

"Together  
we have  
clout!"

## ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ COMMUNITY MEETING ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 2025 - 7:15 PM — SOCIAL HOUR/DINNER - 6:15 PM

SHERMAN OAKS EAST VALLEY ADULT CENTER • 5056 VAN NUYS BLVD

## COUNTY SUPERVISOR LINDSEY HORVATH IS PUSHING FOR BIG CHANGES:



- OVERHAULING HOMELESSNESS SPENDING
- REPLACING LAHSA
- BOLSTERING LA COUNTY'S ECONOMIC GROWTH DECLINE
- ATTRACTING MORE AND STRONGER BUSINESSES TO LA

Lindsey Horvath is our county supervisor and the youngest-ever Board of Supervisors Chair. Upon taking office in 2022, she authored LA County's homelessness emergency declaration, bringing added urgency and transparency to the region's homelessness response. Supervisor Horvath also appointed herself to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) Commission to focus on improving its accountability and transparency on the use of resources to address the emergency. She and Supervisor Kathryn Barger recently sponsored a motion to yank county funding from LAHSA and instead have the county oversee homelessness spending.

She is also member of the Metro Board of Directors, Vice Chair of Clean Power Alliance, and a longtime champion for transportation and environmental sustainability.

Don't miss our live meeting and the opportunity to ask your questions directly to the supervisor. You can also email questions to [SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com](mailto:SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com) no later than noon Tuesday April 15th. Streaming starts at 7:15 pm. Zoom link is posted on [SOHA914.com](http://SOHA914.com); Zoom ID is 879 7381 6530; Zoom passcode SOHA914.



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

## MISSED A SOHA MEETING - WANT TO WATCH IT?

Meeting videos are available a day after the meeting - search YouTube for "SOHA Community Meeting". SOHA records all Community Meetings and posts them on our YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@shermanoakshomeownersassoc9112/videos>



## **COUNCILMEMBER RAMAN - WHEN CAN SOHA GET A SEAT AT YOUR TABLE?**

*by Matt Epstein, President*

For the past four years, Councilmember Nithya Raman has represented our district – Council District 4. As a long-standing leader within the community, having served for more than 30 years as Vice President and now President of the Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association, I have witnessed firsthand the importance of consistent engagement between our representatives and their constituents.

In previous administrations, our council office representative made it a priority to attend our monthly meetings whenever they were around or at least once a year and they would meet with our board regularly. However, the only time our current representative, Councilmember Raman, appears at our meetings is around election season. In her absence, she sends an aide to highlight select “accomplishments” – yet many residents feel a significant disconnect between her actions and the pressing needs of our community. Issues raised by constituents in Sherman Oaks, Encino, and Studio City – especially those affecting Valley residents – continue to go largely unaddressed.

Last year, I was part of a committee that brought together homeowner groups as well as representatives of the Neighborhood Councils from five communities. After months of effort, we finally secured a meeting with Councilmember Raman. Our goal was to collaborate on solutions for the city’s housing challenges in her district. At the conclusion of the meeting, we proposed holding quarterly meetings to ensure ongoing communication and progress. Councilmember Raman flatly refused, stating that regular meetings were unnecessary.

Instead of focusing on the core concerns of our community, Councilmember Raman’s priorities seem to align with a broader progressive agenda, often at the expense of local needs. Her handling of homeless encampments near schools and support for controversial high-density housing projects have caused considerable anxiety and frustration among our residents. These decisions, among others, raise serious doubts about her commitment to the well-being of her core constituents.

Her stance on defunding the police has also been deeply concerning. We have an outstanding group of officers at LAPD who risk their lives daily to serve our community. These officers are on the front lines, dealing with homelessness and public safety issues every day. Meanwhile, Councilmember Raman claims to take a humane approach to addressing homelessness from her office, not on the streets like LAPD. Billions of dollars have been allocated toward this crisis with little to show for it.

Another major concern is California Senate Bill SB79, which would allow apartment buildings up to six stories within one-half mile of bus stops. When our Vice President, Maria Kalban, asked Councilmember Raman for her support to oppose SB79, our CM claimed it was a state issue beyond her control. The impact of SB79 will be major in Sherman Oaks. This is very much within her control. However, it is worth noting that her own home with “breathtaking views of Silver Lake Reservoir” is just outside the half-mile radius affected by this legislation. This raises questions about whether she truly understands or prioritizes the concerns of residents.

Furthermore, her position on single-family neighborhoods has been inconsistent. While she has publicly voiced support for preserving these communities, her last-minute attempt to remove neighborhood protections from the city’s Housing Element suggests otherwise. This last-minute maneuver, which attempted to override a carefully crafted balance between development and neighborhood preservation, calls into question her reliability and transparency and her honesty.

