

THE VALLEY VILLAGER

VALLEY VILLAGE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION



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

What Some Valley Villagers Think

In an informal poll of Valley Village residents, we posed a series of questions to take the pulse of the community. Many answers were as expected, but some were surprising. Here is what we found out:

■ *What made you decide to move to Valley Village?*

For many people, affordability ranked high. The quiet, tree-lined streets and small-town feel were also a recurring response. Half of the people polled mentioned the quality of schools for their children; another healthy percentage admitted they happened on the area by chance.

■ *What is your favorite thing about living here?*

"The history. The originality and the character of the buildings. The trees. Valley Village has always felt like its own little pocket, tucked away from the chaos of the rest of the city. It has always felt like its residents held a pride of occupancy and a strong sense of community." – a 22-year resident

Many people cited our proximity to just about *everything!* "Except the beach," "Grocery shopping, medical/dental care, salons, restaurants, freeways." Another frequent answer was the beautiful, vintage homes.

– a 25-year resident

■ *What do you think is in the direst need of improvement?*

"Perhaps the biggest issue is protecting the integrity of this area which includes development of residential and commercial building that alters the feel of the neighborhood." – a 40-year resident

"It is the problem of unbridled local growth, even in the face of local sentiment to the [contrary]." – a 17-year resident

Overwhelmingly, the neighbors polled expressed concern with overdevelopment and the lack of preservation. Traffic speeding through our residential streets, density, and graffiti were cited by about 30% of respondents. Sidewalk repair received mention, as well as a notable percentage decrying corruption of our local representatives.

■ *If you could change one thing about Valley Village, what would it be?*

Now, here is where we find the REAL diversity in our community!

"Its councilmember." "More restaurants." "...maintaining the essential character of the neighborhood as a kind of suburban oasis...." "Zip codes should reflect Valley Village, not North Hollywood."

■ *How long have you lived here?*

Our survey participants have been in Valley Village for 17 to 40 years.

We would love to hear from you, too! If you are so inclined, please email us at Editor@ValleyVillageHA.com.

Manny's Beat

Friends and Neighbors,

Crime in our area is up, and residential burglaries continue to be our major problem. Year to date, we show an increase of 32 percent, which equates to sixteen more crimes than during the same period last year.

I would like to alert you to look out for the "Knock, Knock Burglars." These suspects are members of street gangs who are committing residential burglaries throughout the Valley and other neighborhoods in the City of Los Angeles. Their method of operation is to rent a high-end vehicle, have a female driver and three or four male passengers. They drive around neighborhoods looking for an empty driveway that indicates there is no one home or they watch for people to leave their home. The group then sends one suspect to knock on the front door while the others stay in the vehicle. If there is no answer at the front door, the suspect proceeds around to the side gate and into the backyard of the residence. The suspect then looks for an easy way to enter the house (unlocked doors or windows). If none is found, the suspect forces entry by kicking or prying open a door or window. Once inside, they remove your valuables.

Please double check all doors and windows before you leave for the day. And if you can, install surveillance cameras throughout your house, or an alarm. Doing these things will deter thieves from breaking into your home.

Thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely, Manny Arreygue
Senior Lead Officer for
Valley Village 818-634-0829

Notes from the Board Meeting, March 13

The Board will send out welcome packages introducing new residents to the area. With the same goal in mind, we are also planning to help individuals set up “meet-up” groups, structured walks round the area and perhaps a tour of some of the most innovative gardens in Valley Village. ** As part of our outreach efforts, we will explore the part of Valley Village west of Laurel Canyon in order to hold some of our membership meetings further west. ** We discussed reverting to the Association’s by-laws in running our elections, and having a more open voting process: the electorate will vote for a slate of Board members, and the Board will then assign each member to a position according to their experience. ** There was discussion about an extensive project going in at 11748 Riverside and properties to the west. The Board is waiting for a date when the permit for a synagogue at that location comes before the Neighborhood Council VV, and will inform the membership of the outcome.

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A Letter from the President

The number one issue in Valley Village will always be quality of life.

As your president, I listen to reports from residents, the media and the LAPD. The news has not been good.

The growing population of homeless, higher-density development (which adds to congestion), Airbnb conversions and occasional architectural assaults by property flippers against some of our community’s classic homes, have been overshadowed by one trend – the surge in property crime.

Valley Village is not an exception. The entire length of the San Fernando Valley and the state as a whole has been affected by this scourge.

There has been much debate whether the increase is largely due to the passage of Prop 47 (reduced sentences for non-violent offenders) in the November election of 2014.

There is at least a correlation. According to the Association of Deputy District Attorneys, major cities in LA County saw an increase of 9.7% in the six months immediately following the passage of 47. The San Francisco metro area saw a 14% up-tick. It is noteworthy that during the same period, the next four largest states experienced declines.

