The Connect-to-Council organization works in several ways to help improve the communication between Santa Ana residents and city government. The organization members are committed to help educate the residents on where to turn for help in solving their neighborhood problems. The city of Santa Ana is divided into six wards, with a Council representative being assigned to each ward. Connect-to-Council works with the Council representatives to bring informative Resource Events to neighborhood leaders and residents. It is Connect-to-Council's belief that Council Persons should have a direct communication line with the residents for the overall improvement of the neighborhoods. Connect-to-Council is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to connecting residents to their city government.

Connect-to-Council’s concept was an outgrowth of the 2008 class of Leadership Santa Ana, which was sponsored by the City of Santa Ana, Leadership Plenty, OC Human Relations and Neighborhood Housing Services of Orange County. Connect-to-Council is designed to increase neighborhood participation in civic affairs and empower residents and neighborhood leaders to positively and constructively communicate with their elected officials.

Events/ Workshops and Forums that Connect-to-Council has presented to date:

2010

Santa Ana Urban Leadership Forum
Rancho Santiago District Board Room, May 1, 2010, 9 am-2 pm
Topics: Strengthening your organization & building alliances, Interaction with city government and Responsible Economic Development

Audience: City-wide neighborhood leaders and those wanting to make a difference

Ward 5 Resource Event
El Salvador Park Community Room, October 27, 2010, 6-8 pm
Topics: Crime Prevention, Disaster Preparedness, Code Enforcement/ Public Hearing Notices & Grant Funding for neighborhoods

2011

Ward 4 Resource Event
Southwest Senior Center’s California Room, March 3, 2011, 6-8 pm
Topics: Crime & Graffiti updates, Code Enforcement, Traffic & Street Issues, Building Leadership & City Connections

Ward 2 Resource Event
Santa Ana Senior Center Community Room, June 1, 2011, 6-8 pm
Topics: Dealing with Crime in our Neighborhoods, Commercial zoning in Ward 2, Code Enforcement issues

Ward 6 Resource Event
Jim Thorpe Fundamental School, September 28, 2011, 6-8 pm
Topics: Code Enforcement updates and discussions, schools and neighborhoods
working together better and the plan discussion for the heavily congested streets around our neighborhoods, including Harbor Blvd.

2012

Ward 1 Resource
Event
Washington Elementary School, February 29, 2012, 6-8 pm
Topics: Abandoned property in our neighborhood, making our neighborhoods safer and the future for our neighborhood parks.
Santa Ana Debate for the Council & Mayoral Candidates
Rancho Santiago District Board Room, September 12, 2012, 7-9 pm

2013

Ward 3 Resource
Event
Santiago Elementary School, March 13, 2013 6-8 pm
Santa Ana Winds of Change Forum... "What's new in our city government?"
Topics: Santa Ana Re-Invented: “What’s new in our city government?”, Santa Ana Commissions: “Which commissions are currently active and what is the process of being appointed to a commission?” and New strategies for connecting local businesses and our neighborhoods
Audience: City-wide community leaders, residents, businesses and officials

2014

Rancho Santiago District Board Room, September 17, 2014, 7-9 pm
Topic: Forum & Debate of the Santa Ana Mayoral & Council Candidates;
Co-presenters included Com-Link, NeighborWorks OC and Orange County Register.
Audience: City-wide community leaders, residents, businesses and officials
SAUSD Board Member Candidates Forum 2014 (Co-sponsor: Youth & Government)
Orange County Laborers Local 652, Santa Ana, CA 6:30-8:30 pm October 16, 2014
Audience: City-wide community leaders, residents, businesses and officials
2015
1st District Orange County Board of Supervisors, Candidates Forum (Special Election)
Presented with the support of Santa Ana, Garden Grove and Westminster Chamber of Commerces
Rancho Santiago Community College District Boardroom, January 6, 2015, 7-9 pm
Audience: City-wide community leaders, residents, businesses and officials
Santa Ana Community Policing for the 21st Century (Forum)
Presented with NeighborWorks, OC Human Relations and Latino Health Access
Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, September 16, 2015, 6:45- 8:30 pm
Audience: City-wide community leaders, residents, businesses and officials

2016

Candidates Forum for 1st District OC Supervisor Candidate Forum & 46th Congressional District Candidate Forum
Presented with Santa Ana Chamber and other area Chambers of Commerce
Santa Ana College, Phillips Hall Theatre, April 14, 2016, 5:30-8:30 pm
http://voiceofoc.org/2016/04/candidates-forum-to-be-presented-on-april-14-2016-1st-district-oc-supervisor/

2016 Candidates Forum & Debate for Santa Ana Council & Mayor
Presented with Neighborworks OC, Latino Health Access & Delhi Center,
Delhi Center, September 21, 2016, 6:30-8:30 PM.

