

Van Nuys Neighborhood Council



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Van Nuys Neighborhood Council General Board Meeting AGENDA

Wednesday,
October 8, 2025 7:00PM

Conference room of the
Marvin Braude Constituents
Building, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd,
Van Nuys, CA 91401

(SE corner of Van Nuys Blvd. and
Sylvan St.)

Van Nuys
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Comments from the public on agenda items will be heard only when the respective item is being considered. Comments from the public on other matters not appearing on the agenda that are within the Board's jurisdiction will be heard during the General Public Comment period. Please note that under the Brown Act, the Board is prevented from acting on a matter that you bring to its attention during the General Public Comment period; however, the issue raised by a member of the public may become the subject of a future Board meeting.

The Van Nuys Neighborhood Council does not condone disrespectful and/or harmful speech. We apologize in advance to those attending this meeting who may hear such language during any public comment. We are obligated to uphold an individual's right to free speech. However, we want to be clear that all comments made at this meeting must be in the jurisdiction of this body, directed to this body as a whole, and, if made during any time other than General Public Comments, must be specific to an agenda item.

Public comment is limited to a maximum of 2 minutes per speaker per item with a maximum of 10 minutes total per meeting, unless adjusted by the presiding officer of the Board. **Actual time for each comment will be recorded in 30 second increments (i.e., 30 sec., 1 min., 90 sec., 2 min.).**

Stakeholders are asked to respect the timekeeper when you are alerted that your time has expired.

Van Nuys Neighborhood Council Board Members are reminded not to cut off, interrupt, or otherwise engage with Stakeholders during their allotted time for public comment.

Speakers shall limit their comments to matters relevant to the item on the agenda. The Chair may rule that the speaker is out of order if the comments are not germane to the item under consideration.

Speakers shall direct their comments to the Board (not to an individual).

Stakeholders are welcome to offer comments -- both during General Public Comment and Public Comments on specific agenda items -- but the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council requests that Stakeholders do not disrupt the meeting for other Stakeholders in attendance. We ask that Stakeholders refrain from calling out or participating in behavior that would disrupt the Board Meeting of the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council. Stakeholders will be given an initial warning. There may be two additional warnings before the stakeholder is asked to leave the meeting due to disruptions of the meeting.

All public comments must be made into the microphone at the lectern to facilitate the capture of a clear recording of the meeting.

1. Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance

2. Reports from LAPD and LAFD

a. **Report from LAPD** Van Nuys Division - <https://vnnc.org/resource/>

b. **Report from LAFD**

3. Reports from other Government officials (2 min each)

a. Council District 2 –Abkar Kalantarians abkar.kalantarians@lacity.org

b. Council District 4 – Taleen Keuroghlian taleen.keuroghlian@lacity.org

c. Council District 6 – Paulina Alvarado paulina.alvarado@lacity.org
(818) 778-4999

d. Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) – John Darnell
john.darnell@lacity.org

e. Mayor’s office – Betsaira Aguilera betsaira.aguilera@lacity.org (213) 257-0224

f. LAUSD Board District 3, Scott Schmerelson scott.schmerelson@lausd.net

g. Los Angeles County 3rd District (Lindsay Horvath) – Karen Dominguez
KDominguez@bos.lacounty.gov

h. Assembly District 46 (Jesse Gabriel) – Clarissa Gomez
Clarissa.Gomez@asm.ca.gov

i. Senate District 20 (Caroline Menjivar) –Alex De Leon Alex.deleon@sen.ca.gov

- j. California Congressional District 29 – Cynthia Becerra
Cynthia.Becerra@email.house.gov (818) 253-3535
- k. Metro staff: Construction updates regarding the ESFV Light Rail transit project – Joanna Amador
- l. Metro staff: Construction updates regarding construction in Van Nuys related to G Line Improvements – Rosalba Gonzalez
- 4. **General Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items** – maximum of 2 min per stakeholder
 (Note that topics discussed must be within the jurisdiction of the VNNC.)
- 5. Discussion and possible action to make two appointments to fill vacant positions.
 - a. School Representative (2027): Nina Caslavka
<https://vnnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Nina-Caslavka-VNNC-Board-application.pdf>
 - b. At Large Representative Seat 1 (2027): Brandon Gruzen
<https://vnnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/B-Gruzen-Boardmember-Applic.pdf>
- 6. **Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee actions that require a roll call vote and/or discussion.**
 - a. Discussion and possible action to approve sending a letter to City Planning stating that the VNNC Board supports the application of the Van Nuys Masonic Building Association for a Zoning Variance to permit the development of a community adult day care facility for 100 adults at 14750 Sherman Way (which would make use of building spaces Monday through Friday only).

