

"Together we have clout!"

SPECIAL COMMUNITY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 2024 - 7:30 PM — SOCIAL HOUR/DINNER - 6:30 PM

JOIN US FOR A FUN NIGHT AT THE VALLEY RELICS MUSEUM

**ONE-TIME JUNE-ONLY LOCATION:
7900 Balboa Blvd, Hangar C3 & C4
Lake Balboa, CA 91406
(entrance on Stagg Street)**



Located near Van Nuys Airport, the Valley Relics Museum is a trip back to a fun time. A special local historian will give us a peak at the Valley's rich history.

- WE HAVE THE MUSEUM ALL TO OURSELVES -
- LOTS OF TIME TO ENJOY EVERYTHING -

DON'T MISS THIS STROLL DOWN MEMORY LANE!



This special meeting will not be streamed.

PLEASE RSVP RIGHT AWAY

Email us at SOHA914@gmail.com or leave a voicemail at (818) 377-4590 with your name(s) and how many will be attending.

Museum has limited capacity - Walk-ins not recommended without RSVP



RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH - MENDOCINO FARMS
FIND OUT MORE ON PAGE 5 - SOHA SOCIAL HOUR @ 6:30 PM

MOVING FORWARD IN COUNCIL DISTRICT 4

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Council District 4's election campaign came down to a narrow (two-thirds of one percent) victory by the incumbent Nithya Raman to continue her work in our fourth council district through 2028. Ms Raman won reelection against two opponents with almost 50% of district voters supporting either Ethan Weaver (38.6%) or Levon Baronian (10.7%). No elected representative will ever make all their constituents happy and hopefully Ms Raman will not take this narrow victory as a mandate, but as an opportunity to give her work in the next four years a wider appeal within her district. In fact, the Los Angeles Times accurately described her first term and her hard fought, close victory this way:

"Being one of 15 City Council members in Los Angeles is an extraordinarily challenging job. It's difficult to steward a district of 260,000 people and impossible to please everyone, particularly when there are such divergent opinions in communities over how to make the streets safer, build affordable housing and address the homeless crisis in a thoughtful, humane way. Some of the community members most upset with Raman have said she doesn't listen to them. She listens. She just doesn't always do what they want."

SOHA does believe that Councilmember Raman's first term was a learning experience which she should take into her next term to become a more effective councilmember to a broader range of her constituents. She should retain her passion about issues like homelessness as her past approach to LA's unhoused crisis had positive results – unhoused numbers increased citywide last year but declined in Council District 4. However, many local businesses in the district have suffered badly throughout the homelessness crisis and now need and deserve the councilmember's attention and action.

Over the next four years, Councilmember Raman must remember that her first responsibility extends to the entirety of her constituents. She must represent them on local issues that involve all city and county agencies. To that end, SOHA has identified our Top Six Priorities for Sherman Oaks that need Councilmember Raman's immediate support:

- **Broader Unhoused Improvements** – Decreasing Sherman Oaks' unhoused population through housing, mental services and improved response to unhoused safety issues for Sherman Oaks homeless, residents, and businesses.
- **Equitable Housing and Affordable Housing** – Ensuring the entire Sherman Oaks community gets sufficient fair and equitable housing that meets state demands, provides sufficient affordability, and is fair to neighborhoods.
- **Improved Safety** – Improving the safety of all Sherman Oaks residents and businesses, while reducing crime with major outreach to local businesses.
- **Fair Rapid Transit** – Ensuring that Metro eliminates Sepulveda Pass Transit project Alternative 4 with its unfair elevated noisy trains only in the Valley, and further guaranteeing that Metro's selected alternative for the project is sufficiently capable, affordable within its budget, and buildable on the most rapid schedule possible.
- **Reduced Airport Noise and Pollution** – Reducing noise and pollution from aircraft at Burbank and Van Nuys airports and ensuring airport expansion is equitable to all communities.
- **More Public Parking** – Meeting the needs of residents with new additional public parking as more housing with no required parking become prevalent.

SOHA wants to work closely with Councilmember Raman on these and other important Sherman Oaks issues. Together we can help fulfill the many needs of all the constituents she serves.