Statistical arguments will fly back and forth, but anecdotal evidence in Valley Village seems to support the theory that something has gone terribly wrong since 2014.

Don’t count on the LAPD to have adequate resources to push back. We are essentially on the front line with the officers.

Organization and technology are the best weapons to prevent or curtail property crime. Blocks with active Neighborhood Watch groups, whose members employ cameras and alarms, stand the best chance of beating back the barbarians at the gates.

Alas, few Neighborhood Watch groups are active. Where there is little communication and cooperation, there is fertile ground for criminals to pick off homes at their leisure.

Occasionally, though, there is a bright spot.

I would like to give a shout-out to Valley Village resident Jimmy Martinez for galvanizing his neighbors and forming a Neighborhood Watch group. I had the pleasure of attending their first meeting. It was held in the late afternoon/early evening, at a quiet intersection, a venue which was conducive to exemplifying the spirit of community.

About 30 enthusiastic residents attended – all filled with passion. It is apparent from the communication which followed that they will not back down.

We need to see more of this kind of enthusiasm. So, please: gather at your own intersections, make plans and establish regular and timely lines of communication.

When possible, my colleagues on the board and I would like to assist new groups or aid in the revival of others.

We are in this together; we are an association.

Paul Hatfield, President

Like VVHA On Facebook! www.Facebook.com/ValleyVillageHA

Projects in the Works

Development projects during the past six months:

1. 5133 Whitsett Avenue. This is a six-unit, small lot subdivision on the site of an existing single family home on the west side of Whitsett just south of Magnolia. The developer is requesting an adjustment for an additional 3'11" above the 3-foot height limit for single family homes in the Valley Village Specific Plan. In response to concerns from the single family home neighborhood immediately to the west, the developer agreed to remove roof decks from units facing west. The stairwell towers are also being removed.
2. 12500 Burbank Boulevard (at Whitsett). This is the site of Edwin's Pharmacy, now closed. Its future will be as a small Jewish school, which will operate six days a week with an initial student population of 30, possibly rising to 57. Its use as an educational facility is permitted by the [Q] C2-1 commercial zone, provided that a conditional use permit is approved. Ten parking spaces will be provided (7 staff, 3 student) and there will be additional landscaping along the sides of the building and in the parking lot.

The school's move from Chandler and Whitsett will necessitate extensive interior renovation to provide 5 classrooms, a computer lab, a library and two small offices. No changes to the exterior of the building are anticipated.

Other projects that the Association is keeping an eye on:

3. Galaxy Car Wash property. This is a 62,481 square foot, five-story, 56-foot tall mixed-use building at the southeast corner of Chandler and Whitsett consisting of 69 apartment units, 5,000 square feet of ground floor retail space, a 470 square foot community center, 140 parking spaces and 82 spaces for bicycles. When reviewed by the Neighborhood Council, the project was faulted for being too tall compared to the surrounding buildings. Application for a building permit for the project was made on March 17, 2017.
4. 11700 Magnolia Boulevard. This is a mixed-use project at the southwest corner of Magnolia and Colfax, on the site of a former auto repair shop. It is designed to comprise 19 apartment units, 1,575 square feet of commercial floor area, 36 parking spaces and 28 spaces for bicycles. When reviewed by the Neighborhood Council the project was criticized for having a very modern architectural style that will not blend in with the surrounding neighborhood's more traditional architectural styles. A building permit was applied for on March 24, 2016.
5. 1545 Colfax Avenue. This is a 12-unit small lot subdivision on the site of a former restaurant and office building immediately south of the project at 11700 Magnolia. The architectural style is similar to that of other midcentury, modernist apartment buildings in the San Fernando Valley. No building permits have been applied for at this time.
6. NoHo West. After much public discussion, trips back to the drawing board and many site sketches, NoHo West was formally ushered in last week as a major renovation on the Macy's lot, at Laurel Canyon Boulevard and Irwin Street. The main features are a generous open air plaza, new residences, a movie theater, shops, restaurants and a fitness center. The Macy's building will be renovated as an office building, and the whole project will be spread over close to 328,000 square feet. NoHo West is scheduled to open in late 2019. More information, with videos, photos and descriptions, can be found at www.NoHoWest.com.

DID YOU KNOW?

Tax Break?

Well, perhaps not as we hear it from Washington, but a small break nevertheless. April 16 is not only Easter this year, it is also Emancipation Day, the day in 1862 when President Abraham Lincoln signed the Compensated Emancipation Act, which freed about 3,100 slaves living in Washington D.C. The holiday, which is little known outside the District of Columbia, will officially be celebrated April 17 this year. That pushes the official tax-filing deadline to the next business day, Tuesday, April 18. That's right: Everyone – residents of Illinois, California and everywhere in between – has an extension to file their tax return.

