and future workers and also be sustainable in our present and future economic environment

### **Information Technology Upgrades and Interdepartmental Communication**

The need for a dramatically improved Information Technology (IT) system was a near universal concern in our investigations into the City's budget. Several themes within the broader context of an improved IT system arose, including: 1) A lack of coordination of IT services across City Departments; 2) An aging IT workforce; 3) An unreliable internal network; and 4) A consistent lack of long-term investments in our IT infrastructure.

The Budget Advocates recommend:

- A single individual (or team) be empowered to coordinate the IT efforts within the City to avoid redundancies and decrease inefficiencies across Departments, including working closely with departmental IT staff to integrate City needs seamlessly with the ongoing use of proprietary systems and *fully* testing every added component to ensure that each is compatible with all existing systems before the new infrastructure is allowed to go active
- The introduction of new technologies be complemented with a comprehensive plan to train and expand IT employees to provide improved and expanded services
- The City hire the next generation of IT workers based on their having relevant experience, with skill sets compatible to the new systems, and pay competitive salaries
- The City establish a strong IT infrastructure backbone that is scalable, and modernize the City's data center operations through public and private cloud options
- The appropriate agent undertake a long-term cost-benefit analysis for all major IT projects before entering into any agreement that might ultimately cost the City more money than it would save

Significant investment in the City's IT infrastructure has the potential to save millions of dollars in the long run provided, however, the needs and concerns of all Departments and the outside agencies that would be affected by such large-scale projects are adequately addressed. Furthermore, the City should require each Department to review the long-term costs and value of these projects and budget accordingly.

Our IT infrastructure cannot continue to be supplemented with only modest changes. To be able to handle the IT needs of a world class city, our IT infrastructure needs to make a 'quantum leap' in IT service and delivery. This entails investing in the high-quality 21<sup>st</sup> century technologies that will enable the City to achieve its potential.

### **Infrastructure Modernization**

Facing the consequences of the significant infrastructure problems that have developed over many decades of deferred maintenance, the City must assess what needs to be done and lay out a plan, first to fix what is broken and then to establish a program of new construction with ongoing maintenance and upgrades, to make our City attractive to investors, hospitable to its residents, and sustainable into the next century.

The Budget Advocates focused on the infrastructure that is paid for from the General Fund. This includes streets and sidewalks, curbs and corner access ramps, street lights, parks and the urban forest, the fleet of aging vehicles, buildings and facilities (including its internal workings such as plumbing, electrical, cable fiber, and HVAC systems), and IT management information and communication systems.

The City does not have a centralized database that tracks the condition of its infrastructure. Most Departments do not have an infrastructure plan.

The City does not have an accurate estimate of the cost to repair and maintain its infrastructure.

The City's current deferred maintenance budget is estimated to be in the range of \$10 billion and the City has been reluctant to conduct a comprehensive survey of its infrastructure because of the expense of a survey. Yet this vital expense would be just a small percentage of the overall cost. The *real* cost is not the expense of the survey, but in the erosion of the public's confidence in the City for the lack of comprehensive infrastructure maintenance.

The City can no longer ignore its failing infrastructure. The rate of failure will accelerate over time, resulting in disproportionately higher costs.

Without repairs, the deteriorating infrastructure will make it harder for the City to attract businesses and maintain its status as a tourist destination, and its economy will suffer.

The City must regain the trust of a skeptical populace which believes that their tax dollars have been diverted to pay for increased salaries, pensions, and benefits for City employees. This will require reform of the City's finances.

The Budget Advocates recommend:

- The City Administrative Officer determine the status of all of the City's infrastructure, Department by Department, and the related deferred maintenance costs
- The City develop a detailed operational and staffing plan to repair and maintain all of its infrastructure, Department by Department to ensure that our streets, sidewalks, and the rest of the City's infrastructure will be maintained in good condition for the next 100 years
- The City develop a comprehensive financing plan which, to earn the trust of the voters, should establish an independent oversight committee consisting of qualified individuals who have the appropriate background, training, and adequate resources to monitor the repair and maintenance of the City's infrastructure
- In the event the financing plan requires the approval of the voters, the City must place on the ballot a measure that comprehensively addresses the City's financial constraints by including requirements that the City balance its budget and fund its retirement plans along with the repair and maintenance of its infrastructure

The City should seek to pass bonds now when interest rates are low and the costs of improvements, including materials and labor, are less expensive than they will be in the future. This would create well-paying jobs for many of our stakeholders, encourage people and

businesses to remain, and attract new investment and business opportunities from outside the City.

