

## 2013-2014 DLANC Strategic Plan Raw Feedback

### Big Vision

Downtown LA is awarded best city in the world by Mercer Quality of Living Survey.

DLANC covers a diverse area and so our Vision must have many facets, like a Diamond. It is not enough to use simple, 'feel-good' answers that look good in a SoundByte but fail to work in real life. In general, our over-arching Vision is to promote goodwill and harmony WITHIN the Board so the benefits accrue to our Constituents. With a renewed Spirit of Forgiveness and Problem solving, the Board will reach out to the areas under its jurisdiction and solve Problems there, too.

So, AN EFFECTIVE, TEACHABLE, PROBLEM-SOLVING SYSTEM, based on Forgiveness and Service, is our BIG VISION.

DLANC is the NC that submits the greatest number of community impact statements (CIS's) to the City Council, on topics ranging from immediate neighborhood-level problems to issues of state-wide concern.

DLANC and Group XYZ bring new arts festival to DTLA

(Or working with other organizations to put on similar large community event.)

A neighborhood community that smiles easily and laughs often. Downtown LA embraces the future but cherishes its past with an old fashion work ethic, but nonetheless knows how to keep things entertaining.

Meet and Greets Huge Contributor to Sense of Community

### Big Goals

1) INNER HARMONY: DLANC has suffered enormous logistical setbacks this year due to divisions in the Board. It's the Human Condition these days, we are honest about it. One of our goals is to establish a Conflict Resolution Program directly within the Board, arbitrated by an Independent 3rd Party. Once established, this will become a permanent consultancy/education resource we can export or Share with other NC's. The information gained from these activities will be used to improve Stakeholder Access to the Board and distill public demands and needs into a de-politicized, centralized language that all of the Board can agree to follow-up on, whatever their personal

preconceptions may have initially been.

2) BETTER AND MORE VISIBLE REPRESENTATION: Our prevailing task for the year is to increase our presence, representation, and public participation in areas that have not yet benefited from the NC Experience. For example, despite failures to agree on other issues, we have successfully reached out in a nonpartisan manner and **INSTALLED NEW BOARD MEMBERS** Mr. Gedeon and Mr. Boutros for the Alameda East District, a large, formerly industrial area that has had no representation in the past 12 years. That Neighborhood is severely blighted, despite the rapid influx of new Residents and Businesses. It is vulnerable to runaway development and the Residents are faced with severe, ongoing Life-Threatening Safety Issues daily. They need an **EASY** way to submit their problems and needs to The Board.

3) GREATER PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: It is our goal to bring Alameda East and other under-represented areas under the safety of the DLANC umbrella and facilitate open and healthy exchange of ideas so they can **DISCOVER** how very willing The City Of Los Angeles is to help them, once informed in an unambiguous and focused manner by an Approved Body such as DLANC. To that end, we want to establish Satellite "Walk-In" locations and/or other easily-accessed public conveyances in each District we manage. And we want to make multilingual information and services available at those locations.

4) PUBLIC SUPPORT TOWARD CITY OF LA & NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL PROGRAMS:  
Many

under-represented Residents and Business Owners are deeply **ALIENATED** from the City, which creates friction, factionalism and divisiveness. They are more than skeptical, it will be a difficult task to educate them about the benefits of NC participation at ALL. This becomes a political issue during times of crisis, because the same Residents will **FAIL TO SUPPORT** those City Services, (Police, Sanitation, etc,) that they feel have failed to support them. One excellent **VIRTUE** of the NC system is that it can overcome this public misapprehension and create a United Los Angeles Consciousness.

5) REVISED OUTREACH FUNDING STRATEGY: Talk is Cheap. And talk of Outreach is cheapest of all. That's why Outreach programs usually fail. Outreach is actually an **INVESTMENT** in the welfare of both the NC and its Stakeholders. It is, quite literally, Money and Materials 'invested' to create the 'profitable' effect of communication. This bidirectional exchange of information and personnel is **SO** important that it is **THE HEARTBEAT** of the entire NC process! Underestimating its central function results in a distressingly weak NC where ill-will from Stakeholder and general mismanagement abounds. All too many NC's put this on their Agenda as a side-issue at voting time. We plan to reverse that and make it Top Priority indefinitely.

Every Board member is connected with the community and their respective constituency, via the web, one-on-one meetings, and official DLANC meetings and presence at events. Board members are committed to becoming aware of, and then advocating for, neighborhood interests.

DLANC Board has enough time and information to develop consensus on pending policy issues and submit official positions to City Council.

- a) Develop and Implement a digital presence that includes upgrading the website, incorporating an online calendar, complementing it with a social media strategy, and supporting it all with an email newsletter.
- b) Development and Distribute print materials and swag that promote the Neighborhood Council and connect with stakeholders.
- c) Survey the community and establish partnerships with other community organizations such as service providers, volunteer groups, and neighborhood watches, in order to share networks.
- d) Participate in public events, implementing a booth strategy that engages stakeholders as beneficiaries and participants.

