

Chatsworth Neighborhood Council Bylaws

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Article I NAME

The name of the neighborhood council shall be the Chatsworth Neighborhood Council ("CNC" or "Council"), an officially recognized council hereby part of the Los Angeles Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils.

Article II PURPOSE

- A. The PURPOSE of the CNC is to participate as a body on issues of concern to our neighborhood and within our sphere of influence and in the governance of the City of Los Angeles.

- B. The MISSION of this Council is:
 - 1. To provide an inclusive open forum for public discussion of issues concerning City governance, the needs of this Neighborhood Council, the delivery of City services to this Neighborhood Council area, and on matters of a citywide nature.
 - 2. To advise the City of Los Angeles on issues concerning City governance, the needs of this neighborhood council, and the delivery of City services to this Neighborhood Council area and on matters of a citywide nature.
 - 3. To initiate, execute and support projects for the physical, social, and cultural improvement of Chatsworth.
 - 4. To facilitate communication between the City of Los Angeles and community stakeholders on issues of concern to the community and/or the stakeholders.

- C. The POLICY of this neighborhood council shall be:
 - 1. To respect the dignity and expression of views of all individuals, groups, and organizations involved in this Neighborhood Council.
 - 2. To remain non-partisan with respect to political party affiliation and inclusive in our operations including, but not limited to, the election process for the governing body and committee members.
 - 3. To inform our Neighborhood Council of matters involving the City of Los Angeles (and our community) in a way that is tailored to provide opportunities for involvement in the decision-making process.
 - 4. To encourage all community stakeholders to participate in activities of this Neighborhood Council.
 - 5. To prohibit discrimination against any individual or group in our operations on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, homeowner/renter status, income, or political affiliation.
 - 6. To have fair, open, and transparent procedures for the conduct of our Neighborhood Council business.

Article III BOUNDARIES

The CNC includes a geographic area in excess of 20,000 residents.

Section 1: Boundary Description – The boundaries include all areas within the City of Los Angeles described as follows:

- A. The Northern line shall be from the most northwesterly point of the Los Angeles City / Los Angeles County boundary at SR-118, northeast along said boundary to Browns Canyon Road, then south along Browns Canyon Road to the gate at its southern terminus, then south in a straight line to SR-118, then east to Corbin Avenue.
- B. The Eastern line shall be the centerline of Corbin Avenue from SR-118 to Nordhoff Street.
- C. The Southern line shall be the centerline of Nordhoff Street from Corbin Avenue west to its termination, then continuing in a straight line to the Los Angeles City / Los Angeles County boundary.
- D. The Western line shall be the western Los Angeles City limit from the extended centerline of Nordhoff Street north to SR-118.

The boundaries of the Council are set forth in Attachment A – Map of Chatsworth Neighborhood Council.

Section 2: Internal Boundaries – Not applicable.

Article IV STAKEHOLDER

Neighborhood Council membership is open to all Stakeholders. A “Stakeholder” shall be defined as any individual who:

- (1) Lives, works, or owns real property within the boundaries of the neighborhood council; or
- (2) Is a Community Interest Stakeholder, defined as an individual who is a member of or participates in a Community Organization within the boundaries of the neighborhood council.

A “Community Organization” is an entity that has continuously maintained a physical street address within the boundaries of the neighborhood council for not less than one year, and that performs ongoing and verifiable activities and operations that confer some benefit on the community within the boundaries of the neighborhood council. A for-profit entity shall not qualify as a Community Organization. Examples of Community Organizations may include Chambers of Commerce, houses of worship or other faith-based organizations, educational institutions, or non-profit organizations.

[The definition of “Stakeholder” and its related terms are defined by City Ordinance and cannot be changed without City Council action. See Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 22.801.1]

Article V GOVERNING BOARD

The Board of Directors or Board shall mean an elected governing body as set forth in the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils (Plan).

Section 1: Composition - The Council will be led by a Board of Directors consisting of twenty-one (21) elected, selected or appointed stakeholders who are at least eighteen (18) years of age. All Board seats are open to all stakeholders; however, no single stakeholder group shall hold a majority of Board seats unless extenuating circumstances exist and are approved by the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Department).

