

Your Community Impact Statement has been successfully submitted to City Council and Committees.

If you have questions and/or concerns, please contact the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment at NCsupport@lacity.org.

This is an automated response, please do not reply to this email.

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council

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The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(13) Nay(0) Abstain(0) Ineligible(0) Recusal(0)

Date of NC Board Action: 05/09/2023

Type of NC Board Action: For

Impact Information

Date: 05/11/2023

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 23-0468

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Summary: At a regular public meeting on May 9, 2023, the Board of Directors of the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council (“DLANC”) voted to submit this Community Impact Statement in support of CF 23-0468: Cooper Do-nuts / Nancy Valverde Square / 2nd Street / Main Street / Permanent Ceremonial Signs. Please see our attached letter for additional information regarding our support.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA



**DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
OFFICERS**

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TREASURER



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May 9, 2023

Re: Community Impact Statement on CF 23-0468: Cooper Do-nuts / Nancy Valverde Square / 2nd Street / Main Street / Permanent Ceremonial Signs

To Whom It May Concern:

At our regularly held public meeting on May 9, 2023 the Board of Directors of the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council ("DLANC") voted to provide the following comments below:

The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council submits this Community Impact Statement **in support** of CF 23-0468: Cooper Do-nuts / Nancy Valverde Square / 2nd Street / Main Street / Permanent Ceremonial Signs

The City of Los Angeles has a rich history connected to the LGBTQIA+ civil rights movement. At the request of the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning Office of Historic Resources, a Citywide Historic Context Statement on LGBTQ history was commissioned then published in September 2014 which contained several sites of historical importance to the LGBTQIA+ community including *Cooper Do-nuts*.

The City of Los Angeles has taken significant steps to preserve this history, especially in Council District 13, as seen with the Historic-Cultural Monument designation of the Black Cat Bar (HCM 939) in Silverlake which was also included in the Planning Departments survey.

The first recorded instance in the LGBTQIA+ community of gender-transgressive persons resisting arbitrary police arrest occurred at *Cooper's Do-nuts* at 215 S. Main Street in Downtown LA in 1959. In Los Angeles, cross-dressing and any form of public gender non-conformity had been outlawed since 1898 under Municipal Ordinance 5022. The Ordinance was amended in 1922 to allow a fine of \$500 and 6 months in jail to be given to those in violation of the order.

Cooper Do-nuts gave gender non-conforming individuals a safe space to socialize among other establishments frequented by gay men exclusively in "The Run" which included bars and restaurants.

Executive Order 10450 (1953) said that anyone found to be gay could be fired from their jobs with no warning and even business owners who catered to gay clientele could lose their license. For this reason, gender non-conforming individuals were excluded from establishments that catered to gay men for fear of uncovering their violation of EO 10450.

In 1950 Nancy Valverde and her friends Audrey Black and Delores Newton were students at Moler's Barber College at 265 S. Main Street a few doors down from Cooper Do-nuts. Cooper Do-nuts being the sole safe place for all LGBTQIA+ persons regardless of gender expression became the place where Nancy Valverde and her friends would congregate on a regular basis to discuss the issues of the day.

As a masculine presenting woman, with short hair and masculine clothing, Nancy was routinely arrested for violating Ordinance 5022 and thrown into Lincoln Heights jail and a section known as the "Daddy Tank" reserved for women suspected of being Lesbian. In the same manner they had a gay men's section of the jail called the "Fruit Tank."

Nancy Valverde took matters into her own hands and visited the Los Angeles County Law Library and with the help of the law clerk discovered rulings that wearing men's clothing was not a crime in Los Angeles. Nancy informed her lawyer, Arthur Black Esq, of what she discovered, and he was able to use these rulings in her defense. The police stopped arresting her and her friends, but harassment did not. Beat policeman would make a habit of knocking loudly on her Brooklyn Avenue barber shop window with their nightsticks. Nancy's tenacity and perseverance however led the way to ending laws targeting LGBTQIA+ individuals but more specifically gender non-conforming persons.

On August 23, 2019, three transgender women were attacked at Las Perlas bar located near 6th and Main Streets only steps away from the original location of *Cooper Do-nuts*. This event which went viral on social media around the world underscores the fact that much still needs to be done to recognize issues specific to the transgender community.

The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council supports Councilmember Kevin de León motion to consider memorializing the significance of the *Cooper's Do-nuts* site and Nancy Valverde's contribution to civil rights for LGBTQIA+ persons in the following manner through the designation of the intersection of 2nd & Main Streets as "*Cooper's Do-nuts / Nancy Valverde Square*."

In addition, we ask that Council further investigate future actions to commemorate this site to include the following:

- As part of an intersection designation process, consider potentially activating the crosswalk with paint, using the LGBTQ Pride rainbow colors.
- Consider memorializing an adjacent street lamp near the site, in a treatment similar to that of the Jonathan Gold memorial at Grand Central Market, with paint using the LGBTQ Pride rainbow colors, a historic sign, and LED colored lighting
- Consider a ground surface treatment, on the public right-of-way, adjacent to the site, with a memorial through the placement of a plaque, paint, bas-relief, and other interventions to recognize the significance of the adjacent site

As Nancy Valverde (92) is still living but is now terminally ill with cancer and in hospice, we respectfully request expediting the above actions.

Sincerely,



Claudia Oliveira
President,
DLANC



Tony Hoover
Treasurer,
DLANC

Cc: Council District 14 (via email)
Transgender Advisory Council, Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department (via email)
Downtown Center Business Improvement District (via email)
Los Angeles Neighborhood Council LGBTQ+ Alliance (via email)