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**\*\*\*REVISED\*\*\***

November 27, 2024

The Honorable Karen Bass  
Mayor, City of Los Angeles  
Room 303, City Hall

Honorable Members of the City Council  
c/o City Clerk  
Room 395, City Hall

**RE: CULTURAL AND HISTORIC REGIONAL COMPONENTS NECESSARY FOR THE LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL'S CONSIDERATION OF A LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT POLICY**

**SUMMARY**

In response to Council File 22-1142, this report provides a framework and proposal for a City of Los Angeles Land Acknowledgment Policy.<sup>1</sup> On September 30, 2022, City Council instructed the Civil, Human Rights and Equity Department (LA Civil Rights), in collaboration with the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) and representatives from the Tongva, Tataviam, and Chumash Tribes, and with the assistance of the Chief Legislative Analyst and City Attorney, to report on the creation of a citywide Land Acknowledgment Policy. LA Civil Rights presents this report without Council action from a sitting councilmember as both movers have left City service. However, Councilmember Eunisses Hernandez has been an advocate of the completion of this report.

Throughout the process of developing this report, LA Civil Rights received extensive guidance from LANAIC, which is composed of both community-elected and City- or County-appointed commissioners originating from a diverse array of American Indigenous groups. Its foremost responsibility is to, "increase the acquisition and application of funding resources to the socioeconomic problems of American Indians in Los Angeles City and County,"<sup>2</sup> which is typically enacted by providing funds and services directly to local Indigenous communities as a form of self-government. However, LANAIC is also charged with interfacing with government bodies and relaying the needs of their communities,<sup>3</sup> prompting the commissioners to undertake informational projects such as compiling reports on historical harms. In regards to assisting LA Civil Rights with this report, LANAIC confirmed that as a governing body, the Commission does not formally represent the interests of any one Tribal group.

<sup>1</sup> Los Angeles City Council, *Council File 22-1142*, 2022. [Web](#).

<sup>2</sup> Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission, *Native American Commission*. [Web](#).

<sup>3</sup> Los Angeles County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 3.42, November 11, 2024. [Web](#).

Despite landmark legislation addressing Indigenous history passed by the City in 2017 and 2021, LA Civil Rights has determined the City of Los Angeles does not have a land acknowledgment policy acknowledging the presence and history of Indigenous people, nor is there City legislation (i.e., an ordinance or executive directive) that instructs or mandates recitation or use of a statement to commemorate Indigenous people. City departments and commission application of a statement are piecemeal and unstandardized.

Based on the Department's direct engagement with LANAIC and Tribal and ancestral groups living in the region, this report provides considerations policymakers may explore to establish a land acknowledgment policy, including a statement and guidance instructing City personnel on the statement's application and appropriate usage. Policymakers may wish to develop a statement after determinations have been made on key areas of debate among Indigenous community members regarding the statement's focus (either on the land and environment or on the experience of Indigenous people in the region), and verifying or authenticating claims of first or original inhabitation to the land that is now the City of Los Angeles.

At this time, the City does not have a process to include, exclude, or prioritize Tribes from the local First Peoples narrative based on geography, history, or relationship to the region, and from its research, LA Civil Rights learned that formalizing a process along those lines is fraught. The City may not wish to become solely responsible for authenticating or verifying claims of originality. The Department recommends City leaders establish an inclusive process that allows Indigenous groups to determine their own relationship to and timeline within the region.

The considerations offered in this report also reflect LA Civil Rights' study of recommendations provided in Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti's Civic Memory Working Group (Working Group) Report,<sup>4</sup> a 2022 joint report from the LA County Department of Arts and Culture and LANAIC,<sup>5</sup> engagement with City departments, scholars, and LA County personnel supporting LANAIC, and a review of land acknowledgment statements issued by other cities in California.

Policy groundwork has been laid to facilitate and catalyze the City's development of a land acknowledgment policy, but the City does not have a departmental agency with the expertise, authority, or scope of work to manage or coordinate matters addressing Tribal Nations, Tribal law, anthropological, geographic, or cultural authentication of First Peoples, or diplomacy that may effectuate recommendations issued within the decade.

LA Civil Rights presents its report under these conditions.

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<sup>4</sup> Los Angeles Mayor's Office Civic Memory Working Group, *PAST DUE: Report and Recommendations of the Los Angeles Mayor's Office Civic Memory Working Group*, 2021. [Web](#).

<sup>5</sup> Kristin Sakoda & Alexandra Valdes, *Report: Development of a Land Acknowledgment*, Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture & Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC), 2022. [Web](#).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. RECOMMEND LANAIC convene a committee of stakeholders to propose a land acknowledgment statement consistent with the values and considerations learned through LA Civil Rights' and the Civic Memory Working Group's research.
2. DESIGNATE funding to support the convening of a City working group to develop language for a land acknowledgment statement.
3. DESIGNATE a position for a City body or personnel with expertise in Tribal history and law to support LANAIC in this engagement; and
4. PROPOSE legislation and initiatives that support and further acknowledge the Native Tribal Nations that have and continue to contribute to Los Angeles.

## BACKGROUND

In light of the current cultural moment of nationwide reckoning and intentional actions to repair the legacies of harm from systemic, institutional, and covert racism, the City of Los Angeles passed significant legislation signifying its commitment to honor the early Indigenous inhabitants of the land that is currently the City of Los Angeles. Key actions included removal of historical, mythologized figures Christopher Columbus and 18th century Spanish Franciscan friar Junípero Serra from City assets and property, as well as apologies for historic harm. On November 21, 2017, the City Council approved Ordinance No. 185261<sup>6</sup>, which established Indigenous Peoples Day as a legal holiday for the City to be celebrated on the second Monday in October. The ordinance, listed under Council File 15-1343, also removed all references to Columbus Day from the City Administrative Code.

In November 2021, the City adopted a resolution, "relative to an apology to the California Tribal Nations, including the Gabrieleño-Tongva, Fernandeseño-Tataviam, and Ventureño-Chumash, for the many instances of violence, maltreatment, and neglect in which the City has been complicit and inflicted upon these peoples; and that the City commits to working with California Tribal Nations to develop strategies and solutions to correct the harmful actions of the past and improve access to City resources, including services and programs" (Council File 21-0002-S178).<sup>7</sup>

In addition to legislative efforts, the City advanced the issue from the executive level. In November 2019, former Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti convened the first Civic Memory Working Group (Working Group) of "40 historians, indigenous elders and scholars, architects, artists, curators, designers, and other civic and cultural leaders" to help Los Angeles "engage more productively and honestly with its past." In April 2021, the Working Group, as a result of its convenings and subcommittees, issued 18 key recommendations<sup>8</sup>, specifying how the City may more thoughtfully "recognize Indigenous history," such as the development of a land acknowledgment policy, the installation of a full-time City employee "within the Mayor's Office to

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<sup>6</sup> Los Angeles City Council, *Council File 15-1343*, 2017. [Web](#).

<sup>7</sup> Los Angeles City Council, *Council File 21-0002-S178*, 2021. [Web](#).

<sup>8</sup> Los Angeles Mayor's Civic Memory Working Group, "Key Recommendations," *Past Due*, 2021. [Web](#).

serve as official liaison to the [LA]NAIC and the broader Indigenous community,” and the embedding of “historians and Indigenous leaders on a compensated basis in City-led planning efforts.”<sup>9</sup>

To the Department’s knowledge, this report represents the only current work by the City to explore a land acknowledgment policy consistent with the recommendations proposed by the Working Group’s Subcommittee 8: “Indigenous Land Acknowledgement and the Work of Decolonization.” Further Council action is needed.

