Date: October 19, 2018

To: Board of Neighborhood Commissioners

From: Grayce Liu, General Manager
Department of Neighborhood Empowerment

Subject: Certification of Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council

The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Department) has prepared this report for the certification of the Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council (HCNNC), which is being subdivided from the existing Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council (HCNC). Pursuant to Los Angeles Administrative Code, Section 22.819 on Neighborhood Council subdivisions, as one of the final steps to the subdivision process, the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (Commission) is authorized to review the bylaws for any Neighborhood Council being subdivided and the bylaws in the subdivision petition and to make any amendments to the bylaws to satisfy Article III, Section 2 of the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils (Plan). Once the bylaws are approved, the HCNNC shall be deemed a certified Neighborhood Council within the City of Los Angeles.

Background

There are extensive documents referred to in this section of the report. All of these materials are on the Department website at http://empowerla.org/hcnnoc/. The specific documents noted in the following sections have been hyperlinked individually from the website.

On January 15, 2018, the HCNNC Formation Committee (Formation Committee) submitted a petition to subdivide from the HCNC. Included in this application were the requisite proposed bylaws and signatures in support of the petition.
After reviewing the application, the Department had reached out to the Formation Committee to request additional signatures. Upon request, the Formation Committee provided the additional signatures requested. Therefore, the Department sent a letter on February 9, 2018 to the Formation Committee noting that the Department received the additional signatures requested and now has all the information for a complete application. The Department also provided the next steps including the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners meeting and community information sessions that took place within the HCNC boundaries. This was in an effort to conduct outreach about the HCNNC subdivision election.

On March 12, 2018, the Commission held a meeting at Castelar Elementary School where stakeholders from the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council area provided their input regarding the subdivision. Some stakeholders raised a concern regarding the submission and review of signatures in support of the petition. The Formation Committee stated that after the submission of the application, the Formation Committee did not provide all the signatures in support of the petition with the initial January 15, 2018 application due to a clerical error, but assured the Department that they were collected prior to the application submission.

As a Department, we continued to work with the Formation Committee to answer any questions from the community and provide any additional information. The Department reviewed the application to ensure that the application met the components of a regular Neighborhood Council Certification application stated in Article III, Section 2 of the Plan, including information on boundaries, bylaws, outreach, financial accountability, and ethics. A proposed map of the boundaries for the new Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council was used at the community information sessions and on the EmpowerLA website. Staff was also available at the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council meetings to answer questions about the subdivision and clarify any boundary issues.

On March 19, 2018, the Department issued an approval letter to the Formation Committee, which acknowledged that the application met all the requirements of the Plan and would move forward to the election phase.

The Department partnered with the Office of the City Clerk, Elections Division to hold the election on June 7, 2018, which included a vote-by-mail component, with the following results:

- Total ballots cast – 463
● 418 voters voted YES (90.67%) in favor of forming a new Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council

● 43 voters voted NO (9.33%) against the formation of a new Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council

The HCNNC subdivision election results were certified by the Office of the City Clerk, Elections Division on June 13, 2018.

Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council Proposed Bylaws

On July 16, 2018, the Formation Committee revised their proposed bylaws with an amendment to the board structure from 21 to 15 Board seats removing six (6) at-large Board seat. In addition, the Formation Committee made a boundary adjustment to include and unrepresented area adjacent to Chinatown area along the Los Angeles River (surrounding the County Jail systems property) and amend the northern boundary of Victor Heights to follow along the 90026 zip code line.

The HCNNC is a combination of polygonal and irregular areas. The written description for the boundaries is the following:

From the intersection of Broadway and the Los Angeles River continuing south along the Los Angeles River to the 101 Freeway continuing along the 101 Freeway to its intersection with the 110 Freeway continuing north along the 110 Freeway to Sunset Boulevard continuing northwest along Sunset Boulevard to the zip code line between Everett Street and Marview Avenue continuing along the zip code line to Stadium way and continuing southeast along Stadium Way turning left onto Lilac Terrace and continuing through Lookout Drive and turning left onto Stadium Way and continuing until turning left onto Dodger Stadium Way continuing along the Elysian Park border and Dodger Stadium Way and turning right onto Academy Road and continuing along the border and Dodger Stadium Way and turning right onto Academy Road and continuing along the border of Elysian Park on the southwest side of Park Row Drive continuing into North Park Row Drive and turning left onto Casanova Street including both sides of Casanova Street turning left onto Broadway and continuing to the Los Angeles River.