We need to establish and enforce performance benchmarks and accountability to ensure that the City does not need to go back to the residents to add to these bonds due to inefficiencies. It is essential the City develops solid and sustainable ways to increase income generation consistent with population growth and stakeholder demands.

### **Personnel and Hiring**

The Department of Personnel, like most other departments, suffers from being underfunded and understaffed in the aftermath of the 2008 recession. A concern of many departments is the need to retain institutional memory by hiring qualified staff now to be trained before experienced personnel retire. The Personnel Department faces a number of regulations that hinder the employment of suitable candidates, do not allow the flexibility to adapt to a rapidly changing world, and do not allow the City to hire personnel for which funding has already been approved.

The City needs ways to attract engaged and innovative staff for all Departments, retaining them with exciting challenges, appropriate training and employee recognition programs to increase morale.

Due to disproportionate cuts dating back to the 2008 economic crisis, the current budgetary request from the Personnel Department barely serves to allow the Department to meet current mandates and, as job classifications change, their obligations in the short term increase, leaving them less likely to effectively catch up, let alone incorporate training and anticipate future needs.

The Budget Advocates recommend:

- The City include in its upcoming budget up to \$5 million to engage outside contractors as necessary to process the entire backlog of testing and hiring of applicants within twelve months including bringing all job descriptions up-to-date
- All emergency appointments be extended by up to one year or until every Department's backlog is cleared
- The City fund general metric analysts plus clerical support for the Personnel Department to proactively plan for the next 5 years of staffing, including, but not limited to, the projected 25% to 40% retirement of current staff
- The City authorize the development and long-term funding of an automated payroll system with HR modules to consolidate and modernize City payroll for all Departments and the Council
- The City fund and the Department of Personnel implement: 1) Expanded in-house and new hire training; 2) Cross-training to ensure flexible staffing during economic fluctuations as well as provide additional short term support for Departments experiencing unexpected staffing demands; 3) An apprenticeship program in conjunction with colleges and vocational schools so people can learn skills on the job



and be promoted; 4) Increased summer and first-job youth employment programs with existing federal and state grants; and 5) A streamlined hiring process, proactively anticipating departmental requirements and avoiding delays to fill positions on a timely basis

Part of the City's current problems stem from insufficient staffing due to the 2008 economic downturn coupled with a projected rate of retirement which could reach 40% over the next five years. A major concern of many Departments is to retain institutional memory by bringing on qualified hires to be trained before the exit of those with the most experience.

The City should take aggressive steps to improve morale of its employees who provide the services which make the City function and are the face of the City to residents, business people, and visitors.

Historically, municipal employment has provided enhanced job, health, and retirement security, but the City now needs to work with the unions to ensure workers' rights and interests are protected while allowing the flexibility for the City to provide efficient and economical services to its stakeholders.

Ongoing evaluation of staffing and compensation is needed to accommodate the changing nature of employment in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, allowing for increased job mobility, both within and between the City and private enterprise, so employees may evolve and grow as the City does.

### **Revenue and the Function of the Inspector General**

As Inspector General, Fernando Campos has begun to bring order to the collections process for the City. When he started, he was faced with forty Departments and thirty-three billing systems working in isolation. Now thirteen are integrated, billing collections have been expedited and consolidated and he is working to concurrently increase transparency across the board and phase in the remaining Departments.

He has identified \$75 million in collectibles from rebilling, grants and disaster assistance including \$30 million still owed from the Northridge earthquake alone. Of 550 recommendations made so far, many by the Budget Advocates, 45% have been implemented and 30% are in process.

The Budget Advocates recommend:

- The City make the position of Inspector General permanent
- The City fund the Inspector General's suggestions when the return will exceed the cost including: 1) Centralization of all City collections; 2) Direct assessment and systemic code enforcement of costs and fees be integrated and expanded; 3) An improved collection of parking fees, specifically from garages and rental car companies be developed and implemented; and 4) \$300 thousand be allocated for his Department to pursue the \$3 million owed by the top 25% of scofflaws
- The City encourage the DWP to replicate the Inspector General model if their collection efforts continue to be ineffective

- The appropriate departments evaluate what is driving lawsuits against the City and accelerate regulations to limit the City's exposure in regards to infrastructure and environmental hazards, vehicle liability, police misconduct and personnel cases
- The City expand Deputy Mayor Rick Cole's mandate to incentivize the development of new income sources and reward innovation by encouraging more citizen participation

The economy has and will always ebb and flow. The City needs to plan for the inevitable economic downturns. Every Department should immediately develop realistic plans to be updated regularly including how to control costs and income during such periods, and the City should adjust its reserves accordingly.