Another significant example of disconnect involves Measure ULA, the property transfer tax she championed. While marketed as a tax targeting only luxury residential properties to fund affordable housing, homeless services, and mental health initiatives, the measure’s broader implications were downplayed. In reality, the measure applies to commercial properties as well, a detail Councilmember Raman failed to disclose during her public campaign. As a result, developers are choosing to build in neighboring cities rather than LA, exacerbating our housing shortage.

Additionally, Councilmember Raman has supported state tax breaks for Hollywood productions, arguing that they benefit all industry workers. However, history shows that these incentives primarily benefit wealthy studios and executives rather than rank-and-file employees. Given her husband’s connections to the Hollywood elite, this decision raises further concerns about her priorities and potential conflicts of interest.

These instances, among others, cast serious doubt on Councilmember Raman's ability to effectively represent our community. Open and honest communication is fundamental to good leadership. We deserve a representative who listens to our concerns and prioritizes the well-being of all CD4 residents, not just a select few. As we approach the next election cycle, we urge community members to reflect on these concerns and carefully reassess Councilmember Raman's commitment to her constituents.

The residents of CD4 deserve a seat at the table more than the statewide advocacy groups that she favors. Ballot harvesting is legal in California right now and that has allowed powerful groups that she is a member of such as DSA-LA to go out and work on her elections. How is that correct? However, when it comes to other powerful special interest groups gathering around to fight for what they want, you fight to make that wrong.

**Councilmember - When can we get a seat at your table to be part of fixing these issues?**

## HOW TRANSIT STOPS CAN BE WEAPONIZED

*by Maria Pavlou Kalban, Legislative Committee Chair*

The Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association and our coalition of community groups, United Neighbors, are opposed to recently introduced CA Senate Bill 79 because it is a reckless bill that randomly allows six-story apartments in single- and multi-family neighborhoods, historic districts, and light-industrial zones if they are within a one-half mile radius of a transit rail stop or a bus stop that has a dedicated bus lane on any part of its route and provide less than a 15-minute headway (time between arrivals). We translated this to the Sherman Oaks map below with circles showing where SB79 would apply to us – and the impact both north and south of Ventura Boulevard is massive. SB79 applies to almost our entire community. On top of this, since Metro routes are constantly revised, eliminated, or added and headways improved, more and more neighborhoods will meet SB79 requirements to allow six-story apartments. Throughout the whole city, residential neighborhoods will be impacted needlessly.

LA City recently passed a massive Housing Element that will dramatically densify the city. It allows lots of density and height on our commercial and transit corridors that complies with the state housing mandate for all levels of housing affordability, while protecting our neighborhoods. SB79 disregards the city's efforts. Our United Neighbors group was able to get a resolution to oppose SB79 introduced by LA Councilmember Lee and seconded by Councilmember Park. This is a very positive step forward for our city. But unless the full City Council passes this resolution, the city's lobbyists cannot convey the city's opposition against SB79 to legislators in Sacramento.

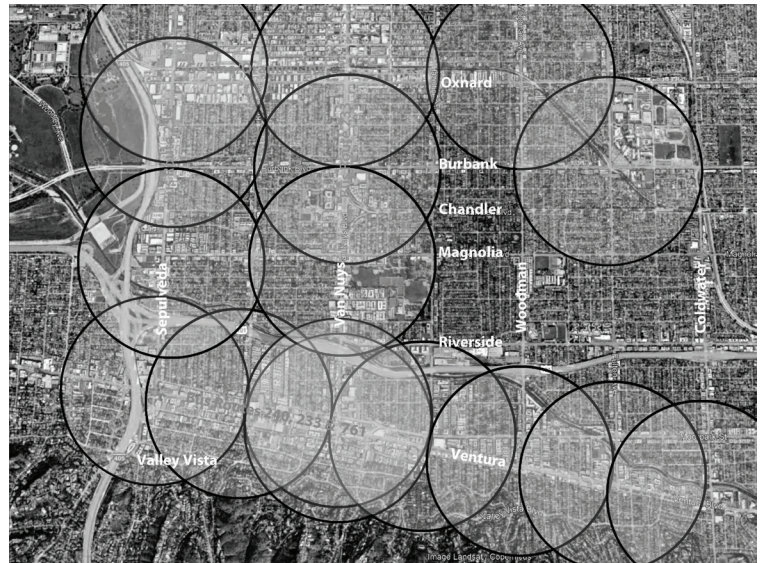
We are now asking people to please send a request to LA's Council President Marqueece Harris-Dawson to expediate a full City Council vote. Please send your request to:

councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org.  
and copy: karen.bass@lacity.org.

