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President Lawshe : I think we're on. I think, I think we're on. Good morning.

President Lawshe : Welcome to the City Planning Commission's regular meeting. Today is Thursday, March 12th, 2026, and the time is 8:34 a.m.. Commissioners participating this morning are Caroline Cho, Martina Diaz, Phyllis Klein, Brian Rosenstein, Elizabeth Zamora, and Jacob Sietman. Today we are in the downtown City Hall building in the John Ferraro Council Chamber room 340 on the third floor. My name is Monique Lawshe and I am the commission president. The City Planning Commission will also be conducted via Zoom webinar. A sound check was performed by planning staff prior to the start of the meeting to confirm that we have the strongest audio connection possible within the limits of city infrastructure. Commissioners, please note that all microphones are on and capture all audio. Cecilia, would you please give the general instructions?

Cecilia Lamas, for the record, good morning, commissioners, planning staff and members of the public. General instructions for this meeting are as follows. Please note that this meeting is being recorded. Audio for this meeting will be available online within three business days. Today we will be following the agenda order. The meeting agenda is available on the Planning Department website at the top of the agenda. There is a link to the folder that includes the presentations and meeting submissions. Staff will add compliant digital submissions to this folder as soon as they are processed to provide access to commissioners and the public. If you wish to speak in person before this commission, please fill out the applicable speaker cards and turn them into commission staff. Speaker cards are located in the back of the room for each agenda item. If you wish to provide public comment remotely before this commission, you may do so by accessing the Zoom link or calling information on the agenda. Disruptions will not be tolerated. If you disrupt the proceedings, you will receive a warning. If you continue the disruptive behavior, you will be escorted from the meeting. If you represent a certified neighborhood council and you have a written resolution or community impact statement, please submit it at this time by emailing cpc@lacity.org. If you have any day of hearing submissions, please submit them at this time by emailing CPC@lacity.org. If you would like to be added to the interested parties list to receive determination letters for any of the agenda items from today's meeting, please email CPC at city.org or provide your information on the sign in sheet located in the back of the room. We thank you for your patience and flexibility with the hybrid meeting format. Commission president Lawshe, we will proceed.

Thank you. This morning I'm going to ask Commissioner Simon to read our racial equity value statement.

Simon: Thank you. president.

Equitable planning demands that race does not determine whether or not one thrives in Los Angeles. The Los Angeles City Planning Commission prioritizes a planning process that centers the need of those most harmed by systemic racism. Our goal is the creation of affordable, prosperous, resilient, and healthy communities where all Angelenos experience the feeling that they belong.

Cecilia Lamas: Thank you. I'm now opening item number one. We will begin with the director's report. Director Bertoni, do you have a report this morning?

Vince Bertoni, Planning Director: Thank you very much. Yes. We have a planned presentation which will be up in just a moment. And just from an overall director's report, just to kind of update on where we are in the budget process. Um, as you know, everything in all

of our programs and what we do as a department are driven by the budget. Last year, we had a very challenging budget, as you may remember. Um, we had an initial cut of 30%, um, from the mayor's budget, which would have been a 25% layoff, the department was able to work with the City Council Budget Committee and the chief legislative analyst to get that cut in half the 30% to 15% without any kind of layoffs. However, we did have to move things around in in terms of the programs because we had some certain programs defunded and others funded, um, to make that work. So we are getting back into the budget process again. Um, we've had initial conversations with the mayor's office and the, uh, the, um, city administrative officer and we are looking towards having the mayor's budget released. I believe it's around April 20th is when that will come out. And then once it's released on April 20th, what will happen is that we will have, um, city council Budget Committee hearings happening within roughly about the next week and then going into the full city Council with council Adoption around June 1st. So we don't know what the budget will be coming out. But, um, we're expecting another year that'll be relatively lean and not as lean as last year. Um, and we will be, um, we will be monitoring that and of course, reminding everybody of the importance of the work of the planning department does, you know, centering our recovery and the, the Palisades fires, which are the most devastating fires, getting ready for the Olympics, working very, um, thoughtfully in housing, getting housing policy adopted and really getting us, you know, really helping us address the housing crisis as well as economic development. You know, entertainment industry drives this city and getting, um, studio production, as you know, and its ripple effect through there. So we think that there's, there's a lot of, there's tremendous value that the planning department and planning in general brings and will be reminding everyone that through this spring.

President Lawshe: Thank you very much for that update, and we look forward to hearing more when it's finalized.

Cecilia Lamas: Pardon the Interjection. President, I'd just like to note for the record that Commissioner Chavez has joined the meeting.

