

Opening Session

August 3, 2002, Congress of Neighborhoods

Speakers:

James Hahn, Mayor, City of Los Angeles

Greg Nelson, General Manager, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment

Laura Chick, City Controller

Rocky Delgadillo, City Attorney

Janice Hahn, Council Member, District 15

Eric Garcetti, Council Member, District 13

Wendy Greuel, Council Member, District 2

Tom La Bonge, Council Member, District 4

David Tofosky, Member, School Board

Bill Christopher, President, Board of Neighborhood Commissioners

Wayne Tanda, General Manager, Department of Transportation

Valerie Shaw, President, Board of Public Works

Bill White, Director, Bureau of Street Services

Vitaly Troyan, City Engineer

Lillian Kawasaki, General Manager, Community Development Department

David Gascon, Assistant Police Chief

Liza Lowery, General Manager, Information Technology Agency

Summary: The opening session is the kick-off to the Congress of Neighborhoods. Get to know your Elected City Officials, your General Managers, and other decision-making officials. Learn what they're promising to do for Neighborhood Councils and how the Neighborhood Councils can help.

Greg: Last year the voters of Los Angeles elected themselves a friend as Mayor. He promised to build the nation's pre-eminent system of grass-roots participatory democracy to share power with the people, and to give the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment the tools it needed to make it all happen. He also decided to change City Hall from a place that did things for people into a place that does things with people. Ladies and gentlemen, the neighborhood's Mayor, James Hahn!

Mayor James Hahn: Good morning. When I had lunch with Greg Nelson on Tuesday, he said it looks like maybe 300 people have confirmed that they're coming. It looks like over twice that many people are in this room right now. If anybody doubts that Neighborhood Councils are real, and that people believe this will be a revolution in city government, they need to come here and see what's going on right here in the San Fernando Valley.

The creation of Neighborhood Councils was about shifting power from those marble halls down at beautiful City Hall out in the beautiful neighborhoods of Los Angeles, out to our streets, out to our communities, and out to the people. It's been exciting to watch this unfold. We started slow, but we've been picking up momentum, picking up steam as we continue to change government, and as we employ some innovative strategies to do that. I'm going to look to all of you in the Neighborhood Councils to guide us at City Hall on how

to provide services to you. That's because no one knows the issues of the community as well as the people who live in that community, and the people who work in those communities. So they're perfectly positioned to give us the input that we need to make sure we're doing our job.

Today, I'm asking you to partner with me and everyone else in city government to lead Los Angeles. Our mission is simple. We're going to improve Los Angeles neighborhood by neighborhood, and street by street. The reason I say that all the time is because I feel it's important to let people feel good about the street they live on because if they feel good about the street they live on, they're going to feel very good about the city they live in. That's what neighborhood councils are all about. We can accomplish this. It's also about shaping the future. We believe that this revolution will show that Los Angeles will be the model city of the 21st Century. We are going to come up with a blueprint for other cities to follow, but we've all got to be engaged in that process. The key is that you've got to have a seat at the table. You've got to be empowered to solve problems in your neighborhood. We've got to give you the tools in order to do that. When are we going to do that?

I think you should have direct access to every city department. We've got a lot of department heads here today. To that end, I recently issued an executive directive to all the general managers of all the departments saying, "you will meet quarterly with the Neighborhood Councils." And I'm encouraging them to farther than that. We want them to identify a staff person in each of their departments who is going to be that liaison, that expert, who's going to deal with Neighborhood Councils and how they interface with the city departments. We want the city departments not only to hear from you on how you want services delivered, but how you think they can improve the delivery of those services. What ideas you have to make them a better department, to make them more efficient, and to make them more accountable to you. We're interested in that because I figure there's a lot of smart ideas that are represented right here in this room.