The members of Subcommittee 8 were advised by several local Indigenous scholars, LANAIC commissioners, and LA County staff. The group’s 2021 recommendations for the City of Los Angeles can be summarized as follows:

1. In close collaboration with LANAIC, the City’s development of a land acknowledgment policy should begin with the convening of a committee consisting of Indigenous community members and a consultant;
2. Include recitation of a land acknowledgment at meetings hosted by elected officials and significant City events, as well as postings of a written statement at cultural sites;
3. The City should collaborate with the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture and LANAIC to incorporate learnings from the Countywide Cultural Policy adopted in 2020.
4. Fund the development of an employee-facing orientation to the history and resilience of Indigenous people in Los Angeles.
5. Study national methods for land return to Indigenous people to make recommendations about how the City may make progress in this area.
6. The Racial Equity Task Force, established via Executive Directive No. 27 (Garcetti)<sup>10</sup> should support the proposed committee by studying the impact of City policies on local Indigenous communities and ways to mitigate harm; consider mitigating efforts, such as a “permanent” mayoral staff member functioning as a Tribal liaison.  
The proposed committee should integrate land acknowledgment policy into planning and development of the 2028 Olympic Games, and other large-scale, global events scheduled in Los Angeles.<sup>11</sup>

At the time of this report, the City has not yet authorized funding to facilitate a process concurrent with Los Angeles County’s, nor has it yet instituted the Civic Memory Working Group as a City entity or activated the Racial Equity Task Force to effectuate the recommendations of a former mayor’s Working Group. However, the City has taken some legislative actions related to Subcommittee 8’s recommendations, such as directing departments to recommend how the City may redistribute public lands to marginalized communities for the purpose of “community land trusts, urban agriculture, environmental stewardship and restoration, cultural spaces, or any

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<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Mayor Eric Garcetti, *EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE NO. 27*, June 19, 2020. [Web](#).

<sup>11</sup> Los Angeles Mayor’s Civic Memory Working Group Subcommittee 8, “Indigenous Land Acknowledgement and the Work of Decolonization,” *Past Due*, 2021. [Web](#).

other uses that center principles of self-determination, community building, and healing (Council File 22-1327).<sup>12</sup> The motion also seeks analysis of how City policy may conform to California's 2019 Surplus Land Act.

In recent years, there have also been truth-seeking and reconciliatory actions at the County level. In October 2021, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors established Indigenous Peoples Day and allocated \$150,000 to facilitate the development of land acknowledgment and land access policies, protocols, and toolkits for Los Angeles County, as well as to gather input to inform ways in which the County has harmed local Indigenous communities, persons, and nations. As a result of LANAIC, the LA County Department of Arts and Culture, and their convenings with consultants, lived experience experts, stakeholders, and advocates of Indigenous communities, on November 1, 2022, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to adopt a Countywide Land Acknowledgment.<sup>13</sup> The statement and complementary assets are featured on a dedicated webpage documenting the County's process and engagement.<sup>14</sup>

Through this report, LA Civil Rights connects developments in City initiatives covering Indigenous land acknowledgment policy with learnings based on the Department's research, including recent dialogue with LANAIC, representatives from Tribal Nations and ancestral groups, local scholars, City personnel from the Department of Recreation and Parks, City Planning, and the Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst, and a review of policies and statements adopted by other California cities.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### *Impacts of Historical and Contemporary Harm*

As Los Angeles was incorporated into the United States during the 19th century, the national ideology of Manifest Destiny — in which the American government and its citizens considered themselves inevitably predestined to spread their influence all the way to the Pacific Ocean and beyond<sup>15</sup> — caused City leaders to implement drastic new policies which would significantly alter the lifestyles of Indigenous peoples and their relationship with the land. For example, as the city's population grew, Los Angeles' formerly open irrigation systems were replaced with underground pipes which were subject to differential quality and upkeep based on favored and disfavored neighborhoods. This situation only began to accelerate with the founding of the LA City Water Company in 1868.<sup>16</sup> Processes like this, however, also resonated with similar actions taken during the periods of Spanish missionary and Mexican rule over the natives. These three

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<sup>12</sup> Los Angeles City Council, "Motion," *Council File 22-1327*, November 4, 2022. [Web](#).

<sup>13</sup> Supervisor Hilda Solis, "Proclaiming Native American Heritage Month and Adopting the Countywide Land Acknowledgment," Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, November 2021. [Web](#).

<sup>14</sup> County of Los Angeles, *Land Acknowledgment*, 2022. [Web](#).

<sup>15</sup> David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, "Manifest Destiny," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 22 Oct. 2024, [Web](#).

<sup>16</sup> David S. Torres-Rouf, "Water Use, Ethnic Conflict, and Infrastructure in Nineteenth-Century Los Angeles," *Pacific Historical Review* Vol. 75, No. 1 (February 2006), University of California Press, pp. 120-122.

governmental periods — missionary, Mexican, and American — are known as the three waves of genocide.<sup>17</sup>

These developments resulted in mass displacement and created intersecting lines of Tribe, nation, mission, and band which persist unto the present. For example, the missions in Los Angeles are San Fernando Rey De España and San Gabriel Archangel, and many of the local Tribes have lineage tracing back to them.

Contemporary waves of migration between the 1950s and 1970s brought several new Indigenous communities from other parts of North America to the Los Angeles region. Modern impacts of disruption, migration, forced assimilation, and the prohibition of Indigenous cultural and religious practices experienced by those communities include economic instability, community and cultural fragmentation, and negative health outcomes, such as high rates of suicide and alcoholism<sup>18</sup>.

Land acknowledgments are a public means by which cities and counties can maintain Indigenous culture and repair ties to traditional customs that may be at risk of erasure. Subsequent steps might include developing specific, culturally-relevant engagement, as well as programs and services that stimulate social, economic, and environmental healing.

### ***Engagement with LANAIC, Tribal Groups, and City Departments***

LA Civil Rights began direct engagement with the commissioners of LANAIC in November 2023, with hopes that the body would be able to confirm which Indigenous Tribal and ancestral groups the City may include in a future land acknowledgment statement. After three presentations at LANAIC's regular commission meetings in spring 2024, the Commission confirmed they can neither make determinations about inclusion nor authenticate claims of First Personhood. Commission leaders emphasized the importance of utilizing a process which would allow Indigenous people to make their own determinations about their relationship and presence on the land that is the City of Los Angeles and adjacent areas.

LANAIC recommended the City align its process toward compliance with State Senate Bill 18 and Assembly Bill 52, and learn directly from local Tribal and ancestral groups. At the Commission's recommendation, LACR consulted the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and obtained a list of 14 Tribes that may have a relationship or presence in the Los Angeles area. We sent electronic correspondence to the:

1. Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians
2. Chumash Council of Bakersfield
3. Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation

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<sup>17</sup> Kaitlin Reed, "We Are a Part of the Land and the Land Is Us: Settler Colonialism, Genocide & Healing in California," *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*, Vol. 1, No. 42 (2020), pp. 33. [Web](#).

