

**EMPOWER** LA™  
Department of  
**NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT**



# 2018 NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL SUBDIVISION ELECTION GUIDE



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Neighborhood Council (NC) Subdivision Election process allows members of an existing Neighborhood Council to subdivide and create a new Neighborhood Council by putting the subdivision question to a vote of that Neighborhood Council's members. Prior to an election, EmpowerLA reviews and approves subdivision petitions, verifying that the proposed Neighborhood Council meets basic requirements set forth in the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils.

If a subdivision petition is approved, an election is held within 90 days. This guide will describe the subdivision election process and outline key rules and procedures.

If you have any questions, you may contact our office at 213-978-0444 or at [clerk.electionsnc@lacity.org](mailto:clerk.electionsnc@lacity.org). Thank you

Holly L. Wolcott  
City Clerk

## **ELECTION PROCESS AT A GLANCE**

Upon approval of a subdivision application, elections will be held within 90 calendar days. The following is a brief explanation of what the subdivision election process will look like.

### WHEN IS ELECTION DAY?

- Westwood Neighborhood Council: **May 22, 2018**
- Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council: **June 7, 2018**
- Wilshire Center-Koreatown Neighborhood Council: **June 19, 2018**

### WHO CAN VOTE IN A SUBDIVISION ELECTION?

- A person is eligible to vote in a subdivision election if that person
  - o **Lives** in the established Neighborhood Council,
  - o **Works** in the established Neighborhood Council,
  - o **Owns real property** in the in the established Neighborhood Council, or
  - o Declares a stake in the neighborhood as a **Community Interest Stakeholder** and affirms a substantial and ongoing participation within the NC's boundaries. This may include participation or involvement in a community organization such as, but not limited to educational, non-profit, and/or religious organizations.
- Depending on your Neighborhood Council, you may have to provide proof of your stakeholder eligibility, such as a photo identification or other documentation. Please refer to page 8 for additional details.

### WHERE DO I VOTE ON ELECTION DAY?

- There will be two polling places, each overseen and staffed by the City Clerk and EmpowerLA, within the Neighborhood Council for the 2018 Subdivision Elections; one specifically in the proposed subdivision boundaries and one outside those boundaries.

### CAN I VOTE BY MAIL?

- Yes, voters can apply for a Vote-By-Mail ballot starting at **45 days** before Election Day.
- Ballots will be mailed beginning **30 days** before Election Day.
- The last day to request a Vote-By-Mail ballot will be **7 days** before Election Day to ensure a timely delivery to the voter.
- Vote-By-Mail ballots must be received by the City Clerk by Election Day. The completed ballot can be mailed or dropped off at the City Clerk's office.

### CAN I VOTE ONLINE?

- No, an online voting option is not available for the 2018 Neighborhood Council Subdivision Elections.

### HOW CAN I FIND OUT THE ELECTION RESULTS?

- Unofficial election results will be posted once all ballots are tabulated. The City Clerk will have up to seven business days to tally ballots and certify and post official results.

# **IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES**

## **WESTWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Monday, March 19, 2018</b>  | DONE approves subdivision application.                    |
| <b>Saturday, April 7, 2018</b> | Online Vote-By-Mail application is available.             |
| <b>Monday, April 23, 2018</b>  | City Clerk begins mailing Vote-By-Mail ballots to voters. |
| <b>Tuesday, May 15, 2018</b>   | Last day to request a Vote-By-Mail ballot.                |
| <b>Tuesday, May 22, 2018</b>   | <b>ELECTION DAY</b>                                       |

## **HISTORIC CULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Monday, March 19, 2018</b> | DONE approves subdivision application.                    |
| <b>Monday, April 23, 2018</b> | Online Vote-By-Mail application is available.             |
| <b>Tuesday, May 8, 2018</b>   | City Clerk begins mailing Vote-By-Mail ballots to voters. |
| <b>Thursday, May 31, 2018</b> | Last day to request a Vote-By-Mail ballot.                |
| <b>Thursday, June 7, 2018</b> | <b>ELECTION DAY</b>                                       |

## **WILSHIRE CENTER-KORETOWN NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Friday, March 23, 2018</b> | DONE approves subdivision application.                    |
| <b>Saturday, May 5, 2018</b>  | Online Vote-By-Mail application is available.             |
| <b>Monday, May 21, 2018</b>   | City Clerk begins mailing Vote-By-Mail ballots to voters. |
| <b>Tuesday, June 12, 2018</b> | Last day to request a Vote-By-Mail ballot.                |
| <b>Tuesday, June 19, 2018</b> | <b>ELECTION DAY</b>                                       |

## **SETTING UP A NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL SUBDIVISION ELECTION**

Prior to Election Day, City Clerk staff will coordinate with EmpowerLA, subdivision applicants, and the affected Neighborhood Councils to recruit polling places, set election hours, and address logistical concerns.

