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WEST HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

JOINT BOARD AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, December 16, 2025 @ 7:30 PM

**Chaminade College Preparatory – Condon Center 2nd Floor
23241 W. Cohasset Street, West Hills, CA 91304**

Enter Chaminade through the Cohasset Street entrance between Woodlake and Platt Avenues. Drive through the parking lot, bear left and continue over the hill until you see the Condon Family Technology Center on the left. Park in the nearest lot.

In conformity with the October 6, 2023 enactment of California Senate Bill 411 (Portantino) and La City Council Approval on November 1, 2023, the West Hills Neighborhood Council Government Relations Committee Agenda Committee meeting will be conducted virtually, telephonically and in person.

- To attend online via Zoom Webinar: Click or paste the following link into your browser: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88391608200>
- To call in by phone, dial (669) 900-6833, then punch in this Webinar code when prompted: **883 160 8200**, then press #.
- To attend in person, please attend Chaminade College Preparatory – Condon Center 2nd Floor, 23241 W. Cohasset Street, West Hills, CA 91304

This meeting is open to the public. Doors open 10 minutes before the meeting starts. Those who wish to speak during the meeting may be asked to complete a Speaker Card. Comments on matters not on the agenda will be heard during the Public Comment period. Those who wish to speak on an agenda item will be heard when the item is considered.

1. Call to Order / Establish Quorum: Joanne Yvanek-Garb, Co-Chair, Brenda Citrom, Co-Chair, Kim Koerber, Co-Chair Aida Abkarians, Saif Mogri, Joan Trent, Faye Barta, Brian Murray, Brad Vanderhoof, Secretary
2. Comments from the Chairs.
3. General Public Comment
4. Review and Approval of November Meeting Minutes.
5. Discussion and Possible Action –Charter Reform meetings and progress.

SB 411 Updates: If a Neighborhood Council has a quorum of board members in a physical location, board members who wish to join the meeting via teleconferencing must adhere to AB 2449 rules and regulations. If a Neighborhood Council does not have a quorum of board members in a physical location, they must adhere to SB 411 rules and regulations. .In the event of a disruption that prevents the eligible legislative body from broadcasting the meeting to members of the public using the call-in option or internet-based service option, or in the event of a disruption within the eligible legislative body's control that prevents members of the public from offering public comments using the call-in option or internet-based service option, the eligible legislative body shall take no further action on items appearing on the meeting agenda until public access to the meeting via the call-in option or internet-based service option is restored. Actions taken on agenda items

during a disruption that prevents the eligible legislative body from broadcasting the meeting may be challenged pursuant to Section 54960.1. The eligible legislative body shall not require public comments to be submitted in advance of the meeting and shall provide an opportunity for the public to address the legislative body and offer comments in real time. Notwithstanding Section 54953.3, an individual desiring to provide public comment through the use of an internet website, or other online platform, not under the control of the eligible legislative body, that requires registration to log in to a teleconference may be required to register as required by the third-party internet website or online platform to participate.(i) An eligible legislative body that provides a timed public comment period for each agenda item shall not close the public comment period for the agenda item, or the opportunity to register, pursuant to subparagraph, provide public comment until that timed public comment period has elapsed.(ii) An eligible legislative body that does not provide a timed public comment period, but takes public comment separately on each agenda item, shall allow a reasonable amount of time per agenda item to allow public members the opportunity to provide public comment, including time for members of the public to register pursuant to subparagraph (D), or otherwise be recognized for the purpose of providing public comment.(iii) An eligible legislative body that provides a timed general public comment period that does not correspond to a specific agenda item shall not close the public comment period or the opportunity to register, pursuant to subparagraph (D), until the timed general public comment period has elapsed.

Public Input: Comments from the public on agenda items will be heard only when the respective item is being considered. Comments from the public on other matters not appearing on the agenda that are within the Board's jurisdiction will be heard during the General Public Comment period. Please note that under the Brown Act, the Board is prevented from acting on a matter that you bring to its attention during the General Public Comment period; however, an issue raised by a member of the public may become the subject of a future Board meeting. Public comment is limited to two minutes per speaker, unless adjusted by the presiding officer of the committee.