New Faces

There is a new Field Representative in Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian's office. Emma Taylor can be reached at 818-376-4246 or Emma.Taylor@asm.ca.gov.

Red Line Upgrade

Metro has recently announced its intention to provide cell phone service on the Red Line sometime before the end of this year.

New Café

Groundwork Coffee is entering its second month of bustling business for those commuters who want to have one last cuppa joe before heading for the bus or train. It is located in the historic, newly restored Lankershim Depot. Metro is planning to install a Metro Bike Hub at the café site, and we may also see a pocket park at the corner of Chandler and Lankershim boulevards in the future.

Checkbook LA

Available on the City Controller webpage, Checkbook LA is a source for information on all the goods and services purchased by the City of Los Angeles. It provides a transparent look at where your money is going. Go to: <https://controllerdata.lacity.org>.

The Treasurer's Report

Welcome to Spring 2017 in Valley Village. This is the time of year that Valley Village Homeowners Association (VVHA) spends a good portion of Member donations to put on or sponsor local events, and there are many great events scheduled in our neighborhood over the next five months. We are always in the process of prioritizing our work projects for the next fiscal year, and since we have maintained the number of homeowner members, our revenue has remained steady. As an Association, and thanks to your donations, we are covering our expenses, so we can now do some serious planning for Valley Village.

Our Association wants to spend more time, and thus money, making sure our Valley Village Specific Plan is maintained, improved, and followed by developers. Adherence to the Specific Plan has become a top priority as the rest of Los Angeles bends to the growing attraction of Valley Village homes and our wonderful schools. This requires major time and money commitments from VVHA but is so important in maintaining the character of our village and the strength of our schools. Most people are not aware, for instance, that over the next 5-7 years, Valley Village will see almost \$250 million spent on improvements to three of our local schools: Colfax Charter Elementary, North Hollywood High School, and Oakwood School. This is a huge capital improvement which will make Valley Village an even greater magnet for families with children.

We still are sponsoring one of the greatest neighborhood parties in the Valley: our Annual July 4th Parade. Well, over 2000 neighbors came out in support of our community last year.

VVHA must always be watchful of development going on around us, particularly NoHo West, late home of the May Company/Macy's at Laurel Plaza, and the continued development at the Metro Red Line Station at Lankershim and Chandler boulevards in NoHo.

VVHA wants to organize more local outreach and beautification projects in the coming year. We welcome your ideas to give us guidance as to what means the most to you, our Members.

Our March 31, 2017, checking account balance was \$21,745, which represents donations received from 338 VVHA Members, 37 of whom are Members who have joined since July 4, 2016.

Thank You for your financial support and love of Valley Village. Please ask your neighbors to become Members along with you so we have a stronger voice within the City of Los Angeles.

Ronald Meyer, Treasurer



This craftsman bungalow was built in 1920 and looks as lovely as it must have looked then. The original owner built a similar house on each of three contiguous lots, but only this home has survived the decades. Three bedrooms, two baths, front and back yards – all meticulously preserved and maintained by the current owner – this is a property cherished by everyone in the neighborhood. Only in Valley Village!

Village 'vents

Wednesday, April 19

VVHA Membership Meeting

6:30pm for refreshments;

7:00pm Meeting

Colfax Charter School Auditorium

See back page for details

Saturday, April 15

Arts and Crafts Fair

10am to 4pm.

3919 Lankershim Boulevard,

opposite NBC Universal

There will be an Arts and Crafts Fair at Campo de Cahuenga, an important local historical site. It will feature California artists' drawings, paintings, jewelry, ceramics, leather and more. In addition, you can take a tour of the historic Campo.

Saturday, May 20

Colfax World Fair

11am to 7pm

Colfax Charter Elementary School

The Colfax World Fair is a wonderful community event enthusiastically supported by VVHA and featuring a silent auction, music, food, rides, games, water slides, a cake walk and much more! This year you'll find exciting new features such as online bidding for our silent auction so you can bid on that amazing show / basket / ticket / trip / gift from your phone!

Also, don't miss the amazing ninja warrior-style obstacle course and the all-new Silent Disco!

All the funds raised at the World Fair allow Colfax students to enjoy art, music, technology, a science lab, and programs not otherwise supported by Los Angeles Unified. Colfax Charter is a small neighborhood school with a diverse group of hardworking families dedicated to the success of all children. For more information, visit: www.facebook.com/ColfaxWorldFair.

Tuesday, July 4

Valley Village July 4th Parade

9:30am to 12pm

A Valley Village tradition for 25 years! Starts at Addison and Morella and ends at Valley Village Park. Enjoy festive refreshments and mingling at the park.

