



AGENDA & NOTICE

LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY
NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2023, 6:30 P.M.

Meeting Location: County of Los Angeles Hall of Administration
Sybil Brand Room 372
500 W. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

To Listen Via Telephone: (669) 444-9171
Webinar ID: 843 3844 9426

To View Via Web: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84338449426>

To Provide Public Comment: You may submit written public comment via email to contact@lanaic.lacounty.gov. Please note "LANAIC Public Comment" in subject line. Please submit your public comment or documentation as soon as possible but no later than 5 p.m. the night before the scheduled meeting.

CHERI THOMAS, Chairperson
Quinault/Yurok

CHRISSIE CASTRO, Vice Chairperson
Navajo

RENE' WILLIAMS, Secretary
Colville Tribes

SHAWN IMITATES DOG, Treasurer
Lakota

DENISE ESCOTO, Commissioner
Northern Cheyenne

ANDREA N. GARCIA, M.D., Commissioner
Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara

DAWN JACKSON, Commissioner
Saginaw Chippewa

MONA MORALES RECALDE, Commissioner
Gabrieleno Tongva

JOHN ONLY A CHIEF, Commissioner
Pawnee Nation

RUDY ORTEGA JR., Commissioner
Fernandeño Tataviam

TED TENORIO, Commissioner
Tiguan Nation

RICH TOYON, Commissioner
Acjachemen

MARK VILLASEÑOR, Commissioner
Fernandeño Tataviam

AUDRA WISE, Commissioner
Zia Pueblo & Laguna Pueblo

ALEXANDRA VALDES
Executive Director
Tlingit/Athabaskan

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. INVOCATION & LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

3. ROLL CALL

4. COMMISSIONER INTRODUCTIONS

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

6. ACTION ITEMS

6.1. Review and take possible action adopting the September 19, 2023 Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) Unapproved Meeting Minutes

6.2. Review and take possible action adopting the draft FY24-25 Budget Request Letter to the Board of Supervisors

**AGENDA FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2023, 6:30 P.M.**

- 6.3 Review and take possible action adopting the draft FY24-25 Budget Request Letter to Mayor Karen Bass
- 6.4 Review and take possible action selecting the 2024/2025 Executive Committee (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer)
- 6.5 Review and take possible action adopting the “Advancing Indigenous Housing Rights in Los Angeles: International Best Practice and a Legal Framework” report
- 6.6 Review and take possible action adopting a letter to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors Recommending that they support the seating of the Cherokee Nation's delegate to the United States House of Representatives per the 1835 Treaty of New Echota

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 7.1 Review and discuss 2023 American Indian and Alaska Native Homeless Count Data
- 7.2 Discuss how the LANAIC responds to incoming inquiries regarding local tribes

8. CHAIR'S REPORT

- 8.1 Communication protocols between Commissioners and the Chair and Commissioners and the Executive Director
- 8.2 October 6, 2023 LA City Council Motion to Codify and Fund the LANAIC

9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- 9.1 September 26, 2023 Feather Alert Town Hall Recap
- 9.2 Indigenous Pride LA Update
- 9.3 AB 776 Update
- 9.4 FY22-23 LA County Budget Update

10. COMMITTEE & AD-HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 10.1 Self Governance Board
- 10.2 Executive Committee
- 10.3 Homelessness Committee
- 10.4 2023 Native American Heritage Month Ad-hoc Committee
- 10.5 Governance Ad-hoc Committee
- 10.6 2023 Arts & Culture Ad-hoc Committee

**AGENDA FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2023, 6:30 P.M.**

11. COMMISSIONER GENERAL COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

13. COMMISSION ADJOURNMENT

Meetings are held in English. If interpretation in other languages or accommodations for persons with disabilities are needed, please contact the Commission at 213-738-3241 at least 3 business days before the meeting. The meetings of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Contact: www.lanaic.lacounty.gov, contact@lanaic.lacounty.gov, or (213) 738-3241



**LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2023**

The September 19, 2023, meeting Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) was at the County of Los Angeles Hall of Administration, Sybil Brand Room 372, 500 W. Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90012.

Call to Order

Chairperson Thomas called the meeting to order at 6:33 P.M and read the Los Angeles County Land Acknowledgment.

Invocation

Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. provided an invocation.

Roll Call

Present: Chairperson Cheri Thomas
Secretary Rene' Williams
Treasurer Shawn Imitates Dog
Denise Escoto (left meeting at 7:51PM)
Andrea Garcia
Dawn Jackson
Mona Morales Recalde
Rudy Ortega Jr.
Rich Toyon
Mark Villasenor
Audra Wise

Absent: Vice Chairperson Chrissie Castro
John Only A Chief
Ted Tenorio (experienced audio difficulties and could not vote)

Quorum was met.

Staff Present: Alexandra Valdes, Executive Director
Stephanie Guadron, Administrative Manager

Commissioner & Staff Introductions

Commissioners provided brief introductions including their names, appointing office and tribal affiliation.

Public Comment

None



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

Action Items

Discussion with Los Angeles City Mayor Karen Bass regarding Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission & American Indian and Alaska Native Community Priorities and Needs

Mayor Karen Bass stated that she is concerned about the issues that the American Indian/Alaska Native community is facing currently and would like to ensure that there are appropriate appointments and positions to support the work that is being done.

Chairperson Cheri Thomas shared the historical background of the LANAIC. Chairperson Thomas also shared about the LANAIC's current funding, programs, and partnerships.

Commissioner Andrea Garcia stated that there has been intentional work surrounding homelessness. Commissioner Garcia also shared that she acknowledges that local tribes are the first to have experienced homelessness on these lands. She shared that Indigenous peoples feel removed from their land, culture, foods, etc. and that solving homelessness is not one size fits all. Commissioner Garcia also stated that there is a report being released soon regarding AIAN homelessness. She also shared about the ongoing AIAN homelessness work led by a consultant team hired by the County's Homelessness Initiative and funded by Measure H.

Mayor Bass stated that she has no problem providing funding to continue the work that has been initiated. Mayor Bass shared that she would like to know more about Native Americans who might be on the street. Alexandra shared that the LANAIC Self Governance Board administers two grant funded programs and subcontracts those funds to direct service providers in LA County.

Mayor Bass asked if the LANAIC has presented to the City of LA Homeless Committee and invited Commissioner Garcia to present to them. Commissioner Garcia stated that the LANAIC is hoping to bring forth best practices and to flag important policies in the City. Mayor Bass also stated that she is setting up offices in Sacramento and Washington DC and they will have access to policy work. Mayor Bass invited Commissioner Garcia and the other Mayoral appointees to meet with her at City Hall.

Commissioner Mark Villasenor stated that the LANAIC currently has one LA City-appointed commissioner vacancy and that the recommendation from the LANAIC is to fill the seat with an individual who demonstrates having worked with the Native community and has experiencing working within systems to create change. Commissioner Villasenor also stated that the LANAIC also recommends LA City to have a dedicated position to support the LANAIC. Alexandra shared that the LANAIC has achieved incredible wins with the County, especially with contributing to the legislative and budgetary processes. Alexandra also stated that having a counter position at the city would provide dual support from City and County for the LANAIC.

Commissioner Villasenor asked Mayor Bass if there is an orientation for LA City-appointed commissioners and who the point of contact for the LA City side would be. Mayor Bass stated that there is no commissioner orientation and that the point of contact will be from Community Development (Mr.



**LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
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Jared Rivera). Mayor Bass also invited the LA City-appointed commissioners to meet with her to develop whatever type of relationship they want to have with her.

Alexandra shared that Native American Heritage Month has an annual budget of \$13,000 and that Indigenous Peoples’ Day currently does not have a budget..

Review & approval of the Unapproved August 15, 2023 Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Andrea Garcia and seconded by Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. to approve the unapproved August 15, 2023 LANAIC Meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed.

YES	Thomas, Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Ortega, Toyon, Villasenor, Wise, Williams, Imitates Dog, Tenorio, Escoto
NO	
ABSTAIN	
ABSENT	Castro, Only a Chief

Review & take possible action selecting the 2023 Native American Heritage Month Honorees for Spirit of Community, Spirit of Tradition and Spirit of Creativity

Roll-call votes were utilized to select the following 2023 Native American Heritage Month Honorees: Spirit of Community – Roberta Javier; Spirit of Tradition – Jimi Castillo; and Spirit of Creativity – Chris ‘Spanto’ Printup.

Spirit of Community	Vanessa Brierty	Roberta Javier	Chris 'Spanto' Printup
Commissioner		8/11	
Chairperson Cheri Thomas		+	
Vice Chairperson Chrissie Castro			
Secretary Rene’ Williams		+	
Treasurer Shawn Imitates Dog		+	
Denise Escoto		+	
Dr. Andrea Garcia			+
Dawn Jackson		+	
Mona Morales Recalde		+	
John Only A Chief			



**LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2023**

Rudy Ortega Jr.		+	
Rich Toyon			+
Ted Tenorio			
Mark Villasenor		+	
Audra Wise	+		

Spirit of Tradition	Jimi Castillo	Eric Michael Hernandez	David Patterson
Commissioner	9/11		
Chairperson Cheri Thomas	+		
Vice Chairperson Chrissie Castro			
Secretary Rene' Williams	+		
Treasurer Shawn Imitates Dog	+		
Denise Escoto			+
Dr. Andrea Garcia	+		
Dawn Jackson	+		
Mona Morales Recalde	+		
John Only A Chief			
Rudy Ortega Jr.	+		
Rich Toyon	+		
Ted Tenorio			
Mark Villasenor	+		
Audra Wise		+	

Spirit of Creativity	Dark Winds Cast & Crew	Pyet DeSpain	Chag Lowry	Chris 'Spanto' Printup
Commissioner				5/11
Chairperson Cheri Thomas	+			
Vice Chairperson Chrissie Castro				



**LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
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Secretary Rene' Williams				+
Treasurer Shawn Imitates Dog		+		
Denise Escoto	+			
Dr. Andrea Garcia				+
Dawn Jackson	+			
Mona Morales Recalde		+		
John Only A Chief				
Rudy Ortega Jr.				+
Rich Toyon				+
Ted Tenorio				
Mark Villasenor				+
Audra Wise		+		

Review & take possible action adopting the FY22-23 LANAIC Annual Report and directing the Executive Director to submit the report to the Board of Supervisors and Commission Services by September 30, 2023

A motion was made by Commissioner Mark Villasenor and seconded by Commissioner Rene' Williams to approve adopting the FY22-23 LANAIC Annual Report and directing the Executive Director to submit the report to the Board of Supervisors and Commission Services by September 30, 2023.