The Americans With Disabilities Act - As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and upon request will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and activities. Sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or other auxiliary aids and/or services may be provided upon request. To ensure availability of services, please make your request at least 3 business days (72 hours) prior to the meeting by contacting the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment by calling (213) 978-1551 or email: NCsupport@lacity.org

Public Posting of Agendas - WHNC agendas are posted for public review at Platt Village, on the Southside of Pavilions, closest to Nothing Bundt Cakes at 6534 Platt Avenue, West Hills, CA 91307 or at our website, www.westhillsnc.org You can also receive our agendas via email by subscribing to L.A. City's Early Notification System (ENS)

Notice to Paid Representatives -If you are compensated to monitor, attend, or speak at this meeting, City law may require you to register as a lobbyist and report your activity. See Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 48.01 et seq. More information is available at ethics@lacity.org/lobbying. For assistance, please contact the Ethics Commission at (213) 978-1960 or ethics.commission@lacity.org

Public Access of Records - In compliance with Government Code Section 54957.5, non-exempt writings that are distributed to a majority or all of the board in advance of a meeting may be viewed at our website: www.westhillsnc.org or at the scheduled meeting. In addition, if you would like a copy of any record related to an item on the agenda, please contact the WHNC's executive director via email at michelle.ritchie@westhillsnc.org

Reconsideration and Grievance Process - For information on the NC's process for board action reconsideration, stakeholder grievance policy, or any other procedural matters related to this Council, please consult the NC Bylaws. The Bylaws are available at our Board meetings and our website www.westhillsnc.org

Servicios De Traduccion: Si requieres servicios de traducción, favor de avisar al Concejo Vecinal 3 días de trabajo (72 horas) antes de evento. Por favor contacteMichelle.Ritchie@westhillsnc.org

IT'S OUR NEIGHBORHOOD. LET'S BUILD A COMMUNITY.



West Hills Neighborhood Council

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JOINT GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE/BOARD MEETING MINUTES Chaminade High School November 24, 2025

Revised November 24, 2025

The Committee shall take official action by a simple majority of yes and no votes cast by the committee members present at a duly noticed regular or special Government Relations Committee meeting, not to include abstentions. There shall be no proxy voting.

Attendance: Faye Barta, Brenda Citrom, Kim Koerber, Brian Murray, Joan Trent, Brad Vanderhoof (left 7:55 PM, returned 8:20 PM), and Joanne Yvanek-Garb
Committee Members Absent: Aida Abkarians, Saif Mogri
Other Board Members Present: Glenn Jennings

1. Call to Order / Establish a Quorum: Co-chair Joanne Yvanek-Garb called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. A quorum was established.
2. Comments from the Co-Chairs: Joanne spoke about fiscal transparency.
3. General Public Comment: None
4. Approval of October Meeting Minutes: No action taken.
5. Charter Reform meetings and progress: There was a discussion on lawsuit settlements, contract negotiations, and other Budget and Finance business being held in closed session.

Brad left the meeting at 7:55 PM and returned at 8:20 PM.

The committee went line by line through the WHNC Draft Charter Reform Recommendations document. An amendment was proposed to have a single contact responsible to NCs. Kim asked for more practical training, such as how to file a CIS, to be part of the trainings for NC Board members. This will be added to Section 3. Kim also said the workshop training recordings should be available on the DONE website without having to register for the class.

Ideas from committee members on other changes to the document are due to Brenda by Tuesday, November 25, no later than noon.

Brenda will make the changes and distribute the updated document.

Co-chair Kim Koerber adjourned the meeting at 8:46 PM.

The next meeting of this committee is scheduled for December 15, 2025, 7:30 PM, Chaminade High School.

West Hills Neighborhood Council City Charter Reform Recommendations

The West Hills Neighborhood Council extends our sincere appreciation for your enormous responsibility. Reforming the City Charter is both technically complex and democratically consequential, and we recognize the diligence, judgment, and civic commitment required to undertake this work. At the same time, we must underscore the urgency of this moment. Neighborhood Councils—created to serve as the City’s eyes and ears—have been persistently under-resourced, underutilized, and structurally constrained in fulfilling their intended role. Effective, durable reform is needed now. We respectfully submit the following recommendations for your consideration.