IF YOU'RE NOT A SOHA MEMBER YET, PLEASE JOIN

It's only \$45 per year. Go to www.SOHA914.com and click "JOIN OR RENEW SOHA" to pay by credit card - or mail a check with your name, address, and email to:
SOHA Membership, PO Box 5223, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413-5223

THE THREE LEVELS OF HOMELESSNESS

by Larry Slade, Homelessness Committee Chair

Bottles and cans, eyesores, and violent crime. To my mind, these represent the three levels of homelessness. We can cast a wide net and generalize that all homeless are in the same boat and can be categorized as just “homeless” (or “unhoused” for the politically correct) – but that’s too broad a brush. Not surprisingly, it’s more complicated.

Nary a day goes by in Los Angeles without its residents being forced in one way or another to deal with the issue of homelessness. To be sure, actually being homeless is much worse than having to witness homelessness, and I remain mindful of this reality whenever I write about this subject. The issue is in our faces daily – whether it’s watching someone rifle through your recycling bin, driving past an encampment under the 101, or most disturbingly, thinking that the ranting homeless man on Ventura Blvd will suddenly direct his negative attention and perhaps attack you as you walk down the street.

To be sure, there are different levels of being homeless. Just because you pick bottles and cans out of the trash does not mean that you are homeless. I think most of us would agree that this manifestation of poverty or homelessness (or both) is perhaps the least disturbing and disruptive to our way of life. Many of us have long since stopped schlepping our bottles and cans to the recycler in exchange for a few dollars. Many of us have no problem with people in need taking what they can get from our recycling bin that we were tossing anyway.

Then there is the next level of homelessness which I will refer to as the “eyesore”, for example, an encampment or the mess it leaves behind if and when it is dismantled. No one wants to see encampments in their neighborhood but most of us are not physically threatened by an encampment. It just looks bad – really bad. And it undermines our faith in the sanctity and safety of our community. But for the most part, we witness these encampments through glass and steel from the safety of our cars.

Finally, there is the third level of homelessness – the one that SOHA has consistently focused on: the homeless who are clearly suffering from mental illness and could pose an immediate danger to themselves or the safety of anyone walking down the street. For many of us, we ignore the recycling efforts and tolerate (as best we can) the eyesore of the encampment. But it’s the real and present danger of physical harm threatened by this group that is the most dangerous and upsetting. It’s this group that requires the most intervention and presents the most vexing problems. It’s this group that is the focus of SOHA’s Homelessness Committee. What is easy to conclude when examining this problem is that our laws are ineffective at empowering the city to help people suffering this third level of homelessness. I see change coming from the US Supreme Court in the coming weeks.

IS OWNING A HOME A THING OF THE PAST?

by Maria Pavlou Kalban, Legislative Committee Chair

Looking around our community, we understand how expensive it has become to own a home or rent an apartment. In the past, moving from a small home to a larger one was common practice, and moving from an apartment to a home was a rite of passage. But today staying put is a more financially prudent thing to do. From apartment to home back to an apartment was a normal cycle for many of us, but because we no longer move, young people are shut out of buying homes even when older couples would prefer to downsize into a condo or apartment.

Today the city thinks adding more apartments will bring down the cost of housing – but will it? There is a lot of money in LA. That money enables people to buy old homes, remodel them into upscale homes, and sell them for three times the original purchase price. We have so many high-income earners that these houses sell quickly. This leaves lots of people with modest incomes behind. The city has no way to address this problem and continues to advocate for more apartments as the solution. But what if someone wants a home? What is the city doing to help middle-income earners buy a home?

This July the Planning Department is releasing the Community Plans for Sherman Oaks that will show in detail how the city will rezone our community block by block. We hope all of you join us at the Sherman Oaks Library on Tuesday, July 18 at 6:30 pm for a discussion and review of what the city proposes and what we can do about it. We hope our councilmember will be part of these discussions as well. Stay tuned and be sure to join us. Please lend your voice to this discussion.

