

April 1, 2021



**CARING FOR OUR  
NEIGHBORHOOD.**



*According to the Los Angeles Times, at one point 174 tents or structures occupied the north end of Echo Park Lake and spread along its western shore. (Photo: Los Angeles Times)*

**Echo Park Lake Is a Cautionary Tale for the Future  
of Silver Lake's Reservoirs**

Over the past year, it has been almost impossible to miss the headlines and startling images of the growing homeless community that occupied Echo Park Lake. It all came to a head on March 24 when the remaining people occupying the lake were moved to supportive housing. After the transition was completed, Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell's office reported that CD 13 had placed 209 people experiencing homelessness into transitional shelter with supportive services, medical care and resources. Echo Park Lake is now fenced and closed and extensive repairs are underway.

For many in Echo Park, it has been painful to watch a once-vibrant community park and children's play area deteriorate. However, the events of the past year are also a cautionary tale for Silver Lake. The fencing around the reservoirs and diligent supervision by Recreation and Parks and LADWP mean Silver Lake's iconic preserve is a clean and safe area for wildlife and humans to enjoy. Unfortunately, that could quickly change if the fencing is removed and the reservoirs are accessible 24 hours a day. It goes without saying that Silver Lake Together supports housing and compassionate care for those who are homeless. However, we don't condone people living outside in unsanitary conditions. And we *do* support thoughtful decisions that take consequences into account.

[WATCH COUNCILMEMBER O'FARRELL'S STATEMENT TO CITY COUNCIL ON THE ECHO PARK CLOSURE](#)

[READ COUNCILMEMBER O'FARRELL'S EMAIL ON ECHO PARK](#)



## Are Neighborhood Councils Obsolete?

First, some background on the current neighborhood council election. The Silver Lake Neighborhood Council is divided into eight categories, comprised of seven regions with two board seats in each region, and seven at-large seats – totaling 21 seats. This year only 27 candidates are running for these 21 seats, and in four of the regions (3, 4, 6 and 7), only two candidates are running. In other words, results in these regions are already determined, making 57.7% of the slots a fait accompli. And with only nine candidates running for the seven at-large seats... well, you do the math.

To put this in perspective: the 2014 SLNC election attracted over 60 candidates vying for 21 seats. In 2016 there were 47, and in 2019, 35 candidates. This year, just 27. Could it be that neighborhood councils, which were created in the late '90s, have become obsolete?

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## Work on LADWP Modular Office at Reservoirs Almost Complete



According to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, work on the new modular office in the reservoirs work area will wrap up this month. Currently, crews are installing a paved roadway to the office, as seen in the photo above. LADWP maintains the reservoirs, which include an earthen dam. At capacity, the reservoirs hold 795 million gallons of water.

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## DWP Agrees to Work with Experts to Protect Wildlife During Construction

In response to questions from members of the Silver Lake Wildlife Sanctuary at a recent Silver Lake Together community meeting, LADWP has agreed to work with wildlife experts and the Sanctuary to be sure nesting herons and other species are not harmed during the construction of the reservoirs' aeration and recirculation systems. LADWP also agreed to coordinate traffic control with LAPD.

LADWP presented the project plan for the systems that will maintain water quality in the reservoirs, and DWP representative Susan Avila confirmed work on the project will begin this spring and continue through mid-2022. LADWP maintains the open water bodies, including control of algae growth and reduction potential odors from anaerobic (lack of oxygen) conditions.

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**New City of Los Angeles  
Emergency Renters**



## Assistance Program Opens; Applications Accepted to April 30

Silver Lake residents can now apply for L.A.'s new \$235.5 million Emergency Rent Subsidy Program, which is designed to eliminate COVID-19 related rental debt for Los Angeles' most vulnerable households. The new subsidy program expands CD 13 Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell's efforts to create an emergency renters subsidy program citywide and a CD 13 specific program. The program will subsidize 80% of a qualified tenant's rental debt accrued between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021 if landlord commits to waiving the remaining 20% owed.

Interested residents can apply online until 11:59 p.m., Friday, April 30. However, an initial pool of applicants will be randomly selected on April 9. Qualifying applicants not accepted will be re-entered into the final random selection.

[READ PROGRAM DETAILS, INCLUDING ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS](#)



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### Let Us Know!

[www.silverlaketgether.com](http://www.silverlaketgether.com)

Need help with an issue in Silver Lake? Do you have ideas that will help our neighborhood or want to share community news?

**Email Us**

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