



Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Neighborhood Council Budget Packages

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Budget

| Code | Category | Total |
|-----------------------|--|----------------|
| 100 Operations | | |
| AUD | Audio and Visual Services | 300 |
| FDU | Training and Board Retreat | 1,000 |
| FAC | Facilities Related and Space Rental | 1,200 |
| MIS | Miscellaneous Expense | 100 |
| OFF | Office Equipment and Supplies | 500 |
| POS | Postage | 700 |
| TAC | Temporary Staff | 1,000 |
| TRN | Translation and Transcription | 1,000 |
| | Sub Total | 11.32% |
| | | \$5,300 |
| 200 Outreach | | |
| ADV | Advertising | 1,000 |
| EVE | Event Expense / Food & Refreshments | 3,000 |
| MET | Meeting Expense | 500 |
| NEW | Newsletter Expense | 600 |
| WEB | Website Maintenance Enhancement/Creation | 1,000 |
| | Sub Total | 16.49% |
| | | \$6,100 |

Sample

"You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you are going because you might not get there." Yogi Berra

"Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood and probably will not themselves be realized." Daniel Burnham

Neighborhood Councils were created with a purpose, "To promote more citizen participation in government and make government more responsive to local needs."

Individual Neighborhood Councils bring that City Charter mandate to life in local communities with unique Strategic Plans that reflect the specific character and personality of their neighborhood.

As the fiscal year draws to an end, we typically see Neighborhood Councils frantically spend down their funds without much consideration to an overall strategic plan simply because they do not want the funds swept from their communities. As of April 30, 2013, out of the approximately \$3.7 million the Neighborhood Councils were allocated this fiscal year, which includes last year's encumbrances, there is still \$2.3 million remaining with only a little over a month of spending time left. Out of the 4 spending categories, Neighborhood Councils have spent \$35,000 on Neighborhood Improvements, \$131,400 on Neighborhood Purpose Grants, \$1.1 million on Operations and \$145,300 on Outreach this fiscal year.

To assist in planning for the upcoming year, EmpowerLA has developed this Strategic Plan template for Neighborhood Councils, a tool that helps to focus on the objective, to fund appropriately for success, and then to measure the results. Together with the FY 2013-14 Budget and a roster of the current Board members so we know who is voting on the use of public funds, we hope to guide Neighborhood Councils to effectively plan for the regular distribution of the funds pursuant to the vision and goals for the year.

Because we'd like your Board to spend some time discussing your Strategic Plan and Budget, we're extending the FY 2013-2014 Budget Package submission deadline to Friday, July 12, 2013. The submission should include:

1. [Completed Strategic Plan](#)
2. [Completed FY 2013-2014 Budget](#)
3. Completed and executed Board Resolution approving the Strategic Plan and Budget
4. [Complete Board Roster using the Department template](#)
5. [Completed NC Outreach Survey](#)

Please let us know if you have any questions or need assistance by contacting us at (213) 978-1551 or by emailing done.funding@lacity.org. Thank you for your work to Empower LA!

2013/2014 Strategic Plan

Neighborhood Council: _____

The BIG Vision: _____

Example: The XXNC wins the EmpowerLA Award for Outreach! or Neighborhood Council draws more voters than Citywide Municipal race!

(Imagine a year from now, when the headline in your local paper announces your success, what do you want the headline to say? Vision should be consistent with the City Charter mandate "To promote more citizen participation in government and make government more responsive to local needs.")

The BIG Goals: Break the Vision down into achievable goals that are steps in fulfilling your vision.

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Example:

- 1) 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.
- 2) Development and Distribute print materials, including business cards, brochures, and resource guides, that promote the Neighborhood Council and connect with stakeholders.
- 3) Survey the community and establish partnerships with other community organizations such as service providers, volunteer groups, and neighborhood watches, in order to share networks.
- 4) Participate in public events, implementing a booth strategy that engages stakeholders.

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

Example:

- 1) We're not tech savvy so where do we go? Solution – Survey the surrounding Neighborhood Councils and share strategies with other successful councils.
- 2) We don't know the other organizations and groups. Solution – Find the people that do and enlist their support (real estate agents, non-profits, Council office, local principal, etc.)
- 3) Look at the tools in our Outreach Plan template. What tools do you have and what would like to have?
- 4) These things cost money! Solution – Break it down and budget for your goals. Budget for the outreach materials that are part of your booth strategy and also the tools for public events (canopy, table, outreach materials, etc.)

The BIG Budget: Use the Neighborhood Council Budget template to help you categorize your expenditures based on your vision, goal and solutions.

- 1) Outreach \$ _____
- 2) Operations \$ _____
- 3) Neighborhood Purpose Grants (NPGs) \$ _____
- 4) Neighborhood Improvements \$ _____
- 5) Elections/Selections \$ _____

The Neighborhood Council yearly allocation for FY 2013/2014 is \$37,000. While there are no set criteria for how much a Neighborhood Council should spend in each area, remember that the mission for Neighborhood Councils: "increase citizen participation and make government more responsible to local needs." Are your funding expenditures doing that? While you can give NPGs out to the community, don't forget to set aside funds to increase community awareness of what is going on with City electeds and departments so you can bring community members' concerns back to the City government.

New for FY 2013-2014 Budgets

The 2014 Elections /Selections must be incorporated in the 2013/2014 Budget, including:

- a recommendation of at least 10% for outreach (\$3700) or more depending on whether your Neighborhood Council wants to do mailers, ads, etc.
- \$500 for Vote-by-Mail, plus postage if over 200 pieces (optional)
- \$250 for Hospitality on the day of the (s)election for the poll workers
- a recommended \$200 for New Board Retreat
- additional costs for Pilot Projects such as online voting (optional), which could potentially cost \$5000 per Neighborhood Council. We are currently preparing a Request for Proposals from online voting platform companies and will know potential costs by mid to late summer.

A Board roster of the Neighborhood Council must also be submitted using the Department's template so the City and stakeholders know who is voting on the use of public funds.

Heads up: for the new Funding Program system, you will also need to figure out your monthly expenses, e.g. lease, storage, printing, food for general meetings, phone, etc. so you know the minimum you must request each month to cover your Neighborhood Council's expenses. We'll be asking for that number when we start setting up accounts in June.

Remember – Budgets can always be adjusted during the year with a Board vote so changes are easily made if necessary.

The BIG Score: Measure your progress and your final performance, adjusting along the way. Evaluate your journey based on results. Start with an evaluation of your current position and then get busy!

Example:

- 1) Website – measure traffic
- 2) Contacts – count the # of people on your email distribution
- 3) Meetings – look at the crowd and count your stakeholders
- 4) Public Events – how many do you do and what is the result?
- 5) Partners – make a list of organizations in your network.

A year from now, ask the same questions and count the same measurables and evaluate your success. We'll be following up, too, to see how you did.

The BIG Reminder: Align your behavior with your Vision.

Everything you do should be advancing you toward your Vision. If something you are doing is not aligned, it is a potential obstacle or challenge that will interfere with your goals.

At every turn, ask "Does this promote more citizen participation in government and make government more responsive to local needs."

If the answer is yes, then you are bringing your Vision to life!