

"Together we have clout!"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **COMMUNITY MEETING** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

— WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2024 - 7:15 PM — SOCIAL HOUR/DINNER - 6:15 PM —

SHERMAN OAKS EAST VALLEY ADULT CENTER • 5056 VAN NUYS BLVD

## CAN LA INFRASTRUCTURE KEEP PACE WITH HOUSING GROWTH?

### RANDALL WINSTON, LA DEPUTY MAYOR FOR INFRASTRUCTURE EXPLAINS THE FUTURE

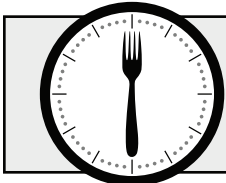


- Why do city services take so long to happen?
- How do we expand to meet water, power, and sanitation demands of massive new housing?
- Who fixes our streets and potholes - and when?
- Where are people in new apartments with no parking supposed to safely park their cars?
- Who controls Metro and how do they get away with blatantly ignoring the public?

Randall Winston is Harvard educated, an architect, and an attorney – and today is LA’s Deputy Mayor for Infrastructure. He reports directly to Mayor Bass and is responsible for developing infrastructure policy and aligning public works and transportation investments – a terrifically complicated challenge covering LADWP, LADOT, street services, sanitation, and even Metro.

Randall was an attorney at O’Melveny & Myers, where he represented government and environmental organizations facing complex litigation and state and federal investigations. He previously served as Executive Director of the California Strategic Growth Council under Governor Jerry Brown, overseeing investments of more than \$1.3 billion in transit-oriented affordable housing and land conservation. Before that, he worked for Pritzker Prize-winning architect Norman Foster, collaborating with interdisciplinary teams on design, urban planning, and infrastructure projects throughout the world. He spent two years working with urban development and architecture firms in Beijing, China.

Email questions for Randall to SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com by noon Tuesday May 14. Streaming starts at 7:15. The meeting Zoom ID is 872 7316 9219 with passcode SOHA914. The Zoom link is on our website at SOHA914.com and we email it to members the day before the meeting. You can listen to the meeting via telephone at (669) 444-9171 or (669) 900-9128 by entering the Zoom ID and Passcode. The meeting video is available a day after the meeting by searching YouTube.com for “SOHA Community Meeting” or going to our “ShermanOaksHomeownersAssociation914” YouTube Channel.



**RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH - CASA VEGA**  
**FIND OUT MORE ON PAGE 4 - SOHA SOCIAL HOUR @ 6:15 PM**

# SHOULD IT BE ILLEGAL TO SLEEP ON THE STREET? THE GRANT'S PASS DECISION

*by Larry Slade, Homelessness Committee Chair*

This last week the Supreme Court of the United States heard arguments in what may be a landmark case in the battle to regulate homelessness. The case of *City of Grant's Pass (Oregon) v. Johnson* will likely have a significant impact on the homelessness challenge in cities across the western United States. The court could overrule the seminal case of *Martin v. Boise (Idaho)* which ruled that the city cannot enforce restrictions on "public camping" – sleeping on the street – unless it also provides the homeless with a place to go (like adequate temporary shelter). The Boise case is currently the law of the land in California, and it serves to tie the hands of cities seeking to enforce their health and safety laws – elevating the rights of the homeless above the rights of the community.

**Opposition against Grant's Pass:** Those who are opposed to permitting cities to fine the homeless characterize the issue in many ways. Does a city have the right to "punish" someone for sleeping outside? Should the homeless be a "protected class" and therefore not treated as criminals simply for "being homeless"? Should a city not be able to remove or fine the homeless unless there are adequate shelter beds? If the Supreme Court rules that it's not a violation of the 8th amendment to the US Constitution, they will make the problem much worse than it is now by pushing the homeless from point "A" to point "B" with no solution to the problem. And the imposition of stiff fines and even jail time for the homeless constitutes "cruel and unusual punishment" because many are homeless due to no "fault" of their own. It would literally make poverty a crime.

