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GRAYCE LIU
GENERAL MANAGER

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February 11, 2015

Honorable Members of the
Los Angeles City Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
200 North Spring Street
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**SUBJECT: NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL CONGRESS/BUDGET ADVOCACY
ACCOUNTS - COUNCIL FILE NO: 11-1020-S1**

Honorable Members:

This Department submits this report to the City Council on a recommendation to create funding accounts for the LA Congress of Neighborhoods and for Neighborhood Council Budget Advocacy.

Background

On March 26, 2013, City Council approved the creation of a Congress/Budget Advocacy Account administered by the Department. This account held the contributions of Neighborhood Councils towards the LA Congress of Neighborhoods and the work of the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates on the City Budget. City Council instructions were to cap the account at \$100,000. The Department anticipated that this cap was per fiscal year, but has subsequently learned that this cap is for the lifetime of the account.

Once the account was set up, members of the LA Congress of Neighborhoods Planning Committee and the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates outreached to Neighborhood Councils to support their work. Neighborhood Councils contributed the following amounts for Fiscal Year 2012-2013:

	FY 12-13 Raised	FY12-13 Spent	Remaining Balance
Congress	49,078.63	0.00	49,078.63
Budget Advocacy	19,050.00	0.00	19,050.00
Total	68,128.63	0.00	68,128.63

The LA Congress of Neighborhoods is held in September each fiscal year. The work of the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates ran from November to April in Fiscal Year 2013-2014. Another subsequent round of fundraising in Fiscal Year 2013-2014 resulted in contributions that exceeded the account cap by \$33,858. To be equitable to the Neighborhood Councils that contributed, the Department credited the accounts in order of receipt, resulting in the loss of potential funding in the amount of \$31,458 for the Congress and \$2,450 for Budget Advocacy that year. The Department credited the account as follows:

	FY 13-14 Raised	FY13-14 Spent	Remaining Balance
Congress	28,821.27	18,275.26	59,624.64
Budget Advocacy	3,050.10	3,846.50	18,253.60
Total	31,871.37	22,121.76	77,878.24

In Fiscal Year 2014-2015, the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates adjusted their schedule to start in October to align better with the City budget process. The expenses for the LA Congress of Neighborhoods and the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates, which are still ongoing for this year, are as follows:

	FY 14-15 Raised	FY14-15 Spent	Remaining Balance
Congress	0.00	28,255.22	31,369.42
Budget Advocacy	0.00	8,763.14	9,490.46
Total	0.00	37,018.36	40,859.88

	Total Raised	Total Spent	Remaining Balance
Congress	77,899.90	46,530.48	31,369.42
Budget Advocacy	22,100.10	12,609.64	9,490.46
Total	100,000.00	59,140.12	40,859.88

Because of the account's lifetime cap, Neighborhood Councils will no longer be able to contribute to the Congress/Budget Advocacy Account to support this important work.

Both the LA Congress of Neighborhoods Planning Committee and the Budget Advocates intend to increase the scope of their existing work. As the number of training sessions and activities increase for the annual Congress of Neighborhoods, the Congress Planning Committee is considering making it a multiple day conference and expanding into City Hall East, which would raise their total costs.

The Budget Advocates are expanding their work to be year long in order to stay in pace with the City's budget process. They are increasing their outreach to stakeholders of the City budget process with more Budget Day events and are piloting a weekly radio show to increase awareness of City budgeting. This additional and necessary outreach work will significantly raise their total costs.

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In order to accurately track the funds contributed each year for the LA Congress of Neighborhoods and for the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocacy work as well as to allow Neighborhood Councils to continue to support their work, the Department has determined in consultation with the Office of the Controller that separate accounts for the LA Congress of Neighborhoods and the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocacy work should be set up each fiscal year. The Department's recommendation will begin this process for Fiscal Year 2014-2015 contributions, and the Department will make the request to City Council for two new accounts to be created every fiscal year thereafter.

Recommendation

The Department recommends the City Council authorize the Office of the Controller to create a LA Congress of Neighborhoods Account and a separate Neighborhood Council Budget Advocacy Account. Each account will be capped at \$100,000 for the fiscal year. See Attachment A for proposed motion language.

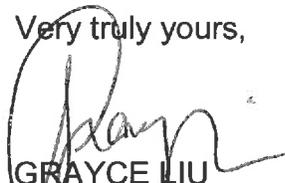
Fiscal Impact Statement

There is no general fund impact inasmuch as this report is provided for information only.

Conclusion

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at (213) 978-1551.

Very truly yours,


GRAYCE LIU
General Manager

ATTACHMENT A – MOTION LANGUAGE FOR
SEPARATE CONGRESS AND BUDGET ADVOCACY FUNDING ACCOUNTS

The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment maintains a Congress/Budget Advocacy Account to pay for the LA Congress of Neighborhoods and the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocacy process.

The LA Congress of Neighborhoods is an annual event designed by Neighborhood Council leaders and coordinated with the partnership of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment to reach out to stakeholders and to both new and seasoned board members. This event offers various workshops designed by Neighborhood Council members to be practical, how-to types of sessions which offer a broad overview of each subject that supports local action and civic engagement.

The Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates maintain a year round budget advocacy process in partnership with the Office of the Mayor and the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, emphasizing the important role that Neighborhood Councils play in advising the Mayor and Council on the City Budget. Neighborhood Council Budget Days are held both at City Hall and regionally citywide, culminating in a white paper to be submitted to the City during with a list of budget priorities as well as detailed recommendations.

Upon Neighborhood Council board approval, funds are transferred from each individual Neighborhood Council appropriation account to the Congress/Budget Advocacy Account. The account is capped at \$100,000 for the lifetime of the account, which has already been reached in Fiscal Year 2013-2014. To simplify the tracking of the funds and because the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment anticipates additional funding needs for both the LA Congress of Neighborhoods and Neighborhood Council Budget Advocacy, the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment recommends creating separate LA Congress of Neighborhoods and Neighborhood Council Budget Advocacy accounts with a \$100,000 cap each fiscal year.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council authorize the Office of the Controller to create a LA Congress of Neighborhoods Account No. 47L220 and a Neighborhood Council Budget Advocacy Account No 47L225 in Fund No. 44B, Department No. 4701.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council authorize the transfer from various Neighborhood Council appropriation accounts, as approved by the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, to LA Congress of Neighborhoods Account No. 47L220 and Neighborhood Council Budget Advocacy Account No 47L225 for a maximum amount of \$100,000 per fiscal year.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Chief Legislative Analyst be authorized to make clarifications or technical corrections as may be necessary to implement the intent of this motion.