Section 2: Quorum - A quorum consists of eleven (11) Board members for all business. There shall be no proxy voting.

Section 3: Official Actions - An "official action" shall be any Board approval or disapproval of any motions, resolutions, positions, or decisions with respect to items on its agenda which will then become the official or representative voice on said item for the CNC.

Official action may be taken by the Board with a majority vote of the Board members present and voting (two-thirds (2/3) when specified), not including abstentions, at any duly noticed meeting, provided there is a quorum.

Section 4: Terms and Term Limits - Board members shall serve a two (2) year staggered term commencing at the first duly noticed regular Board meeting after a selection is certified. There will be no limit on the length of service on the Board.

A. As a result of the Local Emergency declared by the City of Los Angeles on March 4, 2020, due to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), the CNC Selection scheduled for March 21, 2020, was postponed and not able to be rescheduled in a timely manner. Therefore, in order to maintain the existing staggered terms, the following changes in Board member terms shall be implemented:

1. The eleven (11) Board member terms that would have expired in 2020 shall be extended for approximately one year until after the 2021 CNC Selection is held and certified. The newly selected Board members shall be sworn in at the first duly noticed regular Board meeting following the certification of the 2021 CNC Selection results.
2. The ten (10) Board member terms that would have expired in 2021 shall be extended for approximately one year until after the 2022 CNC Selection is held and certified. The newly selected Board members shall be sworn in at the first duly noticed regular Board meeting following the certification of the 2022 CNC Selection results.

Section 5: Duties and Powers - The primary duties of the Board of Directors will be to govern the Council and to carry out its objectives.

The President may delegate to any individual the authority to present before any public body i) CNC positions previously adopted by the Board, or ii) a statement that CNC has had insufficient time to develop a position or recommendation on a matter before that body. Such authority may be revoked at any time by the Board or by a majority of the officers.

Section 6: Vacancies - A vacancy on the Board shall be filled using the following procedure:

- A. Any stakeholder(s) interested in filling a vacant seat on the Board shall submit a written application(s).
- B. The matter shall be placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the Board.
- C. If only one (1) stakeholder has made an application for a vacant seat, then a vote of the Board shall be taken and the applicant installed by a majority vote of the Board members present. If more than one (1) stakeholder has made an application for an empty seat, then a vote shall be taken either at a special selection or at the next regular meeting by all registered stakeholders present. The vote shall be presided over by the Board and shall include one (1) vote per Board vacancy per registered stakeholder.
- D. When the process mentioned above fills a vacant seat, the seat shall be filled for the remainder of the term for that seat. In no event shall a vacant seat be filled where a general selection is scheduled to occur within sixty (60) days.
- E. A special selection held to fill a vacancy on the Board may be conducted during the business portion of a duly noticed monthly Board meeting.
- F. Since the Local Emergency declared by the City of Los Angeles on March 4, 2020, due to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) has resulted in Neighborhood Council meetings being only held virtually via telephone and other electronic means until further notice, there shall be no special Selections held until after the 2021 CNC Selection is held and certified.
 - 1. Any and all Board member seat(s) vacated prior to the 2021 CNC Selection shall remain vacant and will be filled by the 2021 Selection process.
 - 2. After the 2021 Selection is held, any future vacant seat(s) shall be filled pursuant to Section 6, subsections A to E above and in compliance with the currently approved CNC Selection Manual.

Section 7: Absences - A Board member may be removed from office for unexcused failure to attend 30%, or more, of duly noticed meetings in a Board year. This action will require affirmative votes of two-thirds (2/3) of those present.

The definition of “excused” absence and process for removal will be stipulated in the Board Rules.