**Support in Favor of Grant's Pass:** Those in favor of the law under review in Grant's Pass see it this way. Cities must have the right to enforce basic laws that supporting a constitutional right to sleep in the street simply tramples. This situation has gotten out of control with the rights of the homeless seriously infringing on the rights of local citizens and businesses, as well as the city, who expect basic health and safety laws to be enforced – such as: you cannot use my storefront or front lawn as a toilet; you can't do drugs and pass out in my cul-de-sac; and you can't build a tent city on my corner. Something needs to be done to help the homeless and we support that. But, regardless of what alternatives are available or not available for the homeless to sleep somewhere else, they can't sleep here (insert homes, businesses, public transport, or parks).

A decision from the Supreme Court is expected sometime in late June. Its issuance will have a significant impact on the degree cities can regulate and punish the homeless. But one thing is certain – whatever the ruling, it will not solve the homeless crisis in America.

## SB9 DECLARED UNCONSTITUTIONAL – FOR NOW

*by Maria Pavlou Kalban, Legislative Committee Chair*

SB9, the state law that ended single-family zoning by allowing four homes to be built on a single-family lot or allowing a single-family lot to be split in half with two housing units on each half, has been declared unconstitutional in Los Angeles County. SOHA opposed SB9 because it was presented as a bill that addressed our affordable housing problem but none of the units built under SB9 were required to be affordable. We always felt this was a bill created more to benefit developers than homeowners.

The bill caused controversy because the state claimed that affordable housing was a statewide concern and, as a result, the state could overrule any city's land use laws. In California we have 121 charter cities and Los Angeles is one of them. Charter cities have their own charter that grants them constitutional right to govern their own municipal affairs. Land use is considered a municipal affair. Cities fought against the loss of this local land-use control when SB9 was introduced. The bill ultimately was passed in the legislature and became law in 2021.

On April 22, the Superior Court in Los Angeles ruled SB9 unconstitutional, granting a victory for a case brought by the City of Redondo Beach vs Attorney General Rob Bonta. In the ruling the lawyers for Redondo Beach argued that the premise of SB9 was neither reasonably related to its stated concern of ensuring access to affordable housing nor narrowly tailored to avoid interference with a local government's right to determine its own land use laws.

The court stated that the State of California “presented no evidence to support the assertion that the upzoning permitted by SB9 would result in any increase in supply of below-market-rate housing.” The court concluded that “SB 9 is therefore unconstitutional as violative of the home rule doctrine.”

This ruling will certainly be challenged by the State of California. The ruling currently applies only to charter cities but has tremendous potential impact. If this ruling is upheld, a charter city that allows SB9 could be sued by individuals objecting to its application. **WE WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED AS THIS CASE MOVES FORWARD.**

# METRO STILL REFUSING TO TELL PUBLIC REAL FACTS ABOUT SEPULVEDA PASS TRANSIT PROJECT

*by Bob Anderson, Transportation Committee Chair*

For eight years, SOHA has been trying to work with Metro to get the best Sepulveda Pass Transit project for our community, the city, and the county. We made comments. We attended Metro public meetings. We met with elected officials. We met with Metro. We asked for information. But Metro kept stonewalling us and saying it's coming, just wait. We're through waiting. We're working with other organizations, including Keep Bel-Air Beautiful, to learn what we should have known all along about the project. Here's where we are today.

In late 2022, Keep Bel-Air Beautiful made a request to Metro pursuant to the California Public Records Act to obtain various documents about the Sepulveda Pass Transit Project, its budget, and its public outreach efforts. Unsurprisingly, Metro was not forthcoming with documents, so Bel-Air has now brought legal action to force Metro to comply. Through this action, Bel-Air aims to enforce the public's right to obtain public documents and pierce the veil of secrecy that Metro hides its operations and deliberations behind. The final court hearing in Bel-Air's action is set for August of this year. Bel-Air is optimistic that the court will see through Metro's excuses for keeping documents from the public and force Metro to comply with the law. We'll keep you posted.

Last month, SOHA submitted 20 critical questions to Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins who responded with 19 unacceptable answers. Metro's answers to SOHA's questions were so off the wall that a friend suggested I publish them as a weekly series in CityWatch Los Angeles ([www.CityWatchLA.com](http://www.CityWatchLA.com)). CityWatch is a great forum for what's happening in LA. My articles are short and address each SOHA question and Metro response with juicy details. The articles published so far are listed below. You can search CityWatch for “Sepulveda PassTransit” or use the provided links. A new article appears each week.

