

THE VALLEY VILLAGER

VALLEY VILLAGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



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P.O. BOX 4916, VALLEY VILLAGE, CA 91617

January 17th Membership Meeting

Happy New Year! We hope that regularly attending Valley Village Residents Association general membership meetings is on your list of New Year's resolutions! Our first membership meeting of 2024 will feature candidates running for City Council District 2 (of which Valley Village is a part). Candidates who are scheduled to speak at the VVRA membership meeting include:

- Adrin Nazarian, a State Labor Boardmember and former California Assemblymember
- Jon-Paul Bird, Mental Health Professional
- Rudy Melendez, Laborer/Artist
- Sam Kbushyan a Commissioner/Small Businessman

Other candidates on the ballot are Jillian Burgos a Small Business Owner, Manny Gonez a Housing Advocate/Environmentalism and Marin Ghandilyan a lawyer.

Rob Benavidez, LAPD Senior Lead Officer for Valley Village will provide an update on crime and answer questions.

January 17, 2024
Candidates for City Council District 2
LAPD Officer Rob Benavidez
7 pm
Faith Presbyterian Church
5000 Colfax Avenue
Fellowship Hall

Home-baked goodies will be served.

Come and meet your neighbors and members of the VVRA Board.

We hope to see you there!

NOTE OUR NEW MEETING LOCATION:

FELLOWSHIP HALL
at
FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Park in the parking lot on Addison Street.
Enter the courtyard.
Fellowship hall is off the courtyard.

Rob's Beat

Hello again Valley Village. I hope everyone had a safe and wonderful holiday season. Unfortunately, total crime in 2023 increased by 7.5% compared to the prior year. This increase is attributed to vehicle-related crime. However, violent crime was significantly down in 2023, with robberies being down by half and aggravated assaults down by almost 40%. Residential burglaries were down by 1% and personal theft was down 10%.

There was a 53% increase in grand theft auto (stolen vehicles) and a 6% increase in burglary from vehicles (car break-ins). In 2023, the highest number of North Hollywood Division's stolen vehicles occurred in Valley Village, NoHo Arts District south of Magnolia, and Northwest NoHo including neighborhoods near the Tujunga Wash. Below is a breakdown of where vehicles were stolen from:

- 78% - street
- 11% - parking lot
- 8% - garage, carport, or driveway
- 3% - other locations

Kia and Hyundai are currently the most targeted brands. In California, the top vehicles stolen include:

- 1997-2000 Honda Civic
- 2013-2015 Kia Optima
- 2013-2017 Hyundai Sonata
- 1997 Honda Accord.

If you can garage your vehicle or remove it from the street, please consider doing so. Also think about getting a steering wheel club if you own a commonly targeted vehicle.

I wish you all a very happy new year. Welcome to 2024!

Rob Benavidez
Senior Lead Officer, Valley Village

The VVRA Board:President: **Beth Fulton**Vice President: **Dorothy Apple**Secretary: **Ellen Wilhelm**Treasurer: **Ellen Wilhelm** (pro tem)Boardmembers at Large:**Tina Hookom****Sandy Hubbard****Kristin Karanikolas****Ray McIntosh****Peter Sanchez****Linda Simon****Marc Woersching****EDITORIAL STAFF**Publisher: Peter SanchezEditor: Sofia LoEditor Emerita: Gil ShorrContributors:

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Ask a Friend - Ask a Neighbor to Join the Residents Association

Joining is easy. You can do this in a couple of minutes at:

<https://valleyvillagera.com/membership>

The larger our membership, the more influence we have when local and state decisions are made. Your dues pay for *The Valley Villager*, beautification projects, our iconic July 4th Parade, support for our local schools and the expenses incurred to maintain a successful non-profit organization.

A Letter from the President

Dear Members,

As we bid farewell to another wonderful year, I find myself reflecting on the incredible strength and unity that defines our community. The past year has brought challenges, but it's also been a testament to our resilience and collective spirit.

As we step into the promising embrace of the New Year, I want to extend my warmest wishes to every one of you. May the coming year be filled with joy, prosperity, and countless opportunities for us to grow as a community.