2017

Santa Ana Elections: The Past, Present & Future (Community Forum)
Presented with Neighborworks OC. Special presenter Maria Huizar, Clerk of Santa Ana Council
Delhi Center, April 26, 2017, 6:30- 8:30

Ward 6 Resource Event
Salvation Army Community Room, June 28, 2017, 6:30- 8:30 pm
Topics: Parking Permits, Parking Enforcement, Public Safety, Neighborhood Watch Program, City Parks and Park Rangers, and the Homeless issue

Ward 3 Resource Event
Rancho Santiago Community College District Boardroom, August 30, 2017, 6:30-8:30 PM
Topics: Improving the appearance of our parks & public spaces, Addressing our homeless population, Pending developments & the impact on our neighborhoods, Dealing with the urban coyote population: What can be done?
**Ward 5 Resource Event**
Santa Ana Police Community Room, February 7, 2018, 6:30-8:00 pm
Topics: "Map Your Neighborhood" - Creating a Neighborhood Disaster Response Plan, Presentation on SB 1000 – Consideration of "Environmental Justice, Development update associated with the Bristol Street widening & Infrastructure and development update along the route of the pending OC Street Car in Santa Ana.

**Ward 4/ Alliance of South Coast Area Neighborhoods Community Event**
MacArthur Fundamental Auditorium/Multi-Purpose room, April 25, 2018, 6:30-8:30pm
Topics: Understanding the roles of City Manager & City Council, Dealing with dangerous traffic/intersections in Ward 4 & “What are the latest updates regarding the homeless in Santa Ana and in Ward 4?”

**Ward 1 Resource Event**
The Delhi Center, June 27, 2018, 6:30- 8 pm
Topics: Highlights from Santa Ana City Councilmember Vicente Sarmiento, Updates from the City’s Homeless Manager, Hafsa Kaka & Information from SAPD regarding the city’s quality of Life Team and what is being done to address homelessness in our neighborhoods.

**2018 Santa Ana Mayoral/Council Candidate Forum/Debate**

September 19, 2018 at Delhi Center

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**2019**

**2019 Special Election Candidate Forum for Santa Ana Ward 4 Council Seat & vacant SAUSD Board of Directors Seat**
Co-presented with Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce at the Delhi Center, September 24, 5:30-7:30pm.
Connect-to-Council assists the community in these ways:

- Enhancing a new sense of community and belonging between city government, neighborhoods and community resources.
- Increasing neighborhood participation in civic affairs and empowering representative leaders to have a greater voice in the decision making processes that affect their lives.
- Bringing neighborhood and city government representatives together to actively communicate and develop strategy solutions and opportunities to address concerns.
- Developing an improved civic infrastructure that empowers neighborhood association leaders to positively and constructively communicate with their elected officials to develop a foundation for innovative ways to deal with a variety of issues.
- Developing more sustainable neighborhood leadership through educational conferences that help neighborhood representatives obtain a better understanding of our city structure; learning leadership strategies and community problem solving techniques.

Other references for Connect-to-Council events:
http://newsantaana.com/2012/02/24/connect-to-council-event-on-feb-29-at-washington-elementary-school/comment-page-1/

http://newsantaana.com/2011/06/01/connect-to-council-ward-2-meeting-tonight/


http://newsantaana.com/2013/03/07/meet-council-member-amezcua-in-ward-3-on-march-13/


http://www.ocregister.com/articles/santa-370611-council-connect.html

http://www.theliberalloc.com/2012/09/12/santa-ana-candidates-forum-tonight-pulido-is-late-rocco-a-no-show/


https://voiceofoc.org/2014/09/candidates-for-santa-ana-mayor-council-spar-at-debate/

http://voiceofoc.org/2014/12/candidates-forum-scheduled-for-first-district-supervisor-race/