1. The Los Angeles Downtown Neighborhood Council will continue to work to preserve and enhance a vital and attractive downtown for the people who invest, work, shop, visit and live here.
2. The Downtown Council produces cherished events.
3. Maintaining a strong economy in the Central Business District
4. Modern zoning codes for downtown and to be an active collaborator to maintain a strong economy.
5. Facilitate downtown as an economic engine with eight high-compression cylinders: Offices, Employment, Retail, Residential, Entertainment, Conventions, Visitors, and Tourism.
6. Provides the commercial, social, and cultural pulse of our region.
7. While working with other public agencies, ensure safety, mobility, vitality and greening all take place.

I want to host a series of meet and greets at new establishments in the area that we where we hand out give-a-ways. These networking events will foster community and relationships throughout the community--particularly between businesses. Local businesses will donate prizes and rewards for those who attend. To enter the event residents/attendees will have to provide their email address--which will allow us to communicate with these people down the road. We can also provide a DLANC approved decal for these new establishments that host an event. Getting this sticker will be a mark of pride to display, much like the "Review us on Yelp" or "Zagat Rated" stickers tend to be. We also want word to spread that these events are an opportunity to meet with your DLANC reps and communicate local business needs.

## Big Solutions

Work with the City of Los Angeles' newly developing Economic Development Department by providing community input for ideas in categories including sustainability, transportation, safety, education, health care, environment.

Involving and engaging all community members to participate via website and social media. Create social media town hall meetings for residents, property owners, and business participation.

a) We don't have a strong digital or social media presence. Solution – Survey the surrounding Neighborhood Councils and share strategies with other successful councils.

b) We need more interactions with other organizations and groups. Solution – Spread the word through other groups' mailing lists and enlist their support (real estate agents, non-profits, Council office, local principal, etc.)

c) Spread print materials and swag by attending community events as DLANC representatives.

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3)The BIG Solutions: Anticipate the challenges or obstacles that you will encounter and incorporate the solutions in your plan.

Challenge: Administrative. We don't know what to do, when to do it, or how to do it. Our by-laws and standing rules are not clear on how and when we can work with Council offices and other City representatives or otherwise represent DLANC's position. The City's (DONE's) expectations of the Board are not clearly communicated and often change without warning, and without enough time to adjust policy recommendations or budget allocations.

Solution: Create a web-based issues tracking program that utilizes Council File Numbers, when applicable, to refer to motions before DLANC. Amend the by-laws to require this activity as well as the procedures for maintenance

of the system, as well as the responsibilities of the officers for maintenance.

Challenge: Lack of time and information. Solution: Allocate resources to retreats and trainings for Board members to become familiar with internal procedure as well as outreach and consensus-building tools. Some events should be catered.

1. In order for the Downtown Neighborhood Council to preserve and enhance a vital and attractive downtown for the people who invest, work, shop, visit and live there, a multi-faceted marketing plan must be implemented to reach many more businesses and residents alike with stimulating cultural events.
2. In order for the Downtown Council to produce cherished events, strategic alliances must be developed (in a barter type relationship) to put on these cultural events.
3. Maintaining a strong economy in the Central Business District will require working side by side with city agencies, the chamber of commerce, visitors' bureau and various trade organizations and being included in their respective marketing collateral.
4. Progressive modern zoning codes for downtown will be achieved by being an active collaborator and integrated via our sub-committees in the tailoring of ordinances that will stimulate continued economic growth.
5. To facilitate downtown as an economic engine in the areas of more offices, increased employment, energized retail, attracting more residents, more entertainment venues and a destination place for convention and tourism, DLANC will rely on developing and maintaining two to three strong strategic alliances with participating entities in each of the main areas outlined for the economic engine.
6. Provides the commercial, social, and cultural pulse of our region by marketing awareness and utilize creative consolidation campaigns where the budget is lacking.
7. Working with other public agencies to ensure safety, mobility, and vitality all take place will require each board member representing their committee to actively engage per a designed division of labor.

Attendance may be low for the first few events, but if we stick with it, and really put on a show, word will quickly spread. Businesses may be reluctant to help each other at first, but when they begin to hear that positive relationships and benefits are coming from these get togethers, they'll change their tune. The key is to keep these events at a low cost, keep them short, make them painless. I'm not suggesting big bloated parties--just simple meet and greets. Stop by, make and appearance and leave. Everyone can do that.

#### Big Budget

Outreach \$18,000 \_\_\_

Operations \$6,200 \_\_\_\_\_ (current office rent \$350 per month)

Neighborhood Purpose Grants (NPGs) \$12,700 \_\_\_\_\_ Neighborhood  
Improvements \$1,000 \_\_\_\_\_ Elections/Selections  
\$ 100 \_\_\_\_\_

**The BIG Budget:**

- 1) Outreach \$ 15664
- 2) Operations \$ 6305
- 3) Neighborhood Purpose Grants (NPGs) \$ 9500
- 4) Neighborhood Improvements \$ 5500
- 5) Elections/Selections \$ 500

Space will be donated.

Goods will be donated.

Set up/clean up can be donated.

