



WHHO Newsletter

MAY, 2025

Woodland Hills Homeowners Organization

P.O. Box 6368, Woodland Hills, CA 91365 | www.whho.com

Wednesday Night:

May 21st

Guest Speakers:

**Representatives of the
LA Fire Department**

- **Battalion Chief Joe Lopez
(Battalion 17)**
- **Captain Viet Le (Fire Station
84)**

**Come with your questions and
suggestions!**

WHHO General Meeting

**Wednesday, May 21, 2025
7:30 PM- 9:00 PM on Zoom**

**Webinar Virtual Meeting – Register to attend
by going to www.whho.com**



{Pictures from the LA Daily News}

WHHO invites you to our meeting to hear from those that know: LAFD!

Is your home truly safe? WHHO is bringing in the experts from the L.A. Fire Department to answer your most pressing questions about fire safety and protection. This isn't just another meeting—it's a vital opportunity to gain knowledge that could save your home and even your life.

They'll be on hand to discuss topics critical to our community's safety, including:

- Emergency exit routes and fire prevention strategies.
- Hardening your home against the ever-present threat of wildfires.
- The new fire hydrant survey and inspection protocols.
- Insights into LAFD staffing levels, budget priorities, and equipment needs.
- How we can all participate in community-based efforts to boost neighborhood fire protection.

- Crucial updates on new evacuation plans, especially for hillside homes, to prevent issues like those seen in the Palisades Fire.

- Plus, they'll address any additional concerns our association wishes to raise.

Your safety is paramount. Getting educated directly from the LAFD leadership is the best way to protect yourself, your family, and your property.

Don't wait until it's too late! Mark your calendar and go to www.whho.com to register for this essential Zoom meeting.

Bring your questions! This is your chance to get direct answers from the professionals dedicated to keeping our community safe.

LA JUST CAN'T AFFORD TO KEEP YOU SAFE ANYMORE.



Busted budgets mean fewer fire and police crews to protect you, your property and your lifestyle.

The City of LA is broke--literally. And you can expect the services and protections we all depend on each day will be getting even more broken. Why? **There isn't enough money available to do things right anymore.**

It all came to the fore this past month when Mayor Karen Bass delivered a proposed LA City budget that would have cut thousands of City employee positions—including hundreds in the LA Police Department and the LA Fire Department—in an effort to somehow close the \$1 Billion financial deficit that the City is facing. But, after hearing the shrieks and protestations from practically every corner of the City, the LA City Council quickly created a special committee to revise the Mayor's proposed budget. That City Council committee has advanced their own recommendations to revise the Mayor's proposed budget for the coming year with a plan to reduce layoffs to less than 650 City employees.

The good news is that the bad news isn't worse.

The most concerning cut-backs are to the LAPD force and the City's Fire Department. The City Council committee is recommending a slow-down in sworn hiring at the LAPD, which would leave the City's police forces with 8,400 officers by the end of June, 2026—representing a reduction of personnel of about 300 officers from the current fiscal year, and more than triple that compared to 2020. According to the LA City Council, the changes endorsed by this special budget committee could save the positions of about 150 civilian workers in the police department.

Equally critical is that the City Council committee has agreed to eliminate 42 emergency incident technicians at the LA Fire Department—plus also canceling the Mayor's plan for a new homeless unit within the LAFD.

The City Council proposal calls for a reduction in sworn hiring in the Los Angeles Police Department to 240 recruits in six classes of 40, from a proposed 480 recruits in 12 classes of 40, for an estimated savings of \$13.31 million. The committee also expects to restore 133 LAPD civilian positions of the 403 jobs set for elimination. Those positions include photographers, criminalists and forensic print specialists, among others, that are essential for

investigations and could not be easily replaced with a sworn officer.

Tough times: Even the State can't help our \$\$\$ situation.

The mayor has gone on record saying that she will reduce her salary and forego any raises that would be coming her way. Her office staff members are not taking their regularly scheduled cost-of-living adjustments office-wide in June (4%), December 2025 (2%) and June 2026 (4%), it was previously announced.