### **POLLING PLACE RECRUITMENT**

There will be two polling places, each overseen and staffed by the City Clerk and EmpowerLA, within the Neighborhood Council for the 2018 Subdivision Elections; one specifically within the proposed subdivision boundaries and one outside those boundaries.

When selecting a polling place, the City Clerk will take the following factors into consideration:

- Availability for date and time;
- Adequate floor space for voting equipment, staff, and a large number of voters;
- Accessibility as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and
- Parking availability

To the extent possible, the City Clerk will follow the same polling place procedures as required for municipal elections. The City Clerk will also consider polling place recommendations from EmpowerLA, subdivision applicants, and affected Neighborhood Councils, but reserves the right to make the final decision when selecting the polling places.

### **POLL WORKERS**

City Clerk staff will serve as poll workers for each subdivision election.

#### **ATTENTION!**

**To ensure the integrity of the Neighborhood Council Subdivision Election process and prevent multiple instances of voting, poll workers will be instructed to stamp each voter's hand with a temporary ink when issuing ballots.**

## BALLOT DEVELOPMENT

Subdivision elections will only have one type of ballot, which will contain a brief statement followed by a Yes or No Question. For example:

<p><b>The ABC Formation Committee proposes to subdivide the XYZ Neighborhood Council to establish the 123 Neighborhood Council.</b></p> <p><b>Are you in favor of the 123 Neighborhood Council subdivision proposal?</b></p> <p><b>Yes or No?</b></p>
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Additional ballot details:

- All ballots will be printed on 8<sup>1/2</sup>" x 11" paper.
- For tracking purposes, each subdivision election will have different colored ballots for at-poll and Vote-By-Mail.

## POLLING PLACE SUPPLIES

The City Clerk will assemble all polling place supplies for each subdivision election.

## TRANSLATIONS

To the extent possible for the 2018 Neighborhood Council Subdivision Elections, the City Clerk will translate the at-poll Voter Registration Form and the Vote-By-Mail Application into the following languages:

- Bengali
- Chinese
- Farsi
- Korean
- Spanish

The City Clerk and EmpowerLA may also provide language assistance at the polls on Election Day.

## HOW DO I VOTE?

In order to cast a vote in a subdivision election, you must qualify as an eligible stakeholder and either vote at a polling place on Election Day or vote by mail.

## AM I ELIGIBLE TO VOTE?

In order to vote in your Neighborhood Council subdivision election you must:

1. **LIVE** within the established neighborhood council area,
2. **WORK** within the established neighborhood council area,
3. **OWN PROPERTY** within the established neighborhood council area, or
4. Declare a stake in the neighborhood as a **COMMUNITY INTEREST STAKEHOLDER** and affirm a substantial and ongoing participation within the affected neighborhood council boundaries. This may include participation or involvement in a community organization such as, but not limited to educational, non-profit, and/or religious organizations.

**AND** meet the applicable **MINIMUM VOTING AGE REQUIREMENT**. The voting age requirements for the 2018 Neighborhood Council Subdivision Elections are:

- Westwood: **17 years of age**
- Historic Cultural: **15 years of age**
- Little Bangladesh: **18 years of age**

Voting age is determined by the existing Neighborhood Council bylaws.

## DO I NEED TO PROVIDE IDENTIFICATION IN ORDER TO VOTE?

Depending on the specific Neighborhood Council Subdivision Election, you may be asked to produce identification and documentation supporting your eligibility to vote. Otherwise, you may be able to self-affirm or assert your eligibility to vote by signing the voter registration form or completing a Vote-By-Mail application without producing supporting documentation or identification.

For the 2018 Neighborhood Council Subdivision Elections voter verification requirements are:

- Westwood Neighborhood Council: **Self-Affirmation**
- Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council: **Documentation is required**
- Wilshire Center-Koreatown Neighborhood Council: **Documentation is required**

Please refer to **Attachment A: List of Acceptable Forms of Documentation** for additional details on what types of identification or documentation you can use to register to vote.

### **ATTENTION!**

**In Neighborhood Councils requiring documentation to verify voters, homeless voters will be exempt from providing such documentation if they affirm that they are homeless.**



## VOTING AT THE POLLS

All eligible stakeholders will have an opportunity to cast a ballot at a polling place on Election Day. For the 2018 Neighborhood Council Subdivision Elections, there will be two polling places per subdivision election.

## VOTING BY MAIL

If you cannot vote at the polls on Election Day, you have an opportunity to apply for and cast a Vote-By-Mail ballot. You can apply for a Vote-By-Mail ballot online at

<https://clerkappsele.lacity.org/vbmreg/#/vbm> or with a paper application.