YES	Thomas, Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Ortega, Toyon, Villasenor, Wise, Williams, Imitates Dog, Escoto
NO	
ABSTAIN	Tenorio
ABSENT	Castro, Only A Chief

Review & take possible action adopting a letter to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, requesting a sustainability plan following the end of Watson Consulting Group's contract with CEO Homelessness Initiative focused on addressing American Indian and Alaska Native homelessness.

A motion was made by Commissioner Rene' Williams and seconded by Commissioner Mark Villasenor to adopt a letter to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, requesting a sustainability plan following the end of Watson Consulting Group's contract with CEO Homelessness Initiative focused on addressing American Indian and Alaska Native homelessness.



**LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
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YES	Thomas, Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Ortega, Toyon, Villasenor, Wise, Williams, Imitates Dog, Escoto
NO	
ABSTAIN	Tenorio
ABSENT	Castro, Only A Chief

Review & take possible action adopting a letter to LA City Mayor Karen Bass requesting a sustainability plan following the end of Watson Consulting Group’s contract with CEO Homelessness Initiative focused on addressing American Indian and Alaska Native homelessness

A motion was made by Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. and seconded by Commissioner Rich Toyon to approve adopt a letter to the LA City Mayor Karen Bass, requesting a sustainability plan following the end of Watson Consulting Group’s contract with CEO Homelessness Initiative focused on addressing American Indian and Alaska Native homelessness.

YES	Thomas, Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Ortega, Toyon, Villasenor, Wise, Williams, Imitates Dog, Escoto
NO	
ABSTAIN	Tenorio
ABSENT	Castro, Only A Chief

Review & take possible action adopting a two-page AIAN Homelessness in LA County Infographic

Commissioner Andrea Garcia stated that the map on the infographic will be replaced with a hand drawing. Commissioner Morales Recalde requested that the name of her tribe needs to be updated. Commissioner Dawn Jackson stated that she would like to update the infographic by acknowledging all the tribes that make up the Native population in LA County at large.

A motion was made by Commissioner Rene Williams and seconded by Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. to adopt a two-page AIAN Homelessness in LA County Infographic.

YES	Thomas, Garcia, Jackson, Morales Recalde, Ortega, Toyon, Villasenor, Wise, Williams, Imitates Dog, Escoto
NO	
ABSTAIN	Tenorio
ABSENT	Castro, Only A Chief



**LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION
UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2023**

Review & take possible action adopting a letter to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors recommending that they support the seating of the Cherokee Nation’s delegate to the United States House of Representatives per the 1835 Treaty of New Echota

Commissioner Rudy Ortega, Jr. stated that he recommends that the LANAIC wait for the letter of supporters to complete the letter and submit to the Board of Supervisors, because he anticipates that it is something that the Board offices would like to refer to.

The Chairperson tabled this item.

YES	N/A
NO	N/A
ABSTAIN	N/A
ABSENT	N/A

Discussion Items

Discuss “Advancing Indigenous Housing Rights in Los Angeles: International Best Practice and a Legal Framework” report

Commissioner Andrea Garcia stated that she is sharing out a report from the UCLA. Commissioner Garcia also stated that they are updating the section in the report dedicated to explaining how Bruce’s Beach sets precedent for Land Back and other movements, such as the Cal Trans homes that have been reclaimed by local groups.

Chair’s Report

LANAIC Project Budgets and Controls

Chairperson Cheri Thomas stated that she thinks it’s great that folks want to put together great events, but some people are getting confused about the scope of the LANAIC. She stated that although the LANAIC is approached about hosting events, there is no budget or infrastructure for these events. Chairperson Thomas also shared that all actions need to come before the full body and have to be in accordance with LA City and LA County regulations. Chairperson Thomas stated that because the LANAIC is establishing a relationship with the LA City Mayor, we should not overstep or overcommit. She also shared that ad hoc committees sunset after their events.

Commissioner Andrea Garcia stated that the Mayor brought up that they are currently in their budget process and that if we would like to get fiscal support, the LANAIC would have to submit budget letters to both the LA City and LA County. Alexandra stated that she will prepare draft FY24-25 budget letters to both the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor for the review and consideration of the LANAIC at their October meeting.



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

2023 Native American Heritage Month Collaborations

Chairperson Cheri Thomas stated that the LANAIC is working with LA City to light up City Hall for three weeks. Alexandra stated that Councilmember Monica Rodriguez's Office is authoring the resolution and that there will be a small reception following the City Council meeting on Wednesday, November 1, 2023. Alexandra also asked commissioners to share recommendations they may have for performers. Commissioner Mona Morales Recalde asked where LA City is with the booklet. Alexandra stated that she has follow up meetings with Councilmember Rodriguez's Office and the Department of Cultural Affairs to work out logistics including the role and responsibilities of the LANAIC in the development of the book.

Executive Director's Report

September 26, 2023 Feather Alert Town Hall Updates

Alexandra stated that Ramos' Office is the lead for the town hall and that their office is responsible for contacting tribal leaders and making the agenda. The LANAIC is sharing the flyer at this time and have recommended that they have supports in place for attendees who may be sharing difficult experiences at the town hall and that there are still a lot of logistics influx.

Committee & Ad-hoc Committee Reports

Self-Governance Board

Commissioner Dawn Jackson stated that the 2023 Request for Statements of Qualifications for Community Service American Indian Block Grant Native American Set-Aside (CSAIBG) funds Service Providers is underway and that the solicitation is on track to get contracts out by January 1, 2024. Commissioner Rene' Williams inquired if staff could share who submitted an SOQ. Stephanie Guadron, Administrative Manager, responded that we cannot share that information as the evaluation is underway.

Executive Committee

Alexandra stated that vote for the 2024/2025 Executive Committee will take place at the October 17, 2023 meeting and that officers will not take positions until the January 16, 2024 meeting. She noted that she will be emailing commissioners requesting their nominations and then sending out the list of nominees so that commissioners who would like to remove their name from consideration can do so prior to a vote.

Homelessness Committee

Commissioner Andrea Garcia shared that the next meeting for the committee will be held on October 3, 2023 at 3:00 PM and the agenda will be posted on the LANAIC website.

2023 Indigenous Peoples' Day & Native American Heritage Month Ad-hoc Committee

Alexandra stated that on October 6, 2023 LA City Council will be holding a presentation in City Hall Council Chambers for Indigenous Peoples Day. She also thanked folks who gave input on the booklists that the LANAIC collaborated on with the County Public Library. Stephanie stated that staff is working with Indigenous Pride LA to support their event. Commissioner Dawn Jackson stated that in last month's meeting the LANAIC discussed the NAHM Bridge Gallery, and shared it is unavailable for this year but they have it booked for November 2024.



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Governance Ad-hoc Committee

None.

2023 Arts & Culture Ad-hoc Committee

None.

Commissioner General Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Commissioner Ortega Jr. shared that Hart of the West Native American Pow Wow is being held on September 30- October 1, 2023 at Hart Park and Museum.

Announcements/Future Agenda Items

None

Commission Adjournment

The Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission meeting of September 19, 2023 was adjourned by Chairperson Thomas at 8:20 PM.

DRAFT



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION

Chairperson
CHERI THOMAS
Quinault/Yurok

October 17, 2023

Vice Chairperson
CHRISSIE CASTRO
Navajo

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
500 W Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Secretary
RENE WILLIAMS
Colville Tribes

Treasurer
SHAWN IMITATES-DOG
Lakota

Dear Supervisor XX,

DENISE ESCOTO
Northern Cheyenne

I am sending this letter on behalf of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC). LANAIC's budget requests for FY24-25 focus on building and sustaining the County's capacity and knowledge to meet the needs of the American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) community in the delivery of vital services and implementation of policy.

ANDREA N. GARCIA, M.D.
Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara

DAWN JACKSON
Saginaw Chippewa

MONA MORALES RECALDE
Gabrieleno Tongva

On September 20, 2023 the LANAIC transmitted a letter to your office respectfully requesting a sustainability plan to build on the great work of the "Identifying, Supporting, and Serving American Indians and Alaska Natives Who Are at Risk of or Experiencing Homelessness" Board Motion (October 2019). The work of the Board Motion has continued for several years and garnered many wins, thanks in part, due to the hiring of a consultant in partnership with CEO HI and the LANAIC, and made possible by Measure H funds. The consultant contract will expire this Fall, and a report back to the Board of Supervisors will be released. There is still ample work and recommendations to be implemented across County departments. A dedicated full-time position to lead this work is the best possible next step, as well as an interim stop-gap to ensure continuity beyond the expiration of the consultant contract. This request is aligned with the Board Directed priority, Homelessness Initiative.