 Digital copies of project documents can be found at:
<https://planning.lacity.gov/pdiscaseinfo/search/casenumbr/ZA-2025-1248-ZV> (In box on top right of screen, click on “Initial Submittal Documents” to find links to documents related to application.)
 - b. Discussion and possible action to send a letter to Councilmember Imelda Padilla (1) stating that the VNNC supports the request by the Kester Ridge Neighborhood Collective for the purchase of land and development of a new pocket park and (2) calling attention to the need for the addition of more park space in Van Nuys (given that Van Nuys has already been designated as having a “very high need” for parks and that the need will increase as we anticipate more building that will increase population density).

 See Advocacy Letter from Kester Ridge Neighborhood Collective on pp. 6-7.

8. Board Officer Reports

a. President

- (1) Report on Congress of Neighborhoods.
- (2) Next steps on LA Park Needs Assessment
- (3) Participation in Halloween events.
- (4) A printed copy of VNNC General Board Meeting agendas and linked files can be reviewed in a reference notebook that is located at the Van Nuys Branch Library.
- (5) For information on upcoming local events and services, look under the Events list on the right side of the homepage of the vnnc.org website and on the calendar.

b. Vice President Report/Budget Representative Report

c. Parliamentarian Report

7. Consent agenda

- a. Discussion and possible action to approve minutes from the September 12 General Board Meeting.

https://vnnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/VNNC_09102025_GBM_Draft_Minutes_Final.pdf

8. Discussion and possible action to allocate up to \$300 to purchase supplies for a VNNC table at the Delano Recreation Center Halloween event on October 31 and at the Van Nuys Recreation Center Halloween event on November 1.
9. Discussion and possible action to approve a comment from the VNNC regarding the LA Park Needs Assessment (see pp. 8-10) and a revised report on Van Nuys Park Needs (see pp.11-13).

Draft Park Needs Assessment Report can be found at:

<https://needs.parks.lacity.gov/downloads/>

10. If 14 Board Members are present, discussion and possible action to authorize the use of teleconferencing for Van Nuys Neighborhood Council meetings, including board meetings and committee meetings, in accordance with the rules established by Senate Bill 411, in order to offer increased accessibility to meetings and encourage more community engagement.
11. Announcements and identification of topics Board members would like to discuss at a future meeting.
12. Adjournment

THE AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT - As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to

its programs, services and activities. Sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices and other auxiliary aids and/or services, may be provided upon request. To ensure availability of services, please make your request at least 72 hours prior to the meeting you wish to attend by contacting VNNC by via email at: info@vnnc.org

SERVICIOS DE TRADUCCION - Si requiere servicios de traducción, favor de avisar al Concejo Vecinal 72 horas antes del evento. Por favor contacte a info@vnnc.org por correo electrónico para avisar al Concejo Vecinal.

PUBLIC POSTING OF AGENDAS – VNNC agendas are posted publicly near the front door to the conference room of the Marvin Braude Constituents Building, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys, CA 91401 and also online at www.vnnc.org. You can also receive our agendas via email by subscribing to L.A. City’s Early Notification System at <https://lacity.gov/government/subscribe-agendas>

PUBLIC ACCESS OF RECORDS – In compliance with Government Code section 54957.5, non-exempt writings that are distributed to a majority or all of the board in advance of a meeting may be viewed, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd, Van Nuys, CA 91401, at our website: <http://www.vnnc.org/> or at the scheduled meeting. In addition, if you would like a copy of any record related to an item on the agenda, please contact via email: info@vnnc.org

RECONSIDERATION AND GRIEVANCE PROCESS - For information on the VNNC’s process for board action reconsideration, stakeholder grievance policy, or any other procedural matters related to this Council, please consult the VNNC By-laws. The By-laws are available at our Board meetings and our website <http://www.vnnc.org>

Notice to Paid Representatives - If you are compensated to monitor, attend, or speak at this meeting, City law may require you to register as a lobbyist and report your activity. See Los Angeles Municipal Code §§ 48.01 et seq. More information is available at <https://ethics.lacity.gov/lobbying/>. For assistance, please contact the Ethics Commission at (213) 978-1960 or ethics.commission@lacity.org

Neighborhood Council Board Member Oath

I pledge to represent my neighborhood with dignity, integrity, and pride.