While the City has been aware that their \$1 Billion shortfall is fast approaching the due-date, they have been hoping that Governor Newsom and the Sacramento legislature could come riding to the rescue. But those hopes have been dashed because the State of California is already facing a \$12 Billion deficit in their budgeting process, and the State looks like it will have to cut or eliminate thousands of programs and jobs that will impact virtually every need and interest within California's borders.

Just what should our neighborhoods expect?

What isn't crystal clear is just how much impact all of the cut-backs and eliminations will impact the day-to-day lives of the residents of Los Angeles.

The number of active police officers on duty will obviously be impacted, but there is no accurate way to forecast how much that will hog-tie the LAPD's abilities to fight mounting crime and all the other problems we all expect them to handle and solve. Obviously, the reductions in police manpower will be something criminals and gangs throughout the City will be keenly aware of, and obviously reaction times to crimes could be significantly impacted.

The same could be true of fire responders who are still dealing with a significant number of fire engines and other critical response vehicles being stuck in the City's service shops because the money and manpower simply aren't there to keep all of the critical equipment working and in action.

You'll probably want to lodge complaints. (Only no one will probably respond.)

According to some news sources, the general services that most West Valley communities expect will also probably take a hit. Trees that over-grow streets will have to wait until tree-trimming services become available within that area of the City, with only emergence situations like branches obstructing streets getting immediate action. Also, general road-repair services for filling pot-holes and clearing water-collection areas will probably also see slower remediation.

The LAPD's Valley Traffic division which has been hampered by a lack of man-power and available response cars to deal with the growing traffic issues within the West Valley will not be getting much aid with the revised City budget. So, calls to the Police to deal with speeding through single family neighborhoods, donut-spin outs, and other problematic traffic and vehicular incidents will also remain an annoyance and possibly a safety issue because of the cut-backs.

The WHHO will try to get you more accurate explanations—if we can convince someone to face you and the facts.

The WHHO recognizes that this is a lot to digest—and that most of it isn't very appetizing. We believe that you should get real details and insights from our City and County leaders, and we are trying to arrange appearances from the City leaders who are charged with getting the City back on the right track both financially and service-wise. We will let you know which City leaders are ready to step forward and answer your questions and field your complaints. We will send out an e-mail blast as soon as we can convince one of our City leaders to help us keep you informed and involved.

Neighborhood Council Elections – Soon- Get Your Ballots NOW

As you probably already know, the neighborhood Council reviews action that are pending in our area and advises our Councilman, Bob Blumenfield, about the concerns and interests of our community.

Elections will be held for Residential, Business, and Community Based Organization (CBO) representatives for the following areas: Area 2, Area 4, Area 6 and an At-Large representative on June 3rd.

The candidates that are running will be listed on the NC web page. For more information can go to: <https://clerkappsele.lacity.org/NCElection/nccandidates?id=9a18e553-86c8-44be-6251-08dd41479c27>

Key Deadlines

- **May 27, 2025 – Last day to request mail in ballot**
- June 3, 2025 – Election Day (all ballots need to be mailed by this date)

Be sure to know your candidates that want to represent you and our area of the community and be sure to vote. An informed voter helps our community by selecting good, qualified members of the Council.

You will find a better map and more information at the NC web page at the bottom: [Neighborhood Council Board Members - Woodland Hills Warner Center Neighborhood Council](#).

An individual can qualify to vote in area 2,4, and 6 as:

- 1) Resident, or
- 2) Business- own or work, or
- 3) being a member of a Community Based Organization (CBO) such as attendance at a school (parent or child), or a member of a religious organization or other community based organization like the WHHO. Or you may qualify for more than one Area.

IT IS POSSIBLE TO QUALIFY TO VOTE IN ALL THREE AREAS- 2,4, & 6.

