



# 2023 NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL CANDIDATE FILING APPLICATION



**Application Deadline:** All stakeholders interested in running for a Board seat in a Neighborhood Council must submit an application, along with all necessary documentation, 75 days prior to the Neighborhood Council Election Day. Applications received after this date and time will not be processed. There are no write-in candidates. Some of the information on the Candidate Application may be subject to the California Public Records Act request.

## NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL INFORMATION

Neighborhood Council Sunlud-Tujunga Seat Name VP Community Improvement

## CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Name on Ballot Armen Mardirousi Pronouns \_\_\_\_\_

First Name Armen Last Name Mardirousi

Date of Birth 9/1/73 Phone Number (818) 55-2856 Email Address mardirousi@gmail.com

## QUALIFYING ADDRESS, COMPLETE ALL THAT APPLY

LIVE	Street Address <u>5813 Mulberry Drive</u> City <u>Sunladn</u> Zip Code <u>91040</u>
	Check which applies for this address: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Own Property <input type="checkbox"/> Rent Property <input type="checkbox"/> Unhoused Other: _____
WORK	Organization Name _____
	Street Address _____ City _____ Zip Code _____ Check which applies for this address: <input type="checkbox"/> Employee <input type="checkbox"/> Owner Other: _____
OWN	Address _____ City _____ Zip Code _____
	Check which applies for this address: <input type="checkbox"/> Residential Property <input type="checkbox"/> Business Property Other: _____
COMMUNITY INTEREST	Community Interest defined as a person who participates in a non-profit organization that has continuously maintained a physical street address within the boundaries of the neighborhood council for not less than one year, and that performs ongoing and verifiable activities and operations that benefit the neighborhood. A for-profit entity shall not qualify as a Community Organization.
	Organization Name _____
	Street Address _____ City _____ Zip Code _____

## DOCUMENTATION

All candidates must provide documentation to establish their identity and stakeholder status for the board seat they are applying for. List documentation included with this application below (Any documentation submitted by a candidate or voter will not be retained by the City Clerk).

Documentation 1 Police Commission Permit Documentation 2 Utility Bill (Internet)

**I declare under penalty of perjury that the above statements are true and correct.**

Armen Mardirousi

Digitally signed by Armen Mardirousi  
Date: 2024.11.04 19:02:47 -08'00'

11-04-24

Signature

Date

All applicants must agree to the attached Candidate Board Service Acknowledgement and Affirmation prior to certification. For more information regarding this application and acceptable forms of documentation, please visit [clerk.lacity.org/ncelections](http://clerk.lacity.org/ncelections) or call (213) 978-0444.

## CANDIDATE STATEMENT

All candidates have the option of submitting a Candidate Statement as part of their Candidate Filing Application. Every candidate must adhere to the following guidelines when submitting a Candidate Statement:

- Must not exceed 1,000 characters limit including any translations (*Please note that only Spanish translations can be submitted as our system cannot recognize special characters*)
- Must be at least a 12-point font (if typed)
- Must submit statement by 11:59 p.m., 58 days before your Neighborhood Council Election Day
- May not include profanity or comments about any other candidate

As a dedicated member of the Sunland-Tujunga community, I am running for VP of Community Improvement to make our neighborhood an even better place to live. With extensive leadership experience in business, community organizations, and non-profits, and holding degrees in Business Administration and an MBA, I bring a wealth of knowledge to this role.

Focused on enhancing quality of life and increasing community security. I believe in collaboration and will seek community input to prioritize improvement projects that matter most to our residents. As a fast learner, self-motivated, a natural leader, and a true team player, I am committed to working tirelessly on behalf of our neighborhood.

Having built businesses and raised two children who are now productive adult community members, I understand the challenges and opportunities we face. Coming to the United States as a child and building a life here, I embody the American dream. I will remain accessible to ensure everyone's voice is heard and their concerns considered.

My vision is for Sunland-Tujunga to be a thriving community—a beacon of light, a modern oasis with a small-town feel but big-city opportunities.

