



NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS  
**EMPOWER LA**<sup>™</sup>  
Department of  
NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT



# EMPOWERLA BUDGET PRESENTATION

2024-2025

# About the Department

Our **mission** is to empower and inspire civic engagement and participation within the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council system, fostering a more responsive local government. We strive to cultivate public involvement in City governance, and our commitment is to ensure equitable opportunities, driven by valued partnerships that address the diverse needs of our communities.

Our **vision** is to promote the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council system as a cornerstone of civic engagement and inclusive participation that makes local government responsive to local needs. We envision a city where every community member is an active participant in positive change, shaping a community-driven narrative that propels Los Angeles into a model of effective grassroots democracy.

# EmpowerLA Guiding Mantras / Values

- Support the neighborhood councils' achievement of their charter-driven civic engagement role, embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion and co-creating their advocacy landscape.
- Embrace the complexity and variance of the NC system by supporting their individual and collective range of competencies.
- Advance the operational self-sustainability of neighborhood councils by leveraging learning and insights systemwide and appropriately resourcing the Department to address identified needs.
- Continually evaluate and measure the Department's services by developing high-quality continual feedback processes.



# EMPOWERLA Operations

- Civic Leadership
- Policy and Government Relations
- Awareness and Engagement
- Innovation
- Communications
- Administrative Services

# Civic Leadership



## Mission Statement :

Provide the Neighborhood Council leaders with the knowledge, skills and resources to be the change through civic leadership. In providing tools and trainings the Neighborhood Council leaders have the fundamentals to be an asset to their communities.

# Policy & Government Relations

## Mission Statement :

Develop and advance the Neighborhood Council system through legislative advocacy in collaboration with the Mayor's Office and City Council members, Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, City departments, and legislative partners.



# Awareness & Engagement

## Mission Statement :

Connect communities throughout Los Angeles to the Neighborhood Council system through direct public engagement programs, awareness messaging campaigns, strategic community partnerships, civic participation and Neighborhood Council Elections.



# Innovation

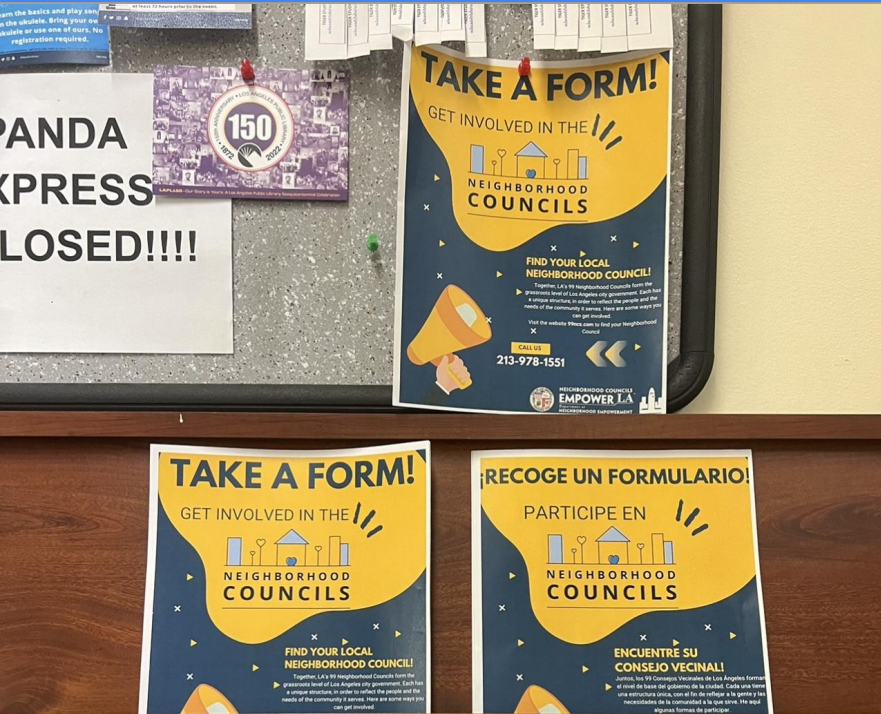


## Mission Statement :

Support Neighborhood Council engagement with data-driven practices using publicly available research tools. Through this engagement, Neighborhood Councils can strengthen civic engagement; social justice; resource equity; and expertise to build robust, inclusive, culturally responsive city programs and systems.