### **A World Class City**

Los Angeles needs to use California's reputation for leading edge environmental legislation as well as our City's well-deserved reputation for innovation and productivity to attract new green, high-tech and creative enterprises in addition to problem-solving think tanks and boutique businesses across the job spectrum. With our current drought, the City should reach out for companies offering ways to mitigate the impact of global warming and improve the City's resilience across the board. Los Angeles could become the new epicenter for innovative application of green energy and sustainable solutions and a leader for government action across the country.

We need to link cause and effect for each Department and work back from the effect desired to the actions that will achieve what's needed based on workload, delivery of services, cost-benefit analysis and the effort involved.

All of this must be addressed at every level of City services and it must be done as a City working together, not as individual Departments, with the following questions in mind:

- How to assess where the City stands?
- What are the *real* costs if intangibles, quality of life, training, infrastructure upgrades, education and road impact are included?
- How can the City hold development and businesses accountable for their actions when they break regulations, dodge taxes and abuse incentive programs?
- What taxation systems could be implemented that are truly fair and progressive?
- How can increasing workers' wages to allow them to stay in their neighborhoods be used to increase City income?
- What other resources exist? And how do we measure success?

In conjunction with the foregoing, and especially with regards to efficiency and transparency for both cost-cutting and income generation, the City needs to establish a panel of Angelenos to provide a view from outside City Hall and to act on behalf of stakeholders to provide parameters, monitor compliance and track improvements year to year and help make Los Angeles the World Class City of the Mayor's vision.

Budget Advocates' White Paper on the Los Angeles City Budget

Respectfully submitted,

The 2014-2015 Budget Advocates

*Jay Handal*, West Los Angeles, Co-President  
*Terrence Gomes*, South Robertson, Co-President  
*Danielle Lafayette*, Empowerment Congress West, Co-Vice President  
*Linda Lee*, Olympic Park, Co-Vice President  
*Howard M. Katchen*, Sherman Oaks, Treasurer  
*Liz Amsden*, Historic Highland Park, Secretary  
*Erick Morales*, Mid-City, Assistant Secretary  
*Glenn Bailey*, Northridge East, Parliamentarian  
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*Darlene Atkins*, Voices of 90037  
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*Nelson Castillo*, Westlake South  
*Krystee Clark*, Sunland-Tujunga  
*Kevin Davis*, Foothill Trails District  
*Vera del Pozo*, Boyle Heights  
*Macky Fortu*, Rampart Village  
*Punam Gohel*, North Hills West  
*Harvey Goldberg*, Tarzana  
*Sharron Haynes*, Watts  
*Jeannette Hopp*, Van Nuys  
*Jack Humphreville*, Greater Wilshire  
*Joan Jacobs*, Harbor Gateway North  
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*Barbara Ringuette*, Silver Lake  
*Marc Ruelas*, Arleta  
*Erik Sanjurjo*, Hollywood United  
*Ken Schwartz*, Tarzana  
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*Krisna Velasco*, Grenada Hills South  
*Joanne Yvanek-Garb*, West Hills

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*Steve Quat*, Studio City  
*Daniel Wiseman*, M.D  
*George Wolfberg*, Pacific Palisades



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City of Los Angeles Certified  
Neighborhood Council

# Motion to approve recommendations for the 2016 Election Stipulation worksheet

**Agenda Item:** GB041615-13

**Date:** 16 April 2015

**Proposed By:** Doug Fitzsimmons

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## Background

The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment is preparing for the 2016 NC elections, and is asking each NC to express their election preferences. Their Election Stipulation worksheet is attached.

