

"Together  
we have  
clout!"



## ZOOM COMMUNITY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2022 - 7:15 PM

JOIN FROM ANYWHERE - VIA COMPUTER, TABLET, SMARTPHONE OR TELEPHONE

### **GUEST SPEAKER: CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR RICK CARUSO**

**ENDING STREET HOMELESSNESS**

**CUTTING CRIME**

**ENDING CORRUPTION AT CITY HALL**

Our March 16th Meeting Guest Speaker will be LA Mayoral Candidate Rick Caruso. Mr. Caruso received his bachelor's degree from USC and law degree from Pepperdine. He is a leading LA real estate developer and philanthropist. Forbes Magazine dubbed him the "Walt Disney of Real Estate". In 1987, he founded the Caruso company which built some of Southern California's most beloved community centers, including The Grove which attracts more visitors per year than Disneyland. He also built California's first LEED Gold-Certified business district project, Palisades Village.

He and his wife have donated more than \$130 million to charitable causes. He donates 20 percent of his company's profits to the community and gives millions annually to organizations providing healthcare and quality education to children in LA's poorest neighborhoods.

When appointed president of the LADWP Commission in 1997, he oversaw the first initiative to evolve the DWP from fossil fuels to renewable energy and launched a rate relief program for low-income customers. As president of the LA Police Commission, he fought for community policing and police accountability, and hired Chief William Bratton, now remembered as the most transformational figure in LA policing. As president of the USC Board of Trustees he empowered independent investigations to clean up admissions and ensure accountability for those culpable in sexual abuse cases.

Mr. Caruso looks forward to sharing his campaign and vision with SOHA and our Sherman Oaks community.

Please email your questions for Mr. Caruso to [SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com](mailto:SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com) on or before Monday March 14th. This is your opportunity to ask the potential new mayor a question!

SOHA's virtual Zoom meeting ID is 879 5624 1790 and the passcode is SOHA914. Please sign in between 7:00 and 7:10 pm. The Meeting starts promptly at 7:15. If you need help signing in, please email us at [SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com](mailto:SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com) and we will email you instructions.



### **▶ DON'T MISS THE SOHA MAYORAL DEBATE IN MAY ◀**

Mark your calendar! SOHA's LA Mayoral Debate will be  
Wednesday, May 18th at 7:15 pm.

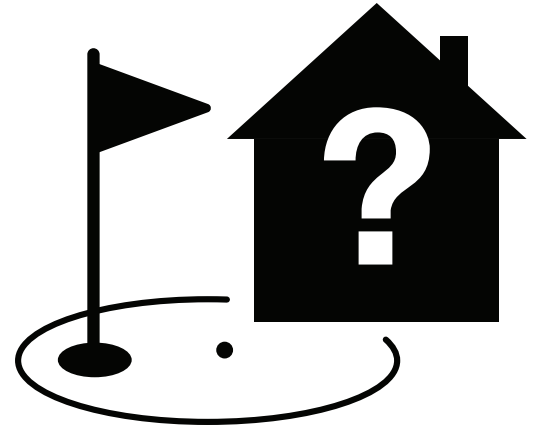
The top candidates will provide their positions and candid answers to your questions.



# HOUSING IN LIEU OF PUBLIC GOLF COURSES?

Maria Kalban's SOHA Legislative Committee is studying three new bills that have been introduced this legislative year in Sacramento. The committee's concern continues to be how to add affordable housing while protecting neighborhoods and quality of life. This month we take a look at Assembly Bill AB 1910.

AB 1910 is a bill reintroduced by Assemblymember Garcia from Bell Gardens. The bill would allow housing to be built on public golf courses. The text of the bill requires just 15 percent of the site be left for open space with 25 percent affordable housing. The open space requirement is equivalent to having a path running along the perimeter of these sites. With this small amount of open space these properties will be packed with housing. The bill's funding would come from a bond measure. Once again, our state with a \$43 billion cash surplus will not be providing any state money. This is shameful.