JOHN ONLY A CHIEF
Pawnee Nation

RUDY ORTEGA JR.
Fernandeño Tataviam

TED TENORIO
Tiguan Nation

RICH TOYON
Acjachemen

MARK VILLASEÑOR
Fernandeño Tataviam

AUDRA WISE
Zia Pueblo & Laguna Pueblo

ALEXANDRA VALDES
Executive Director

The LANAIC also thanks the Board for funding the Commission's request for a consultant to develop a Countywide tribal consent and consultation policy, a much needed investment that will continue to formalize and centralize the County's relationship to local tribal governments. As the County continues to make investments that support the AIAN community and strengthen relationships it is also vital that tribal Indian law expertise is available to County staff. To our knowledge the Department of County Counsel does not have any attorneys with tribal Indian law expertise. We request that the Board funds the Department of County Counsel to retain a firm or an attorney with tribal Indian law expertise. This request is aligned

with the County's priority to advance anti-racism, diversity and inclusion and would ensure that critical knowledge and expertise is accessible to County employees working with and in support of the AIAN community.

We are grateful for the support and momentum that has transpired to date under the leadership of your Board. We are confident that funding a full-time position to address AIAN homelessness and to retain tribal Indian law expertise would help and sustain these efforts.

Sincerely,

Cheri L Thomas
LANAIC Chairperson

Cc: All Supervisors
CEO
Kristin Sakoda, Department of Arts and Culture Director

DRAFT



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION

Chairperson
CHERI THOMAS
Quinault/Yurok

October 17, 2023

Vice Chairperson
CHRISSIE CASTRO
Navajo

Los Angeles City Mayor Karen Bass
200 N Spring St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Secretary
RENE WILLIAMS
Colville Tribes

Treasurer
SHAWN IMITATES-DOG
Lakota

Dear Mayor Bass,

DENISE ESCOTO
Northern Cheyenne

I am sending this letter on behalf of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC). Our budget requests for FY24-25 would build the City's capacity and knowledge to meet the needs of the American Indian and Alaska Native community in the delivery of vital services and implementation of policy.

ANDREA N. GARCIA, M.D.
Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara

DAWN JACKSON
Saginaw Chippewa

MONA MORALES RECALDE
Gabrieleno Tongva

On September 20, 2023 the LANAIC transmitted a letter to your office respectfully requesting support and City/County partnership in a sustainability plan to build on the great work of the LA County Board Motion co-authored by Supervisors Janice Hahn and Hilda L. Solis, "Identifying, Supporting, and Serving American Indians and Alaska Natives Who Are at Risk of or Experiencing Homelessness" (October 2019). The work of the Board Motion has continued for several years and garnered many wins, thanks in part, due to the hiring of a consultant in partnership with CEO Homeless Initiative (CEO HI) and the LANAIC, and made possible by Measure H funds. This consultant contract will expire at the end of 2023 and a report back to the board of Supervisors will soon be released. LANAIC requests funding from the city to make possible a dedicated full-time staff position to lead this work and to implement a stop-gap in the interim to ensure continuity beyond the expiration of the consultant contract. This request is also aligned with the September 2020 Los Angeles City Council approved motion that instructed the City Administrative Officer and Chief Legislative Analyst to identify funding to help hire the above-mentioned consultant. While funding was unfortunately never applied, we hope that there is still will and possible resources to support creation of a more permanent solution that can work in partnership with the County.

JOHN ONLY A CHIEF
Pawnee Nation

RUDY ORTEGA JR.
Fernandeño Tataviam

TED TENORIO
Tiguan Nation

RICH TOYON
Acjachemen

MARK VILLASEÑOR
Fernandeño Tataviam

AUDRA WISE
Zia Pueblo & Laguna Pueblo

ALEXANDRA VALDES
Executive Director

As shared at our meeting with you on September 19, 2023 the work of the LANAIC and its ability to support and advise the City would be greatly improved by the creation of a full-time dedicated City staff position that works with the existing LANAIC team housed within the County. Additionally, historically the City of LA has contributed funding to the LA

City Department of Cultural Affairs to support Native American Heritage Month activities. We are grateful for this ongoing funding. Given LA City's role in the establishment of Indigenous People's Day (IPD), and former Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell's role in producing large scale IPD events, we think it is important for the Mayor's Office to support an ongoing IPD budgetary line item in the City's budget akin to the Heritage Month funding that is administered by DCA.

We are grateful for your support to date. We are confident that funding a full-time position to address AIAN homelessness and as well as a full-time City employee to support the work of the LANAIC within LA City would result in effective and powerful collaboration between City and County to support the needs and better the lives of the AIAN community.

Sincerely,

Cheri L Thomas
LANAIC Chairperson

Cc: LA City Council Neighborhood and Enrichment Committee



DATE: 10/12/2023

TO: LANAIC Commissioners

FROM: Alexandra Valdes, Executive Director

RE: October 17, 2023 LANAIC Meeting Item 6.4 - Review and take possible action selecting the 2024/2025 Executive Committee (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer)

Background

On Wednesday, September 13, 2023 the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) Executive Director Alexandra Valdes requested nominations for the 2024/2025 LANAIC Executive Committee from LANAIC Commissioners via email. Nominations were due to Alexandra via email by close of business on Tuesday, October 10, 2023. The list of nominations received by the deadline were shared with commissioners via email on October 11, 2023 so that any commissioner who wanted to remove their name from consideration could do so. The below list is the finalized list of nominations for the LANAIC’s consideration. Description of the roles and responsibilities of each of the 4 positions is on the second page of this memo.

2024/2025 Executive Committee Nominations

Chair	Vice Chair	Secretary	Treasurer
Chrissie Castro	Chrissie Castro	Dawn Jackson	Denise Escoto
Shawn Imitates Dog	Dr. Andrea Garcia	Rene Williams	John Only A Chief
Rudy Ortega Jr.	Shawn Imitates Dog	Audra Wise	Rich Toyon
Mark Villasenor	Mona Morales Recalde		Mark Villasenor
	Mark Villasenor		



Duties of Executive Committee Members

Role	Responsibilities
Chairperson	<p>The Chairperson shall have general supervision of the business and shall preside at all meetings of the Commission. The Chairperson shall appoint all committees and committee chairs and shall be ex-officio member of all committees.</p> <p>The Chairperson shall authenticate by their signature, when necessary, all the acts, orders, and proceedings of the Commission.</p> <p>Note: The Chairperson serves as a member on the Self-Governance Board. If they have a conflict of interest the Vice-Chairperson will serve in their place.</p>
Vice-Chairperson	<p>The Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in their absence. They shall attend all meetings of the Commission and perform all other duties which may be assigned to them.</p> <p>Note: The Vice-Chairperson will serve as a member on the Self-Governance Board if the Chair has a conflict of interest.</p>
Secretary	<p>The Secretary shall work with the Executive Director to record the minutes, and maintain records of acts, and reports of the Commission and Executive Committee meetings.</p> <p>The Secretary shall be responsible for notification of action for nonattendance.</p> <p>In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, the Secretary shall exercise the power and perform the duties of the Chair.</p>
Treasurer	<p>The Treasurer will work with the Executive Director to create and monitor the Commission's budget, as well as program and events budgets.</p> <p>The Treasurer will work with the Executive Director to set internal fiscal policies and procedures to promote the fiscal health of the Commission.</p>

DRAFT TITLE: Global Best Practices and a Legal Framework in Addressing Indigenous Homelessness: Applications to Los Angeles

I. Introduction

“Los Angeles County (LAC) is home to the largest population (327,930) of American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIAN) in the United States. Due to a legacy of systemic racism and genocide, AIAN endure disproportionate symptoms of intergenerational trauma (e.g. mental health, chronic disease, substance use, and economic disparities).”¹ Due to these increased risk factors, homelessness poses a major problem for the Indigenous² community, one that is increasing year to year.

“There’s a certain level of bang-your-head-against-the-wall irony there, because this was our land and now we’re homeless on it,” [Janeen Comenote, executive director of the National Urban Indian Family Coalition, a Seattle-based advocacy and research group] said. “We’re kind of homeless twice. It happened when the colonizers came, and now in modern times we’re homeless again.”³

This memo seeks to present and analyze frameworks for the advancement of the rights of Indigenous people experiencing homelessness. This includes a human rights framework, predominantly drawn from the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP); however, while the language of UNDRIP is powerful, empowering, and should serve as a guideline for legislative bodies considering policies affecting Indigenous peoples, social practice and precedent giving content to these rights is still emerging and limited. To fill in some of these gaps, we’ve also analyzed frameworks and real-world examples for the advancement of Indigenous rights from other settler-colonial societies with large Indigenous populations, such as New Zealand and Canada as well as practical examples within the United States.

A. Introduction to the UNDRIP Framework

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is a declaration, not a treaty. As such, it is not binding on states or directly enforceable in the same way that a treaty is. However, declarations “represent the dynamic development of international legal norms and reflect the commitment of states to move in certain directions, abiding by certain principles.”⁴ UNDRIP “embodies a convergence of common understanding about the rights of indigenous peoples, upon a foundation of fundamental human rights”⁵ and constitutes “an extension of the commitment assumed by United Nations Member States – including the United States – to promote and respect human rights under the United Nations Charter, customary international law, and multilateral human rights treaties to which the United States is a Party.”⁶ UNDRIP can therefore be seen as reaffirming and re-contextualizing rights, such as the right to “equality, self-determination, property and cultural integrity,”⁷ that are legally binding under customary international law and human rights treaties.

¹ “Identifying, Supporting, and Serving American Indians and Alaska Natives Who Are at Risk of or Experiencing Homelessness.” Motion to the Board of Supervisors.

² We will generally use the term Indigenous in this paper, rather than AIAN or Native American. This is to be inclusive of Indigenous peoples who did not traditionally occupy lands within the present day United States, as is the case of many in cities like Los Angeles.

³ <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/homeless/we-cried-for-happy-news-housing-project-first-in-seattle-to-address-needs-of-homeless-native-adults/>

⁴ <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfi/documents/FAQsindigenousdeclaration.pdf>

⁵ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, James Anaya, Addendum The situation of indigenous peoples in the United States of America, para 82.

⁶ *Id.* at para 81.

⁷ *Id.* at para 82.