As you know, in this year's budget we wanted Neighborhood Councils to have the opportunity to have direct authority over saying how you spend your money. And so \$3,000,000 has been set aside for grants. The Neighborhood Councils can apply for up to \$50,000 each to spend on projects in your neighborhoods. That's something that you all want to make sure you find out how to do that. We want to be able to cut the red tape and get those projects moving so you can decide what's important in your neighborhood. One of the things that you'll want to do is, if you're interested in that, is to make sure you attend the right seminar. The other thing we're going to be asking our general managers to do is that even though we just started the fiscal year in July, we already started working on our budget for next year. As each department starts preparing their budget, before they come to me with their ideas on how they want to spend your money, I want them to come to you for you to tell the departments what your budget priorities are. Crista Binder is going to be running the workshop. She's the budget director in the Mayor's Office. If any of you are interested in attending that workshop on how you can get involved in the budget process at City Hall, make sure you attend.

Finally, I want to point out that we've also restructured the Mayor's Office, so that we can better serve Neighborhood Councils. We created our L.A. Neighborhood Team, which has been modeled after the successful business team that the Mayor's Office is famous for. The L.A. Neighborhood Team will be a one-stop shop for Neighborhood

Councils with the Mayor's Office. We're going to have one representative servicing each of the regional planning areas. Our neighborhood team's responsibility is to help you facilitate your needs, help you with any issue that you have, and we want to be able to expedite that process so that you can get things done. We're hoping that as this model works the other departments do the same kind of thing in their departments to understand that they need to focus on neighborhood councils. I'm going to hold them accountable. I'm not going to take excuses. They are going to serve you in the Neighborhood Councils. That's what city government is going to do. In our Mayor's office L.A. Neighborhood Team, I want you to know who they are.

Monica Pinedo Barajas, will be working with the Neighborhood Councils in the East L.A. planning area. Jennifer Stein, will be working with Neighborhood Councils in the South Valley planning area. Mark Chapa, will be in North Valley, Ryan Gales working with West L.A. Rudy Barajas is going to be the neighborhood team director. Terry Alatorre from Central L.A. South L.A. representative Kila Dames, and Harbor Area representative, Donny Brooks. All of these individuals will be available to you directly as we get Neighborhood Councils going. We want again to make L.A. government work better. That's what this is all about. We feel that over the years, government has lost touch with people. We understand people were right about that. When the Charter reform process was going, and I know my sister, Janice Hahn is now a council member, and was on that Charter commission. The most important thing to Janice in that whole Charter reform process was Neighborhood Councils. She wanted Neighborhood Councils. She said, "I know a lot of people talk about a lot of other systems of government, but I like this idea of getting people in their own neighborhood involved in how the government should be run." I'm glad that Janice is here, and all our other council members are here. I'm going to ask my colleagues, who are here with us, our great new City Attorney, Rocky Delgadillo. Our great City Controller, Laura Chick. Council members, Wendy Greuel, Eric Garcetti, and Tom LaBonge, and my sister Janice. I'm going to ask all of you to join me in applauding everybody here from our neighborhood. Dennis Zine is here. Thank you, this is going to be a great, great workshop today. Thank you for showing that the Congress of Neighborhood Councils 2002 is just the beginning. It's only going to get better from now on. Thank you.

Greg: If there is one person who could be described as the "Mother of Neighborhood Councils," or now as she will proudly points out, the brand new "Grandmother of Neighborhood Councils," it is a person who served as a council member from the 3rd District, chaired the Governmental Efficiency Committee that brought this plan of neighborhood councils to you. Now it's your good luck that she's become the City Controller because she's the one in charge of watching our money, Laura Chick.

Laura: Thank you. I remember when I was chairing the Ad Hoc Committee on Charter Reform Implementation, and we were working out how Neighborhood Councils were going to go forward. I remember thinking, "oh gosh, what if we do this and we invite everybody to participate, and nobody shows up?" Look at you! Look at this! I think 700 people are here. My fears are gone. Greg asked me and a lot of other general managers because besides being your City Controller, I run a working department, to come today and tell you what we're going to do for you.