We oppose AB 1910 because public land for recreation and open space is vital to the health of communities. Trees and permeable surfaces, like grass, help absorb carbon dioxide from the air and rainwater for our aquifers, while reducing heat island impacts on our cities. Public recreational facilities also allow more people to participate in sports which would otherwise not be available to them. LA is park-poor in many areas and allowing public sites to be paved over is wrong. Our committee has always supported and encouraged the use of public lands for housing as long as the lands are not recreational or park open space. We have identified numerous public properties near Sherman Oaks that are empty parking lots or public lots used for storing new dealership cars. Those sites should be used to build affordable housing. Public land for recreation must be protected!

We will keep you up to date as this bill and others move through committee hearings.

## TACKLING HOMELESS ISSUES IN THE BID - IT TAKES A VILLAGE -



The Village at Sherman Oaks Business Improvement District (BID) continues to suffer this past month from issues with the unhoused. There have been numerous confrontations between business owners and unhoused individuals. Even some patrons have been brought into the fray. There have been some physical assaults. There have been some property thefts. It's not good and it has been getting worse.

The BID's community leaders met with Councilmember Nithya Raman's new CD4 Ventura Blvd Business Team. The team explained that they cannot offer security actions but can provide Sherman Oaks, Encino, and Studio City with two homeless deputies to call upon when faced with non-violent disturbances, such as a loiterer refusing to leave the premises of a business. CD4 promised us contact

information for the homeless deputies quickly. The CD4 Business Team also told us that we must call 311 for human waste on public property, with cleanup promised within 48 hours, and 911 for violent incidents.

The BID board and the community leaders think this is not enough. One of the BID's biggest issues is human waste in business doorways and parking lots – the “bathroom” issue. Doorways and parking lots are private property and 311 does not clean up human waste on private property. Even if they did, 48 hours is too long to wait. So, Sherman Oaks business owners continue to do their own cleanup. The BID board is concerned that only two homeless deputies serving three CD4 communities may not be able to sufficiently help merchants in need of immediate assistance, and our Sherman Oaks community will suffer.

The BID board wants solutions to the bathroom problem with safe, clean facilities made available to the unhoused and placed in locations that would work for merchants, patrons, and residents. The BID would like suggestions from Sherman Oaks residents and businesses on such solutions and their possible locations. Please send your helpful suggestions to [leslie@villageatshermanoaks.com](mailto:leslie@villageatshermanoaks.com). We will send the best ones to the CD4 office for consideration. Thank you!

# SOHA HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE NEEDS YOUR HELP

SOHA has again taken up the issue of homelessness as the most important single issue facing our communities today. Board Member Tom Glick is leading our Homelessness Committee. He is supported by SOHA member Larry Slade, former chair of the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council's Planning and Land Use Committee. The Homeless Committee will work with local leaders including our Councilmember Nithya Raman (CD4), as well as other private groups, to help foster solutions which can be realized both in the short term and long term. Unless we all work together to find solutions, the homelessness crisis will not improve.

The committee has begun meeting with representatives of Councilmember Raman's homelessness team including Sarah Tanberg and Stephanie Caridad as well as our CD4 District Deputy, Alexandria Naseef. Our councilmember has been in the forefront on this issue and in fact has recently introduced several motions to provide for necessary homelessness legislation including:

- On February 9, 2022, Councilmember Raman co-authored a motion (Council File 22-0158) to expand the use of homeless shelters throughout the city and broaden where emergency shelters can be located. The motion calls for an expansion of the city's Zoning Code to allow homeless shelters and other forms of interim housing to be established and operated outside normal zones and to establish shelters as a public benefit to be permitted as such under the code.
- On July 1, 2021, Councilmember Raman introduced legislation (Council File 21-0774) to use shipping container storage on public properties, vacant lots, under-utilized parking areas, and other areas to provide emergency housing.
- On July 1, 2021, Councilmember Raman also introduced a motion (Council File 21-0773) aimed at providing sufficient regularly serviced trash receptacles to homeless encampments citywide.

