



LOS ANGELES CITY/COUNTY NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION

Chairperson
MARK VILLASEÑOR
Fernandeño Tataviam

March 17, 2026

Vice Chairperson
BRYCE LEWIS-SMITH
Citizen Potawatomi Nation

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

Secretary
CAROLINE BHALLA
Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin

Dear Board of Supervisors,

Treasurer
RENE' WILLIAMS
Colville Tribes

I am sending this budget request letter on behalf of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (Commission). We appreciate the opportunity to formalize our budget requests for the County of Los Angeles' FY26-27 budget.

CHRISSIE CASTRO
Navajo

At the May 18, 2021 commission meeting, the body adopted a resolution recommending that the County create an Office of Tribal Affairs. The need for this type of office has been uplifted by local tribal leaders and members of the American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) community in numerous County-led processes. The Commission has recommended to your Board in previous budget request letters to fund this critical office. This item was also included in the Department of Arts and Culture's FY25-26 and FY26-27 Departmental Budget Requests. Unfortunately, funding has not been allocated, and the Commission is once more respectfully requesting that the Board allocate funding to stand up the Office.

DENISE ESCOTO
Northern Cheyenne

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

VIVIAN GARCIA
Cherokee

SHAWN IMITATES-DOG
Lakota

DAWN JACKSON
Saginaw Chippewa

On September 20, 2023, the Commission transmitted letters to your Board 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 Commission also uplifted this request in our FY24-25 and FY25-26 budget request letters. Unfortunately, this critical work remains unfunded. The creation of the newly formed Department of Homeless Services & Housing (Department) presents an opportunity to build upon successes to date. The Commission recommends the creation of a Senior Executive item under the Equity & Cultural Care branch of the Department. This role would serve to steward policies and identify potential funding to support AIAN housing efforts in Los Angeles County. Since 2022 LAHSA has had a fulltime AIAN Coordinator role. It is essential that this role is either retained at LAHSA or is transitioned to the new Department. The work of a Senior Executive and a Coordinator is different but complimentary to the tribal liaison position listed under the External Affairs & Policy branch. It is vital that both efforts are properly supported and funded.

MONA MORALES RECALDE
Gabrieleno Tongva

JOHN ONLY A CHIEF
Pawnee Nation

RUDY ORTEGA JR.
Fernandeño Tataviam

TED TENORIO
Tiguan Nation

RICH TOYON
Achachemen

ALEXANDRA VALDES
Executive Director

At the May 21, 2024 Commission meeting, the Commission unanimously adopted a letter requesting that the Department of Arts and Culture allocate funding and qualified resources to support the development of a new website for the LANAIC. The Commission's website is a key communication tool with the AIAN community and public, plays a pivotal role in disseminating information, sharing County and Commission services and events, and highlighting Commission accomplishments. The outdated design and functionality of our current website hinder our ability to communicate with and engage AIAN community members effectively. A request for funding to support the development of a new website was included in our FY25-26 budget request letter and was not met. We are requesting again that the Board allocate funding for the Commission to develop a new website.

At the direction of the Board in 2021, we collaborated with the Department of Human Resources to develop a 2-part *DIALOGUE* event focused on building awareness and understanding of the AIAN population among the County workforce. While these webinars were highly attended and effective, we believe a Countywide-mandated training focused on building the County's workforce's understanding of the unique history and issues facing AIAN people in Los Angeles would have a far greater impact. We request that the Board allocate funding and direct the CEO to procure the training. This request was also included in our FY25-26 budget request letter.

Finally, while some of the recommendations in the *We are Still Here* report have been funded, many remain unaddressed. We respectfully request that your Board dedicate support and resources to developing a First Right of Refusal Policy and a Land Return Policy.

Thank you for considering the Commission's FY26-27 budget requests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Villaseñor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

LANAIC Chair Mark Villaseñor