Vision Zero

Sixty-five percent of all severe and fatal collisions involving people walking and biking happen on just six percent of the City of Los Angeles' streets, and Valley Village is no stranger to this list.

Sections of Laurel Canyon, Riverside, Whitsett, Chandler, Burbank and Magnolia within Valley Village have the dubious distinction of being part of this six percent, what's known as the High-Injury Network.

With traffic-related fatalities on the rise, last month the LA Department of Transportation (LADOT) released its Vision Zero Action Plan whose goal is to end deaths for all users of the road by 2025.

Speed is a major factor in most collisions, and pedestrians are particularly vulnerable: they are four times more likely to die when hit by a car traveling at 40 mph than one traveling at 20 mph. As one result of the Plan so far, the LAPD is joining with LADOT to focus on speed on High-Injury Network streets.

Such improvements as high visibility crosswalks, pedestrian head start signaling, bike lanes and curb extensions have already upgraded roadway safety. Improving road designs, increased education, better signage, updating speed surveys and a partnership with Safe Routes to School are some of the other components featured in this plan, which is citywide.

For example, the new scramble crosswalk at Hollywood and Highland has decreased the number of collisions by 35% with zero deaths or serious injuries since it was implemented in 2015.

As a primarily residential neighborhood with many children heading to school every day, Vision Zero strategies will make Valley Village a safer and more enjoyable place to live.

Colfax Charter School Addition Project

The major renovation is of course still in the planning stages, and approval by the LA Unified School Board is still required before work can begin. But at the latest of several public meetings held on the subject LAUSD brought those in attendance up to date and gave some basic statistics about the school facilities and its need to expand.

For those who are monitoring all this from the sidelines, the basics of the project are to replace ten portables now on site and add eight new classrooms, reconfigure the Administration Building, expand the lunch shelter and provide more parking. All this will allow for 160 new K-5 students to be admitted way into the future (currently, between 20 and 30 are turned away annually). Any environmental impacts would be significantly reduced by required adherence to the LAUSD Standard Conditions of Approval.

The next step is a potential hearing by the LAUSD Board on Tuesday, April 18; the agenda will be available at www.boe.lausd.net on April 12.

Welcome, Captain Donald Graham

Greetings from North Hollywood police station! I am very excited about the happenings in the North Hollywood area. It has only been two months since I was assigned here, and we have already begun moving and shaking! In law enforcement, it is our primary goal to reduce crime, reduce the fear of crime and do all that we can to enhance the quality of life for all members of our communities. My message to you is that we all have a responsibility in fighting crime. Together we all can participate in crime fighting strategies, whether it is keeping our vehicles free of any valuables or being the eyes and ears of our neighbors and utilizing the phrase "If you see something, say something." Together, we can make a difference!



The Good News Corner!

- European researchers found that people who live near trees and green spaces are happier, healthier and less likely to be dependent on antidepressants (Valley Villagers ought to be dancing in the streets!).
- A while ago, we heard about "Shower to the People," a noble enterprise which endeavored to restore dignity to homeless people by parking its mobile shower truck in various locations and providing a solution to the lack of showering facilities for this segment of the population. Now we're hearing about an Apple engineer in Santa Cruz who's spending his evenings and weekends driving around with a mobile laundromat he created – because too many homeless folks were unable to afford clean laundry AND food...
- We're seeing more and more pop-up lending libraries in front of private homes. What a delightful neighborhood contribution! We're all for random acts of kindness – the payback is that they produce endorphins, the brain's natural painkiller!

Homeowners Association Membership Meeting

Wednesday, April 19, 2017 – 6:30pm refreshments – 7:00pm meeting
Colfax Charter School Auditorium
11724 Addison Street, Valley Village

Guest Speaker:

Ron Galperin, LA City Controller

As Controller, Ron oversees a team responsible for conducting independent audits of City departments, managing payroll for more than 42,000 City employees, disbursing 290,000 payments to outside vendors, and preparing comprehensive reports on the City's finances. Ron received his J.D. from Loyola Law School in Los Angeles and his undergraduate degree from Washington University in St. Louis. Ron will discuss his new PropertyPanelLA and how the City can better utilize City-owned real estate.

Also at the Meeting:

Neighborhood Watch and Police Department updates

This meeting is neither sponsored by nor is it in any way connected with the Los Angeles Unified School District

**Mark Your
Calendar:**

2017 Membership Meetings will be on Wednesdays

*April 19 * July 19 * October 18*

2017 Board of Directors Meetings will be on Mondays

*May 15 * August 14 * October 9*

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Neighbors Working Together To Improve The Quality Of Life