The map below portrays the proposed boundaries of HCNNC. The four (4) neighborhoods are categorized by color.
The HCNNC encompasses the following Los Angeles neighborhoods (neighborhoods are categorized by color):

A. Chinatown (purple)
B. El Pueblo (yellow)
C. Solano Canyon (green)
D. Victor Heights (blue)
Formation Committee Change: The Formation Committee changed the following to reflect the northern boundary of the Victor Heights neighborhood to follow along the 90026 zip code line. The change states: “Sunset Boulevard to the zip code line between Everett Street and Marview Avenue continuing along the zip code line to Stadium way and continuing southeast along Stadium Way turning left onto Lilac Terrace and continuing through Lookout Drive and turning left onto Stadium Way”

Department recommendation: The Department recommends making one minor clarification to cross out “continuing into North Park Row Drive”. In doing so, the Solano Canyon neighborhood will include the Solano Canyon Community Garden. Upon discussing it with the Formation Committee and agreeing to the change, the Department brings forth this recommendation.

The internal boundaries of each of the four (4) neighborhoods that encompass the HCNNC are as follows:

A. Chinatown – Beginning at the intersection of Broadway and the Los Angeles River continuing south along the Los Angeles River turning right onto the 101 Freeway turning right onto Alameda Street turning left onto Cesar Chavez Avenue continuing west and turning left onto Spring Street continuing south and turning right onto 101 Freeway continuing west and turning right onto 110 Freeway continuing north and turning right onto Cottage Home Street then turning left onto Broadway continuing northeast to its intersection with the Los Angeles River, excluding the County Jail systems property line.

Formation Committee Change: The Formation Committee changed the internal Chinatown boundaries to include the orphaned area which includes but is not limited to Ann Street Elementary School and the William Mead Homes. This excludes the County Jail systems property lines since the City of Los Angeles does not own or have jurisdiction of this County property.

Department Recommendation: The Department added the underlined portion above to provide more clarification of County property versus City property. The Department agrees to the amendment brought forth by the Formation Committee: to adjust the boundaries to include the unrepresented area into the Chinatown geographical area. The unrepresented area is surrounded by two Neighborhood Councils. The adjacent Neighborhood Council to the unrepresented area is the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council (LHNC), but the Los Angeles River serves as a divider between the LHNC boundaries and the unrepresented area. Therefore, the Department agrees that the unrepresented area shall be included within the HCNNC, Chinatown geographical area.
B. **El Pueblo de Los Angeles** – Beginning at the intersection of Cesar Chavez Avenue at Spring Street east to Alameda Street south to 101 Freeway west to Spring Street north to Cesar Chavez Avenue.

C. **Solano Canyon** – Beginning at the intersection of the 90026 zip code line the Stadium way continuing southeast along Stadium Way turning left onto Lilac Terrace and continuing through Lookout Drive and turning left onto Stadium Way and continuing until turning left onto Dodger Stadium Way continuing along the Elysian Park border and Dodger Stadium Way and turning right onto Academy Road and continuing along the border of Elysian Park on the southwest side of Park Row Drive continuing into North Park Row Drive and turning left onto Casanova Street including both sides of Casanova turning right onto Broadway continuing south and turning right on Cottage Home Street continuing west turning left onto 110 Freeway continuing south passing Lilac Terrace and turning right to connect to Stadium Way up to the 90026 zip code line.

D. **Victor Heights** – Beginning at the bordering 90026 zip code line on Stadium Way continuing east and turning right onto 110 Freeway continuing south and turning right
onto Sunset Boulevard continuing west to the bordering 90026 zip code line continuing to Stadium Way.

Image of Northern part of Victor Heights
(Echo Park NC in blue and Historic Cultural North NC - Victor Heights in purple)

**Formation Committee Change:** As it is noted above, the boundary adjustment to the 90026 zip code line will amend the internal boundaries for the northern part of Victor Heights neighborhood.

**Department Recommendation:** The Department finds this boundary adjustment to be agreeable and amendable. While the map above shows the boundaries going alongside
main streets, such as Everett Street and Marview Avenue, this was not meant to indicate an overlap in boundaries with another Neighborhood Council (Echo Park Neighborhood Council in blue and HCNNC in purple).

The Office of the City Clerk is redesigning all Neighborhood Council maps based on parcels in order to show boundaries more accurately. The Department is assisting in redrawing all the Neighborhood Council maps to illustrate which parcels are included when a written description states the “zip code” line as depicted in this zoomed in map image above, it allows for the Department to make a clear distinction between east side of the zip code line to be in blue, also known as the Echo Park Neighborhood Council and the west side of the zip code line in purple, also known as the Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council.