### **REMINDER!**

**If your Neighborhood Council Subdivision Election requires documents to support your eligibility to vote, you must provide this information when applying for a Vote-By-Mail ballot, unless you affirm that you are homeless.**

## IMPORTANT VOTE-BY-MAIL RULES

1. Vote-By-Mail ballot applications will be available starting 45 days before Election Day.
2. Vote-By-Mail ballots will be sent to voters beginning 30 days before Election Day.
3. Vote-By-Mail ballot applications will be available up until 7 days before Election Day to ensure a timely delivery to the voter.
4. Blank Vote-By-Mail applications may be distributed by groups or individuals, however, applications may not be completed, collected, or submitted on behalf of another person and will not be accepted.
5. Vote-By-Mail ballots **may not** be collected or submitted on behalf of another person unless an authorized agent is designated by completing the "Authorized Agent" portion of the Vote-By-Mail ballot return envelope.
6. Vote-By-Mail ballots must be received by the City Clerk by Election Day.
7. The City Clerk will maintain a roster of all persons issued a Vote-By-Mail ballot, and all those returning a Vote-By-Mail ballot. This roster will be provided to the polling place inspector for use in the voter registration process on Election Day.
8. If you do not have your Vote-By-Mail ballot to surrender, you must vote provisionally to allow the City Clerk to verify that you did not already cast your Vote-By-Mail ballot.

Please refer to **Attachment B: Vote-By-Mail Timeline** for additional information on key Vote-By-Mail dates for your subdivision election.

## WHERE DO I SEND MY MAIL BALLOT?

Vote-By-Mail ballots must be sent to:

**Office of the City Clerk – Election Division  
555 Ramirez Street, Space 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90012**

Vote-By-Mail voters will be provided a return envelope with this address but must provide their own postage to mail in the completed ballot.

## CAN I DROP OFF MY BALLOT AT THE POLLS ON ELECTION DAY?

Yes. If you received a Vote-By-Mail ballot but would like to vote at a polling place on Election Day, you must bring your Vote-By-Mail ballot and surrender it to the registration clerks before receiving an at-poll ballot or you can deposit your completed Vote-By-Mail ballot in the ballot box.

If you do not have your Vote-By-Mail ballot to surrender, you must vote provisionally to allow the City Clerk to verify that you did not already cast your Vote-By-Mail ballot.

## WHAT IF I NEED A REPLACEMENT BALLOT?

If you lose your Vote-By-Mail ballot or if it was never delivered, please call the City Clerk at **(213) 978-0444** for specific instructions on how to receive a replacement ballot. If time permits, you may be sent a replacement ballot. If a replacement ballot cannot be sent to you in time before Election Day, you may still cast a provisional ballot at the polls on Election Day.

## WHAT IF I AM HOMELESS? HOW CAN I APPLY FOR A VOTE-BY-MAIL BALLOT?

Paper applications are available to stakeholders if they cannot apply for a Vote-By-Mail ballot online. If you do not have a permanent mailing address, please call the City Clerk Monday through Friday, at (213) 978-0444, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., for assistance.

# ELECTION RESULTS

## TALLY LOCATION

Once the polls close on Election Day, all ballots will be secured and transported to the following address for tallying:

Office of the City Clerk – Election Division  
555 Ramirez Street, Space 375  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

## TALLY PROCESS

Ballots will be tabulated and unofficial results will be posted on the Election Division website at <http://clerk.lacity.org/los-angeles-city-clerk-election-division> upon the completion of the tabulation. The City Clerk will post the tally start time on our website.

Barring any recounts or election challenges, official results should be available approximately 5 to 7 business days after Election Day.

## HOW IS THE FINAL OUTCOME OF THE SUBDIVISION ELECTION DETERMINED?

A subdivision election outcome in favor or against is determined by a majority (50% + 1) of votes cast.

## OBSERVERS, RECOUNTS, AND CHALLENGES

The tally process is open to the public for observation. All observers must sign in with the City Clerk and must follow posted observer guidelines.

Recounts will only be available by request from stakeholders who voted in the applicable subdivision election and if the vote margin is less than 1%. For the 2018 Neighborhood Council Subdivision Elections, election challenges will be processed according to the guidelines set forth in **Attachment C: Neighborhood Council Subdivision Election Challenge Process**. Challenges will be processed through EmpowerLA's website at <http://empowerla.org/election-challenge-process/>.

## **AFTER THE ELECTION**

If a subdivision is approved, the certified Neighborhood Council(s) being subdivided must amend their bylaws within 30 days of the election to reflect changes to the boundaries and, if applicable, the board structure. Once amended, EmpowerLA and the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners will review and approve the revised bylaws.

Once the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners approves the bylaws, the Neighborhood Council listed in the subdivision petition shall be deemed a certified Neighborhood Council within the City of Los Angeles. The Neighborhood Council(s) from which the subdivision occurred remain certified after approval by the Commission of the updated bylaws.

## **BOARD SELECTION**

The five stakeholders listed in the subdivision petition will be authorized to work with EmpowerLA and make decisions regarding the initial election or selection of the newly certified Neighborhood Council's governing board. This initial board will serve as an interim board until the next scheduled board member elections in 2019.

## **ELECTION RECORDS**

The City Clerk will retain all election-related materials for a period of three months after the certification of election results. Thereafter, Neighborhood Council election related materials will be destroyed in accordance with citywide records destruction guidelines.