Let's look forward to more neighborly gatherings, shared laughter, and collaborative efforts that make our community stronger. Our residents' association has always thrived on the strength of its members, and I am confident that together we will continue to create a positive and supportive environment for everyone.

If you have any ideas, suggestions, or events you'd like to see in the upcoming year, please don't hesitate to share them. Your input is invaluable, and together, we can make our community an even better place to call home.

Here's to a New Year filled with warmth, friendship, and the boundless possibilities that lie ahead. May each day bring you happiness and every challenge be met with resilience.

Wishing you and your loved ones a Happy New Year!

Warm regards,
Beth Fulton, President

A Note from the Secretary, Ellen Wilhelm

Do you ever wonder who receives your calls and email when you contact Valley Village Residents Association? They are received by the VVRA Secretary, who typically has to forward them to another Board member for input. This process can take a few days, and if I am out of town, the process can take longer. We try our best to respond quickly and usually do, but sometimes circumstances cause a later reply. Kindly remember when you reach out to the Board that we are volunteers. We are always happy to help, and we are grateful for the opportunity to learn about your issues with the neighborhood.

Thank you for your support.

New Developments on Development Round-Up**Proposed Development Project:**

Ethel Avenue south of Burbank Boulevard near Valley Village: In accordance with the Mayor's Executive Directive, a seven-story, 200-unit building is planned for the property immediately adjacent to a single-family home neighborhood.

New Ownership at Minuteman Press

Meet Armen Bedrossian, the proud new owner of Minuteman Press, our beloved local print shop. In August 2023, Armen and his wife, Lala, purchased the Minuteman Press franchise on 5224 Laurel Canyon Boulevard.

Armen and Lala were born in Iran, unaware that their paths had crossed as children. As neighbors, Armen had been a playmate of Lala's sister, and both their families lived next door to each other. Armen moved to New Jersey at the age of 12, while Lala and her family relocated to London, UK. Eventually, fate brought them both to Southern California, where they met, fell in love, and tied the knot within a year.



Armen holds a bachelor's degree in computer science, which he earned during his time in New Jersey. He spent 36 years working in computer and software technology and climbed up the ranks to be a senior executive. Lala's background is in accounting, and she has worked as an Office Manager. Interestingly, Armen's first job while in high school was at the Washington Press where he worked in the bindery department. Fast forward to 2024, and now he is the owner of Minuteman Press!

Together, Armen and Lala have celebrated over 33 years of wedded bliss. They are proud parents to three children, all of whom have chosen or are pursuing careers in nursing. Their eldest son currently works as a registered nurse at Cedars Sinai, while their two daughters are studying to enter the same profession.

Here are a few fun facts about Armen:

- He loves all types of food, particularly Italian cuisine. He also has a sweet tooth for chocolate.
- His favorite sport is soccer.
- He has two Maltipoo dogs. He loves cats but is allergic to them.
- His passion is motorcycles.

As VVRA loyal patrons, we have been utilizing this printer location/services for our newsletter for several years. We wholeheartedly encourage everyone to visit Armen, bring your printing needs to his shop, and enjoy a delightful conversation while you're there.

Light Up Valley Village

On December 9th, neighbors, families, friends, and Valley Village businesses joined together to celebrate Light Up Valley Village and kick off the holiday season. Free pizza from Joe Peeps was served along with food from Harvest Moon and Rustic Spoon. Coffee and hot chocolate from Marie et Cie kept everyone in the holiday spirit. Local businesses were open for holiday shopping while the kids got to spend a few minutes with Santa, taking home a keepsake photo from Valley Photo.

Valley Village Residents Association hosted a table at Angelino's Crossfit (on Whitsett Avenue) with information for residents and goodies for the kids.

VVRA Helps with New Student Garden at Burbank Boulevard School

On November 17th, 2023, representatives from VVRA, including Beth Fulton and Ellen Wilhelm, attended the ribbon cutting ceremony at Burbank Boulevard Elementary School for the student garden. This garden was partly funded by VVRA. Those in attendance included: Councilmember Paul Krekorian, LAUSD Board Member Scott Schmerelson, the Neighborhood Council Valley Village (NCVV), and parents, staff, and students of Burbank Boulevard Elementary.