I will encourage other points of view, even when they differ from my own.

I will respect, value, and consider everyone's opinion.

I will find the good in my neighborhood and praise it and promote it.

To my neighbors, and to neighborhoods throughout the City of Los Angeles, I pledge to do this to the best of my ability.

Advocacy Letter regarding the need for a park
from the Kester Ridge Neighborhood Collective

Nina Caslavka

Sunday, May 4th, 2025

RE: Letter of Support for Proposed Park in Kester Ridge, Van Nuys

Dear Council Member Imelda Padilla,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed park in the Kester Ridge neighborhood of Van Nuys. As a resident of this community, I have seen firsthand the critical need for accessible green spaces in our area and wholeheartedly endorse the efforts of the Kester Ridge Neighborhood Collective to bring this vision to life.

Van Nuys is one of the most park-deficient areas in Los Angeles County. According to the 2016 Park Needs Assessment conducted by the County Department of Recreation and Parks, our community has only 0.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents—far below the county average of 3.3 acres. Additionally, only 17% of our population lives within a half-mile of a park. The Kester Ridge neighborhood, located near Kester Avenue and Vanowen Street, was specifically identified in the study as a high-priority area for new park development (“Los Angeles Countywide Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Needs Assessment”).

Despite being classified as a High Need Zone nearly a decade ago, there have been no Measure A-funded park projects initiated in the Van Nuys–North Sherman Oaks area to date. Meanwhile, our community continues to grow. Major developments like the East San Fernando Valley Light Rail Transit Project, the G Line Bus Rapid Transit improvements, and a new 400+ unit housing project on Sepulveda Boulevard are increasing both our population and our need for open, safe, and green public space.

The proposed park would serve as a much-needed resource, particularly for families and students at Columbus Avenue Elementary School—where 94.5% of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch and nearly half are English Language Learners (“California Department of Education”). The school currently sits on an unshaded, paved playground that creates dangerous heat conditions during much of the year. A nearby park would provide not just recreational relief, but a healthier and more equitable environment for children and families alike.

This initiative is a grassroots effort driven by local mothers and caregivers who are deeply invested in the future of our neighborhood. The Kester Ridge Neighborhood Collective has already identified three potential park sites, engaged local elected officials, and secured the support of the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council.

I fully support this effort and urge you to partner with the Kester Ridge community to help create a park that reflects the needs, values, and aspirations of its residents. This project represents

an opportunity to address long-standing disparities in park access and invest in a healthier, more connected Van Nuys.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Nina Caslavka
Co-Leader of the Kester Ridge Neighborhood Collective-Park Proposal Committee

Works Cited

“California Department of Education.” School Profile: Columbus Avenue Elementary,
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sdprofile/details.aspx?cds=19647336120679>.

“Los Angeles Countywide Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Needs Assessment.”
lacountyparkneeds.org,
<https://lacountyparkneeds.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FinalReport.pdf>

Comment from Van Nuys Neighborhood Council regarding
Draft Report for Recreation and Parks LA Park Needs Assessment

Recommendations regarding Prioritization in Section 3 Community Needs, Chapter 8 Site Prioritization

In the *Los Angeles Countwide Comprehensive Park & Recreation Needs Assessment*, the Study Area Profile for the Van Nuys/N Sherman Oaks community (designated Area 44) covered a geographical area that included Van Nuys as well as areas just to the west and south of Van Nuys. The conclusion was that this area “has a very high park need.”