The Executive Committee recommends the following (survey question = \*):

1. **Simple majority vote by the board members present and voting, not including abstentions.** *This is in sync with our current bylaws.*
2. **We have a website and will maintain our 5 physical posting locations.** *Also in sync with our bylaws. Exec felt it important to keep the agendas as accessible as possible.*
3. **President serves as regional grievance representative.**
4. Mandatory bylaws change. No additional action needed.
5. Mandatory bylaws change. No additional action needed.
6. **We want online voting with self-affirmation voter verification.** *We currently are self-affirmation. There is no additional cost to the NC for online voting. There was some debate about this item.*
7. **We do not want telephone voting.** *The NC would have to create and record scripts for the service, so Exec felt that the usage of the service wouldn't be high enough to justify the time and work involved.*
8. **\* We would not be interested in vote-by-mail.** *This is a survey question, not an election decision. VBM will not be available in 2016. Usage was low when we've offered it in the past (best year: VBM was 13% of the ballots cast in 2012—and it cost us \$450 to offer it.)*
9. **Maintain current Board voting structure.**
10. **\* NC candidates should watch a 10-15 minute training video.** *Another poll question.*
11. **\* All Board members should take office on July 1.** *Poll question. Exec felt this would be easier system-wide; simplify our officer and committee terms, and allow more time for new Boardmember training.*

## Proposed Motion

- I. To approve the 2016 NC Election Stipulation Worksheet using the answers listed above.

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## Considerations

**Committee review:**  
*(highly recommended)*

Votes For: 3

Against: 0

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**Amount previously allocated in Committee's working budget:** \$  
*(applies to funding motions only)*

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**Arguments for:**

Reflects the intent of our current bylaws.

**Arguments against:**

Self-affirmation with online voting could lead to fraud and abuse. A person could live anywhere and vote in our election (although it would be an act of perjury).

Online voting potentially favors younger candidates.

Telephone voting and vote-by-mail could make it easier for some people to vote.

In the past year, a number of new policies and procedures have been implemented to improve the Neighborhood Council system. This worksheet provides information on the issues that affect your Neighborhood Council’s bylaws and elections and requests clarification from your board on the matters. **Please take Board action to confirm the information and to provide the additional information needed to update your bylaws and election procedures. The Board may choose to make changes to the checked items, which will supersede any conflicting bylaws language. We will then update the bylaws accordingly. The defaults shall take effect if the information on the worksheet is not provided to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Department) by June 1, 2015.** Please email this completed form to: [NCsupport@empowerla.org](mailto:NCsupport@empowerla.org) Contact the Neighborhood Council Support Helpline at (213) 978-1551 if you have any questions.

**SOUTH ROBERTSON NEIGHBORHOODS COUNCIL**

1. **Article V - Governing Board, Section 3: Official Actions** – Please clarify how your board takes official action and treats abstentions. This would not affect different voting requirements for other sections of the bylaws that required a different vote, e.g. 2/3 vote for bylaw amendments, board removal, etc.

- Simple majority vote by the board members present and voting, including abstentions, which act as a “yes” vote (**default**)
- Simple majority vote by the board members present and voting, not including abstentions
- Simple majority vote by the board members present, including abstentions, which act as a “yes” vote
- Simple majority vote by the board members present, not including abstentions

The Department recommends “present and voting, including abstentions, which act as a “yes” vote” for the board count because board members who are ineligible to vote on items because of age or training/Code of Conduct requirements would not be counted towards the total number of votes needed to take action, and abstentions would be treated in the same way City Council treats abstentions. Please see Neighborhood Council Voting Facts handout for more information on voting.

2. **Article VIII - Meetings, Section 3: Notifications/Postings** – The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (Commission) passed a posting policy reducing posting locations from 5 to 1 location with 24 hour visibility if a Neighborhood Council has a website. If a Neighborhood Council doesn’t have a website, they must maintain 5 physical posting locations. Neighborhood Councils with websites may still choose to maintain their 5 or more physical posting locations.

**Defaults** – Neighborhood Councils with a website will default to 1 physical posting location. Neighborhood Councils without a website will default to 5 physical posting locations.

We have a website and will have 1 physical posting location at: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

We  have/  do not have a website and will maintain our 5 physical posting locations at:

1. 24 hour location – \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

If your Neighborhood Council posts to more than 5 locations, please use a separate sheet of paper to list the other locations.

3. **Article XI – Grievance Process** – The City Council passed CF 13-1689 establishing seven regional Neighborhood Council Grievance Panels – South, Central, Harbor, West, East, North Valley and South Valley. Each Neighborhood Council may appoint one board member or stakeholder to serve on a pool of panelists. These panelists will review grievances and election challenges. Please submit your appointment:

**Default** is the President or Chair of the Neighborhood Council.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  Board member  Stakeholder

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please note that any language in your grievance process in conflict with the new grievance ordinance will be removed.