Too many resolutions get slow walked through the process and become irrelevant. We can't let this happen.

A few more words about SB79. It is a bill that does not require affordable housing which is what we need in LA. Rather than incentivize affordable housing near transit as done in LA's Housing Element, SB79 does not require any affordable units and will encourage market-rate housing, which doesn't help the city reach its affordability requirements and hurts the very people who need to live near transit. Future developments will pop up randomly throughout neighborhoods and will require infrastructure improvements to bring needed water, sewer, and power. Who pays for this? Most upsetting is that the city spent millions of dollars preparing its Housing Element and now a state bill can make it pointless. This is a complete and unnecessary waste of taxpayer money.

We contacted our Councilmember Raman whose electronic reply to our letter directed us to Senator Stern because this is a state matter not a local one. But in fact, it is very much a local issue – check out the map. This will affect all of us forever. The city needs to stand up for good planning and so should Senator Stern who lives in Sherman Oaks. Let's stay united in fighting this bill.





# COURT RULES “KEEP BEL-AIR BEAUTIFUL” ATTORNEYS CAN DEPOSE METRO EXPERT ABOUT SEPULVEDA TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECT

*by Bob Anderson, Transportation Committee Chair*

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority – Metro – has been studying and designing the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project (STCP) for fifteen years. They’ve spent way more than \$200 million of our taxpayer dollars so far on this 13- to 16-mile-long project that would connect the Valley to the Westside using either an elevated monorail or a heavy rail subway. And Metro is still working on the project’s Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) – which is now officially three years late. Although Metro has held multiple public meetings over nine years, they have told the public few details about the project – and for the last five years nothing about project cost or schedule. Metro has also ignored public comments and public requests for more information. This is Metro’s modus operandi – tell the public as little as possible about the alternatives and tell them nothing about cost or schedule. Such information might bias public opinion against unaffordable project alternatives – a sensible reaction because the public is smarter than Metro and understands enough not to buy something they cannot afford.

Metro’s budget for the project is about \$8 billion. From our own research on similar Metro and other projects, SOHA has learned that the basic monorail would cost from \$8 to \$10 billion. The Bay Area is planning a new BART subway extension at a cost of \$2.3 billion per mile. New York City is planning a new subway at a cost at \$4.3 billion per mile. A 13- to 14-mile subway cannot cost any less than \$30+ billion – and could easily exceed \$40 billion. Why hasn’t Metro bothered to explain this at their public meetings – and tell us how they’re planning to get the additional \$22+ billion they would need to build a subway? Metro also hasn’t told the public how long it will take to build a subway. 20 years? More? Metro’s affront to the public is beyond incomprehensible – but in keeping with their philosophy of being non-transparent with everyone.

SOHA and our neighboring community of Bel Air have been unsuccessfully trying for years to get the additional information we all deserve for the project. After being stonewalled one too many times, Bel Air has resorted to litigation to get answers. In November 2022, Keep Bel-Air Beautiful filed a lawsuit against Metro – asking for a broad range of information about the project, including detailed costs and schedules. After several years of Metro’s stalling and stonewalling, Keep Bel-Air Beautiful requested a court ruling to depose Metro personnel to obtain the needed information. On March 28th, the Superior Court ruled to allow Keep Bel-Air Beautiful’s attorneys to depose a Metro expert well versed in the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project – by no later than the end of April. Metro attorneys fought this ruling all the way – but now they will be obligated to open their kimono and reveal the truth. Time will tell. We’ll keep you informed.

## RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH

### VITELLO'S

*by Jane Kaplan, Restaurant Chair* – A Taste of Timeless Elegance at Vitello’s! Get ready, SOHA members – we have a truly special treat lined up for April’s gathering! We’re rolling out the red carpet for Vitello’s, a legendary Italian gem nestled right in our own backyard. This year marks their 60th Anniversary, a milestone that speaks volumes about their dedication to exquisite cuisine, warm hospitality, and an atmosphere steeped in history. We’re thrilled to welcome them back to the SOHA Homeowners meeting!



A lot has changed in the past six decades, but one thing remains the same – Vitello’s continues to impress. If you haven’t visited lately, you’re in for a surprise! Their Velvet Martini Lounge is a stylish homage to The Rat Pack, complete with plush couches, elegant seating, a stunning Steinway piano, and an ambiance that whisks you back to Hollywood’s golden era.