Candidates may also submit a candidate photo. Candidate Statements will be available on [clerk.lacity.org/ncelections](http://clerk.lacity.org/ncelections) and at each polling location. Please print clearly as the statement will be typed and placed on our website.

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Send your completed application and the required eligibility documentation to:  
City Clerk – Election Division, 555 Ramirez Street, Space 300, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Email: [clerk.election@lacity.org](mailto:clerk.election@lacity.org)  
Fax: (213) 978-0376

**NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL BOARD MEMBER  
CANDIDATE FOR ELECTION  
BOARD SERVICE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AFFIRMATION**

**Introduction**

Thank you for your interest in serving or continuing to serve as a Neighborhood Council board member. You are choosing to join some of the most dedicated community servants in the City of Los Angeles. You will have an opportunity to work with other amazing people who are also dedicated to helping their communities. We appreciate your decision to serve.

There are many aspects to being a Neighborhood Council board member. The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (Commission) establishes policies and promulgates rules and regulations relating to the Neighborhood Council System. One such policy is the *Leadership Orientation Policy* [<https://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/NC-Leadership-Orientation-Policy-2020-01-30.pdf>], which the Commission adopted in early 2020. That policy requires the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Empower LA/Department) to ensure that candidates for neighborhood council board service are aware of the roles and responsibilities of board members. EmpowerLA and the Office of the City Clerk must certify that candidates have been advised of and understand these responsibilities. The Commission recognizes that Neighborhood Council board members might need to expand their leadership skills. You can learn more about required trainings on the Department's website [<https://empowerla.org/nctrainings/>].

If elected, you will be provided access to, and in many cases required to participate in, essential trainings in several areas. Some of the optional trainings offered include those in communication, civic education, parliamentary procedures, coalition building, and conflict resolution. Other trainings are team-building opportunities to develop positive interpersonal relationships that bring about an atmosphere of equity and inclusiveness. Developing these skills and understanding helps board members manage some of the challenges of a properly functioning neighborhood council board.

Apart from trainings, candidates for board service must affirm that they will educate themselves on and follow all laws, rules, policies, and procedures applicable to the Neighborhood Council system (System). These include policies of the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, and the Office of the City Clerk. Each of these offices has a separate role in the System. The information and descriptions below implement the Commission's *Leadership Orientation Policy* and expectations.

**Statement of Values.** The Neighborhood Council system is committed to tailoring LA's municipal government to reflect the City's communities, ensuring that recognition and accommodation of these communities' diversity are built into City governance.

**Role of Neighborhood Councils.** To promote more citizen participation in local government and make government more responsive to local needs. Neighborhood Councils shall include representatives of the many diverse interests in communities and have an advisory role on City issues of concern to the neighborhood.

**Neighborhood Council Advocacy Methods and Resources.** There are many ways in which Neighborhood Councils influence City Council policy and advance the interest(s) of their communities. For example, they advise their City Council representatives and submit community impact statements on behalf of their community. They can serve on Neighborhood Council committees or the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners. They can also participate in groups that support dialogue in the System such as the Neighborhood Council alliances.

**What it means to be a Neighborhood Council board member.** A Neighborhood Council board member must consider several compliance requirements. Board members are entrusted with public funds, and must complete essential training sessions, follow their neighborhood council's bylaws and standing rules, and engage the public in their work in a meaningful, transparent, and inclusive manner. Required training topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Code of Conduct
- B. Ethics
- C. Funding training
- D. Planning 101 (required for planning committees)
- E. Diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-bias training (in progress)
- F. Workplace Equity
- G. Implicit bias gender expression gender identify (in progress)

A board member must complete the Code of Conduct, Ethics, AND Funding trainings to be eligible to vote on any financial matters before the board. You should consult the bylaws of your neighborhood council for additional trainings that they may require as a condition of voting on items before the board.

**Responsibilities of Neighborhood Council Board members.** Board members volunteer their time, engage with the community, and provide expertise on various issues. They commit, on average, 10 – 20 hours a month on behalf of the Neighborhood Council System.. In addition, neighborhood Councils make advisory recommendations to City decision-makers. Because, neighborhood Councils are thus neither decision-making nor legislative bodies, they are subject to pertinent laws that govern City departments and government entities.