I have two commitments to make to you today, but I also have two things to ask. The first commitment is about money. I and my staff are pledged energetically to make sure that we cut some of the bureaucratic red tape, and that you'll get your money fast, straight, without having to sit and say "pretty please." The other thing is that we have been hard at work fulfilling the promise that the voters wanted when they gave my office the power of doing performance audits. We've come out with over 30 audits in my first year in office. I am committed to not only keep up that pace, but to take a look at every corner of the city and keep asking the question, "How can we do it better?" I put that information on our website. It's there for you to see, and I hope all of you are at least reading the executive summaries because it tells you where we need room for improvement, and suggestions on how to make it better.

What am I asking of you? First of all on the money. I'd like you, when you get those dollars, public dollars, for you to pretend that the Daily News, for instance, is going to write a headline article on how you spend that money. I want you to make sure that you can stand up proud and tall, and look the reporter and the public in the eye, and say those dollars were spent well. According to the very flexible rules that were going to put down for you. That's one thing I'm asking of you. Secondly, I'm sharing those audits with you, and I'm very eager to hear back from you your feedback, your opinions, and your very good ideas about how to make things work better. You're the ones who receive the services, and so we need to hear more from our customers. I've got my e-mail address on the website, and I'm eagerly looking forward to hearing from Neighborhood Council members on a regular basis. Thank you for letting me say those few words, and thank you, thank you for coming and joining us as part of the solution. Have a good day.

Greg: On his door is says Rockard. I know him as Rocky. His last name is Delgadillo, and he's your City Attorney.

Rocky: Boy, this room is filled with inspiration. This is a neighborhood. This is a neighborhood here in the City of Los Angeles. You who are trying to take back their streets and improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods truly inspire me, and I think everyone else here. I want to again say to you as I know the mayor feels, and the Controller, and every one else, that we want our neighborhoods to have more say about what goes on in their neighborhoods. I believe with you that we can do that and that's why we put 18 seasoned prosecutors in the neighborhoods with you, with our Neighborhood Prosecutor Program. Already, in just a few short months they've been able to solve problems like illegal dumping, prostitution problems, graffiti, vandalism, and other problems in neighborhood that are impinging on the quality of life where you live.

I want to today introduce to you a couple of them, who are here. Kevin Gilligan, who will be part of a panel later on. Tina Hess who's here. Kim Willis from the Wilshire Division. And also the head of our gang unit, Marty Vranicar. And the head of our Special Operations Unit, Chuck Goldenberg as well. They're all here to answer questions and help you solve those quality of life problems in your neighborhood. Again, I'd like to thank the Mayor for his leadership on bringing neighborhoods closer to City Hall, and City Hall closer to the neighborhoods and all of our amazing council members, who are here today and our City Controller, who have done exactly the same thing. And more than anything

else, I'd like to thank you for your leadership in making Los Angeles a better place to live. I thank you so much.

Greg: Every important matter that involves Neighborhood Councils goes to the Education and Neighborhoods Committee. And boy are you lucky because the chairperson of that committee is Councilwoman Janice Hahn.

Janice: Thank you. What a great day this is in the history of Los Angeles, because never before have we ever had an effort like neighborhood councils. Many people told us it couldn't be done. There were a lot of people that opposed us on the City Charter when we tried to get Neighborhood Councils included in the City Charter, but I think this is a great testament to the fact that Neighborhood Councils can succeed. Neighborhood Councils are going to be an important part, a critical part, a necessary part of the future of Los Angeles. I congratulate each and every one of you for being involved in this effort. I must take this opportunity, a little bragging rights, but I also think they deserve to be acknowledged today, the Neighborhood Council in Wilmington, that was the very first Neighborhood Council certified in the history of Los Angeles. Wilmington, certified on December 12, 2001! That is something that will be in the history books forever.

In my district, I rely on my Neighborhood Councils for all sorts of things and I will never forget the first official letter of advice that I got from one of my Neighborhood Councils, which I actually have framed in my office. Just recently, were building a new animal shelter in the Harbor Area. In the old days you would have woken up to the sound of a bulldozer grading property in your neighborhood, and you would have wondered what that was. Then, somebody would have said, "that's the new location of the animal shelter in your community." Now things have changed. Even though the Department of Animal Services is urging me because they're on a deadline, I said we will not build that animal shelter until my Neighborhood Councils have had an opportunity to have input on the sight selection of that shelter. So things have changed.