The former Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous peoples, James Anaya, stated that “the Declaration should [...] serve as a beacon for executive, legislative and judicial decision-makers in relation to issues concerning the indigenous peoples of [the United States]. All such decision-making should incorporate awareness and close consideration of the Declaration’s terms. Moreover, the Declaration is an instrument that should motivate and guide steps toward still-needed reconciliation with the country’s indigenous peoples, on just terms.”⁸ As such, UNDRIP provides legislative officials, including those at the municipal level, with an important set of principles which should guide any and all decisions that affect Indigenous peoples.⁹

II. Reclaiming Land

A. UNDRIP

Perhaps some of the most important rights delineated by UNDRIP are those dealing with land. UNDRIP states outright that “Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired,” which includes the “right to own, use, develop and control” those lands.¹⁰ The State is required to “give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources.”¹¹ Where those lands have been “confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without [Indigenous peoples’] free, prior and informed consent,” “Indigenous peoples have the right to redress, by means that can include restitution or, when this is not possible, just, fair and equitable compensation.”¹²

After his 2012 Country Visit to the United States, former Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous peoples, James Anaya, stated that “what is now needed is a resolve to take action to address the pending, deep-seated concerns of indigenous peoples, but within current notions of justice and the human rights of indigenous peoples.” He provided the examples of “the return of the sacred Blue Lake to Taos Pueblo and the restoration of land to the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe,” as well as “the more recent initiative to transfer management of national park lands to the Oglala Sioux Tribe in South Dakota,” as measures that exemplify “the kind of restorative action to be taken consistent with contemporary human rights values.”¹³ This is because these actions understand the “centrality of land and geographic spaces to the physical and cultural well-being of indigenous peoples, in accordance with standards now prevailing internationally and accepted by the United States.”¹⁴ Recognizing the centrality of land-back claims to the fulfillment of the international human rights of indigenous peoples, Anaya recommended that “measures of reconciliation and redress should include, inter alia, initiatives to address outstanding claims of treaty violations or non-consensual takings of traditional lands to which indigenous peoples retain cultural or economic attachment, and to restore or secure indigenous peoples’ capacities to maintain connections with places and sites of cultural or religious significance, in accordance with the United States international human rights commitments.”¹⁵

⁸ *Id.* at para 84.

⁹ California expressly endorsed UNDRIP (though without enacting its provisions as legally enforceable rights) in resolution AJR-42 (2014), available at:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140AJR42.

¹⁰ UNDRIP Article 26.

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² Article 28. “Just compensation” can take the form of “lands, territories and resources equal in quality, size and legal status or of monetary compensation or other appropriate redress.” *Id.*

¹³ Special Rapporteur report para 78

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ *Id.* at para 90.

Hence, the most integral strategy and rationale for addressing the unhoused Native American and Indigenous population of Los Angeles involves some form of land return or reclamation project. The first peoples of this land include in no particular order: Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians; Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council; Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians; Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation; San Manuel Band of Mission Indians; San Fernando Band of Mission Indians. These nations were stripped of their land by the settler colonial project and forcibly brought into the urban landscape. Similarly, the Native American and Indigenous diaspora to the Los Angeles metropolitan area is a direct product of the ongoing settler colonial project, with the added onus of being uprooted and displaced from their homelands and home communities. The needs of the unhoused of these communities demands some transformation of urban land tenure, even if only in the area of Native American home ownership. What follows are some transformational models of land reclamation projects that may illuminate potential strategies, actions and solutions to address Native American and Indigenous homelessness in Los Angeles.

B. Land Back

The Yellowhead Institute is a First Nation-led research centre based at Ryerson University in Toronto, Ontario.¹⁶ Their report, “Land Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper” discusses the alienation and dispossession of First Nations lands in Canada due to resource extraction.¹⁷ In part three of their Red Paper the authors discuss “recognition,” which encapsulates many of the ways that the Canadian government (and corporations) formally “recognize” Indigenous jurisdiction and rights. “Recognition,” however, has mostly ended with consultation and revenue sharing arrangements for projects on First Nations land; moreover, “an unanswered question is whether or not [“recognition” strategies] reinforce, validate, or resist settler authority and ongoing assimilation.”¹⁸ Indigenous “reclamation” strategies, on the other hand, “reject Crown alienation, and while exploiting Crown recognition where possible, also generally operate outside of accepted Canadian legal and institutional channels.”¹⁹

One such method is the “physical reclamation or occupation of lands and waters.”²⁰ The Red Paper discusses four examples, three of which are particularly relevant to the issue of land-back: the Tiny House Warriors project, the Unist’ot’en Healing Centre, and the Nimkii Aazhibikong camp. While these projects have been met with varying degrees of resistance and long-term success, all have managed, at least for a time, to re-occupy traditional lands for community benefit.

The Tiny House Warriors project is “a campaign to build ten tiny houses along the 518-kilometre route of the Trans Mountain pipeline as it crosses unceded Secwepemc land,”²¹ in order to monitor the pipeline and protest the construction of “man camps” for pipeline workers. The project is “not only a strategic reoccupation of Secwepemc territory to reassert jurisdiction”²² but also “[provides] housing to Secwepemc families facing a housing crisis due to deliberate colonial impoverishment.”²³ The project has been funded by donations and the houses built by volunteers.²⁴ Though one of the tiny houses has been raided and the founders of the campaign arrested and released, the tiny houses still stand and have become “a

¹⁶ <https://yellowheadinstitute.org/about/>

¹⁷ Shiri Pasternak & Hayden King, Land Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper, 48 (October 2019).

¹⁸ *Id.* at 48.

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ *Id.* at 56

²¹ *Id.*

²² *Id.*

²³ *Id.* at 57.

²⁴ *Id.* at 56.

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‘village’ of land defenders” which have gained many supporters through the campaign’s clever use of social media.²⁵

The Unist’ot’en Healing Centre was built on unceded Unist’ot’en land; when a TransCanada subsidiary sought to build a pipeline that would cross a mile away from the Centre, the Centre expanded to block its route.²⁶ Rather than “a site of protest or demonstration,” this action is characterized by the Unist’ot’en as “an occupation and use of our traditional territory as it has for centuries.”²⁷ The Centre has been run and funded primarily by the support of the community and its allies. Unfortunately, however, the courts granted an injunction against a blockade at Unist’ot’en and the company was granted access to construct the pipeline. However, “the conflict resulted in an outpouring of solidarity and sparked actions in over seventy cities around the world”; the Centre remains open to this day and continues to “run programming for women and youth integrating cultural healing practices.”²⁸

In 2017, Elders and community members from the Anishnaabe Nation built Nimkii Aazhibikong camp at Ompa Lake, a site which is Anishnaabe land but is considered Crown land by the province.²⁹ The Camp’s goal is to “connect young people with elders for arts and cultural land-based teachings, help to produce the next generation of fluent (Ojibway) speakers, and facilitate cultural resurgence of sustainable Indigenous practices and restoration of traditional Indigenous practices and restoration of traditional Indigenous land and resource protection and management.”³⁰ The Camp was built entirely via fundraising efforts, without any government or organizational funding; it also does not possess provincial permits or permissions.³¹ However, the camp is still going strong, and is planning to expand the Camp to add “a large central language learning centre and art studio that visiting First Nations will be able to use, free of charge” by 2020.³²

It is important to note that the Red Paper is mainly concerned with prohibiting land and resource exploitation and thus is mainly focused on free, prior and informed consent and negotiation regarding development and extraction projects on traditional First Nations land. Reoccupation in many of the examples listed above occurred on traditional lands where First Nations have strong claim to aboriginal title.³³ Unlike Los Angeles, the reoccupied lands are largely rural or uninhabited.

However, reoccupation strategies may still have a place in urban settings. While “public” spaces such as the uninhabited or rural areas in the examples above may be difficult to find in urban settings, abandoned ‘public’ spaces such as old libraries may be able to be ‘reclaimed’ and ‘reoccupied’ in a similar fashion. As of this writing,³⁴ the rise of COVID-19 has resulted in movements to reclaim land in multiple cities. Realizing the danger of remaining unhoused or in packed shelters during a pandemic, people experiencing homelessness and activist allies have taken over vacant buildings. “Reclaiming Our Homes,” for example, is based in El Sereno, where Caltrans owns 163 homes on land it had planned to build a highway extension

²⁵ *Id.* at 57.

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ *Id.* at 57.

²⁸ *Id.* at 58.

²⁹ *Id.* at 58.

³⁰ *Id.* at 58.

³¹ *Id.* at 58.

³² *Id.* at 58.

³³ In Canadian law, an aboriginal title claim requires evidence of “occupation of the land in question prior to sovereignty, a continuity between present and pre-sovereignty occupation (if present occupation is relied on as proof of occupation pre-sovereignty), and exclusive occupation.” <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-title>, paraphrasing *Delgamuukw*, 1997.

³⁴ This section was added with available information in early April 2020, while still early in the COVID-19 pandemic.

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over.³⁵ The construction project never went through due to backlash, but the homes have remained vacant.³⁶ These homes have been occupied by activists, citing both the dangers of shelters and other forms of temporary housing during a pandemic and the injustice of thousands of Los Angeles homes sitting vacant when so many lack shelter.³⁷ The Reclaiming Our Homes website proclaims, “No one should be homeless when homes are sitting empty. Housing is a human right!”³⁸ The reclaimers of these homes are currently facing eviction.

Similarly, in Surrey, British Columbia, an activist organization called the Red Braid Alliance for Decolonial Socialism, which describes itself as a “revolutionary working class and Indigenous organization,”³⁹ has started a campaign called Hothouse Squat (or #Squat2Survive), which calls “for poor and homeless communities all over the Province to take over vacant buildings as part of the #SQUAT2SURVIVE movement, in an act of militant self-defense from COVID-19.”⁴⁰ On April 1, 2020 they began to occupy a vacant public recreation center. While they were evicted from the center by police shortly after they began to occupy it, B.C. Housing is now considering officially turning the rec center into housing for the duration of the pandemic⁴¹ and the Red Braid Alliance plans to relaunch Hothouse Squat in other locations around the city.⁴²

Reoccupation is by and large an extra-legal process and therefore can be very risky, as evidenced by the arrests, injunctions and forced evictions that took place in many of the examples above. However, reoccupation may also garner a lot of media attention and provide at least temporary relief. Smart use of social media in many of the above examples meant that these movements were successful in raising awareness and garnering public support. Many of the movements led by First Nations and Native American groups foreground for the public an important narrative about indigenous claims to land in settler nations.