The garden teaches children about the environment and how food is grown. It supplements science and math lessons at school and promotes healthy eating habits by introducing students to new and natural foods. Research shows school gardens have a positive impact on student learning, health, and nutrition. They encourage outdoor physical activity and can provide students with a sense of purpose.



VVRA believes in strengthening our local schools to ensure a healthy and vibrant community for future generations. We wish Burbank Boulevard Elementary a happy and healthy harvest!

City Council Approves Metro's Digital Billboard Program

On December 15, 2023, the Los Angeles City Council, by a vote of 10-4-1, approved the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority's (Metro) proposal to place 41 digital billboard structures and 71 sign faces next to rail and bus stations on property that Metro owns. Changes to what the Planning Commission previously approved, including:

- 52 sign faces will face the freeways instead of 33
- 19 sign faces will face surface streets instead 56
- 41 digital billboard structures instead 49

In exchange, 200 existing, non-digital billboards on Metro properties are to be removed.

The rationale for allowing these new digital billboards is to enable Metro to post public service announcements and traffic messages, but the real reason is to generate revenue for Metro and the City. Seven out of eight messages on these signs will be regular advertising. The revenue will be split 50/50 between the Metro and the City. However, the amount of revenue the City will receive is uncertain. Projections range between \$300-\$500 million over 15-20 years resulting in only a modest range of \$7.5 to \$16.7 million per year for the City. This range of revenue accounts for less than 1% of the City's \$13B budget for 2023-2024 fiscal year.

VVRA believes that this proposal is harmful to the public. The face of the digital boards will be 672 sq ft in size and the bright LED display will be allowed to change every eight seconds, which poses a major safety concern for drivers. Moreover, the lights from the LED display will intrude into residents' homes and alter the character of local communities into commercial entertainment districts.

The digital billboard program would grant a major exception to the 70-year-old ban on billboards facing the freeways that has kept Los Angeles freeways free of billboards. The ban on freeway-facing billboards is a redeeming aesthetic feature of Los Angeles. With an existing inventory of around 8,000 billboards in Los Angeles, the removal of 200 existing smaller billboards will result in only a modest reduction (2.5%) in sign clutter along the surface streets. The takedown ratio of billboards removed versus billboards added will be only 2.32 to 1.

Despite the Metro's proposal being harmful to the quality of life in Los Angeles, it was approved by the City Council with City Council President Paul Krekorian and Mayor Karen Bass in support. Four Councilmembers – Traci Park, Katy Yaroslavsky, Nithya Raman and Eunisses Hernandez – listened to their constituents and showed courage in opposing it. So far, at least 33 neighborhood councils have come out in opposition to the Metro's plan and hundreds of individuals have sent in comments opposing it.



Snow! 1940's Valley Village Park - Pre-170 Freeway

(Photo by Alice White - Submitted by Paul Hatfield)

"It is urgent that everyone write letters, attend hearings and be heard. All residents must continue to be diligent and alert to protect the integrity and character of Valley Village."

*Lori Dinkin,
VVRA President 1994 to 2006*

**Communicate,
Participate,
Advocate**

Home Price Gain Year Over Year in VV

Single Family Homes in Valley Village continued to enjoy price growth throughout 2023. The average selling price closed the year at \$1,474,816, up 23% from January's average sales price of \$1,197,625. Prices spiked in the spring, which is a reoccurring pattern in most of the country, before dipping in May, followed by relatively steady growth for the remainder of the year.

Despite interest rates approaching 23-year highs, there are still more buyers in the market than homes available for sale. Many potential sellers are still sitting on the sidelines because they are not willing to give up a 3% interest rate for a current interest rate of about 7%. This lack of inventory has kept home prices stable and continues to give sellers a slight advantage in the market.

Federal Reserve officials have acknowledged a slowing rate of inflation and rate cuts are now projected in 2024. These cuts will likely bring more buyers into the market, potentially driving prices up further and faster. We already see multiple offers on many listings now, so expect that to accelerate in 2024.

For sellers, 2024 will present the opportunity to take advantage of bidding wars to maximize the value of their home.

For buyers, rate decreases will allow them to stretch their budget further, but they will need a solid strategy to win in a tight inventory market.