Furthermore, I want to thank the Mayor personally. I know I have a bias here, but we were lucky to have this Mayor who also is a big supporter of Neighborhood Councils. It's up to the Mayor to really empower you as much as he can, and he's already had many executive orders, which is compelling this city to work with you, and empowering you as we got through everything from the budget process to the review the general managers in this city. I really want to thank the mayor for his commitment to Neighborhood Councils. I also want to announce today that Bank of America, and I want to recognize Randall Hernandez, from the Bank of America, has donated 50 computers for use by Neighborhood Councils. Thank you for that. Thank you and good luck everybody.

Greg: Council Member Eric Garcetti.

Eric: Good morning. When we had the Filipino History Ceremony yesterday, which represented an array of communities ranging from Echo Park and Atwater Village, and Glassell Park, and Elysian Valley, and Hollywood, the people were looking for a sense of place, and a place at the table. That's what this is about today. Those two things. The evolution has already started, but the revolution has not yet begun. And it is incumbent upon you to make sure that the revolution in city government also comes.

After this conference, each year you collectively have an agenda that you bring to us in city government saying, "this is what we want" with one voice, the communities and the neighborhoods of this city speak united about change, and this is what we want you to do. There are three things I want to mention very briefly. One of the things that was holding back people from their neighborhood activism was that they sometimes had the specter of lawsuits over them. If they became active and there were lawsuits going, and I was very happy to have the strong support of Mayor Hahn to bring an indemnification policy, so that when you do your neighborhood activism, when you're beautifying your neighborhood, that you are protected by the law of the city. We now have in place an indemnification law to make sure that you are covered when you do those activities. Secondly, and this doesn't apply to all areas of the city, but I'm working hard in Hollywood, and I hope that the Community Redevelopment (CRA) does this throughout the city, where we can look at some of the CRA areas as directly interfacing with the Neighborhood Councils. So that neighborhood councils could be given direct grants, after all you are about community redevelopment, to spend in your neighborhood and decide which services, what beautification you can have, and that would come directly from the CRA. And we look forward to doing that this year in Hollywood.

Thirdly, building on what the mayor said, I'm introducing this week in Council a motion. I met with the Public Works yesterday because so many of your complaints and so many of the projects that you work on are public works projects, to make sure that there is a dedicated representative from the Public Works Department who goes to every single Neighborhood Council meeting. The motion would offer them some incentive pay, maybe \$50 to be able to go to that meeting. They work hard already and to add more responsibility without paying them, I think is unfair.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to you and thank you for coming. In closing, I want to say we are energizing today, we are organizing today, but what we must do, is we must formalize power for neighborhood councils here in the city of Los Angeles, so you make the decisions, not us. That's what we'll do next year. Thank you.

Greg: One of the things that makes our system of Neighborhood Councils so strong is that it's existence is guaranteed in the City Charter. It can only be changed by the voters. That whole program was put together by a massive two-year effort by a board of elected Charter Commissioners. I won't say that he was my favorite of all the commissioners, because that wouldn't be smart, but boy, did we have a good time together for two years. Please welcome, Councilman Dennis Zine.

Dennis: Thank you Greg. Thank you. At that point, Greg worked for Councilman Joe Wachs, and we definitely made him work hard on that Charter commission on Neighborhood Councils. Good morning, it's a pleasure to be with all of you, and I welcome everyone in Los Angeles to the San Fernando Valley. We are Los Angeles. We are the San Fernando Valley. The energy, the excitement, and the enthusiasm are all wonderful. When I heard about this event, I said, I've got to be here. As a former Charter Commissioner, along with Janice Hahn and Nick Pacheco, this is what we dreamed about.

We dreamed about the communities and the neighborhood of Los Angeles coming together. We've seen it happen. It's a wonderful day to see this Congress come together

where you're given the opportunity to meet your neighbors and meet the communities throughout Los Angeles.