The prioritized list of sites in the LA Park Needs Assessment supports the broader assessment that the Van Nuys area has a need for new parks and for park updates. The following chart reflects the Van Nuys-specific items in the priority lists that begin on p. 176 of the report:

Rank	Title	Size	PNA Classification	Score
	1 st priority			
18	Per Square Mile - Van Nuys – Valley Glen	3	Prospective Site	
	2 nd priority			
28	Per Square Mile – Van Nuys East	3	Prospective Site	
31	Per Square Mile – Van Nuys Central	3		
41	Greenwood Sq. Park	.31	Mini Park	
60	Per Square Mile – Van Nuys West	3	Prospective Site	
84	Van Nuys Multipurpose Center (Senior Center)	1.4	Neighborhood Park	
	3 rd priority			
200	Delano Rec Center	4.45	Large Neighborhood Park	
212	Van Nuys Rec Center	3.89	Large Neighborhood Park	

Van Nuys is one of the only areas of the City that is shown as being recommended for four new “prospective” parks. We appreciate this recognition of the small amount of recreational space that is available and within walking distance for residents in different areas of Van Nuys. The complexity of the criteria for prioritization makes it difficult to understand and comment on the priorities assigned to the three Recreation and Parks facilities that are located in Van Nuys:

- Van Nuys Multipurpose Center (know as the Senior Center)
- Delano Recreation Center
- Van Nuys Recreation Center

Level of Service Standards

We are disappointed that the Level of Service Standards recommended in Chapter 13 for the City of Los Angeles raise doubts about whether Van Nuys will be able to gain highly desired amenities that do not currently exist in our community. Specific Levels of Service include:

- Outdoor swimming pools (p. 384)—Only recommend an increase of 6 swimming pools between 2025 and 2050.
- Off-leash dog parks (p. 378) – Recommend an increase from 14 to 78 between 2025 and 2050 for the whole City of Los Angeles.

We realize that these Levels of Service are based on a comparison with amenities available in peer cities.

Recommendations for Increases in Staffing

We support the analysis on page 411 in Chapter 14, Cost and Funding, that argues that the Recreation and Parks Department needs more staff to support ongoing operations, improve quality of operations and maintenance, and be able to implement the actions recommended in the report.

“RAP could restore staffing levels, a higher level of service, and allow capacity to peers by increasing its operating budget by 75%.”

We also endorse the recommendations for adding more specialized staff. In particular, we support recommendations to:

- Support planting and maintenance of thriving native habitats by adding specialized staff, including environmental supervisors, ecologists, and on-the-ground maintenance crews. (Pages 414-415)
- Support increase in the number of park rangers to provide greater oversight of safety in public parks. (Page 417)
- Interested in the recommendation for the addition of the position of Park Ambassador. (Page 417).

Narrative regarding Council District 6 (Chapter 9, Regional Snapshots, p. 204)

The statement made about Council District 6 focuses on the Vision Plan for the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area and Olympic venues that will be hosted there. The VNNC suggests that there should be a comment about the number of areas within Council District 6 that were identified as priorities for “prospective parks.” We note that these include 4 areas of Van Nuys, 2 areas of Panorama City, 1 area in North Hills, and 1 area in Sun Valley.

Most Important Outdoor and Indoor Facilities and Programs (Chapter 3, pages 84-88)

From surveys, there was a finding that “unprogrammed green spaces, natural areas, and multi-use trails” were the most requested outdoor facilities. The VNNC agrees with others regarding the importance of these type of facilities – almost none of which currently exists at Van Nuys Recreation and Park spaces.

Regarding indoor facilities, the most important facilities were “swimming pools, exercise and fitness equipment, and walking tracks.” The VNNC would like to see such amenities available in Van Nuys. There are none of these indoor amenities available at Recreation Centers in Van Nuys.

The most important programs were “fitness and wellness programs, festivals, nature experiences or environmental education, and arts and crafts classes.” None of these programs are available at Recreation Centers in Van Nuys.

The VNNC would like to see all of these amenities made available to residents of Van Nuys.