4. **Article XIV – Compliance, Section 1: Code of Civility** - The Commission passed a Neighborhood Council Board Member Code of Conduct Policy, and the following language will be added to this section in addition to any other Neighborhood Council requirements. “Board members will abide by the Commission’s Neighborhood Council Board Member Code of Conduct Policy.”

5. **Article XIV – Compliance, Section 2: Training** - The Department requires board members to take ethics and funding training **prior to voting** on funding related items. There is no grace period for board members to take these trainings. The following language will be added to this section in addition to any other Neighborhood Council requirements: “All board members must take ethics and funding training prior to making motions and voting on funding related matters.”

## ARTICLE X - ELECTIONS

### Online and Telephone Voting

Neighborhood Councils will have the opportunity to add online and telephone voting to their 2016 elections at no additional cost to increase the convenience of voting for their stakeholders via computer, tablet, smart phone or regular touch tone phone. We have funding for 50 Neighborhood Councils to participate in this opportunity for the 2016 elections. A physical polling location will still be available on the day of the election. There will be a follow up election stipulation worksheet sent to Neighborhood Councils after July 1, 2015 to lock down polling locations, translation and election timelines.

6. Your Neighborhood Council verifies its voters via SELF-AFFIRMATION and will automatically HAVE the online and telephone voting options added to your 2016 elections unless the board votes not to include online voting. Please select one:

- We want online voting with self-affirmation voter verification (**default**)
- We want online voting with documentation voter verification
- We want self-affirmation voter verification and no online voting
- We want documentation voter verification and no online voting

**Note:** With self-affirmation voter online and telephone voting, your voters will be asked to affirm their stakeholder type and voting address prior to voting online. With voter documentation online and telephone voting, your voters must still be verified with documentation by City trained personnel (homeless voters will have a special verification process) prior to receiving a security code to vote online.

7. **Telephone voting** requires a lot of work in creating and recording scripts. You may choose to eliminate the telephone voting option if you believe your community will not use it. The **default** will be to HAVE it if you have chosen online voting.

- We do not want telephone voting
- Not Applicable

8. **Vote-by-Mail** (for self-affirmation voters only) will be eliminated with online voting though we are exploring the possibility of having a voter request only vote-by-mail paper ballot for those Neighborhood Councils with online voting.

If your Neighborhood Council is choosing online voting, would you be interested in voter request only vote-by-mail paper ballots?  Yes  No (**default**)  Not Applicable

9. Board Vote Structure

Please review Attachment B of your bylaws to see if your board voting structure is correct. Changes to the number of seats, except for an addition of a Community Interest At-Large seat, requires the board to fill out and submit a Bylaw Amendment Application **by May 1, 2015** for Commission review. Please select one:

- Maintain the current board voting structure (**default**)
  - Change the board voting structure to have the Community Interest stakeholder run and vote for one At-Large seat
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- 

10. Candidate Filing Requirements

During the 2016 Neighborhood Council Elections Town Halls, board members suggested that candidates have an understanding of the Neighborhood Council system and the elections process prior to filing. We are polling Neighborhood Councils for their feedback so please answer the following question:

Should Neighborhood Council candidates be required take a 5-10 minute video training (produced by the City) about the Neighborhood Council system and their responsibilities as a candidate during the election process prior to completing their registration?  Yes  No (**existing**)

11. Elected Board Members Seating Period

After the 2014 elections and during the 2016 Neighborhood Council Elections Town Halls, board members suggested that instead of the current staggering seating of newly elected board members, everyone is seated on July 1<sup>st</sup>. This was to minimize transition issues. Other board members stated that July 1<sup>st</sup> was too long, and they would end up with lame duck boards for several months. We are polling Neighborhood Councils for their feedback so please select one:

- Keep the current staggered seating of the board (**existing**)
- All board members should take office on July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Board members should be seated together based on their region and election month, e.g. March elections will all seat together on May 1<sup>st</sup>, April elections will all seat together on June 1<sup>st</sup>, May elections will all seat together on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

**DECLARATION**

I, the person authorized by the above-named Neighborhood Council to execute this Administrative and 2016 Election Procedures Stipulation Worksheet, under penalty of perjury, declare that a Brown Act noticed Neighborhood Council public meeting was held with a quorum of the Board present, and the information in this document and attachments was approved as an official action of the Board per the Neighborhood Council's bylaws. If requested, we will provide the Neighborhood Council agenda and minutes or resolution supporting the approval of this document.

Date of Board Action: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Board Vote: \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Abstentions

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_