West Hills, my residence, was the first Neighborhood Council certified in the San Fernando Valley. Since that point, we've had other Neighborhood Councils certified in the San Fernando Valley. Communities are people and people are communities. What I've done with the Neighborhood Councils is turn over the development projects to my Neighborhood Council representatives. The developers need to understand they can't influence us with contributions of dollars, but the neighborhoods, they can influence by modifying their project to suit the needs of the neighborhoods. Power to the people. Power to the communities. What we need and what we have is the emerging of the new Los Angeles. We have a Mayor who works with the City Council. We have a unified City Council that works together. We have a City Council that works with all the General Managers of the different departments.

We don't need to secede from the City of Los Angeles. We need to find more success within the City of Los Angeles. I see the general managers here today, Department of General Services, Fire Department, Building, Planning, Information Technology, they're all here. They're here because they are this government, working for the people of this city.

What I want to do in the 3rd Council District, which is the West San Fernando Valley, is work in partnership with our Neighborhood Councils so we can turn this community, this city, to what we want it to be. What we know it can be. What we know it was in past years. That's what this is all about. I welcome your participation in this partnership to build the City of Los Angeles, the success of the beautiful city of Los Angeles with your governmental officials. We don't need more bureaucrats. We need more people working for the people to build the city that we need. God bless you all and thank you very, very much!

Greg: And now a personal moment. Yes, I did spend quite a few years working in the Second Council District, and when my boss retired I became very concerned about who would follow. Who would serve that part of the San Fernando Valley? I couldn't be happier because it's someone I've known since she was 19 years old, so I've known her for a couple of years. She's newly married, and I think it's worth noting that she's not on her honeymoon. She's here sharing this moment with you. Council Member Wendy Greuel!

Wendy: Good morning. Greg that was just a few years ago that I was 19, okay. I am so pleased to be here, and my new nickname is "Pothole Queen." I want to tell you a story about that because it's about community empowerment, Neighborhood Councils, and community involvement. When I worked for Tom Bradley several years ago, we had a competition within our staff to identify as many potholes as we could. I said, okay when I get elected, I'm going to do that same thing, but it's not just going to be my staff, it's going to be my neighborhoods and my communities.

Not only did we identify potholes two weeks ago, but we identified bulky items that were in neighborhoods. We identified abandoned cars, and we identified graffiti. I want to make a special thank you to those City Departments and especially the Street Services Division, who filled those potholes, and who do that every single day in our great city.

Each of you are so important to the success of this city. I sat, several months ago with Council Member Janice Hahn and Council Member Tom LaBonge, and I sat with an editorial board, and we started talking about Neighborhood Councils, boroughs, and overall just trying to make the city better. One of those editorial writers said to us, "You know what, people don't care about involving themselves in how government works, they just want the job done." I shot back at them and I said, "Have you been to a Neighborhood Council meeting in this City of Los Angeles?" I hope they're listening today because all of you are part of the solution and our future of the City of Los Angeles. Give all of yourselves a wonderful hand.

I have so many communities here today, Sun Valley, Sunland-Tujunga, Foothill Trails, Valley Glen, Van Nuys, Valley Village, Sherman Oaks, Studio City, North Hollywood, and Van Nuys. They're all represented here today. They're all participating in this process. I want to thank all of you that are here today.

I want to acknowledge a particular community that recently came forward on the issue of Hansen Dam and the dumping by the Army Corps of Engineers. That was a demonstrated success by a community. They went out, took pictures, began talking to the press, came to the city and the federal government, and today dumping is not happening in the Hansen Dam because of the work that the Neighborhood Council did. They took the initiative. Thank you.

I'm looking forward to, as your newest Council Member, working every single day with you because you are the ears, the eyes, and the soul of our community. As Greg mentioned, I married the right guy a week ago and he's here with me this morning, Dean Sharan. Thank you all for being here. We have a lot of work to do. No matter which district we represent, the people who are here, those Council Members know that we represent the entire City of Los Angeles. You have the good ideas, let's work together to make this city better. Thank you so much.