While our City Council continues to find solutions, our councilmember has made it clear that she welcomes involvement from everyone in our community to help find solutions. In that same spirit, SOHA welcomes our members to help our Homelessness Committee work towards solutions. Anyone wishing to help should contact:

Tom Glick - [tomglick.soha@aol.com](mailto:tomglick.soha@aol.com) or [SOHA914@gmail.com](mailto:SOHA914@gmail.com).

## VAN NUYS AIRPORT RAPIDLY EXPANDING AND ONE OF THE LARGEST LEAD-PRODUCING AIRPORTS IN THE COUNTRY

For those of us affected by all the air pollution and noise caused by the Van Nuys Airport (VNY), the Sherman Oaks community needs to know this airport has become one of the largest jet charter airports in the entire country, if not the world. Once limited to only private-plane general aviation, meaning no commercial passenger flights, VNY is also now becoming an airport that offers at least some scheduled passenger airline service to other commercial airports, such as Las Vegas, Jackson Hole, Aspen, San Francisco, and other destinations. The VNY General Manager, Flora Margherita, recently issued a press release proudly declaring "Thanks to the tremendous resilience exhibited by the more than 200 businesses and 5,300 employees who call VNY home, the airport experienced a record-setting 301,122 total takeoffs and landings in 2021. This represents a 31 percent increase in annual aircraft operations compared to 2020, and a 37 percent increase in annual aircraft operations compared 2019."

Residents of Sherman Oaks and Encino might not share Ms. Margherita's enthusiasm for the "resilience" of the VNY operators who contributed to this enormous expansion with its accompanying air pollution and noise impacts, particularly the continued use of lead fuels making VNY one of the highest



lead-producing airports in the country. As many of us know, the city is already in litigation with the FAA and others in an attempt to mitigate the negative effects from this unbridled expansion. SOHA is following these developments and shares the concern of many of our members that the quality of our lives is sorely affected by these constant flights. We will continue to monitor the situation and future newsletters will address some of the more specific complaints and developments in this long-running battle with the airport operator and FAA.

For further information, please contact Tom Materna at [tom@xlsix.com](mailto:tom@xlsix.com).

## SOHA'S NEW PRESIDENT - MATT EPSTEIN

Matt Epstein, SOHA's new President, is a proud Sherman Oakie. He was born and raised in Sherman Oaks, attended Dixie, Milliken, and Grant, and went on to marry, live, and raise his two children right here in Sherman Oaks. He has always known the value of Sherman Oaks with its more politically and ethnically diverse population. After the 1994 Northridge earthquake, Matt became super active in SOHA opposing the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) effort to take possession of quake-damaged Sherman Oaks properties. Matt knew and believed in the people and business owners of Sherman Oaks to bring back the neighborhood better and stronger than ever – without CRA handcuffs. Matt chaired a SOHA Committee in a two-year battle to fight the CRA and ultimately stopped them. Under Matt's leadership, SOHA became the first organization in California history to beat the CRA, working tirelessly to raise money and meet this challenge.



During the CRA fight, Matt was elected SOHA Vice President. As Sherman Oaks was coming back from the damage of the '94 quake, Matt realized that it had also become a concrete jungle. He spearheaded a SOHA Committee campaign to plant trees along Ventura Blvd. It took six years and numerous fund-raising efforts to raise enough money to plant trees from Sepulveda Blvd to Fulton Ave. There were many events with the most popular being the barbecues at Bloomingdales along with a fashion show. For the past 28 years, Matt has worked for SOHA to help our community.

Mayor Reardon then appointed Matt as President of the South Valley Planning Commission, a position he held for eleven years. That term was followed by Mayor Villaraigosa asking Matt to join the Citywide Planning Commission. Matt held that position for two years, but his heart was still in the Valley, and he requested a return to his South Valley Planning Commission position. As a community leader Matt felt he could be a more effective spokesperson and activist by concentrating his efforts in the Valley. Working alongside Richard Close for 28 years was a tremendous honor and privilege for Matt. Our Board unanimously elected Matt as SOHA president after Richard's passing.