President Lawshe: Very good.

Bertoni: And I should mention that we do have a presentation that's listed on the under the director's report. Yes. Which is from, um, we have Ken Bernstein here from resources.

Ken Bernstein: Wonderful. Good morning.

Good morning. Okay. Good morning commissioners.

Micaela Torres-Gil, Planner, UPHPOZ: I'm Mickie Torres-Gil with Los Angeles City Planning's Office of Historic Resources, uh, policy unit. I'm here today to provide a director's report regarding the University Park HPOZ survey. So we'll start with some background information about the purpose of this presentation: the HPOZ program and the University Park HPOZ.

In December 2025, the City Planning Commission reviewed an appeal of the permit for the demolition of a one-story single-family dwelling in the University Park HPOZ. The appeal was filed on claims that the building was demolished in error due to inaccuracies in the district's historic resources survey. The appellant further claimed that this issue affected dozens of properties in the HPOZ. While denying the appeal, the Commission, at the suggestion of Commissioner Klein, requested that city planning follow up on what it would take to update the survey. The Office of Historic Resources has prepared this presentation as background in responding to this request.

The HPOZ program was established in 1979 to administer review of exterior alterations, additions and infill within locally designated historic districts. It comprises 35 HPOZs and one specific plan that functions as an HPOZ. HPOZs range in size from 50 to 4000 parcels, mostly containing single family and multifamily residences, though some also include commercial and industrial properties. The HPOZ Ordinance, last updated in 2017, outlines the review processes for projects proposed within the HPOZs. Review processes are determined by a property's classification in the Historic Resources Survey, either as a contributor, altered contributor or non-contributor. A period of significance is identified based on the dates of construction for contributors. Project review within each HPOZ is further governed by a preservation plan approved by City Planning Commission. While plans share a common language based on best preservation practices, Guidelines are tailored to address character defining features of each district.

The University Park HPOZ was adopted in 2000, serves as one of the program's oldest historic districts. While the area has been formally surveyed several times, the survey, prepared in 1999 by Myra Frank and Associates, is the most recent and serves as the basis for the HPOZs 2000 adoption. The period of significance for the HPOZ, as determined in the 1999 survey and outlined in the Preservation Plan adopted in 2005, is 1887 to 1940. The area has one of the highest concentrations of city historical Historic-Cultural monuments of any HPOZ, as well as two National Register designated historic districts. The University Park Historic Resources Survey evaluated a total of 620 parcels not including vacant lots, vacant parcels and parking lots. Of these, 250 properties were identified as contributors or intact elements that date to the period of significance of the district, contribute to its historic and architectural integrity, and have minimal to no alterations. Another 178 properties were identified as altered contributors, which are contributing elements found to retain their historic integrity despite minor and reversible alterations. For the purposes of HPOZ review, contributors and altered contributors are treated the same. Finally, 183 properties were identified as Noncontributing because they were built outside the district's period of significance or are extensively and irreversibly altered. Regarding integrity, the survey report deemed an element a non-contributor if alterations would require an economic miracle to be reversed. This integrity threshold is no longer used but was common for surveys completed around this time.

University Park community members have requested that noncontributing properties constructed during the period of significance be resurveyed, or undergo technical corrections to modify their status in the 1999 survey. The following slides will discuss the available pathways to fulfill this request.

The HPOZ ordinance outlines three types of modifications to historic resources surveys, each of which can be initiated by City Council, City Council, City Planning Commission, or the Director of Planning. A boundary change is an expansion or contraction of an existing boundary requiring certification by the CHC, a recommendation by the CPC and a final action by Council. The community's concerns do not involve changes to the HPOZ boundary, so this path is not applicable to this discussion. A technical correction is an administrative tool used to correct minor errors and omissions in the survey, based on input from the HPOZ board and the Cultural Heritage Commission. This process may be used if the listed construction date is incorrect, or to reclassify a historic property that was significantly changed or demolished between the survey and the time of adoption. Presenting a clear inaccuracy in the survey, it is not typically used in the reevaluation of a single property, nor for a large batch of concurrent property evaluations. A resurvey, either partial or full, involves a reevaluation of multiple resources requiring certification by the Cultural Heritage Commission and a final action by CPC, and may be applicable for a large and varied group of properties in the survey area.

Since a boundary change is not applicable, and a technical correction would not be an appropriate tool when a discretionary evaluation is required, a resurvey is the most appropriate pathway for addressing the community's request.