SOHA also wants to help by continuing to push for affordable housing on our commercial corridors. We feel there is an opportunity to add attached townhouses to many commercial sites that abut single-family neighborhoods. This would lessen the impact of higher density on residents adjacent to these sites while also creating new more-affordable housing options for people looking for homes.

SOHA SUPPORTS AFFORDABLE MONORAIL AND DEMANDS METRO ELIMINATE ALTERNATIVE 4

by Bob Anderson, Transportation Committee Chair

At their latest set of public meetings on the Sepulveda Pass Transit project in May, Metro asked the public to support eliminating the Alternative 2 monorail from the six alternatives being studied for the project. There were three monorails being designed by LA SkyRail Express (Alternatives 1, 2, 3) and three subways being designed by Bechtel Sepulveda Transit Partners and Metro's environmental contractor (Alternatives 4, 5, 6). Alternative 2 is a monorail connected to the UCLA campus by an underground Automated People Mover (APM). UCLA apparently didn't think much of this alternative, so SkyRail asked Metro to eliminate Alternative 2 from further consideration.

SOHA's response letter to Metro did not oppose the LA SkyRail Express request to eliminate monorail Alternative 2. However, we noted disappointment at eliminating the alternative which was an innovative concept with a good connection to UCLA akin to the people mover connection from Metro to LAX (Metro transit does not connect directly to airport terminals but to the LAX/Metro Transit Center and passengers must take a two-mile APM that is under construction now). It's hard to understand why an APM is fine for the LAX connection but not acceptable to UCLA for their connection – adding an additional cost to the project of up to \$18 billion.

With the elimination of Alternative 2, the Alternative 1 monorail becomes the only one of the five remaining alternatives that is affordable within Metro's Measure M budget. SOHA supports Alternative 1 because first, it is affordable, and second, it is capable with 35% higher passenger capacity than any of the subway alternatives.

SOHA's letter also demanded that Bechtel Sepulveda Transit Corridor Partners immediately eliminate their Alternative 4 "half-subway" which would be the only transit anywhere in LA County using heavy rail trains above street level – with elevated tracks only in Sherman Oaks and Van Nuys. Alternative 4 was developed without any consultation with or consideration of Valley communities. Its sole purpose was to cheapen the cost of a subway under the Westside at the expense of Valley communities. Metro must eliminate it immediately, before the Metro Board could possibly select it in 2025 as the alternative to be built.

At their May public meetings, Metro also announced that the project's Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) will finally be released to the public for comment in early 2025. This is good news, but Metro forgot to mention that their original date for releasing the report was May 2022. DEIR preparation was supposed to take only 18 months, but now Metro is saying it will take 50 months or more – a delay of almost three years. Because of extremely high construction inflation over the last three years, Metro's delay increased the project's construction cost by about 30% – an additional \$2.3 billion for the lowest-cost monorail and up to a staggering \$7.4 billion for the highest-cost subway. These are additional taxpayer dollars we will pay because Metro is already falling behind schedule.

A NEW TERMINAL AT BOB HOPE AIRPORT

by Jay Weitzler, Airport Committee Chair

As some of you probably know, ground has been broken for the new \$1.3 billion, 355,000-square-foot terminal replacing the old but charming facility at the Hollywood Burbank Bob Hope Airport. This happened several months ago but the Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Airport Authority just reached a guaranteed "maximum" price for the construction. Of course, maximum these days seems more the new minimum, but we can hope. According to the Authority, and we hope in line with their predictions, the new and much larger terminal will greatly improve the passenger experience and earthquake safety, as well as complying with newer building safety and environmental guidelines. There will be more shopping and dining available, more space, a new baggage claim area, and a new lobby, as well as a new access road and parking structure.

While there is little question that the new terminal will be larger, have more amenities, and be easier to navigate, the question remains whether this new investment will encourage even more airlines, more takeoffs, and more landings, causing increased noise and air pollution to all of those of us already terribly affected by current aircraft. There are eight carriers at the airport and more than 6 million passengers annually. We wonder how many more might be using it after construction is complete in October 2026, the present scheduled date. The FAA has not been cooperative over the years in responding to the thousands of complaints from impacted residents and we doubt they will stop siding with the demands of carriers for increased flights that will impact our community even more negatively.