C. How the Wiyot Tribe Got Their Land Back

In an unprecedented move, the City of Eureka recently returned Duluwat Island to the Wiyot Tribe. The island is part of the traditional lands of the Wiyot people and considered the spiritual home of the tribe. It was the site of a massacre in 1860, when a group of white settler men murdered as many as 250 Wiyot people on the day of their World Renewal Ceremony. The island was subsequently purchased by a white man who drained the marshes and used the land for cattle ranching; the island was later used for lumber mills and a shipyard. A sea wall made of ship batteries to prevent sea erosion had slowly been leaking toxic sludge into the harbour. The ecosystem had seriously suffered from these activities. Beginning in the 1970s, the Wiyot tribe asked many times for Eureka to give them their land back, but their requests were dismissed.

In what could be seen as a kind of “reclamation,” the Wiyot tribe committed themselves to the rehabilitation of the island, even before it was given back to them.

³⁵ <https://la.curbed.com/2020/3/16/21182478/moms-occupy-el-sereno-house-caltrans>

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ <https://reclaimingourhomes.org/>

³⁹ <https://www.redbraid.org/about/>. The Red Braid Alliance for Decolonial Socialism also writes: “We practice and advocate for a strategic unity between Indigenous peoples fighting for sovereignty through dismantling colonialism, the national struggles of peoples around the world against imperialism, and the working class for worlds without capitalism. We test our politics through practices of politicizing community survival struggles, political education, protest, and direct action.”

⁴⁰ <https://www.redbraid.org/2020/04/01/hothousesquat/>

⁴¹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/homeless-activists-surrey-bc-covid-19-coronavirus-1.5518500>

⁴² <https://twitter.com/stopdisplacemnt/status/1245601539839774726>

Nearly every weekend for years, members of the tribe and other volunteers in the community worked to remove the piles of debris that had accumulated on the grounds. The battery seawall was slowly replaced with a less-toxic one made of oyster shells donated by a local seafood company. Railroad tracks that led into the bay, once used for lifting boats, were removed. To date, the tribe says it's cleared 60 tons of scrap metal and garbage and invested \$3 million in Duluwat's rehabilitation. In 2014, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency gave Duluwat Island a clean bill of health.⁴³

The Wiyot tribe also held yearly vigils on Duluwat for non-Native Eureka residents to remember the 1860 massacre, which some credit as “forcing Eureka citizens to confront and understand the “deep community wound” that was inflicted in 1860.”⁴⁴

At first, the Wiyot tribe was able to purchase 1.5 acres of the 250 plus acre island. They raised community support and awareness through advocacy and vigils, and “[convinced] the city that, as stewards of the land, the tribe would perform a public environmental good.”⁴⁵ By 2015 – a year after the EPA gave Duluwat a clean bill of health – the City Council unanimously voted to give the island back to the Wiyot tribe. After four years of negotiation between the city council and the tribal council, the island's return has been made official.

“Nonprofits and the federal government have returned land to Native people, but nobody consulted by the *Journal* could recall a local municipality repatriating hundreds of acres of land to a local tribe in the absence of a sale or lawsuit settlement.”⁴⁶ While public support was not unanimous – one Eureka resident offered to buy Duluwat to keep it from being given back to the Wiyot tribe – the Wiyot tribe's reclamation efforts resulted in a peaceful transfer of their land from the settler government back to the tribe. In that way it poses an interesting comparison to many of the examples of reoccupation discussed above from the Red Paper: the Wiyot tribe's reoccupation of Duluwat was temporary, unlike a physical blockade; their reclamation efforts performed an uncontroversial public service. While the Wiyot's reclamation efforts were more of a burden on the tribe (spending \$3 million on an island they couldn't be sure they would ever regain control over), they were also less risky than other forms of reoccupation (no one was likely to be arrested for cleaning up toxic sludge.) Likewise, finding spaces where an affordable housing development would be seen as an improvement on the existing use of space in an urban setting could be an effective strategy for gaining public and municipal support.

D. Urban Reserves

Urban spaces posit a particular challenge for land-back, as “settler states continue to pursue the violent transformation of Indigenous land into settler property and to police Indigenous place-making and self-determination particularly aggressively in relation to cities [...]. This includes the active “forgetting” of the historical geographies of urban areas as Indigenous, often unceded, territories.”⁴⁷ Urban reserves have not yet been used to address housing concerns, and moreover are part of a different legislative landscape. However, they provide an interesting example of an urban, government-supported “land-back” program that could be adapted to address AIAN homelessness in Los Angeles.

⁴³ <https://www.citylab.com/equity/2019/11/duluwat-island-wiyot-tribal-native-land-return-california/600991/>

⁴⁴ *Id.*

⁴⁵ *Id.*

⁴⁶ <https://www.northcoastjournal.com/NewsBlog/archives/2019/10/21/duluwat-island-is-returned-to-the-wiyot-tribe-in-historic-ceremony>

⁴⁷ *Settler Cities* at 928.

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“Many First Nations in Canada are located in rural areas, far from the cities and towns where most wealth and jobs are created. This geographic remoteness can sometimes pose challenges for First Nations trying to increase their economic self-sufficiency.”⁴⁸ One way Canadian governmental entities have chosen to combat these challenges (after significant pressure and resistance from First Nations) is via the creation of “urban reserves.” “The majority of urban reserves are created as a result of specific claim and Treaty Land Entitlement settlements, which provide First Nations with cash payments that may be used to purchase land” within or adjacent to the city.⁴⁹ The land purchased is then granted “reserve” status by the federal government, which largely means that the land is not subject to taxation; that First Nations people are exempt from sales tax for products purchased on that land;⁵⁰ and that First Nations people do not have to pay income tax on money earned there.⁵¹ “There are now more than 120 urban reserves across Canada,” the majority of which are in the prairie provinces.⁵²

The urban reserve program has not been without criticism. Envisioned by the settler state as “narrowly [serving] economic development objectives,” urban reserves are posited “as modernizing agents that legitimize a limited form of First Nation jurisdiction and corporate presence in cities.”⁵³ The federal government gets final say on which projects may be granted reserve status, and has been more willing to approve economic development projects than community or housing projects.⁵⁴ “More generally, a fundamental problem with this process of addressing the land debt owed to First Nations is that they are forced to buy land in their Treaty and traditional territories from willing sellers at market rate.”⁵⁵ Urban reserves can therefore be seen as part of a larger neoliberal project of individualization and privatization, where “Indigenous sovereignty is [...] converted into private property and framed as “progress” by the settler state.”⁵⁶

However, some First Nations have been successful in subverting this narrative and using urban reserves as spaces of resistance and community, “repurposing neoliberal governance arrangements to fight marginalization.”⁵⁷ Successful economic development projects on urban reserves still constitute a “subversion of the colonial socio-spatial order[...], which has excluded First Nations from the right to the city.”⁵⁸ “For example, Muskeg Lake Cree Nation’s urban reserve, which was created in 1988 as one of the first of its kind, sits on 35 acres on the eastern edge of Saskatoon, on land originally purchased by the federal government to build a correctional institution. [...] The urban reserve, known as the McKnight Commercial Centre, employs over 300 people in over 30 businesses and organizations.”⁵⁹ Moreover, recent urban reserves have pushed back on the notion that these spaces should be purely about economic development. The first urban reserve to serve educational purposes was created in Regina, Saskatchewan in February of 2019; the 32 acre reserve in the middle of the city encompasses a First Nations university, and the Star Blanket Cree Nation plans to add residences and daycare facilities.⁶⁰

⁴⁸ <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100016331/1100100016332>

⁴⁹ *Id.*

⁵⁰ *Id.*

⁵¹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/demystifying-urban-reserves-1.2993051>

⁵² <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100016331/1100100016332>

⁵³ Julie Tomiak, *Contesting the Settler City: Indigenous Self-Determination, New Urban Reserves, and the Neoliberalization of Colonialism*, 49(4) *Antipode* 928, 930 (2017).

⁵⁴ *Id.* at 934.

⁵⁵ *Id.* at 930.

⁵⁶ *Id.* at 934.

⁵⁷ *Id.* at 935.

⁵⁸ *Id.* at 939-40.

⁵⁹ *Id.* at 938.

⁶⁰ <https://globalnews.ca/news/4958633/first-nations-university-of-canada-urban-reserve-educational-purposes/>

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Would state or local governments in Los Angeles consider transferring public or municipal land to the land-based tribes or tribal organizations in recognition of Native American land entitlement? Once land has been located for housing, is there a way for the city to designate that space as a sovereign or quasi-sovereign, Indigenous space? Are there certain benefits or exemptions that can be granted to that space by the city, county, or the state? The analogy to urban reserves may also help us think about the ways in which the city or state can acknowledge and support a broader vision of Indigenous reconciliation and well-being by supporting Indigenous housing projects in urban spaces.

To some extent precedent has been established for land return or reparations in Los Angeles County vis-a-vis the reparations given to the Bruce Family, a Black family whose beach front land was used for a beach lodge and resort that welcomed Black beachgoers. Their land was unjustly taken through eminent domain for the purpose of building a park, but was shrouded under racist motivations. Nearly 100 years later the land was returned to the Bruce Family. The family has since decided to sell the land back to LA County for \$20 million dollars.