Our Neighborhood Voices

At October's Membership meeting, Valley Village Residents Association welcomed guest speaker Nils Nehrenheim, who is a Redondo Beach Councilmember and member of Our Neighborhood Voices. Our Neighborhood Voices is a coalition of community leaders, local elected officials, and residents that are working on a ballot initiative to restore the local voice in community planning and zoning.

To the dismay of local communities, state politicians have passed new laws that allow developers in California to tear down single-family houses and build six units or more without any new contributions to fund roads, schools, or public safety. These new state laws, like SB9 and SB10, give developers the ability to tear down single-family homes and create multi-unit rental complexes without having to ask for local permission from city councils and without any meaningful neighborhood input. Although these laws claim to promote affordable housing, the truth is that they require zero units to be affordable. Studies show that this type of development leads to higher housing costs, gentrification, and displacement. The result of these laws is more traffic and higher taxes because developers do not need to fund the new services their projects require.

Please join the effort to restore our voice back in our own neighborhoods. Here is how you can help:

1. Make a donation in any amount to:
www.OurNeighborhoodVoices.com/Donate
2. Host a neighborhood meeting to help grow the movement.
www.OurNeighborhoodVoices.com/Events
3. Endorse the Measure at:
www.OurNeighborhoodVoices.com/Endorse
4. Volunteer to help spread the word at:
www.OurNeighborhoodVoices.com/Volunteer
5. Join the weekly meeting every Wednesday at 6pm:
<https://zoom.us/j/3588018061>

VVRA & NCVV?

People often ask how does Valley Village Residents Association (VVRA) differ from Neighborhood Council Valley Village (NCVV)? And does the community need two organizations to represent its interests?

VVRA is a private non-profit corporation whose members are residents (both renters and homeowners). It was founded in 1993 by a group of homeowners to advocate for issues that affect Valley Village. Because VVRA represents only residents, it is focused primarily on issues that affect residents, like quality-of-life, and out-of-character real estate development. As a private organization, the VVRA has autonomy subject only to its bylaws.

VVRA successfully fought for the VV Specific Plan to protect the character of the neighborhood. VVRA organizes and sponsors the July 4th Parade. VVRA also participated and supported the creation of NCVV.

NCVV is a part of the City of Los Angeles government structure. Mandated by the City Charter, it is subject to City laws, regulations and oversight. The 99 Neighborhood Councils created by the City serve as each community's liaison with City departments and officials. NCVV represents all "stakeholders," which includes residents, businesses, community organizations, employees, property owners and visitors.

Do we need two organizations? Yes, it benefits the community to have two organizations. VVRA can respond quickly to issues that affect residents. NCVV, with its connections to the City, has resources that can assist stakeholders. VVRA has established a history and respect with the City and elected officials. NCVV has more access to City Departments that serve our community.

While the VVRA and NCVV have overlapping responsibilities and may at times have conflicting interests, the two organizations complement each other and often collaborate to achieve many shared goals.

Residents Association Membership Meeting

***** IN-PERSON and LIVE *****

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024

Fellowship Hall, Faith Presbyterian Church, 5000 Colfax Avenue

Enter Fellowship Hall from the parking lot on Addison Street

OUR SPEAKERS WILL BE THE CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 2 CANDIDATES
for the Primary Election on March 5, 2024

Senior Lead Officer Rob Benavidez will give a short update from LAPD.

Homemade treats will be available at 6:45pm

Meeting begins at 7:00pm

**Mark Your
Calendar:**

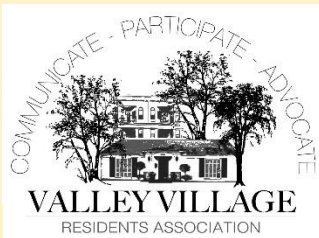
2024 Membership Meetings will be on Wednesdays

Jan 17 * April 17 * July 17 * Oct 16

2024 Board of Directors Meetings will be on Mondays

Jan 8 * Mar 4 * May 6 * July 8 * Sept 9 * Nov 4

VALLEY VILLAGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



P.O. BOX 4916

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818-506-5158

www.ValleyVillageRA.com

Tell a Neighbor about the Valley Village Residents Association