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**GREATER GRIFFITH PARK
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

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PARK NEIGHBORHOOD
COUNCIL**

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**METHODOLOGY AND PURPOSE OF THE GGPNC PRELIMINARY BUDGET
Underlying Assumptions and Principles**

1. Timing. The GGPNC should secure funding as soon as possible. It is better to have the funds and not use them, than to need the funds and not have them. A budget approved by the full council in a public forum must be submitted to DONE prior to initial funding.

2. Preliminary Budget. The proposed budget is preliminary in nature, and as stated on the budget document itself: "All budgeted amounts are subject to reallocation at the discretion of the Greater Griffith Park Neighborhood Council, consistent with its by-laws."

There are currently no policies or procedures in place for approving actual expenditures of money. According to the by-laws, it is the Treasurer's responsibility to establish such procedures. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer intend to expand that responsibility to the full Budget and Finance Committee to further "democratize" the process. That committee will then submit proposed procedures to the full council for consideration.

In the meantime, the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer intend to ask the Executive Committee to approve preliminary procedures to expend money as needed for such items as a post office box, voice mail, securing the ggpnc.org URL, and for small expenditures that to date have been funded personally by members of the Council. No money will be expended until such procedures are in place.

3. Methodology. As in any organization, a final budget should be developed from the bottom up, not the top down. During January, in the absence of a functional committee system, the Treasurer solicited input from the Executive Committee on appropriate line items to include in the preliminary budget. The only comments received requested that the majority of funds be dedicated to community outreach. As that prioritization is consistent with both the mission of the GGPNC and the intention of DONE, the preliminary budget submitted for full council consideration in the January council meeting reflected that priority.

Although there was no consensus expressed in the January meeting as to alternative spending priorities, the revised budget (submitted for consideration at the February council meeting) reflected individual council member and stakeholder comments from and subsequent to the January meeting. Thus, on an annual basis, web site development was reduced by 74%, market / stakeholder issue research was reduced by 26%, and a funded line item for community improvement / beautification was added.

4. Purpose. According to the GGPNC bylaws:

“The mission of the GGPNC is to improve and unify the diverse communities of the Greater Griffith Park area by promoting citizen participation in government at all levels and by encouraging citizens to advise City government in accordance with the provisions of law cited in Article I above.”

For the purpose of the preliminary budget, the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer interpreted that mission as committing the GGPNC to allocate funds to politically empower the stakeholder community. The vehicle for such empowerment is outreach.

The allocation of money to various line items associated with outreach was based upon two principles. These principles may or may not guide the adoption of a final budget, depending upon the intention of the full council. They are:

- a. The council should “front load” funding to develop a methodology and infrastructure for soliciting stakeholder input on important community issues and priorities. That funding was anticipated in the line item “Market Research / Polling,” now called “Stakeholder Issue Research / Polling.”
- b. The council should develop a number of vehicles for ongoing outreach efforts including an interactive web site, direct mailings, email newsletters, newspaper announcements, and door-to-door notices. In the first fiscal year, each method would be deployed and subsequently evaluated on a cost benefit basis, and such evaluation would determine spending priorities for future budgeting purposes.

Kerry Hunnewell, GGPNC Treasurer
Yvette Bryant, GGPNC Assistant Treasurer

February 21, 2003