<sup>18</sup> John Price, "The Migration and Adaptation of American Indians to Los Angeles," *Human Organization* Vol. 27, No. 2 (Summer 1968), Taylor & Francis, pp. 172.



4. Fernandefio Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
5. Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation
6. Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
7. Gabrielino/Tongva Nation
8. Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
9. Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe
10. Northern Chumash Tribal Council
11. San Fernando Band of Mission Indians
12. Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians
13. Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians
14. Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians

Of these, LA Civil Rights received replies from five groups: The Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council, the Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation, the Fernandefio Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, and the Northern Chumash Tribal Council. Representatives from each of these groups provided insight on their lived experience and the region's complex history, and shared formal statements and scholarship asserting their peoples' heritage and place in the region. Appendices B, C, D, and E illustrate unresolved debate about authenticity of First Personhood and claims to the region, and highlights the need for City policymakers to carefully consider a policy that does not inadvertently cause harm, reinjury, or erasure.

During the research process, LA Civil Rights was able to corroborate at the departmental level the importance of establishing an inclusive process focused on harm reduction to historically marginalized communities, and the practical applications of a statement centering Indigenous people. Personnel from the Department of City Planning's Office of Racial Justice, Equity, and Transformative Planning, Office of Historic Resources, West/South/Harbor Project Planning, and Citywide Policy Planning Bureau indicated to LA Civil Rights that their initiatives could be supported by a land acknowledgment policy, which may include both a statement and an established process to facilitate City communication with Indigenous groups. Without a set policy or centralized agency that can regularly and explicitly support meaningful City engagement with Indigenous Angelenos, community members may receive recurring inquiries as to their needs or concerns. This may in turn be perceived as extractive and taxing, a sentiment which was expressed by Tribal groups engaged by LA Civil Rights.

With the confirmation of piecemeal efforts by City departments, LA Civil Rights surveyed a sample of other departments and divisions that participate in the Environmental Justice Technical Advisory Committee, inquiring about current employment of any acknowledgments or commemorative statements, custom statements, and proposed utility for a Citywide policy. (It is also important to note LA Civil Rights' five commissions currently recite the Los Angeles County Land Acknowledgment at their regular meetings and events.) The insights concerning utility reinforce the case for policymakers to consider further legislative actions to establish a Citywide land acknowledgment policy. The Emergency Management Department's response featured

potential use in its planning documents, while the Bureau of Public Works' Office of Forest Management and the Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens' responses proposed integrating land acknowledgments into site-specific initiatives, educational events, and guiding or operational documents. Zoo personnel currently use a "tentative / placeholder statement" from California's Tribal Land Acknowledgment Act of 2020, or Assembly Bill 1968 (2019-2020).<sup>19</sup> The Bill recognizes Indigenous stewardship of the land and the denial and erasure of Indigenous culture and history, and also articulates that a "Tribal land acknowledgment is a transformative act that works to undo the intentional erasure of indigenous peoples from the nationalist colonial narrative, and is the first step in decolonizing land relations."

In dialogue convened by the Department of Recreation and Parks' (RAP's) Chief Equity Officer, LA Civil Rights learned how RAP may apply a land acknowledgment policy. Personnel from RAP's Sustainability and Partnership sections highlighted a variety of locations and sites historically significant to Tribal communities, including the Tongva and Tataviam, and noted RAP's intention to incorporate land acknowledgment statements into park signage, landmark initiatives, and site-specific naming ceremonies.

Based on insights from engagement with City departments, LA Civil Rights offers policymakers three practical applications for a Citywide land acknowledgment policy:

1. Recitation at public City meetings and events to commemorate the history and solemn commitment to honoring Indigenous people, past, present and future, and their original connection to the land that is present day Los Angeles;
2. Inscription or written language on permanent City monuments, plaques, signage at designated City sites honoring Indigenous history, or temporary installations, such as annual exhibits in the Henry P. Rio Bridge Gallery at City Hall; and
3. Publication in written materials to the public or other agencies, such as the California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation, to which the City's Planning Department submits the City's General Plan elements.

### ***Statewide Land Acknowledgment Policy Research***

LA Civil Rights' state-level research included a review of municipal land acknowledgment statements and processes from Los Angeles County, Albany (California), Berkeley, Cudahy, Pacifica, San Gabriel, Sacramento, and the Town of Los Gatos. City of Los Angeles policymakers' pursuit of a land acknowledgment policy may be guided by the features articulated in Table 1. LA Civil Rights analysis of statewide land acknowledgements revealed effective and respectful statements share common features:

- Creation with input from members and civic leaders in Indigenous communities;
- Emphasis on the past, present, and future relationship with the land;
- Recognition of the historical atrocities and harms suffered by Indigenous people, including displacement and disruption;

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<sup>19</sup> California State Assembly, "Bill Text - AB-1968 Tribal Land Acknowledgment Act of 2020," California Legislative Information, amended August 8, 2020. [Web](#).



- Appreciation and respect for Indigenous cultural practices, legacies and knowledge;
- Acknowledgment of the impact of colonial violence; and,
- Integration of language to meet the needs of Indigenous peoples with diverse perspectives and experiences.

Complete statements from the sample municipalities can be found in Appendix A.

**Table 1. Features in a Sample of California's Municipal Land Acknowledgments**

| Municipality<br>(Adoption Year)                    | Land Acknowledgment Policy Features  |
|--|--|
| <b>County of Los Angeles</b><br>(Nov. 2022)        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specifically names several Tribal and ancestral groups</li> <li>• Honors intergenerational inhabitants as caretakers of the land</li> <li>• Articulates historical harm and violence experienced by the Indigenous diaspora</li> <li>• Confirms responsibility and commitment to truth and reparative actions</li> <li>• Incorporates language about the County's relationship to local Tribal governments</li> <li>• Includes a statement, toolkit, and guidance for various audiences and orators of the statement</li> </ul>   |
| <b>City of Albany</b><br>(Nov. 2021) <sup>20</sup> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes genocide, colonial past, and debt to Confederated Villages of the Lisjan Ohlone Tribe, as well as their contributions to land, ancestral protection, and continued positive efforts.</li> <li>• Points to a future relationship and collaboration between Tribe and City to create a better collective future with the Confederated Villages of Lisjan Ohlone</li> <li>• Land acknowledgment was one part of many resolutions to make amends with the Ohlone Tribe, including flag raising, historical education, land-back initiatives, and celebrations on public land<sup>21</sup></li> </ul> |

<sup>20</sup> City of Albany, "Honoring the Confederated Villages of Lisjan," 2021. [Web](#).

