

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE**

May 14, 2009

To: Board of Neighborhood Commissioners

From: Leyla Campos, Acting Field Director  
Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE)

CC: BongHwan Kim, General Manager  
Claudia Dunn, Asst. General Manager  
DONE

Subject: **STATUS REPORT: FORMING AREAS & UNINCORPORATED AREAS**

---

On October 1, 2001, the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Department) began the certification process for Neighborhood Councils. To date 89 Neighborhood Councils have been certified citywide. An additional 10 areas remain without a Neighborhood Council throughout the City. Of those, 6 have an active formation committee working on outreach and/or toward certification, and 4 have just a few stakeholders involved or none at all.

The following identifies and describes each forming area, by region, and provides a summary of the current activities. A separate section has been added with information regarding unincorporated areas and their status.

**FORMING AREAS**

**NORTH VALLEY**

**North Hills East**

Staff worked with this forming effort for over four years. The group was fairly well organized at the beginning and was able to do significant work in terms of the Certification Application. The group held meetings regularly and collected over 200 signatures, participated in Mayor's Big Sunday project, attended community events and sent representatives to other NC meetings and alliances of NCs. In the fall of 2007, the group hit a major challenge in that personalities started to get in the way of doing the business of forming the NC. Group members became overly critical of working titles and a very poor attitude and lack of cooperation began to form. New personalities

came in who thrived on conflict and a 3 to 4 year effort ended with two women holding poorly attended meetings for a period of three consecutive months. As of now, the group has disbanded and the information collected (signatures, petitions, flyers, etc.) has disappeared.

Boundaries:

North:	Lassen St.
South:	Metrolink Railroad Tracks
East:	Sepulveda Blvd. Roscoe Blvd., and Pacoima Wash
West:	San Diego 405 Fwy

Demographics: There are 29,521 resident stakeholders made up as follows:

White:	7%
Latino:	62%
Asian:	11%
African American:	19 %
Other:	1%
Owner:	31%
Renter:	69%

Northridge South

There is currently a core group of approximately 15 people who have been meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every month at Northridge Middle School. The core group is fairly diverse representing various ethnicities, gender and interests in the community. Staff is currently working with the group to assist them with the components of the certification application and going over roles and responsibilities, process and overview of the NC system. The group has decided to divide into various committees to undertake the important pieces of the application. The committees are composed of bylaws, outreach, and application committee. The group identified the need for a structure and thus selected a Chair, Co-chair, Secretary and Outreach Chair. The group has started the collection of signatures and seems to be moving in the right direction. This forming effort known as Northridge South took the territory formerly assigned to "Old Northridge NC", which went through the process of decertification some time ago. This forming effort is also absorbing the unincorporated areas east and west to the area formerly known as Old Northridge thus bridging the gap of unincorporated areas in that zone.

Boundaries: To the North Norhhoff Street and Nordhoff Way; to the West, Winnetka Avenue and Corbin Avenue; to the South, Roscoe Blvd., down Reseda to Strathern Street, down White Oak to Saticoy and back to Roscoe Blvd.

Demographics: Not yet obtained

## **SOUTH VALLEY**

### North Hollywood West

Organizing efforts were reestablished in the Fall of 2007, with the active support of Councilwoman Wendy Greuel's staff and the LAPD's Senior Lead Officer in the area. Meetings have been occurring on a monthly basis, alternating between two school sites, one in the north area and one in the south. A core group of about seven individuals has been involved in the organizing efforts, with two individuals taking the leadership in planning and conducting outreach. Outreach efforts were much of the work focus through the Summer of 2008 to increase awareness about the neighborhood council in the community and invite stakeholders to the monthly group meetings. The monthly meetings have focused on informing stakeholders about the certification process, creating working committees, and also on inviting speakers to address stakeholders on various community subjects. Attendance at meetings has ranged from under ten to over 30 stakeholders. The focus of the work shifted to drafting bylaws in the latter part of 2008. Draft bylaws have been completed by the group, pending the incorporation of City Clerk Neighborhood Council election provisions. A draft community profile report was also created early 2009, pending few further revisions for completion. Currently, the work of the organizing group has shifted back to outreach, focusing this time on business and community-based organization stakeholders. A challenge for the group has been engaging the Spanish and Armenian-speaking community in the area. Core group members have invited personal contacts they know in these communities to join the efforts, but participation remains minimum. The core group and Department staff will focus their outreach plans and efforts in the months ahead to engaging these community members further. All components of the certification application are planned for completion by the end of summer/early fall.

Boundaries:

North:Roscoe Blvd.