In addition to the boundary adjustments, the Formation Committee changed the number of their board seats and voting structure based on large voter turnout. After review, the Department finds the changes allowable and that the revised bylaws still meet the bylaws requirement of Article III, Section 2 of the Plan in providing the following information:

**Neighborhood Council Name**

In Article I of the bylaws, the name for the new Neighborhood Council is identified as HCNNC.

**Governing Body Board Structure**

In Article V of the bylaws, the Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council’s governing body is set forth as fifteen (15) board seats for stakeholders 15 years of age or older in the following manner:

A. Representing Chinatown, two (2) residents – Stakeholders who live (and can provide an exact address) within the Chinatown geographical area who are 15 years or older.

B. Representing Chinatown, one (1) business owner – Stakeholder who is a business owner (and can provide an exact address) within the Chinatown geographical area and who is 15 years or older.
C. Representing Chinatown, one (1) non-profit representative – Stakeholder who is from and a part of a non-profit (and officially designated by the organizations wishes to represent). The non-profit must be a 501(c)3 type of organization in good standing throughout candidacy, election and term, must provide an exact address within the Chinatown geographical area and who is 15 years or older.

D. Representing Chinatown, one (1) at-large business owner, employee, non-profit representative or property owner – Stakeholder who is a business owner, employee, non-profit representative or property owner within the Chinatown geographical area and who is 15 years or older.

E. Representing El Pueblo de Los Angeles, one (1) business owner - Stakeholder who is a business owner (and can provide an exact address) within the El Pueblo de Los Angeles geographical area and who is 15 years or older.

F. Representing El Pueblo de Los Angeles, one (1) non-profit representative - Stakeholder who is from and a part of a non-profit (and officially designated by the organizations wishes to represent). The non-profit must be a 501(c)3 type of organization in good standing throughout candidacy, election and term, must provide an exact address within the Chinatown geographical area and who is 15 years or older.

G. Representing El Pueblo de Los Angeles, one (1) at-large business owner, employee, non-profit representative or property owner - Stakeholder who is a business owner, employee, non-profit representative or property owner within the El Pueblo de Los Angeles geographical area and who is 15 years or older.

H. Representing Solano Canyon, two (2) residents - Stakeholders who live (and can provide an exact address) within the Solano Canyon geographical area who are 15 years or older.

I. Representing Solano Canyon, one (1) at-large business owner, employee, non-profit representative or property owner - Stakeholder who is a business owner, employee, non-profit representative or property owner within the Solano Canyon geographical area and who is 15 years or older.

J. Representing Victor Heights, two (2) residents - Stakeholders who live (and can provide an exact address) within the Victor Heights geographical area who are 15 years or older.
K. Representing Victor Heights, one (1) at-large business owner, employee, non-profit representative or property owner - Stakeholder who is a business owner, employee, non-profit representative or property owner within the Victor Heights geographical area and who is 15 years or older.

L. One (1) At-large youth representative, age 16-20 – Stakeholder within the HCNNC boundaries and who is 16-20 years of age.

No single Stakeholder group shall hold a majority of Board seats unless extenuating circumstances exist and are approved by the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment.

The Department finds the proposed governing body to reflect the diversity of the HCNNC’s stakeholders. The board structure also allows all stakeholders the ability to vote and run in at least one board seat. No majority of the board seats are allocated to a single stakeholder group in violation of the Plan, and the term of the board member is 4 year terms. The terms of the Board shall be staggered so that approximately one-half (1/2) of the members are elected every other election year (8 in one election year, 7 in the next). No board member shall be able to serve more than eight (8) consecutive years on the HCNNC board.

Method to Elect or Select the Governing Body

In Article X of the bylaws, the HCNNC identifies an election process for the governing body.

Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council Proposed Bylaws Amendments

At this time, the HCNC did not vote and take official action to amend its bylaws pursuant to the Los Angeles Administrative Code, Section 22.819 on Neighborhood Council subdivisions to account for the new subdivided HCNNC.

While the HCNC did not have an official amended bylaws submitted to the Department, the Department has provided its own recommendations regarding the board structure and boundaries pursuant to the Plan.