# Communications



## Mission Statement :

Create and circulate messaging about what Neighborhood Councils are, what they do, and how they have impact on the City of Los Angeles and on the communities they serve. Share information on paid and organic digital and print channels about different ways to get involved within the NC System.

# Administrative Services

## Mission Statement :

Design an exceptional administrative support and technological framework for the Department and Neighborhood Councils by recognizing the institutional knowledge of the department's city partners, and collaborating with community leaders to create new and innovative practices.



# Meet the Budget Team



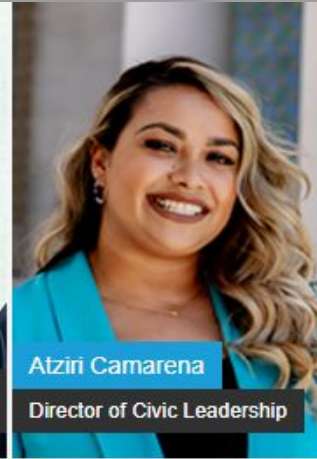
**Vanessa Serrano**  
Interim General Manager



**Armando Ruiz**  
Director of Administrative Services



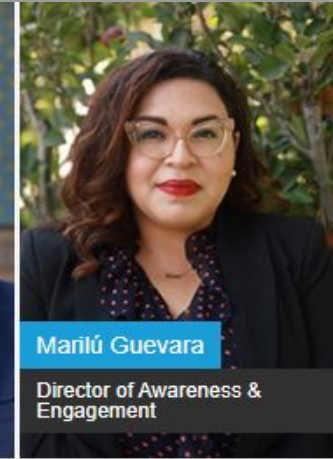
**Tom Soong**  
Director of Policy & Government Relations



**Atziri Camarena**  
Director of Civic Leadership



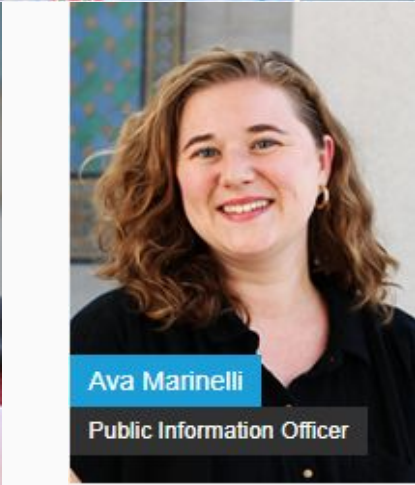
**Gibson Nyambura**  
Director of Innovation



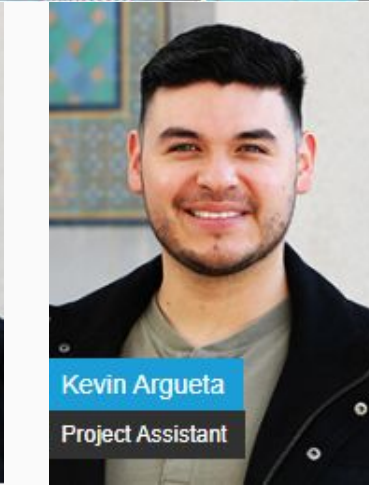
**Marilú Guevara**  
Director of Awareness & Engagement