South:Vanowen St.

East:Whitsett Ave.

West:Tujunga Wash

Demographics: There are 20,690 stakeholder residents made up as follow:

NH Whites: 28%

NH African Americans 2%

NH Asians: 12%

Latinos 52%

Other 6%

Males: 50%  
Females: 50%

Owner Occupied: 46%  
Renter Occupied: 54%

17 years and under: 30%  
18-29 years: 18%  
30-39 years: 17%  
40-49 Years: 14%  
50-64 Years 13%  
65 Years and Over: 9%

## **CENTRAL AREA**

### Westlake North Neighborhood Council

The organizing group consists of twelve stakeholders, who have been meeting twice a month on Thursdays since October 2007 to discuss and plan their outreach efforts and draft bylaws. The core group has organized and participated in a number of outreach events such as block canvassing, attending trainings provided by the DONE, including the Ethics training, community fairs, attending other neighborhood council meetings and requesting letters of support from the surrounding NC's and community based organizations. They meet to identify community issues for the NC to address, gather signatures for the petition, and educate stakeholders about the NC. They have held thirty six community meetings to date with average attendance in the low 20's, and are holding the community meetings in different sections within their boundaries to draw new stakeholders and get their input on the draft bylaws. Staff is assisting the group in identifying more core leaders to assist in completing the elements for certification. Staff has also worked with the group on their outreach. More volunteers are constantly being recruited and other members of surrounding NC's are participating with this group, through their efforts their signature collection has been completed and the bylaws are almost complete. The group has set a goal to submit the certification application by summer 2009.

#### Boundaries:

North:	Beverly Blvd. /First St.
East:	Bixel St. to Emerald St. to Bixel St.
South:	6th St. to Burlington St. to Maryland St. to Bonnie Brae St. to 3rd St. to Westlake St. to Maryland St.
West:	Alvarado St. to 3rd St. to Carondelet St.

Demographics: There are 24,829 resident stakeholders made up as follows:

Latino: 85%  
Asian: 7%  
White: 3%  
African American: 3%  
Other: 1%

Renters: 93%  
Owners: 2%

17 Years and under 32%  
18-29 Years 26%  
30-39 Years 17%  
40-49 Years 11%  
50-64 Years 7%  
65 Years and Over 7%

#### Westlake South Neighborhood Council

The organizing group consists of 8 stakeholders, who have been meeting once a month on the last Tuesday of the month since January 2007 to discuss and plan their outreach efforts and draft bylaws. The core group has organized and participated in of outreach events partnering with the forming Westlake North NC such as block canvassing, attending trainings provided by the DONE, including the Ethics training, a community fair, attending other neighborhood council meetings and requesting support from the surrounding NC's and community based organizations. They meet to identify community issues for the NC to address, gather signatures for the petition, and they are educating themselves and stakeholders about the NC. They have held fourteen community meetings to date with average attendance in the low 20's, and are holding the community meetings currently in one section within their boundaries to draw new stakeholders once they have established more community support they will be able to move around the community and get others input on the draft bylaws. Staff is assisting the group in identifying more core leaders to assist in completing the elements for certification. Staff has also worked with the group on their outreach by printing flyers and working with the CD 1 office to involve more community leaders. More volunteers are constantly being recruited and other members of surrounding NC's are being made aware that the group is looking for mentors to get them through the certification process with best practices. They are currently in the signature collection stage and are considering adopting the Pico Union bylaws which they will tailor to suit the needs of this community. The group has set a goal to submit the certification application by Fall of 2009.

#### Boundaries:

North: Maryland St. to Westlake St. to 3rd St. to bonnie brae St. to  
Maryland St. to Burlington St. to 6th St.

East: 110 Fwy to 8th St. to Bixel St. to 7th St. to Witmer St.  
to 6th St.  
South: Olympic Blvd.  
West: Alvarado St.

Demographics: There are 20,111 resident stakeholders made up as follows:

Latino: 83%  
Asian: 8%  
White: 4%  
African American: 3%  
Other: 1%

Renters: 96%  
Owners: 2%

17 Years and under 28%  
18-29 Years 30%  
30-39 Years 17%  
40-49 Years 10%  
50-64 Years 8%  
65 Years and Over 7%

## **SOUTH L.A.**

### United for Victory

Department staff has been working and meeting with a core group of stakeholders since November 2008. Members of the forming NC are currently in the process of obtaining signatures in their community. The group has made contact with some key stakeholders, including some of the local elementary schools and churches. The forming effort currently meets at the local recreation center and they have received much support from the Recreation and Parks staff as well as the local Council District staff. Forming NC members participated in Department led trainings, including a training on how to form a Neighborhood Council. It is important to note that the majority of the members of this forming NC are monolingual Spanish speakers. The area includes a large section of single and multi-family residences with high concentrations of businesses along Vermont Ave. and Figueroa St.