Greg: If we were to hold a workshop on how to provide city services, it would be taught by one person and one person only, Council Member Tom LaBonge.

Tom: Thank you, Greg. Good morning. This is a great day for Los Angeles. 221 years ago, 44 people walked 9 miles from the San Gabriel Mission to the banks of the Los Angeles River to form the Pueblo Los Angeles. Today, over 758 people drove, took the Red Line, walked, rode a bicycle, and came to Universal City for the first Neighborhood Congress. Give yourselves a hand.

I want to mention three important words, information is knowledge and knowledge is power. You see I'm not good in math. Information, knowledge, power. We need to give information to the great neighborhoods to give them the knowledge to deal with the power necessary to run a neighborhood. That's what our commitment is. That's what I want to do. That's what my staff wants to do, and we could do it together.

I'm very happy to see so many great people here. I want to recognize somebody because when I look up at those beautiful mountains I think of him. When I walk into a store or an elevator and no one's smoking a cigarette, I think of him. When I look at a bicycle on the bike lane, I think of him. Marvin Braude, the father of the Santa Monica Mountains. The great Council Member Marvin Braude. Good to see you for all you've done for neighborhoods. I also want to thank other people. I am only as good as the

staff that I have, and I thank my staff! I'm also only as good as the great community leaders who dedicate the hours from the Mid-City West or Greater Griffith Park, or Toluca Lake.

I need your help. We need to recruit Los Angeles Police Officers. I have a motion on the floor of the City Council. Applications. If you help us recruit an officer we will have our Personnel Department give your Neighborhood Council, or the neighborhood 501C3, a \$500 grant. We need to help get more officers for the LAPD. As a Council Member it's my job to turn the microphone back to the former right fielder for the city haulers, now general manager of the great Department of Neighborhoods. We're only as good as the neighborhoods, and we've got great neighborhoods from Chatsworth, where Chuck and his beautiful hat is, all the way to San Pedro. God bless the City of Los Angeles and everybody in between. Thank you.

Greg: We have one more elected official, and it's a real important one. One of the best kept secrets about neighborhood empowerment is that once you start learning how to get the attention of the elected officials, and once you start learning how to mobilize yourselves, you're going to be able to take that power beyond City Hall. You'll be able to take it to every level of government. Probably, most importantly, that includes the Board of Education. Representing the seven members of the Board of Education, welcome, David Tokofsky.

David: Good morning. If Mr. Rogers were here, he'd say it's a beautiful day in the neighborhood. Neighborhood Councils go with neighborhood schools, neighborhood parks, libraries, cultural affairs, and good economic development. When you think of your neighborhood councils, think of your schools, and bring your councils into the school. Help us design the new schools, build, and repair the old. Your alma maters, the elementary schools, the middle schools, and the high schools that you went to. We need you there, and we're there for you. That's my two minutes. Thank you very much.

Greg: Now we've got an interesting situation. We have a number of city departments that are here, each one bringing a gift, and each one inviting you into the system in ways you've never been invited before. We're short on time, but we're going to make this run on time. We won't be able to get to all of them, but what we'll do is we'll get through as many as we can. I wanted to start off with, representing our Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, the president, Bill Christopher.

Commissioner Bill Christopher: Thank you Greg. I want to thank all of you for all of your efforts in making Neighborhood Councils. I know it's been a long process and a hard process to go through at times, but the results are evident here this morning.

I also want to thank the DONE staff for the efforts that they put in to get us all here to this point as well. Give the staff a hand. Thank you.

We, as a board, are committed to certifying another 30 Neighborhood Councils by the end of the year. We want to have the next roll call represent 70 or more neighborhoods around the city. We expect that process will continue, and by the time this Congress rolls around next year, we'll have almost all of the neighborhoods in the city represented by certified Neighborhood Councils. We're also, as a board, committed to

giving you as much advance notice of our actions as possible. We'll be building our agendas on the website, so that you can see when action items are coming up. We're not going to wait for the formal 72-hour notice window to come up before we tell you about what we're going to do. We want you to know in advance about the actions that affect you and we want to ask all of the other departments to reach that goal as well, so that neighborhoods have real effective advance notice of city actions that affect them in their communities.