Although different than government land return, the Tongva Taraxat Paxaavxa Conservancy did generate general awareness of LandBack when they received a well-publicized one-acre land transfer from a private citizen in Altadena. “We’re working towards one common goal, and that is to have a place of safety, security, where we can have ceremonies and where we can exercise our self-determination,” said Kimberly Johnson, vice president of the Tongva Taraxat Paxaavxa Conservancy, the nonprofit set up by the community to receive the land. “That’s where the healing has begun.”

III. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Connection with Land and Housing

Ending Indigenous homelessness will ultimately require the allocation of land or physical space for those experiencing homelessness, but as discussed earlier in this paper, Indigenous claims that focus on the return of their lands are often difficult and long-term struggles. Moreover, while land-back claims have been successful in some cases, it is difficult to measure their effectiveness in urban settings due to the complexities of municipal governments.⁶¹ Focusing instead on the historic displacement and cultural disintegration of Indigenous communities not only creates space for conversations about reparations but also helps highlight the importance of holistic solutions to Indigenous homelessness. This strategy could be especially effective in a city like Los Angeles, which has a diverse Indigenous population composed of many different Indigenous diasporas, in addition to the land-based tribes of LA County.⁶² While the diasporic communities have no claim to the land Los Angeles sits upon, nearly all of them share a history of colonization, which could provide a legal and moral basis for demanding the improvement of their economic and social conditions in an urban context together with the land-based tribes.

UNDRIP explicitly recognizes the fact that “Indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of, inter alia, their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources, thus preventing them from exercising, in particular, their right to development in accordance with their own needs and interests” as a justification for the rights described in the declaration. In addition to the rights discussed above, UNDRIP specifies numerous rights that are relevant to Indigenous homelessness:

⁶¹ AIAN peoples have successfully secured affordable housing and similar services for their communities in some US cities, but it is difficult to determine whether land-back claims played a role in those victories without reaching out to the leaders of those movements directly.

⁶² <https://mila.ss.ucla.edu/>

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Article 21

1. Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.

2. States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities.

Article 23

Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.

Article 24

2. Indigenous individuals have an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. States shall take the necessary steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of this right.

Because they are contextualized in the historic injustices faced by Indigenous peoples and require affirmative action by the state, these rights may be linked to reparations as a path towards their full exercise and enjoyment. Rather than just focusing on the return of land, however, these rights prioritize the holistic well-being of Indigenous peoples, regardless of their claims to the land they live on.

Such an approach is well-suited to addressing Indigenous homelessness in Los Angeles because it recognizes that the issue is much broader than the number of Native American and Indigenous people who are unable to find physical shelter. Of course, increasing access to affordable housing must be a priority for any person or entity attempting to solve the problem.⁶³ But recognizing the multifaceted nature of indigenous homelessness and acknowledging Indigenous notions of “home” is imperative when considering possible interventions or supportive services for Native American and Indigenous populations.

Unlike the common colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include: individuals, families and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally or physically reconnect with their Indigeneity or lost relationships.⁶⁴

This definition, drafted by Canada’s Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness, contemplates the complexity of Indigenous homelessness and identifies struggles specific to the AIAN experience that require specialized attention. Bringing light to those struggles could help bolster essential

⁶³ <https://everyoneinla.org/about-us/>

⁶⁴ <https://www.homelesshub.ca/IndigenousHomelessness>

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healing and reconciliation efforts and pave the road for meaningful conversations about the role of reparations.

Perhaps more importantly, “Establishing Indigenous concepts of home will allow governments, service providers and Indigenous people themselves to direct ample funding to culturally sensitive social, cultural and material supports for Indigenous Peoples, especially those in crisis situations.”⁶⁵ This notion is exemplified by New Zealand’s approach to Maori homelessness:

Derived from the principles of Te Tiriti [a treaty signed in 1840 between the British Crown and most (but not all) Māori leaders of Iwi], New Zealand has a framework for Māori wellbeing, called Whānau Ora, grounded in the central role of whānau/family in Māori well-being. Whānau Ora, literally meaning the complete wellbeing of Māori families, is a government model that deconstructs artificial barriers between housing, health, and education, integrating them into one model of care that is driven by the whānau based on their priorities.⁶⁶

Whānau Ora also emphasizes the importance of “solutions to Māori homelessness that are grounded in connection to Māori communities, cultural practices, worldviews and values.”⁶⁷ By centering Indigenous knowledge, this approach enables the Government of New Zealand to approach Indigenous homelessness in a holistic way.

Looking beyond physical shelter, addressing Indigenous homelessness requires creating a sense of community, culture, and belonging. UNDRIP repeatedly acknowledges the importance of preserving and protecting Indigenous traditions and customs:

Article 11

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures[...].

Article 13

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons. 2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected[...].

Given the long history of cultural disintegration caused by colonization, local governments should prioritize policies that allow Indigenous communities to reconnect with their cultures. The Wiyot tribe’s reclaiming of Dulawat island is a perfect example of this. Although the tribe has no plans to inhabit the island, tribal chair Ted Hernandez argued that the tribe’s renewed ability to perform its most sacred ritual could help “to bring balance back, to get rid of all the addictions hidden in Humboldt County—children not having homes, being homeless.” According to Hernandez, “everybody here needs that healing. That’s why the world renewal ceremony is important to us.”⁶⁸ In this regard, reclaiming sacred spaces of the land-based tribes could play an important role in the healing process.

⁶⁵ *Id.* at 14

⁶⁶ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352827319300333>

⁶⁷ *Id.*

⁶⁸ <https://www.citylab.com/equity/2019/11/duluwat-island-wiyot-tribal-native-land-return-california/600991/>

IV. Financial Resources and Technical Assistance: Control and Self-Determination

How should holistic Indigenous homelessness prevention projects be funded? How can we work within and/or outside of the legal system to obtain funding? UNDRIP provides for both fair and equitable compensation for “lands, territories and resources which [Indigenous peoples] have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged,” as well as for “access to financial and technical assistance from States and through international cooperation, for the enjoyment of the rights contained in this Declaration.” These rights explicitly delineate states’ obligations to provide financial and technical assistance to Indigenous communities either as a form of compensation for stolen land or as a recognition of the rights described in the declaration.

As noted earlier, UNDRIP contextualizes universal human rights like the right to housing and other economic, social and cultural rights for Indigenous people. Large swaths of the population, for example, of LA city and county are deprived of the same housing right. One strategy for addressing Indigenous homelessness is through accessing universal programs through traditional governmental channels. Under the universalist framework, the state is responsible for providing the necessary resources and deciding how they are allocated; the state remains the primary architect of such programs. Moreover, the state’s obligation to protect Indigenous interests is viewed as an extension of the state’s obligation to protect all of its citizens. This is one of many approaches used by New Zealand to combat Maori homelessness:

The protection of Māori interests to be housed and not be homeless is visible in Housing First, Aotearoa [New Zealand] although not explicitly stated as a Tiriti [treaty] based commitment. Housing First offers a universalist approach to housing the homeless based on need rather than, for example, specific Māori cultural imperatives. While the HF work with a small Aboriginal population in Edmonton, Canada is evolving, evaluation findings from 2010 recommended that HF undergo a programme of decolonisation and that an Aboriginal worldview underpin their work with this population (Bodor et al., 2011). Whether that has implications for HF Aotearoa's work with Māori is unclear.”⁶⁹

Universalist approaches can be strategically appealing because they lend themselves to coalition building, and they are grounded in the well-established obligations of states to their citizens. As the New Zealand and Canadian examples show us, however, such approaches are likely to overlook specific Indigenous cultural imperatives upon implementation, and at a deeper level, inhibit rather than strengthen self-determination.

One way to contextualize general programs for addressing Native American and Indigenous homelessness is through **tribal consultation**, which can include the allocation and distribution of resources, as well as the implementation of programs to address the issue. Under the design of UNDRIP, the right to consultation and free, prior and informed consent is a safeguard to ensure the protection and enjoyment of other substantive rights by prioritizing the right to self-determination. Here it would also ensure access to resources, participation and even control and ownership of the programs destined to alleviate homelessness in the Native American and Indigenous communities of greater Los Angeles. Ideally, such a framework would require local governments to center Native American and Indigenous knowledge, including the Indigenous conceptions of home and community discussed above.

Alternatively, Indigenous communities could attempt to **secure financial resources in the form of reparations**. By asking for (and receiving) resources in exchange for the injustices they have been subjected

⁶⁹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352827319300333>

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to, Indigenous peoples would be in a better position to assert their sovereignty, because they would be able to make their own decisions about how to allocate those resources. This approach has been used with some success:

“Some iwi (for example, Ngāi Tāhu/Tainui) who have received payment to settle historical grievances and the claims of justice are now actively involved in housing their people. For example, papakāinga/communal housing development on tribal lands is an example of Māori led solutions although somewhat constrained within the ambit of government policy. Iwi/tribal-led papakāinga/communal housing development enabled by financial settlements for breaches of Te Tiriti o Waitangi have and continue to enable iwi to fund papakāinga housing on Māori land, thereby drawing Māori with tribal connections, home to the tribal fold.”⁷⁰

The most obvious benefit of this approach is that it puts power back into the hands of Indigenous communities (consistent with Article 23 of UNDRIP), but with that power comes heightened responsibility. Even if they were able to secure funding, Native American and Indigenous people may require further resources, political power, or technical knowledge to address the various elements of Indigenous homelessness in an urban context.

Locally in Los Angeles, an American Indian and Alaska Native Housing Collaborative comprised of AIAN serving non-profits, tribes, tribal entities, and beyond is in its early stages of establishing a formal governance structure. The purpose of the Collaborative is to leverage funding in order to build community and individual organizational capacity to more appropriately serve unhoused relatives. This indeed is meant to build community power while simultaneously building technical knowledge and interaction with the larger homelessness system.

