

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Historic Highland Park Neighborhood Council

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The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(10) Nay(0) Abstain(0) Ineligible(0) Recusal(0)

Date of NC Board Action: 07/05/2018

Type of NC Board Action: For if Amended

Impact Information

Date: 07/31/2018

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 18-0467

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Summary: Attached are recommendations from HHPNC board for Reforms to the Neighborhood Council System.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

HISTORIC HIGHLAND PARK NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Post Office Box 50791
Los Angeles, CA 90050
<http://www.highlandparknc.com>
Certified as NC #33 May 28, 2002

CALIFORNIA



DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT

200 N. Spring St. Ste.2005
Los Angeles, CA 90012
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July 5th, 2018

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, Members of the LA City Council and Commissions
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The Historic Highland Park Neighborhood Council represents over 60,000 Los Angeles stakeholders who reside, own property, or conduct business in our neighborhood.

As requested, we are providing input and recommendations about proposed reforms to the Neighborhood Council System based on diverse feedback. Our input and recommendations are as follows:

- **With regard to amendments to City Charter Article IX:** We agree with changing the name of DONE to Neighborhood Councils Department (NCD), and with changing the name of BONC to Neighborhood Councils Commissions (NCC). However, the theme of empowerment and EmpowerLA should remain part of the branding of the NC system as a larger goal of the system is to empower Angelenos in their neighborhoods.
- **With regard to defining stakeholders:** One simple way to define stakeholders is to limit it to people who live within the boundaries of the Neighborhood Council, much like how constituents for city council, assembly, state senate, congressional districts are limited to people who live within the boundaries of the district. However, the board recommends a more inclusive approach such that stakeholders may additionally include property owners, business owners, students, and parents of minor children in schools within the boundaries of the NC. Our homeless neighbors should also be accounted for, allowing them to self-identify using a public address such as that of the local library, recreation center, or shelter. The current idea of

a Community Impact Stakeholder makes it very difficult if not impossible to ascertain the true number of stakeholders in a NCs boundaries resulting in a barrier to achieving equitable allocation of funds to NCs. Providing a concrete definition and guideline for Community Impact Stakeholder will help improve the ability to identify bona fide stakeholders in the community and equitably allocate resources to better serve and represent them. In the event that the community impact stakeholder definition remains as-is, we recommend that if someone is a stakeholder in more than one neighborhood, they should be required to choose ONE neighborhood they would like to cast their vote in NC elections and/or serve if they choose to run for a board seat.

- ***With regard to amending City Charter Article IX Section 901.d and 904.f.*** We agree with discontinuing the use of “selection” and clarifying that board members should be elected. NC board members need to be elected in a fair manner, whether they are elected in a regular election at the end of a term, or whether they are elected at a meeting to fill a vacant seat in the middle of a term.
- ***With regard to review of bylaws and stakeholder types:*** There should be a uniform set of bylaws across the NC system for each NC in order to promote clarity, efficiency, and fairness in the system. These bylaws should provide for equitable representation on each board.
- ***With regard to voting age requirements:*** The minimum voting age for the NC system should be 16.
- ***With regard to training requirements:*** We agree with a requirement of a planning and land use training for all chairs and vice chairs of NC land use committees. We also believe that there should be mandatory training for all new NC members that shares content provided in Civic U 1.0 and 2.0.
- ***With regard to rollover of funds:*** We agree that rollover of funds should be allowed for NCs and that \$10,000 is a sufficient amount. This will reduce administrative workloads when waiting for invoices toward the end of the fiscal year, and will ensure that funds are not spent inefficiently or recklessly as the end of the fiscal year approaches.
- ***With regard to accepting donations:*** We are concerned that accepting donations will create increased vulnerability to corruption within NCs and we do not support it. However, should it be adopted due to support by NCs elsewhere in the City, donation limits and strict oversight should put in place to address vulnerability to corruption.
- ***With regard to elections and election outreach:*** Elections should be funded by the City. Outreach and advertising pertaining to elections should be funded by the City. Elections for all NCs should be held on the same day citywide. These reforms have the potential to increase turnout at the elections, increase awareness of the elections and of the NCs, and will remove financial pressures and workload pressures from the NC and its unpaid volunteer members. Finally, it will free up funding so that the NC can focus on directly benefitting stakeholders.
- ***With regard to instructions directed to DONE:*** We agree that DONE should create a process for NCs to access shared spaces in City facilities, develop how-to and best practices guides, and develop point of contact lists for key city departments and agencies.