A potential survey project presents several challenges, regardless of whether it is a partial resurvey or a full resurvey. First, the survey scope needs to be defined. A partial resurvey of non-contributors dating to the period of significance would comprise 121 parcels, while a full resurvey would comprise all 620 parcels in the survey area. In the past, when the department has been requested to complete partial resurveys, it has opted to reevaluate all parts, all parcels within the boundary to ensure consistency, fairness and transparency. A standard survey requirements also present several challenges. Um historic resources surveys serve as the authoritative basis for the HPOZ for HPOZ project review, and therefore, it is important that these surveys are conducted by highly qualified historic preservation professionals, ensuring that survey findings are rigorous, defensible and prepared by an objective third party that does not own property or reside in the affected district. HPOZ surveys are often contracted out to qualified preservation consultants for this reason. However, if outsourcing a contractual service budget for a full resurvey could cost up to \$100,000. A lack of available resources to complete a survey of this size presents the largest challenge due to budget cuts in the past year. OHR has lost two full time positions, including one in HPOZs, constituting an almost 15% reduction in its staff between standard case processing across 35 HPOZs, a new HPOZ adoption, and HPOZ expansion and adoption of new designs, new design standards. The HPOZ unit is operating at maximum capacity. Given a lack of staffing and the importance of rigor and objectivity in survey findings, OHR recommends that any future survey work is completed by qualified historic preservation consultant. However, as previously noted, survey contracts are expensive. In the past, HPOZ surveys and surveys have been funded through some combination of community fundraising, grant fundraising or grant funding. City budget allocations or discretionary funds made available through a council office. Unfortunately, to date, no financial resources have been made available to initiate a University Park resurvey. Therefore, next steps in this effort might include further defining the survey scope and collaboration with the Community and council office to identify potential financial resources.

That concludes our presentation. Thank you for the opportunity to present to you, and we're happy to take any questions.

President Lawshe: Thank you. I'd like to note that Commissioner Johnson has joined us. Welcome. Thank you. Um, so if I understand everything that you just said, the current survey is 25, 26 years old. And I understand the challenges of, uh, the budget challenges, but, you know, I just like to know what your thoughts are. Um, including director Bertoni on how do you prioritize? There's lots of competing priorities, um, on the budget.

Ken Bernstein: Thanks. Good morning. Ken Bernstein with the Office of Historic Resources. Um, as Mickey mentioned we do have 35 adopted HPOZ's across the city. These have been adopted since the 1980s. Um, a large number such as University Park were adopted in the late 1990s early 2000. We have not had a comprehensive program to update historic resource surveys across the city. As was mentioned, the standard that has been cited by community members that was an issue in the Hancock Park and Windsor Square box is no longer used by the city has not been in nearly 20 years, but there are at least a dozen other surveys that were adopted around the same time as University Park that also have not been updated. So it really has been a, a resource question. Um, and, uh, you know, we have not had dedicated budget allocations or dedicated funding to comprehensively revisit these surveys.

President Lawshe: Okay, director Bertoni, anything to add to that?

Bertoni I think that, um, Mr. Bernstein did an excellent job of presenting. I would just say that, you know, if we were to do approach this, I think you have to do it citywide as Mr. Bernstein mentioned, and and that it needs to be comprehensive. This is not the oldest survey we have. Um, um, by, by by there's quite a few that are older than that. When we have had these kind of efforts in the past, as my memory was, there was very specific intentionality from the city council to actually budget for them. Um, so there are periods of time where we had these batches of increases of, of HPOZs and Mr. Bernstein will probably remember these better than I would, but they were actually very intentional from the city council to actually fund them. And I think that's an important thing. So if we were to do it, we should do it. We'd have to do it citywide. There'd have to be a clear budget allocation from the city council, you know. Um, I gave my presentation on the budget, not with the intent of this particular item, but you're here. you have to understand what happened last year. We had a 30% cut delivered to us by the mayor's office, which would have been a 25% lap. That was huge. We got out of it. We, as a department, worked hard with the Budget Committee of the council and the CLA to figure out a different solution. But (what) the solution did is it put us as a department in a lot of constraints to get to get where we are. You know, I'll give you, for example, we didn't have anybody laid off, but we have such constraint on hiring. We actually can't rehire a lot of positions. So we've had a reduction in staff, um, because we can't refill because of our budget and our contracting portion has been greatly reduced. So I think coincidentally, now's the time to have the conversation because we're going into budget and to really talk about what's important, the values here. And if it's an important city value that needs to be included in the budget. And if it is, we'd be happy to do that because we think it is important to to maintain the service.