**Role of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (EmpowerLA).** EmpowerLA has a diverse role in supporting the Neighborhood Council system. EmpowerLA's core responsibility is to provide *direct neighborhood council support*. In addition to providing meeting and training support for Neighborhood Councils, EmpowerLA is also expected to ensure that Neighborhood Council boards follow all laws, policies, and procedures that apply to the Neighborhood Council System. EmpowerLA also conducts trainings for City departments, elected offices, and stakeholders about the System. The Department is a liaison between Neighborhood Councils and these City decision-makers. Additionally, EmpowerLA administers and oversees awareness, engagement, and election outreach for the NC System.

**Role of Office of the City Attorney.** The Office of the City Attorney Neighborhood Council Advice Division (NCAD) performs the function of general counsel for the City's Neighborhood Council System and advises on the laws that impact the operations of the Neighborhood Councils, including laws that pertain to conflict of interest.

**Role of Office of the City Clerk.** The Office of the City Clerk sets regulations, policies, and guidelines regarding the funding of the Neighborhood Council System and administers neighborhood council elections.

**A. Neighborhood Council Election Handbook [hyperlink]:** The Neighborhood Council Election Division handbook and website provide voters, candidates, and other neighborhood council participants with important policies and information about the neighborhood council election process.

**B. Neighborhood Council Funding Program [Policies and Guidelines](https://clerk.lacity.org/neighborhood-council-funding/funding-trainings-and-workshops):** The Neighborhood Council Funding Program [\[https://clerk.lacity.org/neighborhood-council-funding/funding-trainings-and-workshops\]](https://clerk.lacity.org/neighborhood-council-funding/funding-trainings-and-workshops) issues policies and guidelines related to the funding provided to neighborhood councils.

### **Regulatory Framework**

As you begin your journey with the Neighborhood Council System, it is essential to know the regulatory framework within which it operates. These laws may range from the Brown Act, the Public Records Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, City Administrative Codes, and Commission Policies, to the Neighborhood Council bylaws and standing rules.

### ***Federal Laws Governing the Neighborhood Council System***

- A. **U.S. Constitution.** Provisions of the U.S. Constitution, including the First Amendment's Free Speech, Establishment, and Free Exercise clauses, may be applicable to Neighborhood Council operations, such as meetings and events.
- B. **Americans with Disabilities Act.** The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) applies to the operations of state and local governments and may be applicable to the operations of neighborhood councils

### ***State Laws Governing the Neighborhood Council System***

- A. **California Constitution.** The state constitution protects individual rights and may be applicable to Neighborhood Council operations, such as meetings and events. Other relevant provisions include Article XVI, section 6 (the prohibition against a gift of public funds), and Article I, section 3 (incorporation of the California Public Records Act).
- B. **The California Public Records Act.** The California Public Records Act is a state law providing the public access to public records. Neighborhood councils must respond to Public Records Act (PRA) requests for its records.
- C. **The Political Reform Act of 1974.** The Political Reform Act is a state law meant to ensure that certain public officials are free from bias caused by their own financial interest and act in an impartial manner. Neighborhood Councils abide by applicable provisions.
- C. **The Ralph M. Brown Act.** The Ralph M. Brown Act is a state law requiring open and public meetings and has been applied to neighborhood councils through the Act's definition of legislative bodies.
- D. **California Government Code § 1090.** Government Code section 1090 is a state law that prohibits public officials and employees from having a personal financial interest in public contracts. Because Neighborhood Councils are given some limited authority to recommend or advise on City contracts and to make purchases using City funds, Government Code section 1090 is applicable.
- E. **Federal Employment Practice Laws.** In addition, Neighborhood Councils abide by laws and policies preventing workplace violence, sexual harassment, and discrimination.