Some examples of nonprofit community based organizations in Woodland Hills are the WHHO, Valley Cultural Center, Chamber of Commerce, Friends of Platt Library, churches, or synagogues and schools

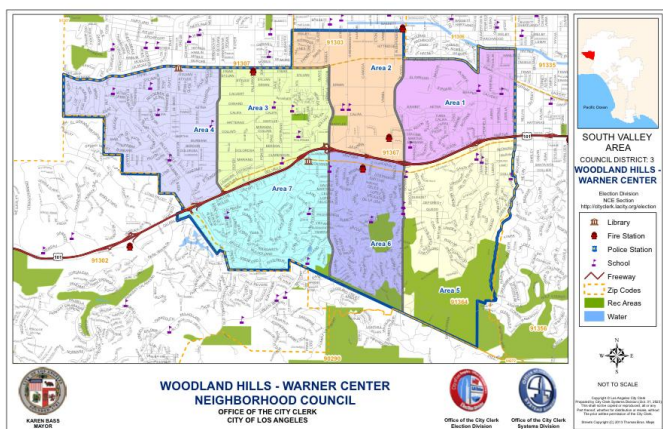
AREA 6- CBO -WHHO qualifies as a Community Based Organization for Area 6 - ALL WHHO MEMBERS can vote in Area 6. Be sure to request JOHN (john@whho.com) to send you a letter stating **you and your spouse are members in good standing.**

Be aware you must register your spouse and any children over 16 to vote! See the NC web page listed above.

The city will require proof of eligibility in each area you qualify to vote in- you may be able to vote in more than one area. For example, you may live in one area, work in another and belong to an organization (religious or school, or CBO) in a different area. You can request a Ballot in each of these Areas where you qualify. You can get more information from this link:

[NC Documentation Guide2025](#).

Here is the link for example to the English Application:



https://clkrep.lacity.org/election/ENG_2025_NC_VBM_Paper_Application.pdf

**Smartest in LA? Won it!
Most brain-power in California? Got it!
National Champions? Yup, El Camino Real
Charter HS does it again. (And again. And...)**

**El Camino Real HS
carries home the United
States Academic National
Championship for the 3rd
straight year, and 11th
time overall!**



The scholars at Woodland Hills' El Camino Real Charter High School have done it again. (And again. And again. And....) The school's Academic Decathlon Team have upheld the school's tradition of brilliant wins as they took home this year's national championship after an arduous battle of the brains where they won the school's 11 title on May 5th.

The 11 national titles sets a record for all schools across the nation, with the nine competing ECR students achieved a score of 52,987.3-- more than

1,000 points ahead of their nearest competition. They also returned home with bags packed with 34 individual medals that showed the real scholarly diversity of the ECR team.

The team members are Ashley Acosta, Enoch Chan, Darren Du, Brendan Luna, Bahar Mirzajanzadeh, Emily Simms, Yash Singhal, Leanne Warren and Zarah Zuhair

Throughout the years, the ECR Academic teams have won the national championships in 1998, 2001, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2014, 2018, 2023, 2024 and now again in 2025. ECR's Academic Decathlon teams have also captured 15 California State titles (another record) and has also won the regional competition 17 times.

Equally impressive, with this year's totals, ECR Decathletes have broken the 9,000 point barrier. This year, the top ECR point earner was Maya Teitz who totaled 9,652 points which places her at the all-time apex for Decathletes.

**LA's Homelessness
Services are "broken and
cannot be fixed."**



That's not just a headline to try and capture your attention. That's the bottom-line evaluation of a team of auditors hired by the County and sanctioned by U.S. District Judge David O. Carter—the magistrate put in charge to straighten out the County

and City's increasingly tangled and financially uncontrollable efforts to not only make a dent in the homeless crisis, but to solve it.

Needless to say, the report from the team of auditors found that the escalating problems of LA's homelessness cannot be fixed in patches or by continuing the efforts that have managed to spend billions of dollars while achieving few success stories that can validate spending those sums.

“Phantom beds” populate the City’s claims for providing safe zones for the homeless.

According to news analysts, the City of LA is under various court-enforced agreements to create more shelter the unhoused. But after extensive financial digging and numerous visits to sites where homelessness groups are claiming success after success, the auditor teams have been unable to verify the numbers of beds that the City (and the County) claims to have created to comply with those agreements that many of the homelessness teams claim have been filled.

According to a leader of the consulting firm Alvarez & Marsal, the accountants were unable to verify the number of beds that have been claimed to have been created. Making the situation of the “Phantom Beds” even more egregious is that City officials apparently withheld spending records from the court's auditors that show the city only paid for a small portion of the shelters it was reporting to the court. The consultants are claiming that City officials withheld spending records from the court's auditors that show the city only paid for a small portion of the shelters it was reporting to the court.