Adjusted Boundary Description
The Northwest Corner of where 7th Street meets the Los Angeles River. Travel West on 7th Street to the corner of 7th Street and Alameda Street. Travel North on Alameda
Street until Alameda Street intersects 4th Street. Travel West on 4th Street until Omar Street. Travel North on Omar Street until Boyd Street. Travel West on Boyd Street until San Pedro Street. Travel North on San Pedro Street until 3rd Street. Travel West on 3rd Street until Los Angeles Street. Travel North on Los Angeles Street until the 101 Freeway. Travel East on the 101 Freeway until the 101 Freeway meets the Los Angeles River. Travel South down the west bank of the Los Angeles River down to the Northwest corner of 7th Street.

Adjusted Internal Boundary Description

A. **Arts District** – 101 Freeway at Alameda east to Los Angeles River south to 7th Street west to Alameda Street north to 101 Freeway.

B. **Little Tokyo** – 101 Freeway at Los Angeles Street east to Alameda Street south to 4th Street west to Omar Street north to Boyd Street west to San Pedro Street north to 3rd Street west to Los Angeles Street north to 101 Freeway.
Governing Body Board Structure

In Article V of the bylaws, the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council’s governing body shall be set forth as fifteen (15) board seats with a quorum of 8 for stakeholders 15 years of age or older in the following manner:

1. Arts District Representatives, seven (7)
2. Little Tokyo Representatives, seven (7)
3. At Large Representatives, one (1)

The breakdown of the 15 Board seats are as follows:

1. Arts District, three (3) residents
2. Arts District, three (3) at-large business owner, employee, non-profit representative
3. Arts District, one (1) property owner
4. Little Tokyo, three (3) residents
5. Little Tokyo, three (3) at-large business owner, employee, non-profit representative
6. Little Tokyo, one (1) property owner
7. At Large Representative (1)

Alternative Proposed Boundary

The Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council Bylaws Committee proposed bylaws to include the following neighborhoods: Arts District, Little Tokyo, Solano Canyon, and Victor Heights. This would exclude Chinatown and El Pueblo de Los Angeles. Solano Canyon and Victor Heights were connected to Little Tokyo and Arts District by the 101 freeway, which they argue is a “major thoroughfare.” These proposed bylaws were not approved by the HCNC board. Pursuant to the Subdivision elections on June 7, 2018, the majority of the stakeholders who voted from the HCNC boundaries approved the subdivision to include Solano Canyon and Victor Heights in the new Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council. Furthermore under the Plan, Article III, Section 2, Subsection a(ii) “a proposed set of boundaries should, to the maximum extent feasible, follow historic and contemporary community and neighborhood borders, and shall utilize natural boundaries or street lines and be geographically compact and contiguous.”
This map below shows in red that the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council Bylaws Committee is proposing to connect with the Victor Heights and Solano Canyon neighborhoods that are within the HCNNC proposed boundaries.

Under the guidance of the Office of the City Attorney, the Commission and Department have never interpreted this provision in this manner, i.e. that a freeway is considered the major thoroughfare to connect other neighborhoods. Even if the HCNC board had
approved these boundaries, they would not be compact and contiguous when using a freeway to connect to another area. If that was allowable, any Neighborhood Council bordering a freeway could use the freeway to connect to another far off area, such as Hollywood to Tarzana using the 101 freeway.

**Shareable Areas between HCNNC and EPNC**

Any other shared locations should follow past practice of having to be on the boundaries between two or more Neighborhood Councils and is considered for public use.

Under Article III, Section 2 of the Plan, “the boundaries of two or more Certified Neighborhood Councils may not overlap with one another, unless the area for proposed inclusion into each Certified Neighborhood Council is designed for a public use, such as a park, school, library, policy or fire station, major thoroughfare, or contains a landmark or facility with historical significance.” The HCNNC will include the Elysian Park area. Although not yet stated in the amended bylaws, the Department recommends placing additional clarification that the Elysian Park will be a shared asset with Echo Park Neighborhood Council and HCNNC in the bylaws, Article III, Section 1.

**Recommended Findings**

Because the Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council has satisfied the criteria to subdivide from the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council, the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment recommends that the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners:

1. FIND that the Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council’s bylaws satisfy Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 22.819(d) and Article III Section 2 of the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils making Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council the 99th Neighborhood Council in the City of Los Angeles.

2. FIND that the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council and the Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council’s amended board structures described in this report, to be in compliance with Article III, Section 2 of the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils.

3. FIND that the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council and Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council’s amended boundaries to be in compliance with Article III, Section 2 of the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils.
4. FIND that Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council and Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council will share the public use location of the following: Elysian Park because it is a permissible overlap of boundaries under Article III, Section 2 of the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils.

5. AUTHORIZE the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment to adjust the bylaws of the Historic Cultural Neighborhood Council and the Historic Cultural North Neighborhood Council accordingly.