Section 8: Censure - The purpose of the censure process is to place a Board member on notice of misconduct and to provide the Board member with an opportunity to correct the misconduct. The Neighborhood Council (“Neighborhood Council”) may censure any Board member at a regular or special meeting open to the public following a good-faith determination by the Neighborhood Council Board that the member has engaged in conduct that is contrary to rules and regulations applicable to the Board or that impedes the orderly business of Board operations. Grounds for censure include, but are not limited to, persistent disruptive conduct at meetings, violations or abuses of the Board’s bylaws or rules, violations of the Code of Conduct, acting on behalf of the Board without authorization, and misuse or abuse of the censure or removal process by acting in bad faith.

The Board shall use the following procedure when censuring a Board member:

- 1. A motion to censure a Board member may be initiated by any three (3) Board members.

Those Board members shall not constitute a majority of the quorum of any Neighborhood Council body, such as a committee. The motion shall be delivered to any officer of the Board or a specific officer or member of the Board as may be specified in the bylaws or standing rules of the Neighborhood Council. The motion shall be in writing and provide the specific facts and grounds for the proposed censure including the date(s) and specific conduct relied upon for the motion. The motion shall not be based upon conclusions, e.g., “for alleged violations of the Code of Conduct” but shall contain factual statements that describe conduct only and is not intended to embarrass or humiliate the board member.

2. The Board member, group of Board members or committee responsible for setting the final Board agenda shall include the motion on the agenda of the next regular or special Board meeting scheduled at least thirty (30) days following the delivery of the proposed censure motion.
3. The Board member subject to censure shall be given a minimum of thirty (30) days prior-written notice, which may include email sent to the last email address on file with the Neighborhood Council, of any meeting at which the motion to censure will be considered. The notice shall provide the specific facts and grounds for the proposed censure as specified in 1 above. The Board shall also provide a copy of the notice to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which the motion to censure will be considered.
4. The Board member subject to censure shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard at the meeting, either orally or in writing, prior to the Board’s vote on a motion of censure.
5. The Board shall decide by a majority vote of those present and voting whether or not the Board member should be censured. The Board member who is the subject of the censure motion shall not be counted as part of the majority present and voting and shall not be allowed to vote. For the purpose of censure motions, abstentions shall not be counted as votes.
6. In no event shall a motion to censure a board member be heard by the Neighborhood Council within sixty (60) days of the next scheduled Board election or selection.

Section 9: Removal - Any Board member may be removed by the Neighborhood Council (“Neighborhood Council”) for cause, following a good faith determination by the Board that the member has engaged in conduct that is contrary to rules and regulations applicable to the Board or that impedes the orderly business of Board operations. A Board member shall not be subject to removal under this Policy, unless the member has been censured at least once pursuant to the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners’ (“Commission”) Censure Policy. Grounds for removal include, but are not limited to, persistent disruptive conduct at meetings, violations or abuses of the Board’s bylaws or standing rules, violations of the Code of Conduct, acting on behalf of the Board without authorization, and misuse or abuse of the censure or removal processes by acting in bad faith.

The Board shall use the following procedure when removing a Board member:

1. A motion to remove a Board member may be initiated by any three (3) Board members. Those Board members shall not constitute a majority of the quorum of any Neighborhood Council body, such as a committee. The proposed motion shall be delivered to any officer

of the Board or a specific officer or member of the Board as may be specified in the bylaws or standing rules of the Neighborhood Council. The motion shall be in writing and provide the specific facts and grounds for the proposed removal action including the date(s) and specific conduct relied upon for the motion. The motion shall not be based upon conclusions, e.g., "for alleged violations of the Code of Conduct" but shall contain factual statements that describes conduct only and is not intended to embarrass or humiliate the board member. The motion to remove shall also include a copy of the prior censure motion and the date it was passed.

