

Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance
Bylaws
Approved January 8, 2017

Article One: Mission

The Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance (NCSA) advances sustainability and resilience across Los Angeles through advocacy, sharing of best practices, and community action.

Article Two: Boundaries

The NCSA's area of focus is the City of Los Angeles.

Article Three: Membership

- A. Neighborhood Councils can be members.
- B. Community Councils or other groups that are democratically elected by their community, composed of varied stakeholders, cover whole neighborhoods, and do not have a neighborhood council can be full members. *In the rest of this document, such organizations will be included in the use of the term "Neighborhood Council."*
- C. Neighborhood Councils may actively opt in to membership of the NCSA, and if they do, will be publicly listed as members. To do so, Neighborhood Councils will opt in by agendaized board vote, and sign a statement that reads:

"We the _____ (Neighborhood Council) formally agree to be a member of the Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance. The Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance advances sustainability and resilience across Los Angeles through advocacy, sharing of best practices, and community action."
- D. Nonprofits, government agencies, and companies can be "partners" but not "members."

Article Four: Representation of Member Neighborhood Councils

- A. Each member Neighborhood Council gets one vote per issue or election.
- B. Neighborhood Councils are to determine who represents them—they are open to selecting as many representatives as they like. For groups who have multiple representatives or additional stakeholders present at the meeting, caucusing is encouraged.
- C. Neighborhood Council representatives will identify themselves as such when they sign in at meetings, and can be verified later. (We will aspire to use the honor system, with verification as a back-up.)
- D. If a Neighborhood Council has not appointed a representative, an individual who is a stakeholder of that Neighborhood Council can vote on the Council's behalf. Voters should vote based on the interests of their Neighborhood Council.
- E. If a member Neighborhood Council votes on a question that the NCSA has asked member Neighborhood Councils to vote on, then that vote will be considered to be the vote of the Neighborhood Council's representative(s).
- F. Member NCs are invited to participate in the process to set the direction of the NCSA.

Article Five: Decision-Making

- A. When possible, decisions will be made through consensus. If necessary, democratic voting will be utilized.
- B. When voting is needed at meetings, either a show of hands or roll-call vote can be used.

- C. If remote voting is needed, emails or online surveys can be used.

Article Six: NCSA Decisions Regarding Public Policy Position

- A. If required by a specific member Neighborhood Council, the NCSA shall allow representatives to work through their committees and steering boards to vote on NCSA issues.
- B. It is possible that on occasion the NCSA will have to work quickly and have members take public policy positions without allowing time for Neighborhood Councils to take positions first.
- C. Member Neighborhood Councils can take public policy positions that are in opposition to the NCSA position.

Article Seven: NCSA Steering Board

- A. Steering board members are selected by current board members. Steering board members shall serve staggered two-year terms so that one half of the members shall be up for election at the end of each term (or if the number does not evenly divide by half, the board shall be divided as close to halves as possible). The system for staggered terms of office will be implemented as follows: at the meeting of the steering board at which this portion of the bylaws is adopted, board members will self-select for one- or two-year terms, or there will be a drawing in order to determine the initial terms of the members (one year and two years), from the time of their initial appointment. There is no limit to the number of terms that they can serve.
- B. Steering board members who are appointed mid-term will serve for terms no less than one year and no more than two years (barring resignation or removal), until they are synchronized with the schedule of the other board members.
- C. The steering board sets the direction of the NCSA, sets the meeting agendas, selects and prioritizes issues, is responsible for communications, and establishes committees.
- D. Steering board members should offer expertise and energy. Factors to consider for steering board membership include: time commitment, expertise, representation of BONC planning areas, participation on committees, ability to represent community viewpoints, and other domains of diversity (including race and ethnicity).
- E. Steering board members who are not official representatives of a Neighborhood Council cannot vote on public policy positions.
- F. At any point a steering board member can be removed by a two-thirds vote of the steering board.
- G. Bylaws can be changed by consensus or a two-thirds vote of the steering board.

Article Eight: Executives

- A. Executive positions:
 - 1. The chair ensures the effective action of the board in governing and supporting the organization and also oversees board affairs. The chair acts as the representative of the board as a whole and can appoint others to do so.
- B. Other executive positions are to be determined.
- C. Executives are members of the steering board.

Article Nine Committees

- A. The steering board can create, suspend, and dissolve committees.

- B. Member Neighborhood Council representatives, steering board members, partner organizations, and members of the general public can join committees.
- C. Only member Neighborhood Council representatives or steering board members can be committee chairs.
- D. Each committee must have at least one steering board member.
- E. Committees cannot take official positions without steering board approval.