Park Needs of the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council Community

Van Nuys is a "park poor" area of the City

In the *Los Angeles Countwide Comprehensive Park & Recreation Needs Assessment*, the Study Area Profile for the Van Nuys/N Sherman Oaks community (designated Area 44) covered a geographical area that included Van Nuys as well as areas just to the west and south of Van Nuys. The conclusion was that this area "has a very high park need." Specific statistics included:

- .2 park acres per 1000 people (vs. County average of 3.3 park acres per 1000 people).
- 17% of the population living within ½ mile of a park (vs. County average of 49%)

Within the geographic boundaries of the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council, there are only two relatively small Recreation Centers – Delano Recreation Center and Van Nuys Recreation Center.. Each center has a small playground space for small children. Most of the space is devoted to structured recreation fields. The two centers have a limited capacity (in relation to the population of children in the community) to offer after-school programs and summer camp programs. The subsidized Play LA programs have been a bright spot – allowing families to pay \$10 per child for team sports. (However, this subsidy will only last until 2028.)

Recreation fields are made of artificial turf. Current science reveals that such fields get dangerously hot in the direct sun. In addition, these fields are composed of dangerous PFAS chemicals and have a lining that does not allow water to soak into the ground. (One of the artificial turf soccer Fields at Van Nuys Recreation Center had a dangerous dip that filled with water and had potential for player injury. Park personnel asked for repairs. It took over a year to get a temporary fix.)

Amenities not available in Van Nuys include:

- No public swimming pool
- No off-leash dog park
- No walking trails.
- No parks with unstructured tree-shaded areas natural areas/green space for general enjoyment of the outdoors and/or exploration of nature.

A high percentage of Van Nuys residents are renters and live on properties with almost no significant outdoor green space. This makes it even more important to provide more park/natural green spaces for family gatherings, picnics, unstructured play, etc.

How can more park space be made available?

One concept would be designation of **Community School Parks** (shared use of local public school recreation space on weekends and during summer break). While such parks have been opened in other areas of the City, we are not aware of any local school that is currently under consideration for this program. There are two LAUSD public school complexes that should be given priority consideration: Van Nuys High School and Robert Fulton Preparatory School.

Another concept is to develop **Pocket Parks** on vacant plots of land in family-oriented neighborhoods. The Kester Ridge Collective has identified a few locations that might be suitable to be developed into a pocket park.

Another attractive space that could be revitalized with park-like elements is the **Van Nuys Civic Center** on Van Nuys Blvd. between Sylvan and Delano. In 2016, a Council Motion¹ was introduced (CF 16-4011) to initiate a Civic Center Revitalization Plan. While this project did not move forward, we would like to see this concept revived. A new reading garden will open in October between the Police Station and the Van Nuys Branch Library. It includes benches and attractive landscaping. Adding more community gathering spaces to the Civic Center would be a welcome addition. We would also like to see the Civic Center plaza decorated with art works and planted with more CA Native trees and plants.

The City Council approved a motion on 11/20/24 (CF 12-1549-S2²)-to study potential alternative uses for **six DOT-owned parking lots around the Van Nuys Civic Center**. Potential alternative uses could include housing. Instructions are to “to determine the suitability for development of affordable and/or supportive housing and replacement parking, as well as commercial and retail space and open space in conformance with the procedures outlined in the City's Asset Management Evaluation Framework and Affordable Housing Opportunity Site Review Process.” The VNNC wants to advocate that one or more of these lots be converted into a park with tree canopy and community gathering spaces.

The VNNC would also like to advocate that the City explore other opportunities to utilize **other City-owned properties** in Van Nuys as park spaces.

The **SE Valley Community Plan** covering Van Nuys should try to identify opportunities for increasing green spaces and spaces for community gathering.

As more development occurs **along Van Nuys Blvd.** and the G Line in association with Metro transportation projects, the VNNC advocates for more inclusion of green space and locations for community gathering. The VNNC would also like to advocate that consideration be given to providing free public transportation that would enable young people and their families to take advantage of the neighboring **Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area** and its amenities, including the LA River, the Wildlife Refuge, Lake Balboa, the Japanese Garden, and a variety of specialized sports programs.

¹**CF 16-4011** - Assess and coordinate revitalization opportunities / Van Nuys Civic Center / Van Nuys Boulevard between Victory Boulevard and Oxnard Street
<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=16-0411>

²**CF 12-1549-S2** - 14401 Friar Street / 14521 Friar Street / 14532 Gilmore Street / 14607 Sylvan Street / 14517 Erwin Street, etc. / City-Owned Parking Lots / Affordable and Permanent Supportive Housing / Housing Opportunity / Asset Evaluation Framework / Site Review
<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=12-1549-S20>