Arthi Varma: Commission President, part of the city planning. If I could just add to that, uh, to your question about how we prioritize. Kind of reevaluating some of these, um, older surveys, I did want to add an invite staff to chime in. Um, when we look at reserving the many properties that are designated within, you know, many of these are decades old. The surveys could, you know, kind of go in both directions. And we want to be really mindful about the designations that we have. And I also want to note where we have kind of reevaluated based on this criteria. We haven't always seen the level of change in terms of redesignations of non-contributors to contributors and maybe staff can speak to that example, but that adds to how we prioritize the resources, the limited staff resources and budget that we have and how we allocate it towards our various historic preservation programs.

Commissioner Cho : If I may, before you start again, this is Caroline Cho. To that point, my thoughts were, uh, these are existing buildings. So the question would be what would trigger a resurvey? Because it's not like all of a sudden you're going to have new historic buildings showing up, right? So, um, if you could just give some detail around that.

Ken Bernstein: Thanks again. Ken Bernstein Um, I think the community's concern is that, um, the survey in their view, um, misclassified certain buildings, particularly those that are non-contributors that they felt could easily be restored and could be contributing structures and therefore be subject to a different set of review processes. Um, just building on the point that Arthi Varma just made, uh, we have done two large surveys in the past based on that so-called economic miracle standard that became an issue in, in a court decision. And so we resurveyed Hancock Park and Windsor Square HPOZs; each of those neighborhoods had over 1200 properties within those districts. And as a result of those surveys, there was only one property that was reclassified from a non-contributor to a contributor, out of about 2500 total. So that, you know, didn't indicate to us that there needed to be a prioritization of, um, completely redoing all the surveys that had used that same standard. We've just not been using that standard moving forward.

Cho: thank you.

Commissioner Klein: Commissioner Klein with a couple of questions, since I raised this subject, was there something about the community feedback here that indicated that University Park should be resurveyed? I remember this was a discussion about one property, right?

Ken Bernstein: I think to their credit, the University Park community has been vocal and consistent in their view about the survey really since the HPOZ was originally adopted. So it's been, it has been a consistent request from the University Park community and historic preservation leaders in the surrounding West Adams neighborhood. So I think that's why it's been brought to the attention of staff previously and been raised as some of our HPOZ board meetings over the years.

Commissioner Klein: Has the University Park area been fundraising or trying to gather support for even a partial resurvey here?

Ken Bernstein: To my knowledge, they have not. Um, the University Park community position that they've articulated has been that they feel the, uh, what we call a resurvey and described in the presentation that they feel that can be handled through what's called a technical correction, which is a staff driven administrative process. As our presentation indicated, that is a process we've used to correct individual properties on kind of a one off basis individually. But when we're talking about hundreds of properties, um, potentially that is either a partial or a full resurvey. So the community's position has been this should be done through a technical correction and that the community members themselves, who do have considerable historic preservation expertise that they could contribute to or actually conduct the survey themselves.

Commissioner Klein: Um, question for Director Bertoni. So with SB 79, does this impact or will it, uh, force a look at surveys for some of those neighborhoods? Because there's several HPOZs that will be affected by SB 79.

Vince Bertoni, Planning Director : Well, I can get into more details. I mean, if you're talking about the parts of SB 79 that had things such as delayed effectuation, there's you know, the thing about it is there's multiple reasons why areas get delayed effectuation. One of them would be historic preservation, but there's many other ones, like lower resource areas would have delayed effectuation. If the existing zoning capacity meets or exceeds SB 79, that would have delayed effectuation. So, the interesting thing is there are many neighborhoods that have historic resources, but under SB 79 are being delayed effectuation because of other reasons, such as low resource.

Arthi Varma, Planning: Yeah, I'll just chime in also that with SB 79, the processes of HPOZ review would still be in place. I think the larger issue that you might be kind of bringing up is with new state legislation coming through over the past few years, streamlining has been sort of a which is not necessarily the key point of SB 79. But other state bills certainly involve, you know, streamlining, which, you know, removes some of the discretionary process. And I think that's where some of the concern have been raised in terms of, you know, the ability to review at the same level when years passed when we didn't have some of the state streamlining bills.

Bertoni : And I believe and I think you can correct me if I'm wrong, we believe that SB 79 is written. It's the designation that we would apply. Historic preservation. We can still provide

historic preservation standards provided during the district. I think a non-contributor in the district would still have certain review.

Arthi Varma: Yeah. And I think for, you know, within even with SB 79 the same, you know, demolition procedures still apply. I mean, you get incentives through SB 79 to build additional units and f a r, but you would still have to go through Secretary of Interior Standards review and you wouldn't be able. it would be difficult to, I should say, demolish a contributor in an HPOZ even with SB 79.