Looking for something even more exclusive? Head downstairs to The Rendition Room, a chic speakeasy-style hideaway perfect for a quiet, intimate evening. While it’s typically reserved for members, they’ll happily seat you if space allows with reservation only. And of course, there’s the main dining room and the outdoor patio, both serving up Vitello’s renowned menu brimming with authentic Italian flavors.

Speaking of food – you won’t want to miss this! Vitello’s will be serving up their signature dishes at our April 16th SOHA meeting. Mark your calendars, bring your appetites, and prepare for another unforgettable evening filled with great company, delicious food, and timeless charm. Buon appetito! See you there!



## SAVE THE DATE - MAY 17TH - SOHA SERVICE DAY LA

This is a day to join your community, clean up, meet new people, accrue service hours, and HAVE FUN - Saturday, May 17th from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm. Gather at Gelson's parking lot, 4250 Van Nuys Blvd. Contact Kelly Lynch, SOHA Beautification Committee Chair at [klynch@kplselect.com](mailto:klynch@kplselect.com) for further information.



## COMINGS AND GOINGS

*by Matt Epstein, President*

For years now, Studio City has been the go-to destination for sushi lovers, offering a dazzling array of high-quality sushi restaurants on nearly every block. What once started with just a handful of sushi spots - most notably the enduring Terra Sushi - has blossomed into a culinary hotspot where fresh fish and expertly crafted rolls are the norm.

Recently, however, Sherman Oaks has been stepping up its game, emerging as a worthy rival to Studio City's sushi supremacy. The neighborhood has welcomed an impressive lineup of sushi spots, including the recently opened Karma Sushi and Aria Sushi on Ventura Blvd. These newcomers join the ranks of established favorites like The Note, a sushi bar owned by the same team behind the acclaimed Augustine Wine Bar, and countless other sushi gems lining the Boulevard.

Last week, my wife and I finally made it to The Joint, a long-standing but often overlooked sushi destination. While I'd known about it for a while, I hadn't yet experienced its unique split concept - a top-tier smoked fish market on the right side (open only during the day) and a minimalist yet inviting hand roll bar on the left. Let me tell you - the hand rolls were phenomenal. Each one was carefully crafted and served individually on a simple white napkin, allowing me to savor every bite without distraction. I devoured six rolls, each one better than the last, and was pleasantly surprised to find the prices quite reasonable - possibly even lower than what you'd pay for six rolls at the renowned Katsuya. I've heard rave reviews about the fish market as well, so a return visit to pick up some fresh seafood is definitely in order.

Meanwhile, the Sherman Oaks dining scene continues to expand beyond sushi. A brand-new restaurant, DAISY, is set to open its doors on Ventura Blvd. This innovative Mexican restaurant and margarita bar will be open from 5 pm to midnight, offering a fresh and inspired take on traditional Mexican cuisine. The brains behind this venture are the award-winning team behind Mirate in Los Feliz, who are bringing their signature style and expertise to reinvent the modern-day cantina. DAISY promises a "GASTRO-CANTINA" experience, deeply rooted in Mexican culinary tradition while embracing creative innovation. If you have a penchant for tiki-inspired cocktails and bold, flavorful Mexican fare, DAISY might just become your new favorite spot.

On a less exciting note, a disappointing experience with Donny's Breakfast Spot on Ventura has left a sour taste. In last month's newsletter, I highlighted Donny's as a promising new breakfast destination and even arranged for it to be SOHA's Restaurant of the Month for March. My wife personally met with Donny, and he enthusiastically agreed to the feature. However, after multiple follow-ups - both in person and via phone - he completely ghosted her. Ignoring calls and commitments is simply not the way to build community trust. If he had changed his mind, a simple heads-up would have sufficed. Instead, his radio silence speaks volumes. Let's hope his restaurant doesn't vanish just as suddenly as his willingness to engage.

With so many exciting new dining options popping up in Sherman Oaks and Studio City, it's clear that this area remains one of LA's most dynamic culinary scenes. Whether you're craving top-tier sushi, innovative Mexican fare, or a solid breakfast spot (hopefully one with better follow-through than Donny's), there's no shortage of fantastic choices to explore.



## SOHA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE



**SOHA needs your membership!**

Membership is only \$45 a year and includes our monthly newsletter, community meetings, and much more. Go to [www.SOHA914.com](http://www.SOHA914.com) and click "JOIN OR RENEW SOHA" to pay by credit card subscription that auto-renews every year. Or mail your check, name, address, and email address to: SOHA Membership, PO Box 5223, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413-5223.

# SHERMAN OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

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**Raman, weaponized transit stops, and a court ruling**  
**that allows a deposition of a Metro expert on the**  
**Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project** ◀