



[www.councilmanrosendahl.com](http://www.councilmanrosendahl.com)

City Hall (213) 473-7011 West LA (310) 575-8461 Westchester (310) 568-8772

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 21, 2006

Contact:

Safiya Jones, 213-473-7011

## **LAUNCH OF ROSENDAHL'S EMPOWERMENT CONGRESS A SUCCESS** *First Meeting Focuses on Transportation, Planning Issues*

LOS ANGELES - Signaling a new era of community participation in city government, the weekend launch of Councilman Bill Rosendahl's 11th District Empowerment Congress was a phenomenal success.



More than 150 community leaders gathered at Loyola Marymount University Saturday for the inaugural meeting of the Empowerment Congress, which focused on two key issues in the 11th District: planning and transportation.

"This is the beginning of something very exciting," Rosendahl said. "We are giving people a real chance to determine the direction of their neighborhoods. We are giving people a genuine opportunity to be part of governing."

Rosendahl and his staff recruited residents from every community in the 11th District to make up the Empowerment Congress, which will develop policy proposals and help Rosendahl lobby for them. The full congress will meet twice annually, and working committees will meet throughout the year on policy issues.

At the weekend general assembly session, members engaged in a lively and informative 90-minute Q&A with Gloria Jeff, the new general manager of the Department of Transportation, and Gail Goldberg, the new general manager of the Planning Department. Both promised sweeping reforms in their departments, and pledged to make their agencies more visionary, and more community-friendly.

Attendees also heard from Laura Trejo, general manager of the Los Angeles Department of Aging. She spoke of expanded opportunities for seniors as a result of money Rosendahl helped her department win in the city budget process.



"During my campaign last year, I promised that people would no longer have their noses pressed against the glass as decisions were being made," Rosendahl said. "With this Empowerment Congress, people will not only be in the room when decisions are being made, they will help frame the issues, shape the debate, and develop the solutions."

The lion's share of the work of the Empowerment Congress will be in its working committees. At the Loyola meeting, Rosendahl announced that he had appointed co-chairs of most of those committees:

- *Angela Reddock* and *Ken Alpern* will chair the **Transportation Committee**. Reddock is one of Rosendahl's former campaign opponents and a member of the Los Angeles Transportation Commission. Alpern is a leader of Friends of the Green Line, Friends of the Exposition Line, the [Transit Coalition](#), and the [Mar Vista Community Council](#).

- *Maritza Przekop* and *Kurt Toppel* will chair the **Planning & Development Committee**. Przekop is the former chair of the planning committee of the Mar Vista Community Council and a member of the Los Angeles Planning Department. Toppel is chair of the [Pacific Palisades Community Council](#) and former president of the Marquez Knolls Property Owners Association.

- *Dennis Hinman* and *Gwen Vuchsas* will chair the **Public Safety Committee**. Hinman recently retired as the LAPD senior lead officer for the Brentwood area and is a [Medal of Valor recipient](#). Vuchsas, president of the [Neighborhood Council of Westchester-Playa del Rey](#), has been a leader in the Pacific Area LAPD Boosters and the Pacific Area Community Police Advisory Board.



- *Nancy Karlin* and *Mindy Meyer* will chair the **Affordable Housing & Tenant Rights Committee**. Karlin is an attorney, a renter, and key member of the Mar Vista Community Council. Meyer is board member of the [Venice Community Housing Corporation](#) and a member of the Citizens Unit for Housing and Community Development Participation.

- *Adlai Wertman* and *Robert Levy* will chair the **Homelessness Committee**. Wertman is president and CEO of [Chrysalis](#). Levy is a member of the [Bring LA Home Blue Ribbon Commission](#), and co-chair of Sheriff Lee Baca's Homelessness Commission.

- *Frances Stronks*, *Edmundo Gonzalez*, and *Maureen Burruel* will chair the **Senior Services Committee**. Stronks is a Westchester community leader who runs a Meals on Wheels program. Gonzalez is a member of the Los Angeles County Advisory Council on Aging. Burruel is a social worker affiliated with the gerontology group at UCLA.



In the coming weeks, Rosendahl plans to announce chairs of committees on: the Environment; Education; Youth Issues; Arts & Culture; and Government Reform. The chairs will work with Rosendahl's staff to determine the membership of each committee. Each committee will meet at least monthly, have a designated liaison on the council staff, and work with policy experts in their fields.

Rosendahl also pledged to diversify the Empowerment Congress, which he said needs more renters, more women, and more non-whites to truly reflect his district. Applications to join the Empowerment Congress are available from Rosendahl's offices or online [here](#).

More details on the Empowerment Congress can be found [here](#).

###

This message was sent to by:

Councilman Bill Rosendahl  
200 N. Spring Street, Room 415  
Mailstop 218  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Unsubscribe:  
If you would like to be removed from this list please click here.

Sent Using :  
**SimpleSend**  
www.simplesend.com