

Motion:

The Encino Neighborhood Council Parks and Environment Committee recommends that the Encino Neighborhood Council file a Community Of Interest statement with the Los Angeles City Council Redistricting Commission declaring that substantially all of the Sepulveda Basin, bounded by Victory Boulevard on the North, White Oak Avenue on the West, and Interstate 405 on the East and the community of Encino on the South, has for at least 50 years been considered part of Encino and redistricting should respect this and include Encino and the Sepulveda Basin in the same Los Angeles City Council district. Indeed, when the Neighborhood Council boundaries were established, the Sepulveda Basin was included in the Encino Neighborhood Council and subsequently became a shared facility with the Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council.

The Sepulveda Basin is a 2,150 acre flood control basin owned by the US Army Corps of Engineers, with approximately 1,500 acres leased out to the City of Los Angeles Departments of Recreation & Parks and Sanitation. It contains such local Encino assets as Tapia Brothers farm and farmstand, a velodrome, golf courses, a Sports Center, soccer and baseball fields, a model airplane park, picnic areas and playgrounds, the Los Angeles River, and wildlife areas. All of these areas, with the exception of the Tapia Brothers Farm Stand and a small portion to the west, were moved into a different council district than Encino through political redistricting shenanigans 20 years ago. This includes areas of Encino Village where the boundary is literally the property line of residents' back yards.

Most Encino Residents consider the adjacent Sepulveda Basin to be part of Encino, indeed they continually address concerns and complaints to Council District 5 while Council District 6 actually has purview over most of the area. The Encino community, represented by the Encino Neighborhood Council and its delegates to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee, was a crucial player in the development of the wildlife reserve areas in the basin. From 2003 until about two years ago, Council District 6 denied that the Encino Neighborhood Council had any advisory authority with respect to its Sepulveda Basin Areas.

For most of those years, the wildlife areas of the Sepulveda Basin, including the Los Angeles River corridor, have been subjected to mismanagement including uncontrolled expansion of homeless encampments to the point where it was likely at one point that there were over 500 people living in the designated and undesignated wildlife areas. To this day there are large encampments in the Los Angeles River bottom adjacent to Encino residential communities. There have been innumerable fires in the area, several resulting in evacuation warnings to residents of the adjoining Encino community. A massive fire on a 117° day in 2020 resulted in near complete destruction of a carefully nurtured wildlife area and the death of an unhoused person. In 2012, the US Army Corps of Engineers destroyed by bulldozing a wildlife area near the Sepulveda Dam, apparently at the request of CD 6. The list could go on indefinitely.

The point is, the Encino community has been outspoken in its dedication to and advocacy for the Sepulveda Basin. The Basin and Encino should be in the same Los Angeles City Council

district. The Encino community and the Encino Neighborhood Council will advocate for proper management of all the areas, and wise use of funds to make the entire basin an asset the entire City can be proud of. This will include everyone, from adjoining underserved communities to Encino residents adjacent to the Basin and visitors from near and far.