Instead, a **hybrid approach** could allow Indigenous peoples to assert their sovereignty by taking control of mechanisms within the state. In fact, this is one of the key features of the Whānau Ora approach in New Zealand:

It is an inside out model rather than the typical government-funded outside in model of intervention. Whānau Ora is continually evolving with large scale Whānau Ora commissioning agencies now managing programme funding for the government. The role of government agencies is diminished in this model and the commissioning agencies are comprised of tribal/iwi representatives to enhance greater alignment between Whānau Ora as a government funded programme and iwi development.⁷¹

The compromise is The Māori Housing Network, a government entity housed within the Ministry of Māori Development, which supports Indigenous peoples with “practical support and financial assistance for a range of housing activities.”⁷² More specifically, “It supports whānau with information, advice and practical support to improve and develop whānau housing and works alongside whānau, hapū and iwi to help them with housing goals, project planning, developing funding proposals, and providing agreed funding as projects are implemented.”⁷³

⁷⁰ *Id.*

⁷¹ *Id.*

⁷² *Id.*

⁷³ *Id.*

V. Holistic Approaches and Tribal Sovereignty

Since the 1970s, when strengthening tribal sovereignty and self-determination became official U.S. policy, many Native Nations have seen a robust reclamation of sovereignty in economic, social, cultural and political spaces, including in the arena of housing. The Chickasaw Nation, for example, offers a variety of housing assistance programs to their members, both in and outside of the Nation’s boundaries. These include, among others: rental assistance, grants to help first time homeowners pay a downpayment, and grants for landscaping, home improvement, and to improve handicap accessibility.⁷⁴ While some programs are only available within Chickasaw territory, others are more geared to providing support to citizens in the towns where they live. The Chickasaw nation has also used their economic resources to provide a network of social services for their citizens, strengthening the social and cultural fabric of the tribe.⁷⁵ Indigenous organizations in urban areas have also created comprehensive, holistic programs to meet the needs of the urban Indigenous population. The following section provides some examples of urban Indigenous populations that have exercised their right to sovereignty and self-determination to create culturally-appropriate services and housing solutions.

A. Chief Seattle Club’s Eagle Village

Eagle Village is a \$3.3 million bridge housing program in Seattle that consists of 24 private units in six modular trailers.⁷⁶ Chief Seattle Club was approached by the county to run the village and provide culturally appropriate services.⁷⁷ Chief Seattle Club, which runs the program, is itself a Native American-run space for AIAN community, job training, and the revival of cultural & spiritual practices for those experiencing homelessness.⁷⁸ The Club supports people experiencing homelessness in a variety of ways, including providing hot meals, counseling and traditional healing services, legal aid, and housing assistance.⁷⁹ They even have an apprenticeship program called Native Works, where AIAN peoples with criminal records, who are experiencing homelessness, and/or are struggling with mental health or addiction are given the opportunity to produce Native American art which is then sold at Pike Place Market.⁸⁰ Eagle Village currently features Native American cultural services such as traditional healing circles, Native American case managers, a medicinal garden and a drum circle.⁸¹

The annual operating cost of the program is around \$800,000.⁸² “Funding for Eagle Village came from a variety of sources, according to county officials, including the Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy, King County General Fund, hotel/motel tax revenues, and funding from the State Department of Commerce.”⁸³ The project also relies on non-government funding from organizations such as BECU, The Bernier McCaw Foundation, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Campion Foundation, the Paul G. Allen

⁷⁴ <https://www.chickasaw.net/Services.aspx?categoryfilterquerystring=10%3b&areafilterquerystring=0>

⁷⁵ <https://www.chickasaw.net/Services.aspx>

⁷⁶ <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/homeless/we-cried-for-happy-news-housing-project-first-in-seattle-to-address-needs-of-homeless-native-adults/>

⁷⁷ <https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/eagle-village-seattle-sodo-king-county-native-american-homeless/281-5494576c-01fb-4a7e-8c47-8b0d74f56e73>

⁷⁸ <https://www.chiefseattleclub.org/>

⁷⁹ <https://www.guidestar.org/profile/91-0852503>

⁸⁰ <https://www.guidestar.org/profile/91-0852503>; <https://nativeworkscsc.org/>.

⁸¹ <https://archpaper.com/2020/01/seattle-modular-housing-homeless-eagle-village/>;

<https://www.kuow.org/stories/going-modular-and-culturally-competent-in-homeless-housing>.

⁸² <https://dchsblog.com/2019/11/04/homeless-to-housed-eagle-village-prepares-to-open-in-sodo/>

⁸³ <https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/eagle-village-seattle-sodo-king-county-native-american-homeless/281-5494576c-01fb-4a7e-8c47-8b0d74f56e73>

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Family Foundation, Raikes Foundation, Schultz Family Foundation, Seattle Foundation, Seattle Mariners, Starbucks and the University of Washington.⁸⁴ The development rests on land owned by King County's Metro.⁸⁵ Colleen Echohawk, the Executive Director of the Chief Seattle Club, frames the government's contribution in reparative terms, stating that she sees this "as sort of a way for government officials to fulfill those old obligations that have been forgotten by most part."⁸⁶

County officials cite the necessity of culturally appropriate housing, given the fact that Native Americans "are disproportionately represented in the homeless population."⁸⁷

"We have been working with King County closely to address the disparity that we have within our homeless population," [Colleen] Echohawk said.

"We decided that we would work together to offer a cultural response, to offer a cultural home for Native people right here in Eagle Village."

"We'll offer a place where Native community can find a connection to tradition and to culture. We know that's important because Native people have experienced a lot of trauma," she said.⁸⁸

However, in order to comply with fair housing laws, the program is not exclusively for AIAN peoples experiencing homelessness.⁸⁹ People applying for housing through the county are given the option to select a preference for Native-American community, and are sorted into the facility based on that preference.⁹⁰ If not enough people select that preference, the housing is opened up to the homeless population at large.⁹¹

The Chief Seattle Club is in the process of building another Native American housing development, this time offering permanent housing for residents making 30% or less of Seattle's median income.⁹² The development will be called *ʔəlʔəl*, which "translates to "home" in Lushootseed, the Native language of Seattle-area Coast Salish people."⁹³ *ʔəlʔəl* will feature 80 studio apartments, communal spaces, a health clinic, expanded space for the Chief Seattle club to provide more services, a café and an art gallery.⁹⁴ "[I]nside, furnishings and gathering spaces will be inspired by local customs and traditions."⁹⁵ The Club plans to open this development in 2021.⁹⁶

B. Red Lake Nation's Minneapolis Alliance

"In 2015, Native people accounted for 8 percent of Minnesota's homeless adult population even though they were just 1 percent of the overall population, the largest disparity of any group in the state."⁹⁷

⁸⁴ https://www.builderonline.com/design/modular-trailers-become-homeless-refuge-in-seattle_c

⁸⁵ <https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/eagle-village-seattle-sodo-king-county-native-american-homeless/281-5494576c-01fb-4a7e-8c47-8b0d74f56e73>

⁸⁶ <https://www.npr.org/2019/12/30/791766439/seattle-shelter-focuses-on-native-peoples-experiencing-homelessness>

⁸⁷ <https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/eagle-village-seattle-sodo-king-county-native-american-homeless/281-5494576c-01fb-4a7e-8c47-8b0d74f56e73>

⁸⁸ <https://www.kuow.org/stories/going-modular-and-culturally-competent-in-homeless-housing>

⁸⁹ <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/homeless/we-cried-for-happy-news-housing-project-first-in-seattle-to-address-needs-of-homeless-native-adults/>

⁹⁰ *Id.*

⁹¹ *Id.*

⁹²

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/590cf733d482e9ff42aadb0e/t/5e609721f755fe73e4b59cdb/1583388456612/Chief+Seattle+Club+al+al+Case+Statement.pdf>

⁹³ *Id.*

⁹⁴ *Id.*

⁹⁵ *Id.*

⁹⁶ *Id.*

⁹⁷ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/23/us/native-americans-homeless-minneapolis-reservations.html>

This disparity became particularly visible in 2018, when the city of Minneapolis became the site of one of the state’s largest ever homeless encampments, which came to be known as the “Wall of Forgotten Natives.”⁹⁸ At its height, the encampment consisted of more than 200 tents and occupants, the vast majority of whom were Native American.⁹⁹ The sheer size of the encampment offered many of its Native American residents “a sense of community and relative safety.”¹⁰⁰ However, reports of drug overdoses, fires, and the deaths of a handful of residents raised fears that the city would crack down on the encampment.¹⁰¹ In response, “Red Lake Nation, a tribe some four and a half hours’ drive north, offered to help build temporary shelters on land it had bought [...] for a permanent housing development in the city. Other tribes in Minnesota supported Red Lake’s shelter proposal, forming a partnership to help win concessions from local officials and secure emergency relief.”¹⁰² This decision marked the beginning of an unprecedented alliance between tribes, nonprofits, and local government.