To that end, remember that the FAA and NASA, of all agencies, are still online to begin testing the new concept of small Air Taxis (also called Advanced Air Mobility vehicles) at Bob Hope Airport as soon as next year. Testing of these aircraft has already begun in some other areas. We encourage all residents to very closely scrutinize this concept of increasing low-altitude air flights. We have been supported by our Congressman Brad Sherman in this effort, but as we all know, the FAA is its own animal and does not seem to care very much about the effect of aircraft on those most directly affected. We will continue to monitor these developments and call for membership voices in opposition when appropriate. In the meantime, let us continue to make our voices heard.

RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH

MENDOCINO FARMS

By Jane Kaplan, Restaurant Chair – Our Restaurant of the Month for our special meeting at the Valley Relics Museum is Mendocino Farms! They opened their first restaurant in 2005 and have been delighting us ever since with their creative sandwiches and salads! For Mendocino Farms, their idea was not only to serve nutritious and creative foods but also to make happiness a priority! And that they've done. All their menu items offer fresh ingredients that you can feel good about. They love bringing fresh flavors and ingredients together in unexpected ways. They've created signature sandwiches and salads that you end up craving. Like the avocado Quinoa Superfood Salad ... or their Farm Club Sandwich! Every time our son is back from NYC he craves the NotSoFried Chicken Sandwich. He's got to have it!



Mendocino Farms uses the highest-quality ingredients and that is why they are now operating all over California and are now in Texas and Washington state. As they say, Happiness at Mendocino Farms is only an order away. So, Eat Happy! and enjoy this wonderful restaurant at our June 19th Valley Relics Museum meeting.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMINGS AND GOINGS

by Matt Epstein, President

This month, the Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association is embarking on a very special community meeting at the Valley Relics Museum on June 19th. As someone who grew up in the Sherman Oaks and could be considered a bit of a relic myself, I cherish the rich history of what the Valley once was and continue to admire what it is today.

Ventura Boulevard is not the boulevard I remember from the 60s. We've lost many iconic places: the Sportsman's Lodge, Maxson's Drugstore, and Weddington Golf and Tennis. Yet, despite these losses, our community continues to thrive. We still have enduring businesses that remain pillars of our community.

Take, for example, the Valley Inn. Established in Sherman Oaks in 1947, it continues to serve delicious meals to this day. Tony's Liquor, also opened in Sherman Oaks in 1947, has been a community staple for generations. I fondly recall buying candy at Tony's on my way to Dixie Canyon Elementary School.

Baxter Northup Music originally opened in downtown LA near the Angels Flight, then moved to Sherman Oaks in 1950. They hold the title of the oldest continuously operating music store in California. I took drum lessons there in the mid-60s, and it remains a vibrant place to take music lessons and purchase instruments and sheet music.

The Antique Mall, which opened 42 years ago, almost closed a few months ago but thankfully remains open. Casa Vega has been serving the Sherman Oaks community since 1956, becoming an enduring landmark in our lives.

Antonio's Pizza has been spinning dough since 1957, and Sy Devore moved to Sherman Oaks in 1962, starting at Fashion Square before relocating twice on Ventura Boulevard. Vitello's, which opened in 1964, is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year and still serves great Italian food.

Despite the changes, much has remained the same. Babies are still born every day, and the Juvenile Shop, which has been around since 1977, continues to welcome new mothers and their babies.

These vibrant stores, restaurants, and shops might someday join their commercial brethren at the Valley Relics Museum, but for now, they are alive, well, and thriving in Sherman Oaks.

SHERMAN OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The **ONLY** member-supported,
volunteer-run, non-profit
community organization
dedicated to preserving and protecting
the quality of life here in Sherman Oaks.

★ **BECOME A MEMBER** — 💡 **STAY INFORMED** — ❤️ **MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

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JOIN US FOR A FUN NIGHT
AT THE VALLEY RELICS MUSEUM - RSVP REQUIRED**

**Find out how we can move forward in CD4, the 3 types of
homelessness, maddening Metro monorail maneuvers,
and if homeownership is becoming a thing of the past.**