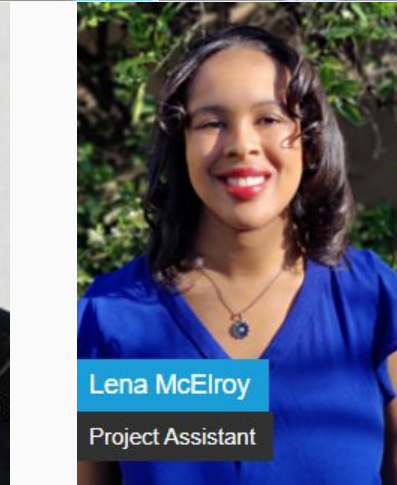
**Karen Moreno**  
Management Analyst



**Ava Marinelli**  
Public Information Officer



**Kevin Argueta**  
Project Assistant



**Lena McElroy**  
Project Assistant



**Socorro Galindo**  
Project Assistant

# 2023-2024 Adopted Budget

- **\$3,811,035 Adopted Budget**
- 35 regular positions
- 7 resolution positions
- Regularized two positions
  - Communications Director
  - Commission Executive Assistant II
- New Project Assistant for Civic Leadership
- Results Based Accountability Training
- Youth Conference Event
- Women's Leadership Event
- New Systems Analyst for Administrative Services Division
- Website and Portal Training upgrade
- New Chief Management Analyst (replacing SR MA II)
- SR MA I funding continues

\* NC Funding Appropriations are part of the City Clerk's budget

# Mayor's Budget Themes

- Providing outstanding services for residents and businesses
- Implementing strategies to end homelessness and expand housing access
- Preventing crime and interrupting cycles of violence
- Advancing environmental justice, sustainability and climate change mitigations
- Institutionalizing equity principles to expand opportunities for Angelenos

# 2024-2025 Budget Proposal Breakdown

## [November 2023]

- Baseline Funding - \$3,313,177
- Continuation Funding - \$438,341
- Election Funding - \$750,000
- Event Funding - \$160,150
- 23 New Positions Salaries - \$953,086
- 2 Staff Upgrades Funding - \$28,938
- City Emails for NCs Funding - \$ 153,435
- Language Access/Records/PRA Team (LARP) + \$500,000 Funding
- Accessibility Services Funding - \$95,000
- Multilingual Media/Multilingual PR Vendor Funding - \$ 60,000
- Communications Printing Services Funding - \$50,000
- AI- Enhanced Accessibility Translation Pilot Program Funding - \$50,000

# What Has Happened Since November?

- Hiring activities + 5 new staff members
- Turnover - 3 employees promoted to other departments
- Citywide anticipated shortfalls in revenue
- Prioritized Critical Hiring (PCH) Process ([CF 24-0275](#))
- Personnel, Audits, and Hiring Committee
- Review of Department Vacancies
- CAO's Mid-Year FSR ([CF 23-0600-S116](#))

# Department's Response

- Focus on Core Priorities - Direct NC Support
- Advocate for critical asks
- Awareness & Engagement - NC Election Year
- Preservation of existing funding and staffing levels
- Advocate to fill existing vacancies through PCH process
- Innovation within our means
- Participate in City belt-tightening measures



# How This Could Affect Neighborhood Councils

- For day to day support - hopefully none!
- Restrictions on expanding programs or activities
- Availability to grow outreach to new membership