Federal Judge is tired of hearing rosy reports but sees only thorny results.

It was little wonder that when the auditors reported their finding to Judge Carter, he was prompted to schedule an evidence-gathering hearing for May 27 to examine whether the city of L.A. has breached its obligations to create more shelter. The hearing comes as Carter considers transferring control of

homelessness spending from city officials to a court-appointed receiver.

Carter said the evidentiary hearing will examine all of the city's alleged failures and breaches of two major agreements in the lawsuit that require it to create thousands more shelter beds: The “Roadmap” agreement from 2020 and the L.A. Alliance settlement deal from 2022.

Judge Carter stated that the focus of the hearings would include allegations that the city incorrectly reported its encampment-reduction efforts to show compliance with the settlement, and a lack of documentation supporting the city's claims that it is complying with the Roadmap agreement. The Roadmap agreement requires the city to expand the number of shelter beds for unhoused people in the city of L.A. by adding and paying for 6,000 new beds. And as part of the Alliance settlement, the city agreed to create nearly 13,000 new shelter and housing beds for unhoused Angelinos. The county separately agreed to create 3,000 mental health and addiction treatment beds.

You can fool some of the people some of the time. But time has run out.

“Because there are serious doubts about the city's ability to fulfill its obligations ... the upcoming evidentiary hearing is necessary now,” Carter said after reviewing the results from the auditors. Joining in that view is Diane Rafferty, a managing director at Alvarez & Marsal, who after looking at the bottom line of the survey stated, “All of this needs to be looked at in a different way. Concerning homelessness in LA, Diane Rafferty, a managing director at Alvarez & Marsal, said a review of the city's homelessness services “needs to start from the ground up.”

Of course, the response from the City was to challenge the plans for the evidence-gathering hearing on procedural grounds.

“I don't know what's going through their minds,” commented one mid-level City bureaucrat. “All they have to do is open a door that leads onto the street

and stick out their heads to verify if the City’s efforts have been working. I think it is pretty obvious to anyone that this just isn’t accomplishing anything except spending billions of dollars.”

Newsletter Opinion

[Disclaimer: This is one board member’s opinion and does not reflect the stance of other board members or the WHHO.]

Public Safety vs. City Budget Priorities— Are We Getting Shortchanged?

Woodland Hills has been grappling with an uptick in burglaries, reckless driving, shoplifting, and other crimes. The LAPD Topanga Division works hard to respond, but given staffing shortages, officers must prioritize urgent calls over lower-priority incidents—meaning response times are not always immediate.

Los Angeles is in a budget crisis, and rather than finding creative solutions, city officials—from the mayor to the City Council—are making cuts that could impact public safety. In a [May 9 Los Angeles Times article](#), City Council members proposed eliminating 403 civilian jobs, potentially forcing officers to take on roles normally handled by forensic scientists, crime scene photographers, and cybersecurity experts. This means fewer officers available for patrol, investigations, and response calls, further straining an already overworked police force.

Councilmember Bob Blumenfield, a member of the budget committee, acknowledged the trade-off, stating:

"If the city can protect those 133 specialists, reducing the number of officers may be a pill that is worth swallowing."

Meanwhile, the Los Angeles Police Protective League, which represents over 8,700 officers, issued a sharp criticism of the proposal. They accused City Administrative Officer Matt Szabo of pushing to defund the LAPD to a level that would endanger officers and residents. The union argued that the city is sitting on a \$15-billion investment portfolio that could be tapped to ease the current budget crisis instead of slashing police staffing ([May 9 Los Angeles Times article](#))

The numbers speak for themselves: the projected size of the LAPD is set to take a nosedive in the next few years. In 2020, the department had around 10,000 officers; by 2026, it might have around 8,400. Now, that's just a projection, and we certainly hope that the L.A. City Council finds a way to stop such officer losses before we reach that 2026 number.

Priorities—Do They Align With Reality?