2. The Board member, group of Board members or committee responsible for setting the final Board agenda shall list and briefly describe the motion on the agenda of the next regular or special Board meeting scheduled at least thirty(30) days following the delivery of the proposed removal motion.
3. The Board member subject to removal shall be given a minimum of thirty (30) days prior written notice, which may include email sent to the last email address on file with the Neighborhood Council, of any meeting at which a motion to remove will be heard. The notice shall provide the specific facts and grounds for the proposed removal as specified in 1 above. The Board shall also provide a copy of the notice to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to any meeting at which a motion to remove will be considered.
4. The Board member subject to removal shall be given reasonable time to be heard at the meeting, either orally or in writing, prior to the Board's vote on a motion for removal.
5. The Board shall decide whether or not the Board member should be removed by an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the currently sitting Board members. The Board member who is the subject of the removal motion shall not be allowed to vote and shall not be counted when determining the two-thirds (2/3) majority vote. For the purpose of the removal motion, abstentions shall not be counted as votes.
6. In no event shall a motion to remove a Board member be heard by the Neighborhood Council within sixty (60) days of the next election or selection.
7. The Commission may review a Neighborhood Council's removal decision if requested to do so by the affected Board member. Once the request is made for the Commission to review the decision to remove, the Neighborhood Council voting to remove the board member may not fill the vacancy created by the removal until the Commission has made a decision on whether the removal was proper or the Commission declines to review the matter. The Commission's decision whether to hear or decline to hear the removal review request shall be sent in writing to the requestor and the Neighborhood Council within 30 days after the request for review is delivered.
8. A request for the Commission to review a Neighborhood Council's removal decision shall proceed as follows:
 - a. The request must in writing and must be delivered to the Executive Assistant of the Commission or, in the absence of an Executive Assistant, to the President of the Commission within thirty (30) days of the date of the action by the Neighborhood

Council to remove the Board member.

- b. The request must state the basis for the review. The request shall not cite or present any evidence not considered by the Neighborhood Council but must address only procedural deficiencies.
 - c. If the Commission determines the request for review raises sufficient questions regarding procedural deficiencies and agrees to hear the review, it will be placed on the agenda of a regular or special meeting of the Commission within sixty (60) days of receipt of the request for review.
 - d. At the review, the Commission will determine if the facts as presented support the removal motion and if the procedures set out in this policy were correctly applied.
 - e. If the Commission determines that there were either factual or procedural deficiencies, the Commission may either reinstate the Board member or return the matter to the Neighborhood Council for further consideration.
 - f. If the Commission returns the matter for further consideration and the Neighborhood Council does not act within sixty (60) days of the Commission's decision the Board member will be considered reinstated.
 - g. During the period of appeal the Board member shall not be counted as part of the Board for any quorum and shall not participate in any Board actions.
 - h. If the matter is returned to the Neighborhood Council for further consideration the Board member shall not be counted as part of the Board for any quorum and shall not participate in any Board actions until the Board takes action as requested by the Commission or until the expiration of the sixty (60) day time period.
9. This policy is not intended to restrict or eliminate a Neighborhood Council's ability to remove or render ineligible to serve, Board members who fail to attend meetings, join committees, maintain their stakeholder status, or perform other duties as may be described in the Neighborhood Council's bylaws and/or standing rules. Nor is it intended to limit a Neighborhood Council's ability to remove committee chairs or committee members according to the Neighborhood Council's bylaws and/or standing rules.

Section 10: Resignation - If a Board member resigns or is no longer a stakeholder, the position shall be determined vacant. A resignation must be made in writing to the President or other Board officer with the member's signature affixed.

Section 11: Community Outreach

- A. The CNC will maintain an Outreach Committee, which will be responsible for communicating with stakeholders on a regular basis in a manner ensuring information is disseminated in an even and timely manner.

- B. The Board shall direct that a system of outreach be instituted to find and obtain nominees for selections to the Board. The Board may choose to design such a system through the committee process.
- C. The purpose of this outreach is to put forth a reasonable effort to inform and give every stakeholder desiring to participate on the Board an opportunity to become a Board member. To that end, there shall be outreach for each selection for purposes of soliciting stakeholder support.

Article VI OFFICERS

Section 1: Officers of the Board - Officers shall include positions entitled President, Vice President(s), Secretary, and Treasurer(s).

Section 2: Duties and Powers

- A. The President shall preside at all meetings and direct all activities of the Council.
- B. The Vice President shall be in charge in place of the President if the President is unable to serve.
- C. The Treasurer shall maintain the records of the Council's finances and book of accounts and perform other duties in accordance with the Council's Financial Management Plan. See Article IX for a further description of Treasurer responsibilities.
- D. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all Board meetings.
- E. Other duties of Officers may be defined in the Board Rules.