Greg: Ladies and gentlemen, I want to introduce to you the General Manager of the Department of Transportation, and maybe our newest general manager, Wayne Tanda.

Wayne: Thank you very much. I need to tell you that I am in absolute awe. One month ago I had the honor of being asked to become part of your City of Los Angeles team. I come from Northern California, City of San Jose where for several years we've been working in this area, we call them strong neighborhoods. I can't tell you how impressed I am with the number of leaders and the quality of leaders that you have here in the City of Los Angeles.

What I'd like to do is to be able to be with each of you at each meeting that you would want me to be there. I can't do that, that's not humanly possible. What we're doing though in the Department of Transportation, which provides a very diverse set of services, is forming ambassadors. They'll be individuals who will be your contact for two things. Not just accessing our services, but to make our services better. Relieving congestion and promoting livability in your neighborhoods in dealing with parking issues, in dealing with safety to schools, and in dealing with our transit services, of which we have a number of them. I really look forward to this opportunity and thank you for the opportunity to be here in the great City of Los Angeles. Thank you.

Greg: It's probably safe to say that no department provides more direct services to the people than the Department of Public Works. We're joined today by the President of the Board of Public Works, Valerie Shaw.

Valerie: Thank you so much. I'm pleased to be here this morning to present our gift from the Department of Public Works, and I'm going to let our two bureau heads talk about those specific gifts. If you noticed, I was on the video. I want to leave you with this one thought. If the people lead, leaders will follow. This is what this is all about. People will lead. The leaders will follow. We are here to listen and to take your lead. With that I'll give it to Bill White, the Director of the Bureau Street Services.

Bill: Thank you all. We're enormously pleased to be here with you today on this historic occasion. The Bureau Street Services is the custodian of the urban forest. We have the charge of preserving over 680,000 street trees. Our gift to you is 10 trees per neighborhood. Thank you.

Valerie: In addition to the tree planting for each Neighborhood Council, we also, through the Los Angeles Conservation Corps, have a number of trees to be planted in individual yards, that the Neighborhood Councils can decide what neighbors can get the trees.

Vitaly: I'm Vitaly Troyan and I'm the City Engineer. We deliver capital projects throughout the City of Los Angeles. We also serve as the engineering consultant for the City. In addition, one very important thing that we do is maintain the city map, which is available through Navigate L.A. It's on the Internet. It has approximately 250 layers of information about capital projects, and things you may want to know about the city.

What we bring to you today is that for each Neighborhood Council, we have generated a map that shows the particular council, the streets within it, and the boundaries of the council districts. These maps are available for free to each council district right outside the doors at the Bureau of Engineering table. Thank you very much for coming.

Valerie: Thank you. In addition to this map, we'll also have maps that indicate the condition of your street lighting, the streets that have been resurfaced, and all the conditions subject to Public Works. You'll receive maps. These maps are now available outside at our table. In terms of tree planting, it's just the beginning. We're going to give each Neighborhood Council 10, for now, but are going to add more as we go along. Thank you so much and have a good afternoon.

Greg: Through its Community Development Department, the City acquires millions of dollars in grants, and supports many nonprofit organizations. We've asked for their help to teach us how to acquire grants for the Neighborhood Councils. We're joined today by the General Manager of the Community Development Department, Lillian Kawasaki.

Lillian: Good morning. My commitment today is to, one, involve the Neighborhood Councils in the consolidated plan process. What is that process? That process is, that annually the City of Los Angeles allocates its federal community block grant funds, and we have made a commitment today to make sure that we directly involve the Neighborhood Councils in that development process. Secondly, we'd like to very much to encourage, as I look around the room, to ask every Neighborhood Council to please make the effort to involve young people in your Neighborhood Council. In return, our second commitment is for any of the ones that are interested, is to assist you in doing outreach to your young people in your community.