## ***City Laws Rules Governing the Neighborhood Council System***

- A. The Los Angeles City Charter.** The City Charter created the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, and a citywide system of Neighborhood Councils. Article IX, sections 900 to 914 relate to the Neighborhood Council system.
- B. The Los Angeles Administrative Code.** The Administrative Code consists of administrative and procedural City ordinances. Chapter 28. relates to the Neighborhood Council System. Other relevant sections include section 5.517 (administration of the Neighborhood Empowerment Fund), spaces), section 10.2.1(b) (funding for neighborhood purposes grants), section 20.36 (neighborhood council elections), and section 22.535 (neighborhood council office and meeting spaces).
- C. The Los Angeles Municipal Code.** The Municipal Code contains criminal and regulatory ordinances. The City Council has passed ordinances within the Municipal Code, which relate to, among other things, notice to the Neighborhood Council system regarding certain land use matters. General City contracting rules can be found in the City Charter (starting at section 370) and within the Administrative Code (starting at section 10.1).
- D. City of Los Angeles Personnel Policies:** The City recognizes that a workforce of individuals with diverse personal backgrounds, ideas, talents, and experiences facilitates an opportunity for each individual to make a unique contribution to the workplace and to provide superior and equitable service to all of the communities of Los Angeles. Harassment or discrimination based on a protected category as defined by the Fair Employment and Housing Act or (FEHA) activity that interferes with the City's goals of maintaining a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and productive workplace is not tolerated. The Office of the City Attorney Labor Relations Division may be asked to investigate questions in this area pertaining to Neighborhood Council boards or board members. When this occurs, board members are expected to comply with the investigation. Failure to do so may give cause for removal of the reluctant board members by the Department.
- E. Fundraising Rules.** The city's campaign finance ordinance restrictions do not apply to Neighborhood Council elections. However, any donations candidates receive are considered gifts which may require them to recuse themselves if the candidate is elected. Recusal will be requires on any matter which directly involves the donor or has the requisite impact on the donor if the donor has given gifts in the amount of \$500 or more in total during 12 months prior to the decision. If the Board candidate is a public



official with disclosure obligations, such as a city employee, applicable gift limits of City and state law would apply to contributions received by the Board candidate.

### ***Board of Neighborhood Commissioners***

The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners establishes policies and promulgates rules and regulations relating to the Neighborhood Council System. Pursuant to section 902 of the City Charter, the Board is responsible for policy setting and oversight, including the approval of contracts and leases and the promulgation of rules and regulations for the Neighborhood Council System.

#### **A Few Important Ordinances, Neighborhood Council Policies, and Rules.**

- A. **Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils**The Plan contains a statement of policies and objectives of the Neighborhood Council System.
- B. **Neighborhood Council Bylaws:** The bylaws of a Neighborhood Council are established to provide a written framework and an organizational structure for that particular Neighborhood Council. Bylaws establish, among other things, an organization's management structure, procedures, and dispute resolution processes.
- C. **Neighborhood Council Standing Rules:** The Standing Rules of a Neighborhood Council detail the administrative rules of that neighborhood council. As a best practice, a copy of the Standing Rules should be added to the Neighborhood Council website making it accessible to the public.
- D. **Parliamentary procedure - Robert's Rules of Order or Rosenberg's Rules of Order:** Parliamentary procedure is a tool to help neighborhood council boards to be more effective and productive during their meetings. A neighborhood council's bylaws state which rules of order apply.

Pursuant to the *Board of Neighborhood Commissioners Leadership Orientation Policy (2020-1)*, elected as well as selected Board Members and candidates are required to affirm that they have received the aforementioned information and affirm their agreement to abide by the requirements and responsibilities of Neighborhood Council board members. The Department may maintain a public list of all board members and candidates who have affirmed or who have failed to affirm.

- The Department may require newly elected board members to participate in a mandatory orientation prior to board service. All mandatory trainings must be completed before board service can begin.
- To learn more about candidates for Neighborhood Council board service, we may ask you to provide demographic information. The information is used by



the Department to improve the direct neighborhood council services it provides Neighborhood Councils.

**I hereby affirm that I have read, understand and agree to follow rules, laws and procedures detailed above in the "Board Service Acknowledgement Candidate Affirmation Document."**

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Signature

**11/4/2024**

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Date