Section 3: Selection of Officers - The Officer positions shall be filled by a majority vote of the Board members present at the first meeting following the certification of a selection.

Section 4: Officer Terms - The Officers of the Board shall serve one (1) year terms and may stand for re-election annually.

Article VII COMMITTEES AND THEIR DUTIES

Section 1: Standing Committees - The Board shall have such power to change any permanent or standing committee(s).

Section 2: Ad Hoc Committees - Ad hoc committees may be established as needed but may include only members of the Board of Directors.

Section 3: Committee Creation and Authorization - Board Rules shall govern the system for the election, selection, or appointment of stakeholders to committees and sub-committees. All other committees established or disbanded, shall be noted in the Council meeting minutes. Other issues related to committees may be stipulated in the Board Rules.

Article VIII MEETINGS

A Council meeting shall mean a meeting of the stakeholders and the Board that has been duly noticed. All meetings, as defined by the Ralph M. Brown Act, shall be noticed and conducted in accordance with the Act, the Neighborhood Council Agenda Posting Policy, and all applicable laws.

Section 1: Meeting Time and Place - Meetings of the Board shall be held at least once per calendar quarter.

Section 2: Agenda Setting - The President and/or Secretary, or their respective designee Board members, will plan the agenda for each Council meeting.

Section 3: Notifications/Postings - Notification of all meetings shall include, at a minimum, posting at five (5) public locations specified in the Board Rules. Any canceled meeting shall be posted in the same locations.

Section 4: Reconsideration - The Board may reconsider and amend its action on items listed on the agenda if that reconsideration takes place immediately following the original action or at the next regular meeting. The Board, on either of these two (2) days shall: (1) make a motion of reconsideration and, if approved, (2) hear the matter and take an action. If the motion to reconsider an action is to be scheduled at the next meeting following the original action, then two (2) items shall be placed on the agenda for that meeting: (1) a motion of reconsideration on the described matter and (2) a "proposed" action should the motion to reconsider be approved. A motion of reconsideration may be made only by a Board member who previously voted on the prevailing side of the original action. The aforesaid shall all be in compliance with the Brown Act.

Article IX FINANCES

- A. The CNC shall comply with all financial accountability requirements as specified by City Ordinance and in the Plan as stated in the City's Certification Application. This Council shall also comply with all financial requirements as prescribed by the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (Department).
- B. The Treasurer shall be ultimately responsible for the maintenance of bookkeeping and financial reporting and for the protection of all Council assets. The Board may authorize the hiring of a financial professional in compliance with City and Department rules to help maintain financial records.
- C. The Council's financial statements, books and accounts shall be open for inspection and copying by any member of the public upon written request in accordance with the Financial Management Plan, which provides for fair and open procedures to permit inspection within a reasonable time. CNC will comply with the Public Records Act.
- D. The Treasurer shall make a report to the Board on the Council's finances at every regular meeting of the Board.
- E. The Treasurer shall be responsible for preparing or coordinating the preparation of financial reports as required by the Department.
- F. The Council will not enter into any contracts or agreements except through the Department.

Article X ELECTIONS

Section 1: Administration of Election - Instead of an election, the CNC will conduct a selection process every year in accordance with the rules and regulations promulgated by the City.

Section 2: Governing Board Structure and Voting - There are twenty-one (21) selected at-large Board seats, for which all eligible stakeholders can seek selection and all eligible stakeholders can vote. See Attachment B.

Section 3: Minimum Voting Age - Each registered stakeholder must be at least 16 years of age on the day of the selection to be eligible to vote.[See Admin. Code §§ 22.814(a) and 22.814(c)] Stakeholders shall be entitled to one (1) vote for each open position on the Board.

Section 4: Method of Verifying Stakeholder Status - All voters shall verify their Stakeholder status through documentation as defined in the CNC Selection Manual.