Professionally, Matt is a real estate broker-agent with a concentration in the south Valley. His love of Sherman Oaks envelops his joy in finding and selling homes for people in Sherman Oaks. No other agent has sold more homes in Sherman Oaks than Matt. Having lived here his whole life and knowing everything about our community, one couldn't be in better hands than having Matt by their side when it comes to community issues or finding a place to call home. Sherman Oaks has always been a very vibrant neighborhood – walkable, approachable, and truly a melting pot. Matt is looking forward to SOHA's next chapter and how together we can all make SHERMAN OAKS the best it can be!



*Natas*<sup>™</sup>  
PASTRIES

*Portuguese Café & Restaurant*

## A TASTE OF PORTUGAL IN SHERMAN OAKS

Since 2005, Natas Pastries has served up traditional Portuguese dishes to customers in Sherman Oaks, including their namesake natas, a crisp, buttery puff pastry filled with crème brûlée-style sweet custard.

Owner Fatima Marques was inspired to open her restaurant 16 years ago, after moving to Los Angeles from her hometown of Lisbon. She discovered that not only could she not find a nata in all of LA, but she also couldn't find a Portuguese restaurant at all.

Now more than native Portuguese diners come to her restaurant for authentic fare such as French toast made with Portuguese sweet bread and bica, or espresso shot,

caldo verde, or classic kale soup, delicios do mar, a seafood salad made with baby shrimp, and bacalhau com natas, a dinner entree comprising salt cod and a béchamel cream sauce.

Tucked away in a mini mall on Ventura Blvd adjacent to Casa Vega, Natas still offers some of Los Angeles' only authentic Portuguese food. Marques continually updates the menu, creating and designing new dishes to add to her menu and ensuring a traditional Portuguese experience with every bite.

Natas Pastries // 13317 Ventura Blvd, Suite D, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423 // (818) 788-8050

*The above article is not an advertisement. SOHA does not accept payment for articles.*

## **IF YOU LIVE IN SHERMAN OAKS BUT AREN'T A SOHA MEMBER...PLEASE JOIN!**

SOHA is the **ONLY** non-profit, member-supported, volunteer-run community organization dedicated to improving and protecting the quality of life in Sherman Oaks since 1964. Independent of city and county influence, SOHA is dedicated to obtaining the best outcomes for Sherman Oaks in areas that impact our lives and community, including mass transit, housing legislation, local business support, area beautification, and safety.

If you are not already a SOHA member, please support your community by joining. Membership is a small investment that yields big benefits! It includes our monthly SOHA Newsletter filled with info and updates on vital issues for our community. Our monthly meetings (currently via Zoom) feature guest speakers of key consequence to our lives and community, including LA's top mayoral candidates!

While basic membership is just \$30 annually, if you're able to join at the \$50 Silver or \$100 Gold level, that provides needed additional resources. To join online, go to [SOHA914.com](http://SOHA914.com), click on Join SOHA, and become a member via PayPal or credit card (to pay via credit card, select PayPal, then select Checkout as Guest). Alternatively, send your name, address, email address, and a check payable to SOHA to PO Box 5223, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423-5223. If you have questions, please email SOHA Board member and Membership Chair Nancy Sogoiian at [JoinSOHA@gmail.com](mailto:JoinSOHA@gmail.com).

Please share this newsletter with friends and neighbors and encourage them to join! We appreciate your membership. It provides the resources for the important work we do!

The SOHA logo consists of the lowercase letters "soha" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A horizontal line is positioned below the text.

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





# **Sherman Oaks**

**WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO HELP KEEP SOHA STRONG!  
VISIT [SOHA914.COM](http://SOHA914.COM) TO BECOME A MEMBER AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

## HELP SOHA UPDATE OUR EMAIL LIST

Please be sure we have your latest email address. Email your full name and mailing address (as they appear on your SOHA Newsletter mailing label) and your preferred email address to **SOHA914@gmail.com**. Thanks!

Make A Difference  Stay Informed 

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# soha

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*Founded in 1964*

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