I. Fiscal Transparency and Revenue Authority

Los Angeles cannot build public trust or maintain essential services without full financial transparency. The City also needs modern revenue tools: for example, allowing City-operated asphalt recycling facilities to sell reclaimed material, and taxing commercial users of the public right-of-way—such as autonomous delivery robots and autonomous vehicles like Waymo—that impose measurable wear on streets without contributing to their upkeep. These measures would strengthen the City’s fiscal resilience and create a fairer, more sustainable revenue structure. The Charter must require that all City budget and financial data be publicly accessible in clear, searchable formats so residents can understand how public resources are allocated and spent.

City Controller Kenneth Mejia has repeatedly highlighted the City’s lack of “budget conformity,” in which the adopted budget does not reflect actual departmental spending or operational practices. His findings underscore the need for a Charter framework that guarantees transparent, accurate, and accessible financial information. Ensuring reliable fiscal data is essential for restoring public trust and enabling residents, Neighborhood Councils, and policymakers to make informed decisions.

To support these transparency reforms, the Office of the City Controller must be structurally strengthened. The Charter should provide the Controller with an independent budget, designate the Controller as the City’s Chief Financial Officer, and establish minimum professional qualifications for the office. The Charter should also clarify that the Controller’s audit authority includes performance audits of all City programs funded with public tax dollars, including those overseen by elected officials. Additionally, the Controller must be empowered to hire outside counsel when necessary, and the City’s Fraud, Waste, and Abuse function should be fully enshrined in the Charter. *Lastly, the City Council must offer far greater fiscal transparency to both neighborhood councils and the general public, particularly regarding lawsuits, nuisance claims, and contract or union negotiations. At present, excessive confidentiality shrouds these negotiations, limiting meaningful oversight and community understanding. Furthermore, Neighborhood Council budget advocates should be empowered to voice their perspectives on these issues, ensuring that local communities have a role in shaping decisions that directly affect them.*

Together, these reforms would fortify the City’s financial oversight framework and ensure that public resources are managed transparently and responsibly.

2. Democratic Representation by City Council

The scale and diversity of Los Angeles demand a legislative structure proportional to its population. Expanding the size of the City Council and establishing district populations no greater than 150,000 residents (based on 2024 estimated population), like peer cities, would create more responsive representation. ***With today’s population, considering Los Angeles is the second most populist city in the United States, this adjustment would result in roughly 26 council seats which is appropriate for our population.*** More reasonable district sizes promote constituent access, accountability, and more geographically relevant policymaking. The City Council must be more responsive and accountable to neighborhood council comments and suggestions.

3. Ethics and Accountability Reform

Los Angeles must modernize its ethics rules and enforcement mechanisms to reflect contemporary political and economic realities. Granting the Ethics Commission authority to place ordinances directly on the city ballot would introduce a meaningful check on Council inaction and allow the public to address urgent issues without undue delay. The Ethics Commission (EC) plays a central role in maintaining integrity within City government. Expanding the EC from five to seven commissioners, including two selected through an open application process, would introduce new voices, reduce political influence, and reinforce public confidence.

A stable and predictable funding formula—tied to (Consumer Price Index) CPI, new mandates, (Cost of Living Adjustment) COLA, and step increases—is necessary to ensure the EC can fulfill its growing responsibilities. *To keep contribution limits aligned with real economic conditions, the ECs should have the authority to adjust those limits using broader indicators—such as wage growth, disposable income, and poverty rates—rather than relying solely on the CPI.*

The Charter should also close long-standing loopholes. Currently, lobbyist employers and clients may still give gifts to City officials even though lobbyists themselves cannot. This inconsistency undermines trust and should be corrected. Similarly, the ability of lobbyists and firms to bundle campaign contributions weakens the existing campaign finance restrictions and should be prohibited.