Section 5: Restrictions on Candidates Running for Multiple Seats - Not applicable.

Section 6: Other Election Related Language - The conduct and operation of each CNC Selection shall be governed by the currently approved Selection Manual.

Article XI GRIEVANCE PROCESS

- A. Any grievance by a stakeholder must be submitted in writing to be placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting. At that duly noticed meeting, the Board shall refer the matter to a grievance panel comprising three (3) stakeholders who are randomly selected from a list of stakeholders who have expressed an interest in serving on such a grievance panel. Within two (2) weeks after the panel receives the grievance the Board President or a designee will coordinate a time and a place for the panel to meet with the person(s) submitting a grievance to discuss ways in which the dispute may be resolved.
- B. Within two (2) weeks following such meeting, a panel member shall prepare a written report to be forwarded to the Board outlining the panel's collective recommendations for resolving the grievance. The Board may receive a copy of the panel's report and recommendations prior to any meeting by the Board, but the matter shall not be discussed among the Board members until the matter is heard at the next duly noticed regular meeting of the Board pursuant to the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- C. This formal grievance process is not intended to apply to stakeholders who simply disagree with a position or action taken by the Board at one of its meetings. Those grievances can be aired at Board meetings. This grievance process is intended to address matters involving procedural disputes, e.g., the Board's failure to comply with Board Rules or these Bylaws. In the event that a grievance cannot be resolved through this grievance process, the matter may be referred to the Department for consideration or dispute resolution. The Neighborhood Council grievance review process will be conducted pursuant to any and all City ordinances, policies and procedures pertaining to Neighborhood Council grievances.

Article XII PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Where the Brown Act, then the Bylaws, then the Board Rules are silent, the Board shall follow Robert's Rules of Order unless there is a compelling reason to do otherwise.

Board Rules shall be developed by a committee and adopted by a majority of the Board, unless contrary to any applicable laws including these Bylaws, and can be changed or modified by the Board per said rules.

Article XIII AMENDMENTS

Any Board member may propose amendments to these Bylaws by requesting that an item to that effect be placed on the agenda. Any stakeholder may propose amendments to these Bylaws during the public comment period of a regular meeting of the Board.

- A. A stakeholder-initiated proposal to amend these Bylaws must then be formalized in writing and submitted to the person responsible for preparing the agenda for the next regular meeting.
- B. The proposed amendment will be noticed on the agenda for public discussion and a vote at the next regular meeting of the Board.
- C. An amendment or adjustment to these Bylaws requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board members present where a quorum has been established.
- D. Thereafter, and within fourteen (14) days after a vote recommending amendment or adjustment to the Bylaws, a Bylaws Amendment Application shall be submitted to the Department along with a copy of the existing bylaws for review and approval.
- E. Such amendments shall not be valid, final or effective until approved by the Department.