<sup>21</sup> Jessica Flores, "East Bay city moves to recognize Ohlone land, 'make things right,'" *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 20, 2021. [Web](#).

| Municipality<br>(Adoption Year)                                       | Land Acknowledgment Policy Features   |
|---|---|
| <b>City of Berkeley</b> <sup>22</sup><br>(Oct. 2022)                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calls attention to the Ohlone people's history and resistance to colonial violence</li> <li>• Serves as a starting point for restorative and reparative actions that the City and community must support and engage in</li> <li>• Considers further actions in addition to the land acknowledgment, including the creation of easements, land transfers, voluntary land taxes, and land sovereignty</li> </ul> |
| <b>City of Cudahy</b> <sup>23</sup><br>(Jan. 2022)                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledges the Gabrieleno-Tongva home and land, as well as honoring the contributions of Indigenous people from the past, present, and future</li> <li>• Contains a statement pledging to unite and collaborate on collective care of land.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Town of Los Gatos</b> <sup>24</sup><br>(Adoption date unconfirmed) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facing challenges in development from internal disagreements over which groups should be recognized, and the degree to which Indigenous participation and collaboration should be compensated</li> <li>• Solutions include being as general as possible in recognition due to lack of clarity</li> </ul>   |
| <b>City of Pacifica</b> <sup>25</sup><br>(Adoption date unconfirmed)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evokes a remembrance of ancestry, traditions, contributions, sovereignty, and respect of Ramaytush Ohlone people</li> </ul>  |

<sup>22</sup> Councilmember Sophie Hahn, "Land Acknowledgment Recognizing Berkeley as the Ancestral, Unceded Home of the Ohlone People," City of Berkeley, October 11, 2022. [Web](#).

<sup>23</sup> City of Cudahy, "Agenda: A Regular Meeting of the Cudahy City Council and Joint Meeting of the City of Cudahy as Successor Agency and Housing Successor Agency to the Cudahy Development Commission," December 21, 2021, pp. 5-6. [Web](#).

<sup>24</sup> Drew Penner, "Town's efforts to acknowledge earliest residents fraught with challenges," *Los Gatos*, August 10, 2022. [Web](#).

<sup>25</sup> Clay Lambert, "Land acknowledgment must be but a first step," *Pacifica Tribune*, October 26, 2021, [Web](#).

| Municipality<br>(Adoption Year)  | Land Acknowledgment Policy Features   |
|--|---|
| <b>City of Sacramento<sup>26</sup></b><br>(Dec. 2021)                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council-adopted land acknowledgment in partnership with Sacramento Native American Health Center (SNAHC) and the Chairman of the Wilton Rancheria Tribe, Jesus Tarango</li> <li>• A formal statement of public recognition that recognizes the ancestral/historical relationship to the land, displacement and disposition, colonial harm, gratitude and appreciation, and active efforts of the various Indigenous Tribes in Sacramento</li> </ul>  |
| <b>City of San Gabriel<sup>27</sup></b><br>(Adoption process is ongoing) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the process of proposing land acknowledgment with contributions from Tribal leaders to respect past, current, and future contributions from Native peoples to the region</li> <li>• Proposed statement honors the Native legacy and recognizes the need to retain the history and education of the village of Sibangna</li> <li>• Process includes reviewing purpose statement and question responses,<sup>28</sup> as well as incorporating framing input from Tribal leaders.<sup>29</sup></li> </ul> |

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Considerations for Establishing a City Land Acknowledgment Policy*

As a result of direct engagement with Indigenous community members, LA Civil Rights presents insights policymakers or any Council-directed committee may consider while developing a City of Los Angeles Land Acknowledgment Policy:

- **Highlight First Peoples and Broken Relationships:** City leaders may issue a land acknowledgment policy that recognizes that Indigenous peoples who resided on the land that is now the City of Los Angeles had their life-ways disrupted by colonialism and legacies of harmful practices that persist today. Additional exploration for a City statement may need to resolve how the City's policy can acknowledge collective harms experienced by the diaspora of Native Tribal Nations, while uplifting the specific experience of the area's original inhabitants.

<sup>26</sup> Sacramento City Council, *Adopt an Official City of Sacramento Land Acknowledgment*, December 14, 2021. [Web](#).

<sup>27</sup> City of San Gabriel, "Land Acknowledgment Statement," updated September 14, 2022. [Web](#).

<sup>28</sup> Matthew Morales-Stevens, "Memorandum," City of San Gabriel, January 11, 2022, pp. 3. [Web](#).

<sup>29</sup> Matthew Morales-Stevens, "Memorandum," City of San Gabriel, October 6, 2021, pp. 1-2. [Web](#).

- **Acknowledgment of the Environment and Land:** Alternatively, it was also recommended that the City explore a statement that explicitly focuses on an appreciation for natural resources, flora and fauna, continued caretaking, and stewardship of the natural habit while reducing focus on the articulation of original inhabitants and people groups.
- **Recognition of Mission-Group identity:** Engagement revealed historical migration, displacement, and colonization across California created intersecting identities at the Tribal, Indigenous nation, mission, and band levels. Lived experience experts requested that any City statement acknowledge these aspects of identity, and point to the lineage many share tracing back to the San Fernando Rey De España and San Gabriel Archangel missions. City leaders, as well as any committee convening to effectuate recommendations outlined by former Mayor Garcetti's Civic Memory Working Group or those offered by the Department, may need to explore how the legacies of local missions affect proposed language for a land acknowledgment policy, and how inclusion of missionary history may affect Indigenous people not associated with missions.
- **Mitigate Additional Harm:** LA Civil Rights learned the precise wording of a statement and specificity in naming certain peoples may be perceived as advantageous for some Indigenous groups and a barrier to others who are currently residing in Los Angeles, but not listed as local. The Department recommends any future committee establishing a City land acknowledgment policy formulate and articulate a process by which Tribes and ancestral groups may be included or excluded. Through its research, LA Civil Rights used a "self-identification" strategy, allowing assumed groups to opt out of City consideration. This method was inclusive and amiable, but incited critique from Indigenous community members preferring a more stringent method of authentication based on geographic boundaries and history within the region. At the time of this report, LA Civil Rights has not learned of any approved process for verification of maps or history and has not identified City personnel that could make that determination.

### ***City of Los Angeles, Champion of Equity***

By establishing a land acknowledgment statement, the City of Los Angeles has the opportunity to continue its bold stance on equity, anti-racism, and reparative action, and would likely be the largest major U.S. city to issue a citywide land acknowledgment policy. In recent years, a number of cities across the nation, such as Denver and Phoenix, have drafted or adopted land acknowledgment statements and policies.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, the City of Chicago's Office of the City Clerk lists a statement that speaks for the whole of their municipal government,<sup>31</sup> which is a less common approach. LA Civil Rights' research revealed the prevalence of statements operationalized by specific departments or commissions, but Los Angeles policymakers have the opportunity to issue a wider-reaching statement that would initialize an effort to aid

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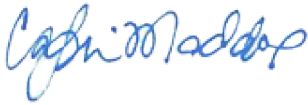
<sup>30</sup> Caitlin Dewey, "Growing Number of Cities Weigh Tribal 'Land Acknowledgements,'" *Stateline*, March 17, 2021. [Web](#).

<sup>31</sup> Chicago Office of the City Clerk, *Land Acknowledgement Resolution*, [Web](#).

Indigenous Angelenos after a long history of harm. City leaders can then continue to enact reparative legislation during this decade of reckoning while also combatting Indigenous erasure and advancing dialogue which catalyzes community healing, justice, and reconciliation.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact with the submission of this report.