At the same time/Because ethics violations remain inconsistently enforced, making it essential for the City to clearly assign prosecutorial responsibility—whether to the Ethics Commission itself, the City Attorney, the District Attorney, or a dedicated independent office. and ensure that enforcement processes and related funding are transparent to the public, including resources intended to deter nuisance litigation. Strengthening the legal

infrastructure for Neighborhood Councils is equally important; while the City Attorney's office has historically supported NCs—most notably through attorneys like Elise Ruden, who has capably resolved a range of issues—a dedicated legal representative with a deep understanding of NC needs would provide consistent guidance and greatly enhance the system's ability to function effectively.

Taken together, these reforms would establish a more modern, transparent, and enforceable ethics framework.

4. Transparency and Data Infrastructure

A 21st-century city requires 21st-century data capacity. The current reliance on third-party vendors for essential datasets often leads to fragmentation, high costs, and barriers to transparency. Establishing a City Data Bureau would centralize data expertise, streamline operations across departments, and strengthen public access to information. *Integrating an AI-driven search interface would further simplify how residents and staff locate and interpret City data.*

Such a bureau is especially vital for complex processes such as redistricting, where accurate data and clear public visibility are indispensable. A permanent in-house team would reduce redundancy, improve analysis quality, and ensure consistent citywide data standards.

5. Infrastructure and Governance Modernization

Los Angeles must overhaul how it manages the public right-of-way. Making LADOT a Charter department with full responsibility for street and sidewalk construction, maintenance, and repair would create a unified and accountable structure for one of the City's most essential functions. The current multi-agency system diffuses responsibility, slows coordination, and complicates capital planning.

Replacing the Board of Public Works with a single *reporting entity to the NCs* would streamline oversight and eliminate the fragmented governance that has often impeded timely infrastructure delivery. To coordinate the City's complex capital programs, we recommend creating an Office of Infrastructure Management led by an executive chosen for demonstrated operational and capital-delivery expertise.

This Office should house the City's Capital Improvement Plan and the Charter should require two-year budget cycles and a five-year plan to bring predictability, transparency, and apolitical stability to long-term planning. Funding should be stabilized through dedicated revenues to LADOT, restoring service levels to a capacity that would insulate infrastructure maintenance from fiscal volatility.

6. Neighborhood Empowerment and System Reform

Neighborhood Councils require clear authority and dependable support if they are to fulfill their chartered purpose. NCs should be empowered to take official positions on County, State, and Federal legislation affecting their communities. Establishing an Assembly of Neighborhood Councils would ensure that bottom-up priorities reach the legislative agenda by allowing the Assembly to select one topic annually for an evening City Council meeting.

There should be no term limits for Neighborhood Council board members. Term limits would lead to the loss of institutional knowledge and experience that long-serving board members bring to their councils. Frequent turnover could disrupt continuity, delay long-term projects, and interrupt established relationships with City departments. The volunteer nature of NC service already makes recruitment challenging, and mandatory turnover could leave some boards without enough willing members to serve. It is difficult enough now to get community and stakeholders involved during the election process. Limiting stakeholders' ability to elect knowledgeable and effective representatives of their choice, reducing leadership continuity, and diminishing the strength of advocacy for underserved communities is already challenging. Term limits will affect continuity, community trust which are essential to the effective functioning of Neighborhood Councils.

DONE must recognize that Neighborhood Council members are volunteers with limited time and competing personal and professional obligations. They cannot accommodate hours-long training sessions that extend well beyond what is necessary for compliance. Most required trainings can be completed within a half hour, and if they were made interactive, they would be far more effective and retainable.

Neighborhood councils need practical, accessible trainings on everything from navigating City processes to sharing proposals with other councils and advancing ideas to the City. These trainings should be easy to find and widely available. To support this, DONE should build a significantly improved and more functional website where council members can quickly access training materials, step-by-step guidance, and practical resources for core neighborhood council procedures and applications.

