



LITTLE TOKYO SERVICE CENTER

Positive Change for People and Places

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October 2, 2018

Councilmember David E. Ryu
Chair – Health, Education and Neighborhood Councils Committee
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Support for Community Impact Stakeholder category for Neighborhood Councils

Dear Councilmember Ryu,

I am writing to urge you to maintain the Community Impact Stakeholder category for Neighborhood Councils in the City of LA, and suggest that this category be an option that each Neighborhood Council may choose for its own circumstances. Little Tokyo Service Center CDC was founded over 35 years ago and understands the diverse community make up and changes of demography over time. The Community Impact Stakeholder category is a vital means to allow longtime community stakeholders to remain involved in Little Tokyo.

Little Tokyo is the regional center for people of Japanese descent in Los Angeles County, other API communities and beyond. It is home to the country's sole Japanese American National Museum, which boasts over tens of thousands of members and donors. The largest Japanese American Cultural & Community Center in Southern California is based in Little Tokyo. Over a half dozen religious organizations, including major centers such as Higashi Hongwanji (established 1904) and Nishi Hongwanji (established 1905) are located in Little Tokyo, serving generations of families who remain actively connected to Little Tokyo.

As with many ethnic neighborhoods in Los Angeles, Little Tokyo remains the focal point for many people who celebrate their culture in Southern California. Thousands of people attend Oshogatsu (Japanese New Year) festivities in Little Tokyo every year, and tens of thousands of people celebrate Nisei Week annually in Little Tokyo. It's vitally important that our stakeholders, many of whom live or work miles from downtown, can continue to participate and vote in Neighborhood Council issues that affect a neighborhood they have been active in for several generations.

Thank you for your leadership in undertaking reforms for the City's Neighborhood Council system. We hope you will seriously consider our recommendation for this important stakeholder category.

Sincerely,

Takao Suzuki
Director of Community Economic Development