### **Boundaries:**

North: Gage St.  
East: 110 Freeway  
South: 80th Street  
West: Vermont Ave.

**Demographics:** There are approximately 15,000 resident stakeholders. The following is the population breakdown:

White	163
Black	4684
American Indian / Alaska Native	19
Asian	30
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Island	5
Other Race	33
Multi Racial	94
Hispanic	9409

Vernon Main (formerly known as Vernon Main Neighborhood Council)

Staff began organizing efforts in the Vernon Main community in late summer and held the first meeting to organize a new neighborhood council in September 2008.

At the re-org meeting that took place on Wednesday, November 12, 2008 at Junipero Serra Library, a former Vernon Main NC (VMNC) board member invited a number of guests to attend. Within minutes, it was apparent that a number of these guests were not stakeholders in this community and were not sure why they were asked to attend. The former VMNC board member continually disrupted the meeting with comments regarding the decertified VMNC. Although staff did clarify the role of this new group and reminded stakeholders that the decertified NC had no bearing on them, it was straining and counterproductive to continually have this discussion throughout the meeting. It was apparent that there was a separate agenda spearheaded by the former VMNC board member.

Given the history of instability and havoc created by the board members of VMNC, staff believed that the actions of the former VMNC board member needed to be addressed. It was commented by fellow stakeholders that the former board member was sabotaging the participation of community members. Due to a number of comments received, staff decided to concentrate efforts to stabilize key community members to organize a neighborhood council. Since then, we have had a few meetings with core members who are interested in starting a new neighborhood council.

**Boundaries-**

North: Martin Luther King Blvd

South: Slauson Avenue

East: Central Avenue

West: 110 Freeway

Demographics: Approximately 50,000 Stakeholders

## **WEST AREA**

### Brentwood

No recent activity

Boundaries:

North:	Mulholland Dr.
South:	Wilshire Blvd. and Carmelita
East:	Sepulveda Blvd. and Brentwood Glen
West:	Sullivan Canyon and Paul Revere

Demographics: There are 30,211 resident stakeholders made up as follows:

White:	85%
Asian:	7%
Latino:	5%
African American:	Less than 1%
Other:	3%

Owner:	59%
Renter:	41%

### Pacific Palisades

No recent activity

Approximate Boundaries:

North:	Mullholland Drive
South:	City of Santa Monica
East:	Sullivan Canyon and Paul Revere
West:	Pacific Ocean

Demographics: Unknown

### Westwood

The forming group of the Westwood Neighborhood Council has been meeting since January of 2009. The group made a decision to define the Westwood Neighborhood Council area as that area encompassed within the following boundaries: West: the 405 and Sepulveda Boulevard, with the exception of the Veteran's Administration property, North: Sunset Boulevard; East: the boundary of the City of Beverly Hills; South: Santa Monica Boulevard. Generally speaking, these boundaries seem consistent with descriptors of the area from other sources. There are no overlapping boundaries with

adjacent Neighborhood Councils. A map of the boundaries has been created by the Department in cooperation with the City's Engineering Department.

The WNC forming group has been reaching out to community members to sign petitions attesting to their support of the council. Also, the forming group is working on a draft of bylaws and an outreach plan. The next meeting of the forming group will be set for the end of this month. The Neighborhood Empowerment Analyst working with the WNC forming group is creating a list of local businesses, non-profits and schools in order to assist with the outreach and planning group recruitment.

Westwood is best known as the home of UCLA. It was carved out from the Wolfskill Farm purchased in 1919 by retailer Arthur Letts. The area was developed by Lett's son-in-law, Harold Janss, and homes were advertised for sale as early as 1922. Westwood is bordered by Brentwood on the West, Bel Air on the north, Century City and Beverly Hills on the east, West Los Angeles on the southwest, Rancho Park on the Southeast, and Sawtelle on the on the south and southwest.

A more updated report from Zillow.Com indicates that the median household income in the area is approximately \$70,000, the median age is 40 years of age, and the average household size is 1.924%.

#### Approximate Boundaries:

North:	Sunset Blvd.
South:	Santa Monica Blvd.
East:	Beverly Hills
West:	405 Freeway and Sepulveda Blvd.