CAPRI MADDOX, ESQ.  
General Manager

CM:DJ:RH:MJ: lcv  
November 26, 2024

APPENDICIES:

- A. Land Acknowledgment Statements from a Sample of California Municipalities
- B. Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents Received from the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation
- C. Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents Received from the San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians - Gabrieleno Tongva
- D. Document Received from the Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
- E. Correspondence Received from the Northern Chumash Tribal Council



## APPENDIX A

### Land Acknowledgment Statements from a Sample of California Municipalities

| Municipality                              | Land Acknowledgment Statement  |
|---|--|
| <b>County of Los Angeles<sup>32</sup></b> | <p>“The County of Los Angeles recognizes that we occupy land originally and still inhabited and cared for by the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples. We honor and pay respect to their elders and descendants -- past, present, and emerging -- as they continue their stewardship of these lands and waters. We acknowledge that settler colonization resulted in land seizure, disease, subjugation, slavery, relocation, broken promises, genocide, and multigenerational trauma. This acknowledgment demonstrates our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation and to elevating the stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of Los Angeles County. We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on these ancestral lands. We are dedicated to growing and sustaining relationships with Native peoples and local Tribal governments, including (in no particular order) the</p> <p>Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians<br/>Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council<br/>Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians<br/>Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation<br/>San Manuel Band of Mission Indians<br/>San Fernando Band of Mission Indians”</p> |
| <b>City of Albany<sup>33</sup></b>        | <p>“The City of Albany recognizes that we occupy the land originally protected by the Confederated Villages of Lisjan. We acknowledge the genocide that took place on these lands and must make strides to repay the moral debt that is owed to this Indigenous people, specifically the Ohlone Tribe. We thank them for their contributions which have transformed our community, and will continue to bring forth growth and unity. The City of Albany commits to sustaining ongoing relationships with the Tribe and together build a better future for all that now make this their home.”</p>   |

<sup>32</sup> County of Los Angeles, *Land Acknowledgment*, 2022. [Web](#).

<sup>33</sup> City of Albany, “Honoring the Confederated Villages of Lisjan,” 2021. [Web](#).

| Municipality                          | Land Acknowledgment Statement  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>City of Berkeley</b> <sup>34</sup> | <p>“The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (Huchiun (Hooch-yoon)), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo)-speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. As we begin our meeting tonight, we acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley’s residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley’s incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today.”</p> |
| <b>City of Cudahy</b> <sup>35</sup>   | <p>“We would like to acknowledge that the land we inhabit today was once known as Tovangaar, the home of the Gabrieleño-Tongva people. We show our respects to the Gabrieleño-Tongva people, as well as all Indigenous People, past, present, and future, and honor their labor as original caretakers of this land. We commit to uplifting the Gabrieleño-Tongva people, invite you to acknowledge the history, and join us in caring for this land.”</p>   |
| <b>City of Pacifica</b> <sup>36</sup> | <p>“The city of Pacifica acknowledges that we occupy the ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone peoples, who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula. We honor the Ramaytush Ohlone peoples for their enduring commitment to Mother Earth. As the Indigenous protectors of this land and in accordance with their traditions, the Ramaytush Ohlone have never ceded, lost nor forgotten their responsibilities as caretakers of this place, as well as for all peoples who reside in their traditional territory. We affirm their sovereign rights as First Peoples and wish to pay our respects to the ancestors, elders and relatives of the Ramaytush Ohlone peoples.</p>   |

<sup>34</sup> Councilmember Sophie Hahn, “Land Acknowledgment Recognizing Berkeley as the Ancestral, Unceded Home of the Ohlone People,” City of Berkeley, October 11, 2022, pp.18. [Web](#).

<sup>35</sup> Alfonso Noyola, “Staff Report: Item Number 15A,” City of Cudahy, December 21, 2021. [Web](#).

<sup>36</sup> Clay Lambert, “Land acknowledgment must be but a first step,” *Pacifica Tribune*, October 26, 2021, [Web](#).

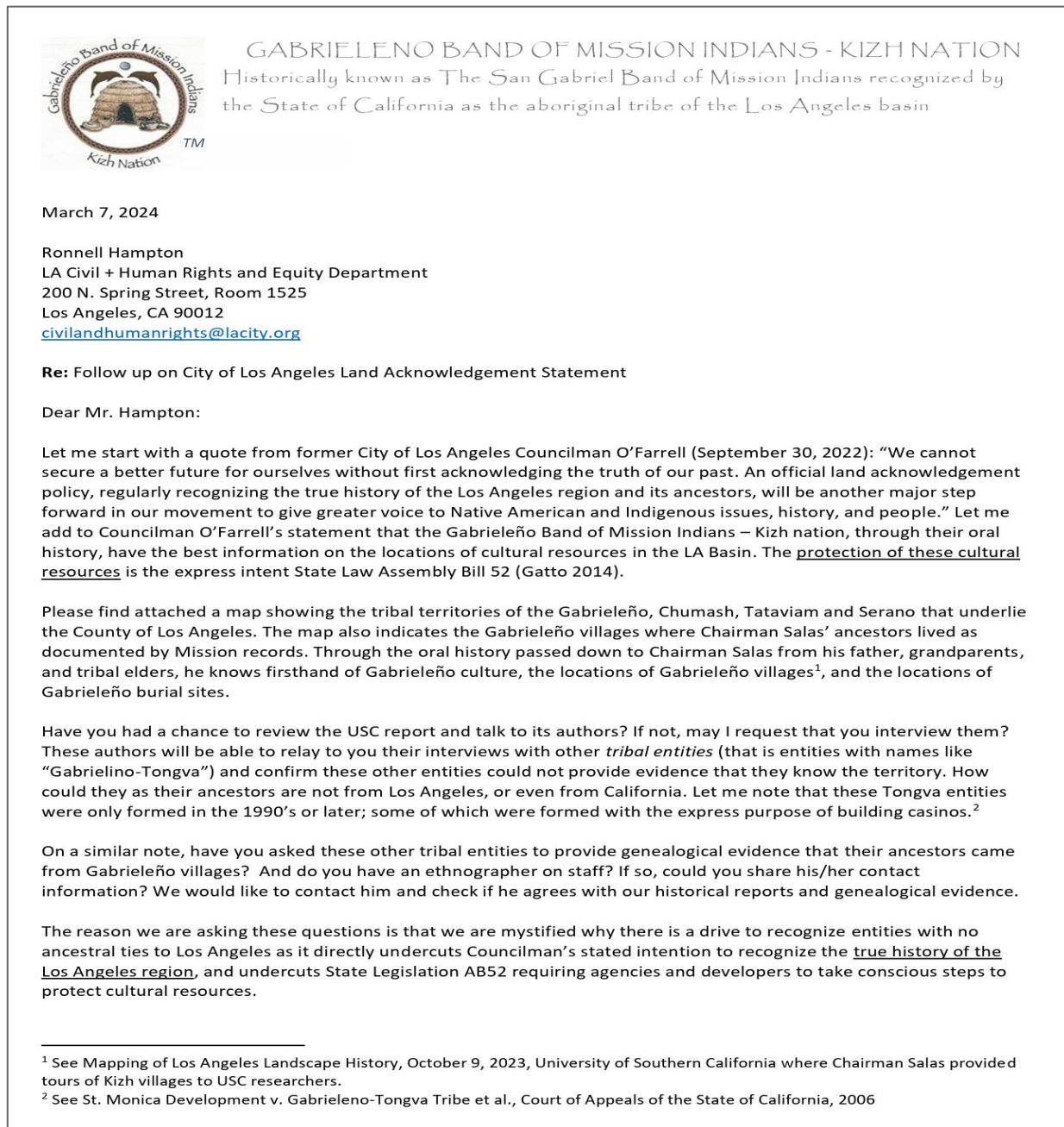
| Municipality                             | Land Acknowledgment Statement  |
|--|--|
| <b>City of Sacramento</b> <sup>37</sup>  | “The history of the Sacramento area, and the people, is rich in heritage, culture and tradition. This area was, and still is, the Tribal land of the Nisenan people. Sacramento was a gathering place for many local Tribes who have lived throughout the central valley and the foothills for generations and were the original stewards of this land. We would like to acknowledge the Southern Maidu people to the North, the Valley and Plains Miwok/Me-Wuk Peoples to the south of the American River, and the Patwin Wintun Peoples to the west of the Sacramento River. We would also like to honor the Wilton Rancheria, the only federally recognized Tribe in Sacramento County. We acknowledge that we are standing on the Tribal lands of Sacramento’s Indigenous People.” |
| <b>City of San Gabriel</b> <sup>38</sup> | “The City of San Gabriel resides on the lands of the uncaded village of Sibangna and acknowledges that the ancestors of this village and many others were collectivized at the San Gabriel Mission. The City respectfully recognizes its responsibility to the original and current caretakers of this land, who remain an important and vibrant community. The City strives to respect and honor the ancestral peoples’ legacy and educate residents of this history.”  |