In addition, we will also commit to do resource fairs wherever we can combine Neighborhood Councils. In these fairs, we want to bring you together and let you know more about the grants and resources from the federal government. Finally, to make life easier for you to access the Community Development Department, we have already established a single point of contact for the Neighborhood Councils. That particular person will coordinate with the Community Development Department's team response. His name is Greg Dimmitt, and his number is 213-485-8162. I encourage you to email him, as well. Thank you.

Greg: What would a gathering of Neighborhood Councils be without the Los Angeles Police Department? With us today is Assistant Chief, David Gascon.

David: Good morning. Thank you very much. The highest compliment a police officer can pay to anyone is that they will work to call them a partner. It's because when you work a patrol car, you're responsible for each other's lives. You fondly refer to your partner that way, and we fondly refer to all of you as our partners. We look forward to continuing this developing relationship at every level in the organization. I'd like to thank the Mayor and the Police Commission for infusing new life into our Senior Lead Officer Program. For all of you who have worked with Senior Lead Officers over the years, you know how critical they are to the community. They are responsive and they care. We will continue that commitment. We pledge that at every level in the organization, this Police Department will be interacting with you and will be responsive. Thank you very much.

Greg: One of the departments that doesn't have a lot of face-to-face contact with you, is the Information Technology Agency, but you deal with them a lot electronically. They're the ones who send you your Council agendas and put up them up on the City's Website. It's lead by Liza Lowery.

Liza: Good morning. Thank you. I have a couple quick commitments, and a couple exciting opportunities. The IT agency is committed to continue to get information to you through our Website, and expanding the transactions through our Emmy Award Winning government channel, Channel 35. I have two opportunities for you to participate. First, the City is facing renewals of over a dozen cable television franchises. If you care about your cable television, we're looking for the Neighborhood Councils to be involved. The Mayor's Office wants you involved, as we look at what are the needs of the subscribers of the City of Los Angeles. The City Council also wants you involved. They've introduced a motion to do that. This is very important to you because these franchises bring money into the City to support the City's programs. They help provide our government and our educational programming. They also bring infrastructure, so the Neighborhood Councils could get connected and communicate.

The second is, in mid-September, we're happy to be launching 3-1-1. The motto that we've adopted is, "Your one call to City Hall." I'm sure you've heard the Mayor Hahn talk about that. We want the Neighborhood Councils to get involved in the needs and the design of 3-1-1, even the motto. How about, "One call does it all?" Most importantly, we want your input in what happens after you call. What needs do you require most. I look forward to getting to know you and having you participate. Thank you.

Greg: We promised that we'd make this event run on time, and I'm pretty close to keeping that promise right now. We've run out of time for the departments to talk to you, however, I want to very quickly introduce those departments who remain. I'm sure you can get their information through the workshops today.

Jerry Greenwalt, General Manager of Animal Services. Mike Carey, City Clerk. Andrew Adelman, the General Manager, Department of Building and Safety. Ellis Stanley, General Manager, Emergency Preparedness Department, who is going to play a real critical role in what were doing because we've talked about the importance of making sure that every neighborhood ends up with an emergency preparedness plan. When the big one comes, and the big one will, we want every neighborhood to be self-sufficient, and able to take care of itself. Betty Wilson, Department on Disability. Jon Mukri, General

Manager, Department of General Services. Our Fire Chief, Bill Bamattre. Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission, Rabbi Allen Freehling. Our City Librarian, Susan Kent. Our Director of Planning, who will be teaching one of the workshops, Con Howe. The Interim General Manager, Department of Aging, Rushmore Cervantes. The new General Manager of the Department of Recreation and Parks, Manuel Mollindeo. From the Cultural Affairs Department, Lee Mentley. From the Housing Department, General Manager, Gary Pinney. Lastly, remember how I told you that you could influence every decision making body, from the MTA, Valley Project Manager, Roger Martin.

Finally, it's time for you now to go to your workshops. One special workshop that I want to mention at 2:15 is called "Planning the Next Congress." Ultimately, the vision was is that the planning of all these Congresses will be done by you, the Neighborhood Councils. If you'd like to meet with others, go to the room that's designated for this event and begin talking to some of the others. Happy Empowering!