

Dear Sirs and Madams:

Re: Problems with new City rules about funding and acquiring Neighborhood Watch (NW) **Lawn** Signs:

1. According to the NC Funding Manual, Neighborhood Councils (NCs) may only get funding for UNBRANDED Neighborhood Watch (NW), signs through Community Impact/Improvement Project (CIP), funds and then only after going through the lengthy LAPD, BSL, DOT permitting process. (ex: Because CIP funds must benefit "all," and NW signs are usually secured on public property - light poles). Additionally, our Funding Clerk has stated that even NW **lawn** signs provided to stakeholders for placement on their **private property** must still be LAPD approved, DOT permitted, UNBRANDED, and come from Community Improvement funds (however, private property placement is in conflict with CIP rules).

In the NC Funding Manual it specifies under "Community Improvement Projects (CIP)" "CIPs include projects associated with beautification and capital improvement projects on public places such as, but not limited to: ..."i. Signage such as Neighborhood Watch signs." Furthermore, it states, under "Unauthorized Projects," "Capital improvement or beautification projects involving private property are not permitted under the NC Funding Program, except when permitted and authorized by applicable City Ordinance." (Note: Neighborhood Watch **lawn** signs, to a great degree, protect the entire surrounding neighborhood, not just the specific stakeholder with a lawn sign.)

2. NCs must now use distant, "CITY CONTRACTED," traffic sign vendors provided by DOT instead of **local**, City approved, licensed, permitted and insured NW sign vendors that NCs have used, efficiently and legally, for decades. (This is contrary to the NC's purpose in supporting surrounding small businesses and vendors.)

3. The NEW permitting process requires LAPD involvement in approving locations of NW signs. This is unnecessarily and overly burdensome to our LAPD SLOs. The Neighborhood Watch program **is not** a LAPD program! The SLOs advise and guide newly formed community NW teams as to what they may or may not do, inform them about local crime stats, but they **are not** responsible for, **nor** do they **form** NW teams. **Any** group of neighbors can form a NW team, with or without the guidance or assistance of the LAPD.

4. Neighborhood Watch sign designs **are not** copywrited by the City of LA or the LAPD, nor do they carry any "penal code," from the City, LAPD, nor DOT. The exact same sizes and design of NW signs can be purchased from retail or online merchants just as they are stipulated by DOT and BSL The only difference between retail signs and those required by DOT and BSL are the types of materials and coatings used. If local, City licensed and approved sign vendors manufacture NW signs that meet the BSL and DOT sign requirements, there should be no need to obtain permits for NC **lawn** signs as **Outreach** items.

5. In the form to acquire the permitting of NW signs, it specifies that, "If the signs and/or posts are damaged or stolen, the requester [NC] is responsible for sign and/or post replacement and re-installation by one of the approved contractors." (This could emburden future NC's funding, which is also against the NC Funding rules. **Lawn** signs however, as an **Outreach** item, would not emburden future NC's funding budgets.)

It would help if NCs knew **why** these "**New rules**," for funding and purchasing NW signs were made. Why must NCs use **City contracted** "traffic sign," vendors instead of our **local** City permitted and licensed Neighborhood Watch sign vendors who know how to obtain the proper permit, and know all of the BSL and DOT rules for the manufacture and installation of NW signs? (It begs the question, is someone with the City getting a kick-back from their CITY CONTRACTED "traffic sign," vendors?) Why is the City, LAPD, BSL or DOT involved with the permitting of NW **lawn** signs on our stakeholders' **private property**? Why can't NW **lawn** signs be **branded** and come from **Outreach** funds if they are to be placed on our stakeholder's **private property**?

Thus, we suggest, Neighborhood Watch **lawn** signs **should** be available as NC **branded, Outreach** items, for all stakeholders, to be placed on their private property.

If the City feels justified in denying our tax-paying stakeholders the right to obtain these signs that may help keep them safe, then please explain why. The funds expended for these signs are our stakeholder's monies, not the City's, so it will be difficult to explain the reasons for the City's NEW rules dictating how Neighborhood Councils may provide Neighborhood Watch signs to NC stakeholders.

Your logical consideration and corrective action on the "New NW sign rules," will be appreciated.