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<sup>37</sup> Sacramento City Council, *Adopt an Official City of Sacramento Land Acknowledgment*, December 14, 2021. [Web](#).

<sup>38</sup> Matthew Morales-Stevens, “Memorandum,” City of San Gabriel, August 23, 2022. [Web](#).

**Appendix B**  
**Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents**  
**Received from the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation**



**Figure 1.** Letter sent by a representative of the Gabrieleño Kizh to LA Civil Rights, requesting strong consideration of tribal history in the composition of a potential City land acknowledgment.

**Appendix B**  
**Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents**  
**Received from the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation**

Chairman Salas does appreciate your offer to meet, and I am checking on when he can be available. May I suggest that Chairman Salas meet you at a historically interesting site near your office for your discussion? I promise to get back to you soon!

Sincerely,

Victoria Jones  
Kizh Tribal Liaison

Cc: Andrew Salas, Kizh Nation Tribal Chairman  
Christina Swindall Martinez, Tribal Council Secretary

Attached: Southern California Map with Ancestral Tribal Territories



Andrew Salas, Chairman  
Albert Perez, treasurer I

Nadine Salas, Vice-Chairman  
Martha Gonzalez Lemos, treasurer II

Dr. Christina Swindall Martinez, secretary  
Richard Gradias, Chairman of the council of Elders

[Redacted contact information]

**Figure 2.** Back side of the letter in Figure 1. Contact information has been redacted.

## Appendix B

### Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents

#### Received from the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation

**Mission records prove the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation are the indigenous tribe in the Los Angeles Basin**



| Tongva Entities on NAHC Contact List                   | Year Created | Chairperson     | Family Origins                |
|--|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe                                | 2006         | Charles Alvarez | Mexico: Sonora                |
| Gabrielino/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians  | 1991         | Anthony Morales | Mexico: Sinaloa, Loreto, Baja |
| Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council | 1999         | Robert Dorame   | Mexico: Sonora                |
| Gabrielino/Tongva Nation                               | 2006         | Sandonne Goad   | Mexico: Sonora                |



**Figure 3.** Map diagram presenting the purported Kizh lineage and origins of various Gabrieleño tribal leaders.



**Appendix B**  
Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents  
Received from the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation

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has also been assigned to the Gabrielino, which would be a more natural division of topography, since it would leave the Serrano pure mountaineers."<sup>13</sup>

On the basis of information received from Serrano, Palm Springs Cahuilla, and Mountain Cahuilla (who had lived in San Timoteo canyon), I have come to the opinion suggested in the last sentence quoted. All informants questioned, and they were all old people, agreed on the fact that the sites of San Bernardino, Redlands, and Crafton had originally been occupied by people who spoke the San Gabriel language. The original owners had been succeeded by the Mountain Cahuilla who were brought down to the San Bernardino mission about 1846, while the Serrano, or ismailem, as the Cahuilla term them, had originally occupied the foothills of the San Bernardino range bordering the San Bernardino valley. The Serrano, however, had always occupied the Yucaipe valley just southeast of Crafton. The Gabrielino group at Crafton was called *tekenetpauitcem* in the Cahuilla language, the Gabrielino group at Redlands was called in the same language *wateicpakiktum*, but the name given the Gabrielino group at San Bernardino was not remembered. The four main informants whose independent statements concurred on these points were Rosa Morongo, a Pass Cahuilla woman married among the Serrano; Jesusa Manuel, a Mountain Cahuilla woman married among the Serrano; Alec Arguello, a Mountain Cahuilla man who formerly lived in San Timoteo canyon; and Alejo Potencio, old clan leader of the Palm Springs Cahuilla. Both of the men had seen and talked with Gabrielino who had formerly lived at the sites in question, while the two women had received their information from their older relatives. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity or honesty of these four informants, and the exact concurrence of each in regard to the language of the "Kisiannos," as the Gabrielino were called, is strong evidence in favor of original Gabrielino occupation.<sup>14</sup>

One important piece of evidence disputes this conclusion and that is the statement of Hugo Reid who formerly lived at San Gabriel where he had married a Gabrielino woman. He says, "Jurupa, San Bernardino, etc., belonged to another distinct tribe possessing a language not at all understood by the above Lodges; and, although reduced by the Spanish missionaries to the same religion and labor,

<sup>13</sup> Handbook, 615-616.

<sup>14</sup> Benjamin Morongo, an old Serrano questioned by Gifford, likewise stated that the valley including the San Manuel reservation site, was formerly occupied by Gabrielino. Gifford, *Clans and Moieties in Southern California*, present series, 14:179-180, 1918 (cited hereafter as *S. Cal.*).

**Figure 4.** Excerpt from a scholarly text featuring linguistic and geographical information relating to the Kizh people. Source: William Duncan Strong, "Aboriginal Society in Southern California," *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology* Vol. 26 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1929), 8.

**Appendix B**  
Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents  
Received from the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation

**WHITTIER NARROWS**

In the region now occupied by the Whittier Narrows Dam and Flood Control Basin, the confluence of the Río Hondo and San Gabriel rivers once formed a great marshland that bordered the northern slopes of the Puente Hills. Nearby was Misión Vieja, the first site of Mission San Gabriel; sometime around 1774 it was moved to its present location in San Gabriel (Johnston 1962:129; see Harrington 1986:R104 F36 for a sketch map of the Misión Vieja site).

According to Harrington's consultant Raimundo Yorba, the Gabrielino living in the Whittier Narrows area referred to themselves as *Kichireños*. According to Yorba "his mother was half San Grabiellino Indian. She was what they called a Kichireño, one of a bunch of people that lived at that place just this side of San Gabriel which is known as the Mision Vieja. Kichireño is not a placename, but a tribename, the name of a kind of people" (Harrington 1986:R129 F345).

Reid (1852:7) reported that *'Isanchanga* lay near Misión Vieja; José Zalvidea concurred and offered that the name means "wolves, deriving it from *'īsawt*, wolf," although Harrington noted that the etymology was "not clear" (Harrington 1986:R102 F135). Although early historical accounts mention a

**Figure 5.** Passage further detailing ethnic Kizh history, including their relationships with other Los Angeles area Tribes.