- March 4 Sepulveda Pass Transit 1 – Can Metro Be Trusted?**  
<https://www.citywatchla.com/guest-words/28559-sepulveda-pass-transit-can-metro-be-trusted>
- March 11 Sepulveda Pass Transit 2 – Is Metro Transparent and Accountable?**  
<https://www.citywatchla.com/los-angeles/28587-sepulveda-pass-transit-is-metro-transparent-and-accountable>
- March 18 Sepulveda Pass Transit 3 – Is It Really Affordable?**  
<https://www.citywatchla.com/los-angeles/28622-sepulveda-pass-transit-is-it-really-affordable>
- March 25 Sepulveda Pass Transit 4 – Show Us the Money!**  
<https://www.citywatchla.com/los-angeles/28657-sepulveda-pass-transit-show-us-the-money>
- April 1 Sepulveda Pass Transit 5 – Prejudicial Survey**  
<https://www.citywatchla.com/los-angeles/28688-sepulveda-pass-transit-prejudicial-survey>
- April 8 Sepulveda Pass Transit 6 – How Long To Build It?**  
<https://www.citywatchla.com/los-angeles/28720-sepulveda-pass-transit-how-long-to-build-it>
- April 15 Sepulveda Pass Transit 7 – No Transparency, No Public Input**  
<https://www.citywatchla.com/la-election-2022/28755-metros-sepulveda-pass-transit-no-transparency-no-public-input>
- April 22 Sepulveda Pass Transit 8 – Metro Silent Treatment on Alternative 4**  
<https://www.citywatchla.com/voices/28792-metros-silent-treatment-on-alternative-4-of-the-sepulveda-pass-project>
- April 29 Sepulveda Pass Transit 9 – Unveiling the Black Box: Demystifying Metro's Dubious Ridership Analysis Assumptions**  
<https://www.citywatchla.com/los-angeles/28818-unveiling-the-black-box-demystifying-metros-dubious-ridership-analysis-assumptions>

**VOLUNTEER TO SUPPORT SOHA AND SHERMAN OAKS**

**CONTACT US AT [SOHA914@gmail.com](mailto:SOHA914@gmail.com) or (818) 377-4590**  
**Tell us your name, how you could help, and how to contact you. Thank you!**

# PLEASE RSVP EARLY FOR SOHA JUNE MEETING AT VALLEY RELICS MUSEUM

Our June meeting at the Valley Relics Museum (<https://valleyrelicsmuseum.org>) in Lake Balboa is going to be great fun! A special restaurant of the month right at the museum. Great speakers. A stroll down memory lane. A peak at the Valley's rich history.

**YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS THIS!**

The museum can accommodate a limited number of people. Please let us know if you will attend. Email us at [SOHA914@gmail.com](mailto:SOHA914@gmail.com) or leave a voicemail at (818) 377-4590 with your name(s) and how many will be attending this special meeting at the Valley Relics Museum.

## HUGE LOOPHOLE FOR FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

*by Maria Pavlou Kalban, Legislative Committee Chair*

The LA Planning Department is proposing a housing program that would allow Faith-Based Organizations to build affordable housing on any land they own. This is not a new concept. It is actually based on Senate Bill 4 that became law in January 2024. California law allows Faith-Based Organizations to develop affordable housing on underutilized land they own anywhere, even in single-family neighborhoods. Faith-Based Organizations often inherit land they don't need, and this law makes it less restrictive for them to build housing on it. The state passed SB4 but added one important criterion – these underutilized properties had to be owned prior to January 2024.

LA Planning Department's current proposal is to remove the "time-of-ownership" criterion to make the program more flexible. This would now allow any property newly purchased by a Faith-Based Organization, even in single-family neighborhoods, to get fast-track approval with no public input.

We think this opens up a huge loophole that developers will take advantage of. By partnering with any Faith-Based Organization they then have full access to single-family neighborhoods. Currently, developers are not granted the right to build apartments in single-family neighborhoods. This program is ripe for abuse.