Awareness will be free (email--and each event will be easier to promote than the last) Cost might be \$250-\$500 for supplies and provisions and snacks

**Big Score**

Measure website/social media traffic and stake holder participation/responses.

1) OBTAIN PROPER FUNDING: Outreach requires MONEY, MATERIALS, WORK SPACE, and a

STAFF. So we plan to erect a true, Stakeholder-friendly Outreach System with public locations, a permanent Staff, and Approved Materials consistent with City Of LA mandates and Guidelines. This would immediately create NC Satellite Locations accesible to all Stakeholders. Meetings, rallies, and other forums will naturally emerge from this greater ACCESS; abounding with juicy information that the sponsoring NC will use to create focused, concise recommendations to The City. Since the money is available and would get 'swept' anyway, we Pray that we will have the opportunity to invest heavily in this area during the next year, it is a Primary Need of our DLANC. We will unabashedly request WHAT IT WILL ACTUALLY COST to implement our New Outreach Program, based on the Guiding Principles we have set forth in our Vision Statement.

2) PROMOTE BOARD HARMONY AND EFFECTIVENESS: Needless to say, a factionalized Board

is NOT serving the needs of Stakeholders. The problem with our Volunteer position is that it is all-too-easy for us to think this is a hobby and that we can therefore play games with one another's time. Indirectly, this means we are playing games with our Stakeholders. Some of us forget we are City Employees, with specific

responsibilities. Therefore, Rules of proper conduct must be installed into our Bylaws. There must also be a 3rd -party arbitrator available to the Board as a paid Staff member. The PAYMENT to an arbitrator is a signal to all Board members that we aren't playing games anymore, that this comes OUT of our Budget and therefore the Budget of our Stakeholders. We are obligated to ACCOUNT TO THE CITY for all Money, which automatically sets a higher standard of behavior. And there must also be accountability to the Public, which will be covered later.

3) CREATE STRATEGIC, VISIBLE CHANGE IN NEIGHBORHOODS: Despite whatever Good Works go

on 'under the hood', the prevailing public perception is that NC's don't work or only serve the needs of a few. That's because local neighborhoods often have URGENT NEEDS that are so dramatic to Stakeholders that they drown out anything else. Reworking a SINGLE INTERSECTION if it is in bad shape can light up an entire block with a Domino Effect, often causing unexpected benefits far and wide. Taking a proactive stance with Parking Variances for over-ticketed Residents can solve both parking AND safety problems and create better relations with Law Enforcement Agencies. That is 3 Benefits for one Action, and we plan to think formulaically like that in the future when deciding which Actions to support.

4) DEVELOP A "MODEL FOR NC SUCCESS" THAT IS EXPORTABLE AND TEACHABLE: By adopting a

Spirit of Service and Forgiveness and Problem-Solving, we will use our own NC, and its past problems, as a guinea pig in a larger Experiment. We feel that change is possible at any time in history. We understand what the pitfalls can be, from our personal experiences as a Governing Body. Luckily, we have acquired several new, highly-proactive Board members, which has shifted a long-standing imbalance of power that handicapped the Board in the past. We want to codify and repackage our personal experiences into a Template that ANY Neighborhood Council can use to improve its operations and effectiveness. This "Forgiveness & Problem-Solving" attitude will be our new Guiding Light.

5) CREATE BOARD ACCOUNTABILITY: As NC Board Members, WE and our Stakeholders come

from a much more diverse, and sometimes difficult, environment than most City Employees. It has to be so! After all, the whole NC process was designed by the City Of LA (THANK YOU!!) to bring information from the Street to City Hall. The NC, and its Board, is the middle-man in that process. That makes each and every Board Member a middle-man or woman to the District they represent. Since we COME from those Districts, we look and behave the way our constituent Stakeholders do. One of the hazards of this arrangement is that it is Street vs. Street. People form prejudices prior to investigation. Conflict is inevitable unless respect is enforced AND each party feels like their needs are being properly attended to by the Board as a whole. To this end, we plan to publicly PRAISE effective work and CENSURE mismanagement of

group resources such as time and money and REWARD good performers with more resources. This is consistent with the practices of any healthy company. That will be accomplished by quarterly Peer Review Reports. A Peer Review System will be implemented on paper and its results distributed online for the benefit of Stakeholders and future Voters. So that this doesn't become an abusive forum, there will be strict secret voting procedures during Quarterly Peer Review. The Peer Review Standard we develop during this process will be codified and made available to other NC's, as another example of our new "Multiple Benefits From A Single Action" policy detailed earlier.

- 1) Measure traffic on website and utilize all social media outlets.
- 2) Increase our contact and mailing list.
- 3) More consistent grassroots outreach to stakeholders for meeting attendance.
- 4) More Public Events.
- 5) Make a list of Strategic Partners and expand our network.
- 6) Utilizing formulas that measure and evaluate our success. Follow up is the key.

We have two simple measurements to track success:

- 1) Number of attendees per event
- 2) Number of emails gathered for the DLANC email list as a result.

If these numbers go up, we can consider this a big success.