**Appendix B**  
Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents  
Received from the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation

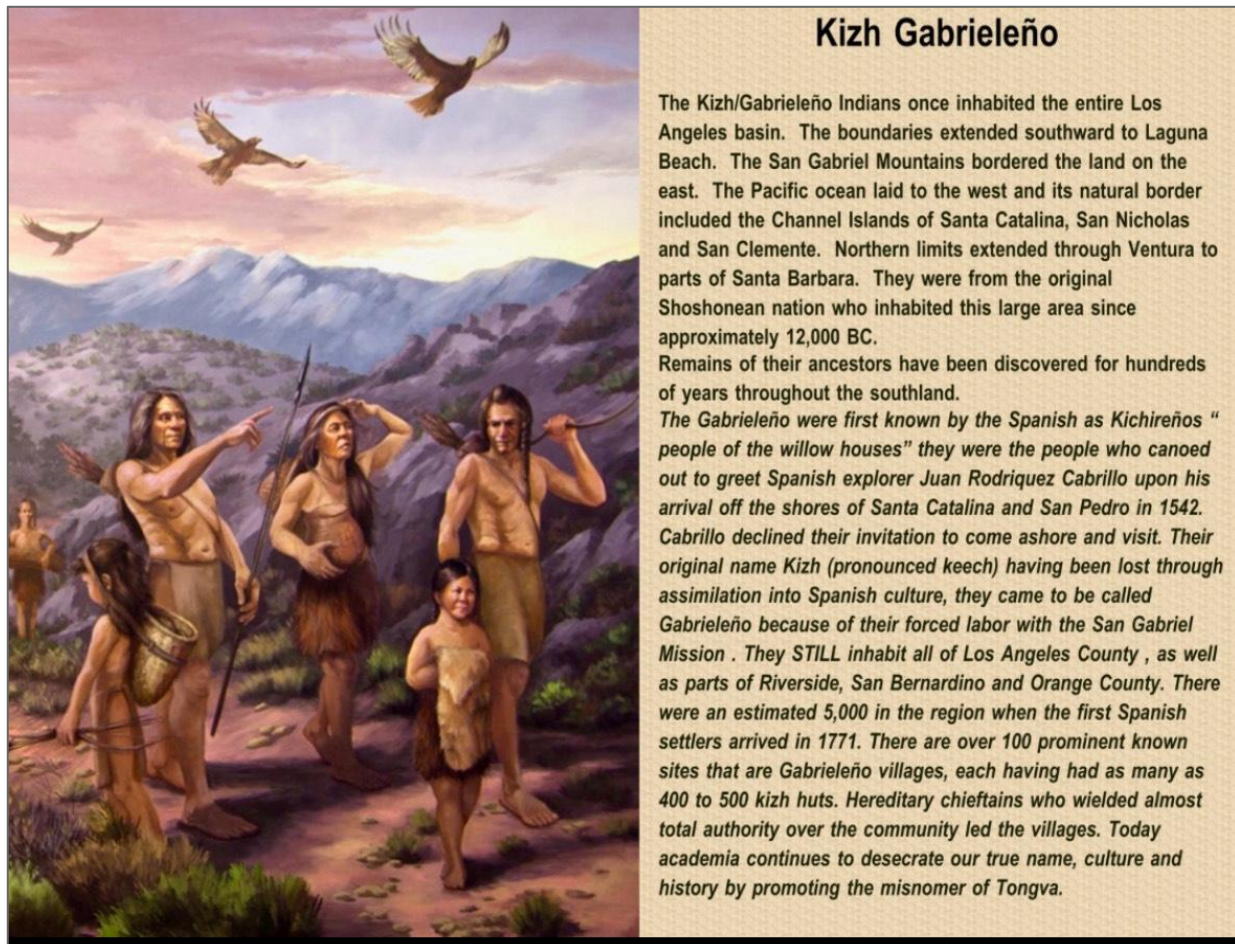
## **Where have the Kizh people, also known as the People of the Willow Houses, disappeared to?**

The answer is, of course, they have been here all along. They have intermarried to some extent within the Mexican community, sometimes blending in discreetly. But most of all they have been systemically ignored for, I think, obvious reasons. It was an immensely convenient and profitable fiction to say that the first people of Los Angeles no longer existed.

For much of the twentieth century, there was a concerted effort to deny their existence, hindering any discussion of reparations. In recent years, the Kizh people have become more politically active, particularly in environmental conservation across Southern California. Despite their deep connection to the land, they lack any formal ownership, facing prosecution even for gathering herbs and plants in the Los Angeles forest. Delving into their history reveals a story of resilience and resistance, highlighting the injustice of their erasure from historical narratives, save for token gestures like occasional invitations to showcase their heritage at events like the Plaza.

**Figure 6.** Unattributed statement describing the systemic cultural erasure and historical significance of the Kizh people.

**Appendix B**  
Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents  
Received from the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation



**Figure 7.** Visual aid with caption summarizing the Kizh's demands for historical, territorial, and cultural recognition.

**Appendix C**  
**Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents**  
**Received from the San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians - Gabrieleno Tongva**



**OUR STATEMENT**

The Gabrieleno (Tongva) San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians (AKA) "Gabrieleno Tongva" is the Historically Traditional Tribe within the County of Los Angeles. The Gabrieleno Tongva occupied the entire Los Angeles Basin and the islands of the Santa Catalina, San Nicholas, San Clemente and Santa Barbara, and from the mountains to the sea. The existence of our people on these ancestral lands has been unbroken since long before the first contact between the Tongva and Europeans.

The Gabrieleno (Tongva) San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians received State recognition from the State of California in 1994. We have remained an integral part of the Southern California community. Our presence is well documented. Our existence is preserved in records of the three local Catholic Missions and in records of local cities and both Los Angeles and Orange Counties. We have cultural and historic sites located throughout the County but our Tribal Headquarters still remains near the San Gabriel Mission.

The Gabrieleno San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians "Gabrieleno Tongva" Tribe is governed by 5 member tribal council, which is democratically elected by members of the tribe. The Tribal Council is responsible for the general operations of the Tribe subject to review by the General Membership during tribal meeting.