In an official statement, the Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors wrote that “a broad coalition of government, non profit, and community partners and stakeholders are coming together to address the short-term, mid-term and long-term barriers to housing for the residents of this camp, as well as those in other camps not so visible.”¹⁰³ The city of Minneapolis responded by allocating \$1.5 million to support the Navigation Center project, and several philanthropic organizations followed suit.¹⁰⁴ Such a project typically would have taken nearly six months to complete, but construction was completed in approximately eight weeks thanks to the expertise of local nonprofits as well as the cooperation and flexibility of the city government.¹⁰⁵ The temporary shelter offered approximately 120 beds in heated tents, meals, showers, and cultural events.¹⁰⁶ While drug and alcohol use is not permitted, intoxicated individuals are not turned away, and the facility is open 24/7 without curfew.¹⁰⁷ Native Leaders pushed for the temporary project to have as few rules as possible in order to create the most welcoming environment possible.¹⁰⁸ The Navigation Center remained open until mid-2019, when the Red Lake broke ground on its permanent housing project.¹⁰⁹ The new apartment complex will have 110 units of affordable housing and is expected to offer social services and cultural events.¹¹⁰

VI. **Conclusion: Opportunities for Advocacy**

UNDRIP provides for either the restitution of land itself, or for the provision of equivalent financial compensation for stolen lands. In practice, a willing government may peacefully transfer land back to tribes; more likely, land will be returned only after significant advocacy and resistance. This may take the form of extra-legal action such as reoccupation or restoration; such efforts may be rewarded in time, after garnering widespread public awareness and support, but may also impose harsh burdens upon tribes and their

⁹⁸ <https://www.npr.org/2018/11/05/664492155/native-american-nonprofits-tribes-lead-response-to-minneapolis-homeless-populati>

⁹⁹ <https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/how-minneapolis-managed-a-massive-homeless-encampment>

¹⁰⁰ *Id.*

¹⁰¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/23/us/native-americans-homeless-minneapolis-reservations.html>

¹⁰² *Id.*

¹⁰³ <https://www.franklinhiawathacamp.org/>

¹⁰⁴ The Catholic Communities Foundation donated \$1 million to the project. <https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/how-minneapolis-managed-a-massive-homeless-encampment>

¹⁰⁵ *Id.*

¹⁰⁶ *Id.*

¹⁰⁷ *Id.*

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/23/us/native-americans-homeless-minneapolis-reservations.html>

¹⁰⁹ *Id.*

¹¹⁰ *Id.*

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advocates in the process. Ideally, a process of reclamation and restoration could occur in cooperation with local governments and communities.

Under UNDRIP, the state may have an obligation to provide funding to indigenous groups, both as financial compensation for stolen lands and for the displacement and cultural disintegration of Indigenous communities caused by centuries of colonization. Financial assistance for the fulfillment of basic rights is thus owed by the government whether or not the Indigenous people involved have a direct claim to Los Angeles land. Funding may be used to purchase land and support programming, which the government may then be able to designate as a recognized Indigenous space, as in the case of Canadian urban reserves.

The right to housing is a universal human right, codified in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights. However, regardless of how space for housing is obtained, both UNDRIP and the Canadian definition of Indigenous Homelessness stress the importance of creating exclusive or specialized spaces for Indigenous people experiencing homeless in order to safeguard important rights to culture and community. UNDRIP provides that “Indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.” The LA City/County Native American Indian Commission and the emerging AIAN Housing Collaborative could continue to dialog around various options suggested here regarding land reclamation, creation of Native American and Indigenous spaces, holistic reparation, and self-determination and control over the programs and services addressing homelessness in the AIAN community in Los Angeles, in order to create a strategy going forward.



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION

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MARK VILLASEÑOR
Fernandeño Tataviam

AUDRA WISE
Zia Pueblo & Laguna Pueblo

October 17, 2023

County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors
500 W Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am sending this letter on behalf of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC). The purpose of this letter is to recommend that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors support the seating of the Cherokee Nation's delegate to the United States House of Representatives per the 1835 Treaty of New Echota.

In 1835, the Cherokee Nation and United States signed the Treaty of New Echota. The treaty forcibly removed the Cherokee from their homelands, which led to over one-quarter of the Cherokee Nation perishing on the "Trail of Tears." That same document, however, also guaranteed the tribe a delegate to Congress. For almost 200 years, the U.S. House of Representatives has failed to act or honor this promise. In 2019, Chief Hoskin Jr. nominated Kim Teehee as the Cherokee Nation delegate and committed to the effort of finally demanding Congress live up to its agreement. Thousands have acted by calling on Congress to vote to the seat the Cherokee Nation delegate. Historic progress has been made, including in November 2022, when the U.S. House Rules committee held a congressional hearing to discuss the issue.

The Treaty of New Echota has no expiration date. It's time for the U.S. government to fulfill its promise and uphold its legal obligation to guarantee the Cherokee Nation a delegate to Congress. We respectfully ask that the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors authorize advocacy for this critical representation and add this advocacy position to the County of Los Angeles Federal Legislative Agenda.

Sincerely,

ALEXANDRA VALDES
Executive Director

Cheri L Thomas
LANAIC Chairperson

2023 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count -American Indian / Alaskan Native - Los Angeles Continuum of Care



Data presented includes persons who identified as either Hispanic/Latino or Non-Hispanic/Latino American Indian/Alaskan Native. The Los Angeles Continuum of Care covers all of LA County except Pasadena, Glendale, and Long Beach. Data presented reflect the estimated number of Persons unless labeled as a Household count. Data from the 2023 Greater Los Angeles Point-In-Time Count estimate the number and demographic characteristics of the homeless population on a single night in January 2023. If you have any questions about the data presented, please email datasupport@lahsa.org.

Population	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total	Prevalence in Homeless Pop. (%)	Percent Change 2022-2023
TOTALS					
All Persons	19,013	52,307	71,320	N/A	10%
All Persons who are Hispanic / Latino	401	2,299	2,700	100%	85%
All Households	323	2,099	2,422	100%	75%
HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION					
<i>A Household has one or more members. A Family Household is composed of at least one minor (under 18), and at least one person over 18.</i>					
Individuals (those not in family units)	254	2,061	2,315	86%	76%
Adults 25+	230	1,778	2,008	74%	56%
Transitional Age Youth 18-24	24	283	307	11%	859%
Unaccompanied Minors (under 18)	-	-	-	0%	N/A
Family Households (at least 1 child under 18)	69	38	107	4%	60%
All Family Members	147	238	385	14%	171%
Adult-headed Households	64	38	102	4%	62%
Family Members 18+	55	105	160	6%	196%
Family Members under 18 (children)	82	133	215	8%	162%
Transitional Age Youth-headed Households	5	-	5	0%	25%
Family Members 18-24	3	-	3	0%	50%
Family Members under 18 (children)	7	-	7	0%	75%
VETERANS					
All Veterans	19	91	110	4%	96%
Veterans who are individuals	19	91	110	4%	100%
Veterans in families	-	-	-	0%	-100%
CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS					
<i>A household is considered chronically homeless if any of its members have (1) a long-term disabling condition; and (2) been homeless for 12 months or more within the last 3 years as specified by HUD.</i>					
People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness (all)	132	1,250	1,382	51%	128%
Chronically Homeless who are individuals	103	1,133	1,236	46%	109%
Chronically Homeless Family Members (all)	29	117	146	5%	873%
Chronically Homeless Veterans	5	54	59	2%	211%
Chronically Homeless Youth (24 & under)	6	128	134	5%	1575%
GENDER					
Male (includes transgender)	198	1,416	1,614	60%	117%
Female (includes transgender)	199	878	1,077	40%	57%
Gender Non-Binary (includes transgender)	4	5	9	0%	200%
Questioning (includes transgender)	-	-	-	0%	-100%
Transgender	6	121	127	5%	144%
ETHNICITY					
Hispanic/ Latino	288	1,297	1,585	59%	191%
AGE					
Under 18	89	133	222	8%	158%
18 - 24	33	295	328	12%	741%
25 - 54	206	1,247	1,453	54%	51%
55 - 61	35	456	491	18%	63%
62 and Over	38	168	206	8%	190%
SEXUAL ORIENTATION					
Straight	345	1,987	2,332	86%	95%
Gay or lesbian	12	180	192	7%	149%
Bisexual	13	130	143	5%	61%
Questioning	31	2	33	1%	-67%
The following data are reported for 18+ population only.					
Population	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total	Prevalence in 18+ Homeless Pop. (%)	Percent Change 2022-2023
HEALTH & DISABILITY					
<i>Health & disability indicators are not mutually exclusive; a single person may report more than one condition and thus be represented among more than one health & disability subpopulation.</i>					
Substance Use Disorder	53	471	524	19%	85%
HIV/AIDS	12	22	34	1%	386%
Serious Mental Illness	106	525	631	25%	101%
Developmental Disability	48	147	195	8%	47%
Physical Disability	62	549	611	25%	45%
DOMESTIC / INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE					
DV/IPV Experience	81	893	974	39%	5%
Homeless Due to Fleeing DV/IPV	28	310	338	14%	50%

BUDGET & FINANCE

MOTION

The Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission was officially established by the County of Los Angeles on June 25, 1976. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors then established the Commission via Ordinance No. 11409, adopted September 7, 1976, and effective October 8, 1976.


The commission has 15 positions. Five members of the commission are appointed to a vacant position by, and serve at the pleasure of, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles. Five members are appointed to a vacant position on the commission by the City of Los Angeles. Five members are selected by the Los Angeles Indian community pursuant to elections conducted by the commission.

The primary purpose of the Commission is to increase the acquisition and application of funding resources to the socio-economic problems of American Indians in Los Angeles City and County.

Currently, the Commission is not codified with the City of Los Angeles and we should equally memorialize our commitment to the Native American community to demonstrate our shared goal with the County to assist and support the American Indians in Los Angeles City and County.

Currently, the Commission is funded by the County at \$510,000 annually and by the City at \$47,0000 annually for staff and supplies.

The City must make every effort to officially formalize and adequately financially support our commitment to the native and indigenous communities as the first people of this region.

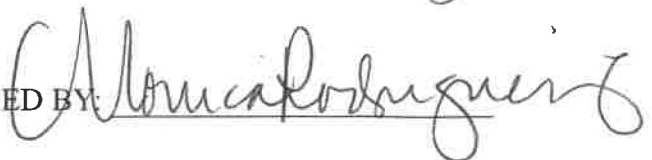
I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council instruct the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA), in collaboration with the Los Angeles City/ County Native American Indian Commission (Commission) to report within 30 days on the options available to codify the Commission within the City of Los Angeles. 

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council instruct the City Administrative Officer (CAO) to identify \$250,000 to be appropriated in the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget and future budgets to fund the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission.

PRESENTED BY:


EUNISSES HERNANDEZ
Councilmember, 1st District

SECONDED BY:



ORIGINAL

PK
OCT 06 2023