We are meeting with the Planning Department, Councilmember Raman's Planning Deputy, and the Mayor's office to express our concern and that of numerous other communities. While we certainly don't object to Faith-Based Organizations building affordable housing, we do object to the city making them land speculators with full and unaccountable access to our neighborhoods.

### RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH

## CASA VEGA

*By Jane Kaplan, Restaurant Chair* – Casa Vega is the perfect restaurant to celebrate Cinco De Mayo this month! This long-standing gem in the San Fernando Valley has been our top pick for the May Restaurant of the Month for years, and we're excited to announce that they'll be joining us at our upcoming SOHA meeting on May 15th.

With a rich history that dates back more than 65 years, Casa Vega is one of the oldest family-owned restaurants in the Los Angeles area. It all started in 1956 when Ray Vega opened his first Casa Vega on Olvera Street in downtown LA. Today, Ray's daughter, Christy Vega, continues the family legacy with more than two decades of experience in the industry. She worked closely with her father, and now she proudly carries the torch for Casa Vega.

We can't wait for Casa Vega to join us in May for an evening of exquisite food and vibrant celebration. Get ready for a night filled with the rich flavors and traditions that have made Casa Vega a beloved fixture in the community.



# NEIGHBORHOOD COMINGS AND GOINGS

by Matt Epstein, President

Sherman Oaks is buzzing with fresh and exciting additions to its culinary and design scene! Over the past few months, we've seen a wave of new businesses opening their doors and making their mark in the community.

First up, AVLAU, the stunning design store on Ventura Blvd near Hazeltine, is a haven for those looking to transform their homes. With a commitment to creating personalized spaces that reflect your vision, AVLAU offers top-quality flooring, cabinets, lighting, and more. It's the perfect destination for anyone embarking on a home makeover! 14070 Ventura Blvd, <https://avlau.com>

Catch 818, the latest Mexican seafood restaurant on the boulevard, is making waves with its mouthwatering offerings. Specializing in shrimp, fish tacos, oysters, ceviche, and more, Catch 818 brings a taste of coastal flavors to Sherman Oaks. Their Van Nuys location was a hit, and we can't wait to try their shrimp burrito! 15025 Ventura Blvd



Tacos 1986 is another must-visit spot, boasting legendary tacos and a lively atmosphere. Situated near Sepulveda, this eatery is making waves for its delicious and authentic Mexican cuisine. 15030 Ventura Blvd, <https://www.tacos1986.com>

Right next door, Borekas Sephardic Pastries offers scrumptious pastries and delights. 15030 Ventura Blvd

Cava, the Mediterranean grill that's taken the nation by storm, has a Sherman Oaks location near Chipotle. Known for its flavorful and healthy options, Cava is a great choice for those seeking a Mediterranean culinary adventure. 14708 Ventura Blvd, <https://cava.com/locations/sherman-oaks-ca>

In nearby Studio City, Heavy Handed just opened its doors, and the response has been phenomenal. With lines out the door, this casual eatery serves up burgers, fries, grilled cheese, and soft-serve ice cream. Plus, with a selection of wine, beer, and cider. It's the perfect spot for a laid-back meal. 11838 Ventura Blvd, <https://heavyhanded.la>

Our town is certainly the place to be for foodies and home decor enthusiasts alike. Enjoy exploring all the new places that are adding a fresh spark to the neighborhood!

## ▶ THANK YOU FOR RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP! ◀



Thanks to all of you, our 2024 membership drive was a great success.



Members who joined or renewed by credit card have a membership subscription that automatically renews each year.

### IF YOU'RE NOT A MEMBER YET, PLEASE JOIN NOW!

It's only \$45 per year and members enjoy our monthly newsletters, community meetings, social hours, informative eblasts, and more.



Go to [www.SOHA914.com](http://www.SOHA914.com) and click the "JOIN OR RENEW SOHA" button. Select your membership level, enter your name and email, and click on the "Subscribe" button to pay by credit card.



You can also mail a check with your name, address, and email to: SOHA Membership, PO Box 5223, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413-5223.



IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONTACT US AT [JoinSOHA@gmail.com](mailto:JoinSOHA@gmail.com) or leave us a voicemail at (818) 377-4590.



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**a big SB9 Superior Court ruling, a huge loophole for**  
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