#### Demographics:

As of the census of 2000, it is estimated that there were approximately 48,000 people residing in Westwood. The ethnic or racial makeup was 62.53% non-Hispanic White, 2.10% Black; 7.13% Hispanic or Latino; 0.15% Native American; 23.06% Asian; 0.15% Pacific Islander; 3.19 from other races; and 5.46% were mixed race individuals.

## UNINCORPORATED AREAS

### NORTH VALLEY AREA

#### Area A (Pacoima)

**The unincorporated area is bounded** by Branford St. on the northwest; Amboy Ave. on the northeast; Muscatine St. and Rincon Ave. to its terminus, then connecting with Laurel Canyon Blvd. on the southeast; and Laurel Canyon Blvd. on the southwest. The unincorporated area abuts the Pacoima Neighborhood Council on the northwest; the Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council on the northeast and southeast; and the Arleta Neighborhood Council on the southwest. There are approximately **291** resident stakeholders in this residential area. Staff has addressed the possibility of incorporating the area into one of the surrounding certified neighborhood councils. The Pacoima Neighborhood Council has over 80,000 resident stakeholders and has found it problematic to conduct sufficient outreach within its boundaries. Inclusion into the Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council would also be problematic due to the fact that the boundaries closest to the unincorporated area contain vacant land and an industrial zone. The area is recognized by the Bureau of Engineering as part of the community of Arleta. However the Arleta Neighborhood Council feels that they are not ready to add more area into their boundaries. Staff has not conducted further outreach into this area.

### SOUTH VALLEY AREA

#### Area B (Sherman Village)

**The unincorporated area is bounded by** the Tujunga Wash on the east; the 101 Freeway on the south; and Coldwater Canyon Ave. on the west. Sherman Village abuts the Neighborhood Council Valley Village (NCVV) on the east; the Studio City Neighborhood Council (SCNC) on the south; and the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council (SONC) on the west. Sherman Village is contained within the Van Nuys – North Sherman Oaks Community Plan in the South Valley. There are **1,220** resident stakeholders in Sherman Village, which is made up of apartments, houses, and condominiums. Members of the SONC Executive Committee have had brief discussions about incorporating this area, but no decisions have been made. Staff has not conducted further outreach into this area.

### EAST AREA

#### Area C (Ramona Gardens)

This area resulted from the denial of the Greater Valley Neighborhood Council's application for certification, on May 21, 2002. **The area is bounded by** the LA-32 Neighborhood Council to north, the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council to the west,

and the Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council to the south. There is a residential stakeholder population of **6,026** of whom 5,800 are Latinos. The area contains approximately 1,598 households with a large renter base at 1,262, and 194 owner occupied. A great portion of the area is residential mostly along the southern area (Marengo St.) and throughout the center of the area. A major housing development (Ramona Gardens) is housed within the area accounting for over 2,000 residents. The rest of the residential portion is private housing. The northern end of the area is mostly industrial businesses and railroad yards. Staff has been working with the surrounding certified Neighborhood Councils to incorporate the area. The Boyle Heights NC took an official position to outreach to the area, to determine the interest in being incorporated into their boundaries. The LA-32 NC has also taken steps to invite the stakeholders from the area to actively participate in the neighborhood council. The Lincoln Heights NC has not addressed the issue. Staff has not conducted further outreach into this area.

#### **Area D (William Mead)**

This area resulted from the redrawing of the Downtown Neighborhood Council's (DLANC) proposed boundaries, at the time of the certification hearing, by Board of Neighborhood Commissioner's on April 27, 2002. **The area is bounded by** the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council (LHNC) and the LA River to east; the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council (HCNC) to the north, west, and south; and the Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council to the southeast.

There is a residential stakeholder population of **12,409**, of which Latinos comprise 44%, Whites 20%, Black/African American 33%, and Asian/Pacific Islander 5%. The area contains approximately 1,598 households with a large renter base of 78% and 12% owner occupied.

A great portion of the area is commercial/industrial mostly along the southern area and throughout the center of the area. Located within the southern portion of the area is the MTA Gateway Plaza, City Facilities, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Twin Towers Correctional Facility and the Men's Central Jail (which account for a great portion of the resident population), and small businesses. On the northern end are Ann St. Elementary School and a major housing development, William Mead Homes, accounting for over 1,300 residents. On the northern most end are commercial and industrial facilities.

One idea previously considered for the area is a merger with an existing certified NC. There are two in close proximity (Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council and Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council). The area lies within the Central Planning Service Area as does the HCNC, and the LA River creates a natural geographic boundary. No concrete discussions of incorporation have taken place with either Certified Neighborhood Council. There have also been no recent formation efforts.