DONE must be restructured as a facilitative—rather than directive—agency. DONE should not impose discretionary policy constraints or interfere in local decision-making. Instead, it should operate with transparency and accountability by publishing regular performance dashboards tracking election logistics, funding approvals, and service delivery – a facilitative role. Its budget should provide equitable support across all councils. In summary, the role of DONE should be to help NCs and to make things easier providing support, not dictating direction. NCs should be setting policies, not DONE.

Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (BONC) also requires modernization. Seats should be reserved for NC-elected or regionally nominated commissioners to ensure deeper community understanding and direct system experience. Annual “State of the Neighborhood Council System” reports should measure election turnout, grievance resolution timelines, board retention, and overall system health. Regular evening meetings held across multiple regions would further democratize access and ensure that commissioners engage directly with the communities they oversee.

These reforms would return NCs to their original purpose ensuring that local civic participation is respected, supported, and genuinely woven into City governance. *They would also reaffirm the system’s core identity as a grassroots, bottom-up, decentralized model of engagement, rather than a top-down hierarchy that sidelines community initiative.*

7. Strengthening Community Participation and Access

Civic participation is strongest when it is accessible. City Council and Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) meetings should be held at times and locations that allow maximum public engagement, particularly evenings and weekends, and in or near the communities affected by the agenda items. Improving hybrid broadcast quality, translation services, and accommodation accessibility is essential to inclusive participation.

Neighborhood Councils must receive timely notice of City decisions that affect their communities. A notice requirement must be received within 96 hours for Council or Commission actions and within 48 hours’ notice for new planning and development applications. This would allow NCs to consult residents and respond meaningfully. City departments should attend NC meetings with 30 days’ notice.

These changes would transform NCs from symbolic advisory bodies into meaningful participants in local policymaking.

8. Land Use, Local Authority, and Planning

Neighborhood Councils possess local knowledge essential to sound planning. They should be granted authority in land-use matters—either through structured advisory weight in discretionary decisions or a formal right of appeal to City Planning or Building & Safety. When the City acts contrary to an NC recommendation, it should be required to issue written findings demonstrating consistency with applicable Community Plans and public welfare standards. *The City must provide a written explanation when they disagree with NC recommendations.*

Commissions should be restructured to support these reforms or eliminated if they cannot be aligned with enhanced NC engagement. This framework acknowledges that local insight is not merely supplemental but indispensable to effective governance.

The Area Planning Commission (APC) should be restructured to support these reforms or eliminated if they cannot be aligned with enhanced NC engagement. APCs must be free from political influence, include members with relevant subject matter expertise, and avoid conflict of interest by rejecting associations with development enterprises.

9. Strategic Collaboration and Ongoing Evaluation

Charter reform must establish processes for continuous improvement. The city should mandate regular review of engagement tools, oversight structures, and communication systems. Neighborhood Councils should have the authority to initiate system reviews, assess public communication strategies, and recommend improvements to city processes.

Ongoing evaluation ensures that reforms remain relevant and responsive as Los Angeles evolves.

Closing Statement

We offer these recommendations with deep appreciation for the Commission's work and with the urgency born of two decades of first-hand experience. Neighborhood Councils can fulfill their foundational purpose only if the charter recognizes the partnership formed by NCs and the City of Los Angeles. This partnership is essential to restoring trust and ensuring that the civic engagement in Los Angeles is substantive rather than symbolic. *We consider these suggestions critical to the survival of all neighborhood council systems.*

With appreciation,

West Hills Neighborhood Council

A Certified Neighborhood Council (CNC) or a person identified as a member of a CNC or as representing the CNC may not file an appeal on behalf of the Neighborhood Council; persons affiliated with a CNC may only file as an individual on behalf of self. The appellate body must act on the appeal within a time period specified in the LAMC Section(s) pertaining to the type of appeal being filed. Los Angeles City Planning will make its best efforts to have appeals scheduled prior to the appellate body's last day to act in order to provide due process to the appellant. If the appellate body is unable to come to a consensus or is unable to hear and consider the appeal prior to the last day to act, the appeal is automatically deemed denied, and the original decision will stand. The last day to act as defined in the LAMC may only be extended if formally agreed upon by the applicant.