Let’s take a look at the allocation of the city’s budget:

- Expenditures for the Unhoused: LA County dedicated \$783 million to programs aimed at reducing homelessness, while the City of Los Angeles allocated \$1.28 billion in the 2023-24 fiscal year. Reports claim that \$513 million of that remained unspent due to inefficiencies, raising questions about who is in charge of these funds and how they are being managed ([LA County Homeless Initiative](#) & [Los Angeles Times](#))

- 2028 Olympics Costs: LA has committed to a \$6.9 billion budget for the Olympic Games, with projections suggesting cost overruns could place additional burdens on taxpayers. While much of this funding is backed by sponsorships, the city remains responsible for covering unexpected expenses ([NBC](#)).

Why Slash LAPD Funding When Public Safety Is at Risk?

There's no doubt that Councilmember Bob Blumenfield understands budgeting at both the state and city levels—his track record proves his expertise. He's one of the most effective budget strategists in government, but that doesn't mean this move is the right one. The reality in our neighborhoods—rising crime rates, reckless driving, and strained police response times—demands a different approach.

Instead of cutting LAPD staffing, the city should focus on eliminating wasteful spending in areas where funding goes unused—like homelessness programs that have yet to deliver tangible results. The answer isn't stripping police resources—it's better financial oversight and responsible budgeting.

Being a councilmember isn't easy, and balancing financial constraints is a challenge. However, at the end of the day, public safety should be the top priority.

Residents deserve accountability, solutions, and a government that truly protects all of its people.

THE WHHO NEEDS YOU TO BE PART OF US IN 2025.

The WHHO wants to be your voice as well as your eyes and ears into what's going on in our community and our City that will affect your lifestyle, your property and your neighborhood.

We try to bring you discussions with important City, County and State figures that can have an impact on your home, your neighborhood and your community.

We encourage you to attend our Zoom meetings (they're free - just register for them), and we're anxious to hear your comments on how we can be even more effective in our efforts to protect and advance our neighborhoods. Have a story for the WHHO news? Please email it to us. The more everyone knows, the better for our community. Or, if there's something you think needs to be covered, let us know.

At the bottom of the first page of our web site, www.WHHO.com you can register and pay for your membership using PayPal (it accepts any credit card). So, join us today. We look forward to having you part of our family.

It is only \$25 a year for an *entire household* to belong to WHHO, and your membership helps to sustain us by covering taxes, insurance and other legally required fees.

Help us help you!

**DON'T MISS THE 33RD
ANNUAL
CANOGA PARK
MEMORIAL DAY
PARADE**

See the attached Flyer.



This is believed to be the ONLY one in Los Angeles celebrating those who have fallen in defense of liberty and our country. God Bless to them all!

**WHHO Officers &
Directors for 2025:**

President: John Walker - (818) 719-9181
Vice-President: Dennis DiBiase - (818) 346-9567
Vice-President: Marty Lipkin - (818) 999-4340
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SALUTING THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

33RD ANNUAL CANOGA PARK MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

MONDAY, MAY 26, 2025

Parade route on Sherman Way
from Owensmouth to Cozycroft



CANOGAPARKMEMORIALDAYPARADE.COM

"Canoga Park Community Center Foundation is pleased to welcome all participants to the 33rd Annual Memorial Day Parade. This year we bring all the tradition along with some new ideas to make the parade safe and fun as we remember those that gave their lives for our freedom."

- Board of Directors

★ **OPENING CEREMONY AT 10AM**

★ **PARADE BEGINS AT 11AM**



FLOATS - A mobile patriotic show!

The Parade welcomes businesses, Chambers of Commerce, Neighborhood Councils, and Community Organizations to enter a float. If you are a business think about reaching out to a non-profit group and sponsoring their float!

MUSIC - Brings a parade to life!

Bands or choral groups may either march or ride. Help us with the music and reach out to your local school, church, military and community organizations with bands. The music, whether vocal or instrumental, must be patriotic and consistent with the USA parade theme.

PEOPLE - Our pride is shown with every participant!

People, young and old, marching or riding in the parade is a fitting tribute to the families who have sacrificed their loss for our freedom! Groups will have an opportunity to do a short performance during pre-planned parade stops along the parade route.

Canoga Park Community Center
info@canogaparkmemorialdayparade.com



Photography by VPC Valley Photo Club