# 2024-2025 NC Election: Our Guiding Vision

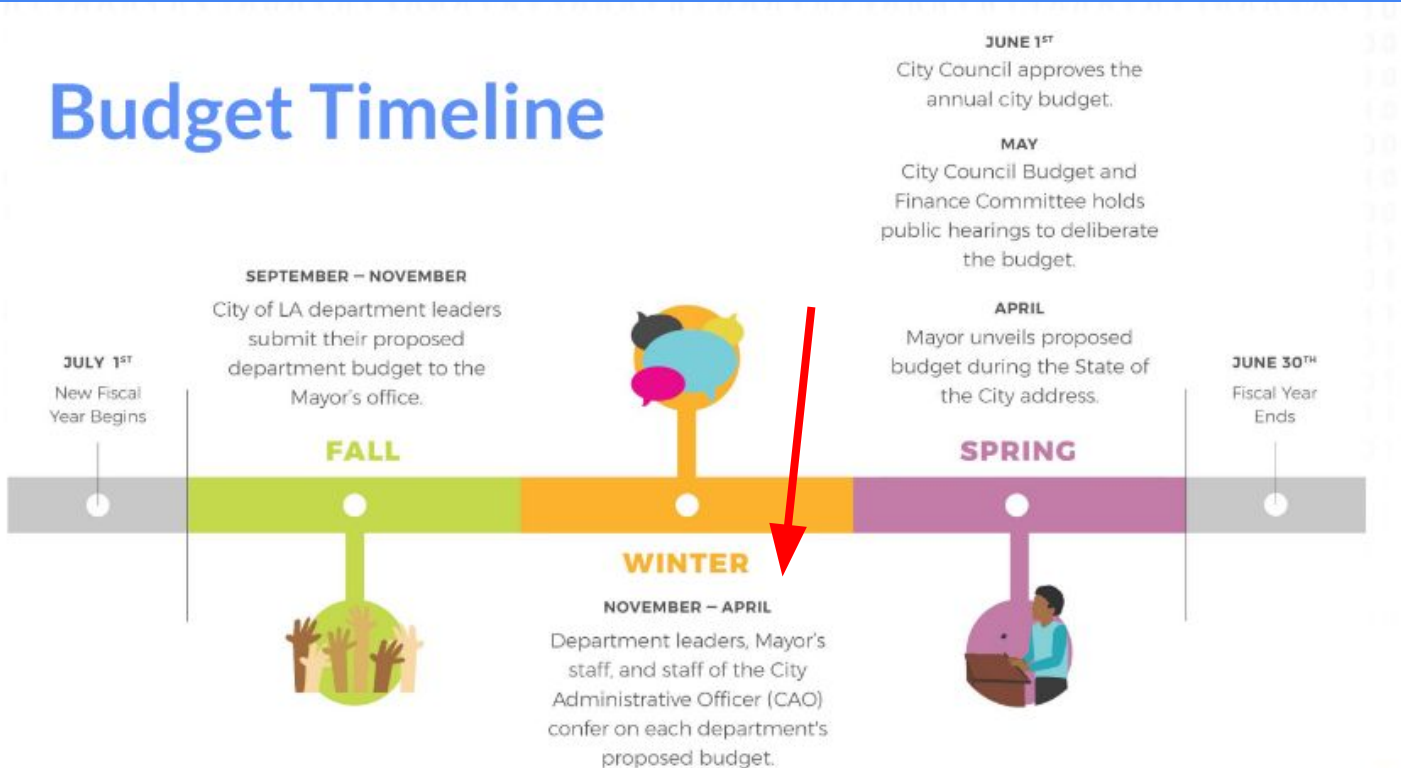
What is driving our Election Plan?

- EmpowerLA Awareness and Engagement Survey
- Equity Plan
- Collaborative Spirit
- Strategically Inclusive and Responsive
- Innovation!



# City Budget Timeline: Next Steps

## Budget Timeline



- CAO Discussion
- CAO Review (January)
- Mayor's Office Review (Jan-Feb)
- Mayor's Budget (By April 20)
- Budget & Finance Committee Hearings (May)
- B&F Recommendations (May)
- City Council Consideration (May-June)
- City Council Approval (By June)
- Mayor's Approval (By June)

# How to get Involved?

- Agendize discussion of City / Dept budget at NC meeting
- Communicate with Budget Advocates
- Listen to Budget and Finance Committee Hearings
- Listen to Personnel, Audits, and Hiring Committee
- Submit Community Impact Statements (CIS)
- Keep updated with the CAO's Budget & Financial Information  
<https://cao.lacity.gov/budget/index.htm>
- Review the City Controller's Financial Data  
<https://controller.lacity.gov/data>

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Questions?