President Lawshe Thank you. Thank you. Um, unless there are any more questions or comments, we're going to move along on this item. Um, I failed to ask if there were any speakers online. I have no speaker cards in person for this meeting.

Marcus, for the record. Yeah, we have a few callers, caller Jean please go ahead.

Jean Frost: My name is Jean Frost. I was one of the original chairs of the University Park HPOZ. I want to thank the City Planning Commission. Um for the concerns that came out of the demolition at 1015 West 21st Street, which had an odd set of circumstances, but it springboarded us to the issue of non-contributors that ought to be contributor altered and their vulnerability under various scenarios that may come into place. Um, as I think, with stated contributors could still have some review, uh, under, uh, some of the state bills and as we said, which even, uh, brings us to the issue of how revision of non-contributors to contributors altered is ever more important, and we are looking forward to having a collaborative relationship and that includes raising funds. And I know West Adams Heritage, the Neighborhood Council and various others are willing to start raising funds so that we can have this technical correction. We are looking at or hope to look at only those non contributors that are from the period of significance. Thank you very much.

Marcus: Caller Catherine, you're unmuted. Please go ahead.

Catherine Estrada: Good morning. My name is Cathy Estrada. I am on the board of University Park. Thank you so much Commission, planning commission for, um, hearing us. Uh, but as Jean was mentioning, it is ever more important for the non-contributors to be re surveyed to be contributor altered with the state legislations that are coming up. And so I thank you so much for listening to us and hearing us, because our neighborhood is being destroyed, because it wasn't it wasn't surveyed properly and labeled properly. So I ask that you please, um, uh, consider letting this happen. Thank you.

Lawshe: Thank you.

Marcus Daniela. You're unmuted. Please go ahead.

Daniela Velasco: Hello. My name is Daniela Velasco, and I'm speaking on behalf of the Conservancy. Thank you to City Planning for its efforts in refining the University Park survey. Um, it's important that the survey guidance development process accurately reflects the historic resources of the University Park. It was also conveyed where Evaluation methods, such as economic criteria, and would potentially be different today. Because of that, identify economic importance for the evaluation. So we support an updated survey so planning decisions are based on the most accurate and up to date information available. Thank you.

Marcus: Caller 2526 you're unmuted. Please press star six to unmute yourself.

Jim Childs: Good morning, Jim Childs for ADHOC.

I have to say, thank goodness it's finally out in the open. I've been working to make this happen for over 25 years. The issue of the Office of Historic Resources continues. The University Parks now finally being heard outside of OHR management manipulation. Um, in 2011, the HPOZ board started its own review after they tried to do something. And in terms of the numbers, I wanted to write this up. We saw that there were 184 non contributing structures, 109 within a period of significance, 100 and 109 for an economic miracle. Those are the numbers we're talking about in this report. Now the remaining 89 non contributors.

Marcus: Thank you. That is your time.

Caller Andrea, you're unmuted. Please go ahead.

Andrea: Yes.

My name is Andrea and I am on the Board, the Board of University Park. I would think that it would benefit the entire city of Los Angeles, that our surveys are the most accurate that they can be. And I understand that when the survey was done that the criteria was different than it is today. But once we tear down an altered non contributor, we are not going to get it back. And with the development pressure that's on us today, I think we must resurvey to do everything we can to save the character of our historic neighborhood. Because LA it deserves that.

Thank you.

Lawshe: Thank you.

Marcus: Caller Roland, you're unmuted. Please go ahead.

Caller Roland, please go ahead and unmute yourself.

They'll move on to the next individual caller. Please go ahead.

Caller John Muzier: Please go ahead and unmute yourself.

And that is the last time at this time.

President Lawshe: Okay. Thank you.

Uh, at this point, um, uh, I think that we're concluded this issue. Thanks for all of the input from staff. Thanks for your, your, um, presentation. Um, moving on, does the deputy city attorney have anything to report? Hello.

City Attorney: Good morning, commissioners. Nothing to report today.

President Lawshe :All right. Thank you. Um, commissioners, please take a look at your advanced calendars. Note any planned absences. Does any commissioner have a request at this time? And I've noted on our advanced calendars that SB 79 is showing up twice now. Is that correct? Yes. So so we're going to have two separate hearings on that item.

Arthi Varma: the Department of City Planning. We are potentially going to have two hearings. We're waiting for our council direction. We are tentatively scheduled.

We are tentatively scheduled for March 24th at City Council. And we should have more clarity after that meeting. Uh, depending on the direction that we are provided at that meeting.

President Lawshe Okay. Thank you. I'm now closing item number one. Opening item number.