Article XIV COMPLIANCE

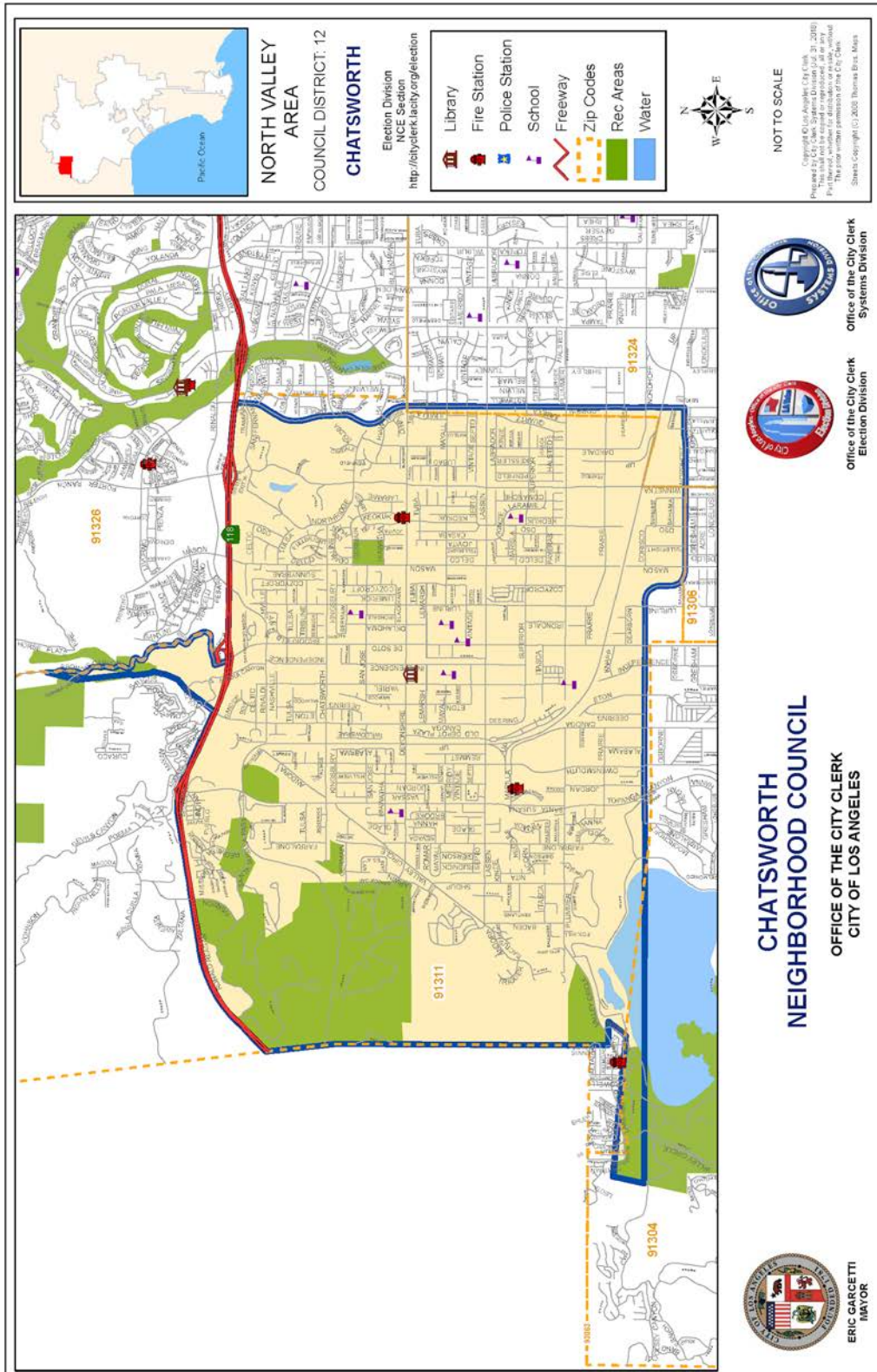
The Council, its representatives, and all stakeholders will refrain from violating the Board Rules, shall be subject to any or all applicable sections of the City of Los Angeles Governmental Ethics Ordinance (LAMC Section 49.5.1), and will abide by the plan and all local, county, state and federal laws.

Section 1: Code of Civility - The Council, its representatives, and all stakeholders will endeavor to conduct Council business in a professional and respectful manner. Board members will abide by the Commission's Neighborhood Council Board Member Code of Conduct Policy.

Section 2: Training - All board members must take ethics and funding training prior to making motions and voting on funding related matters.

Section 3: Self-Assessment – Intentionally left blank.

ATTACHMENT A - Map of Chatsworth Neighborhood Council



ATTACHMENT B - Governing Board Structure and Voting

Chatsworth Neighborhood Council – 21 Board Seats

BOARD POSITION	# OF SEATS	ELECTED OR APPOINTED?	ELIBILITY TO RUN FOR THE SEAT	ELIBILITY TO VOTE FOR THE SEAT
At-Large Representatives Term: 2 Years	21	Selected	Any Stakeholder of Chatsworth Neighborhood Council who is at least 18 years of age at the time of the selection.	Any Stakeholder of Chatsworth Neighborhood Council who is at least 16 years of age at the time of the selection.