## **WEST AREA**

### **Area E**

This area was an apparent oversight of the South Robertson Neighborhood Council organizing committee as it drew its proposed boundaries. At the time of certification, it was believed that the Beverly Hills City border began at Pico Blvd. east of Robertson Blvd. Consequently the area was not considered. **The orphan area is bounded by** the City of Beverly Hills on the north, Robertson Blvd. on the west, La Cienega Blvd. and the Beverly Hills City boundary on the east, and Pico Blvd. on the south. The orphan area is a mix of commercial and multi-family residential units. In 2005 this area was absorbed by the SoRo Neighborhood Council.

#### **Area F**

This area is comprised of a private country club, but is primarily a gulch or drainage ditch and there are no residents in the areas.

#### **Area G**

This area was not proposed for inclusion by the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council. Because this orphan area lies east of Fairfax and La Cienega, which has traditionally been considered the boundary of West Los Angeles, the orphan area would likely be considered a more natural fit with the Mid-City and Central area Neighborhood Councils. **The area is bounded by** Venice Blvd. and the 10 Freeway on the north, La Cienega Blvd. and Fairfax Blvd. on the west, the Mid City NC on the east, and Culver City on the south. The possibility exists that the newly elected SoRo board may adjust its boundaries to incorporate this orphan area, although the option exists for the Palms Neighborhood Council as well.

### **SOUTH AREA**

#### **Area H (South LA)**

Boundaries:

North:	Gage St.
East:	110 Freeway
South:	80 <sup>th</sup> Street
West:	Vermont Ave.

Demographics: There are approximately 15,000 resident stakeholders.

The area is surrounded by 5 Certified Neighborhood Councils (Vermont Harbor on the north, CANN DU on the East, Empowerment Congress Southeast Area Neighborhood Development Council on the south, and both the Empowerment Congress Central Area Neighborhood Development Council and the Empowerment Congress Southwest Area Neighborhood Development Council on the west).

Staff has been working with the Area and two of the surrounding Certified Neighborhood Councils (Empowerment Congress Central Area Neighborhood Development Council

and Empowerment Congress Southwest Area Neighborhood Development Council). The goal is to determine whether the Area would like to form a Neighborhood Council under the exempt clause of the Plan or merge with an existing Certified Neighborhood Council. To do this, several meetings have taken place both in the unincorporated area and the surrounding areas. Though no determination has been made, both the unincorporated area and the two Certified Neighborhood Councils are using surveys to conduct outreach. The surveys are polling stakeholders to see (1) if the unincorporated area would like to form its own Neighborhood Council, (2) if the unincorporated area would like to merge with an existing Certified Neighborhood Council, and (3) if the stakeholders in the Certified Neighborhood Councils are in agreement with the merger of the unincorporated area into their existing Neighborhood Council boundaries.

Based on staff observation, stakeholders are leaning toward a merger where the unincorporated area would be split in half along Florence Boulevard and the northern section would merge with the Empowerment Congress Central Area Neighborhood Development Council and the southern section would merge with the Empowerment Congress Southwest Area Neighborhood Development Council. No concrete decisions, however, have been made.

A representative from the South Los Angeles Organization, titled C.O.R.E. (Congress of Racial Equality), Mr. Celes King IV, has come forward and would like to help the area organize into its own Neighborhood Council under the name "Gage Neighborhood Council". He has completed drafted By-Laws and is in the process of outreaching in the area to gain needed signatures.

The PC has suggested to both certified Neighborhood Councils and to Mr. King that they speak to one another and with stakeholders in the unincorporated area to determine what may be best for the area.

With the unique characteristics of this area, information has been included in both the forming and unincorporated report and corresponding matrices.

### **Area I (South LA)**

The creation of surrounding Neighborhood Councils based on previously determined and/or historic boundaries left this void. The area is mostly residential with dense populations, similar to the surrounding Neighborhood Councils. No discussions, however, have taken place to determine whether or not the area could possibly be merged into an existing Neighborhood Council.

The area is in South Los Angeles and is located above the Harbor Gateway. It is surrounded by 3 certified Neighborhood Councils and the City Limits (Empowerment Congress Southeast Area Neighborhood Development Council to the north, the City Limits to the west, the Watts Neighborhood Council and the City Limits to the east, and both the Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council and the City Limits to the south).

Stakeholders from the unincorporated area in the community entitled Athens on the Hill have expressed interest in either forming their own NC or merging with one of the existing certified NCs.

PC has been in communication with stakeholders to discuss possible options.