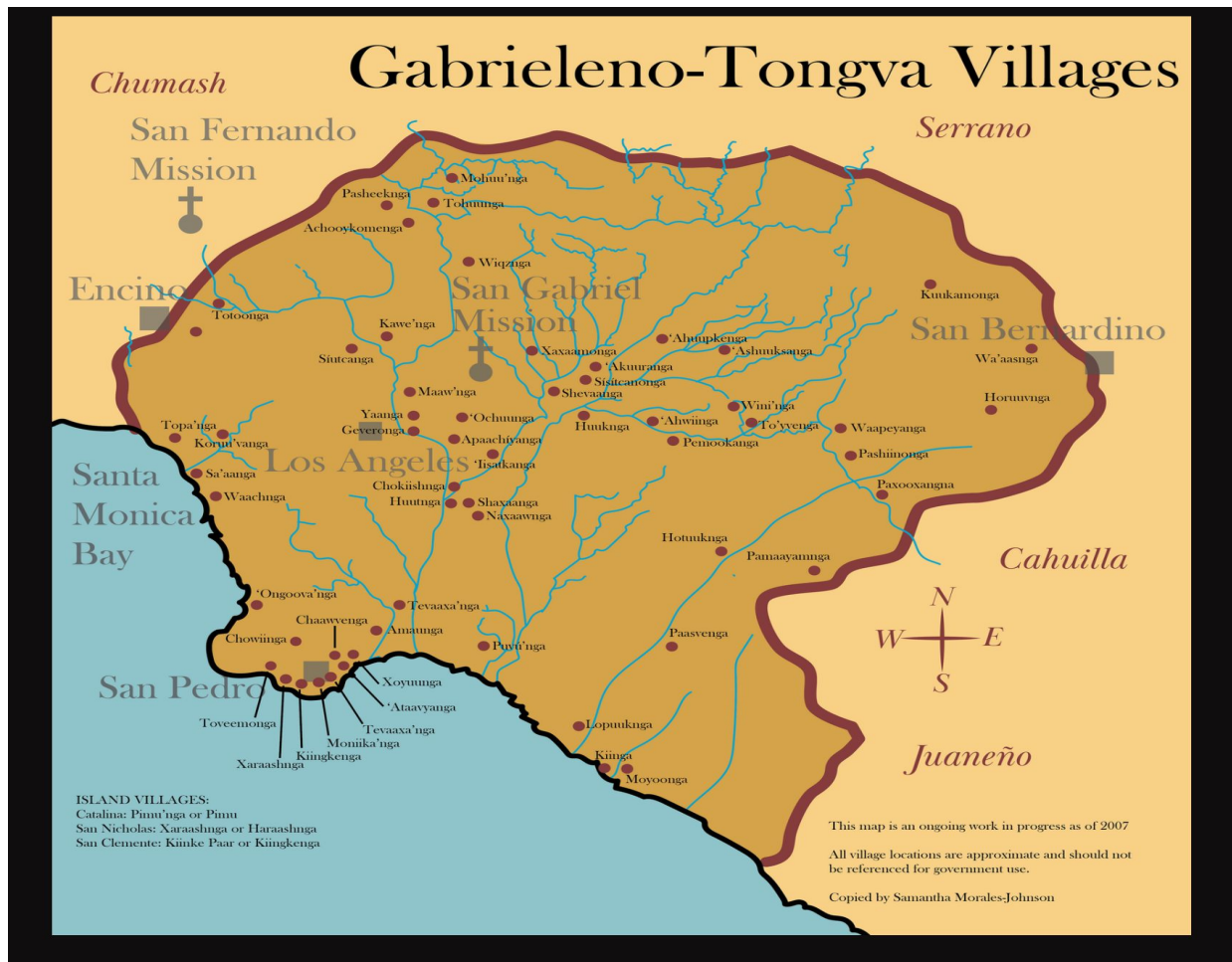
It is our vision to build and inspire traditional values and ethics for future generations while preserving the foundations of American Indian culture. Saving and preserving traditional cultural is a priority of this tribe, along with developing unity among nations, and then the Non- Native citizens by educational work in providing an awareness of the history and culture of our people.

Our long term purpose is to continue to pass on our ancestral traditions to our children and to educate the communities of our Tribal existence.

**Figure 8.** Gabrieleno Tongva statement regarding their tribe's history, current status, and goals.



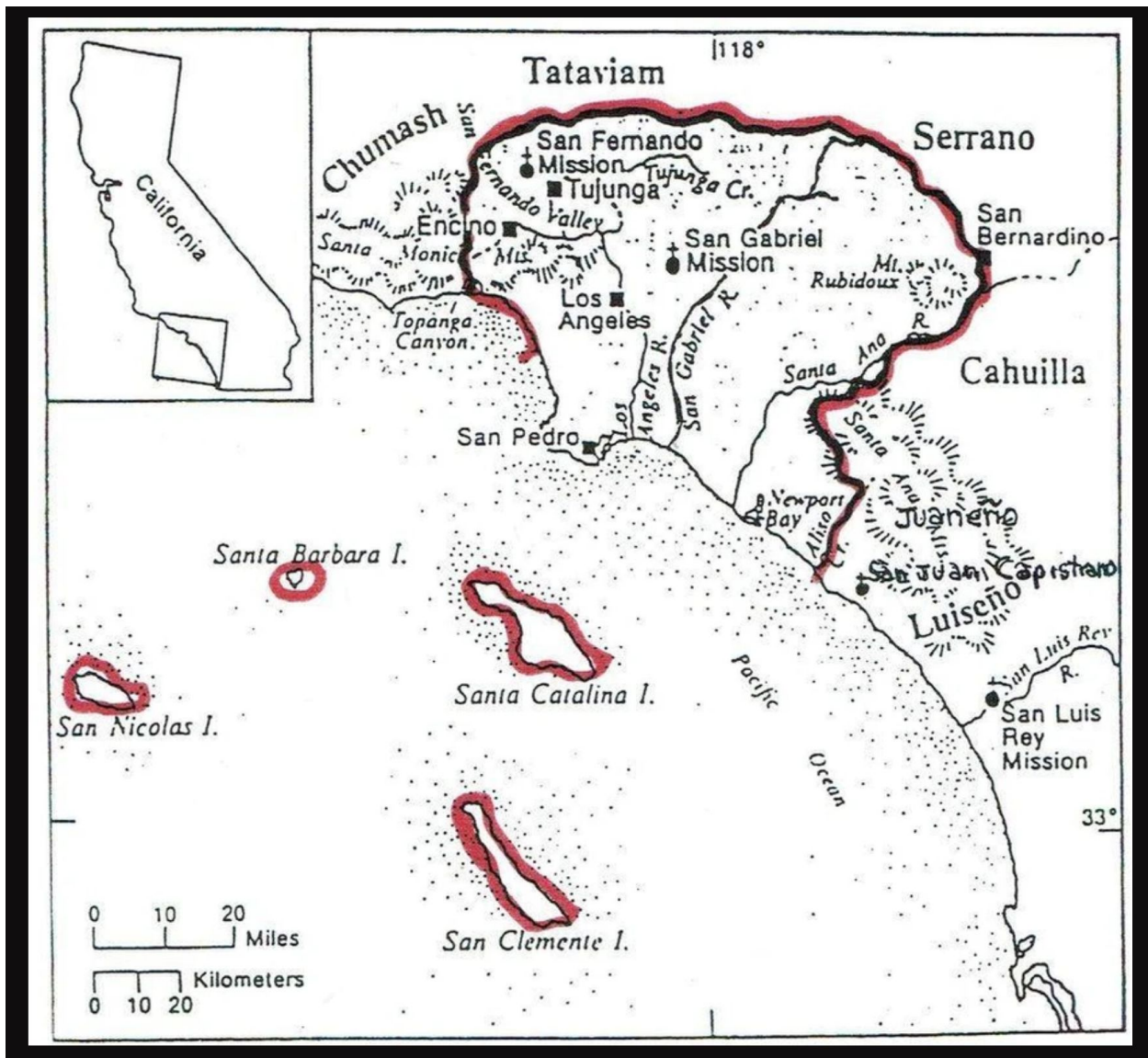
**Appendix C**  
**Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents**  
 Received from the San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians - Gabrieleno Tongva



**Figure 9.** Map depicting the placement of historical Gabrieleno Tongva villages in the Los Angeles area. Not suitable for governmental reference.



**Appendix C**  
Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents  
Received from the San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians - Gabrieleno Tongva



**Figure 10.** Map outlining the approximate historical territory of the Gabrieleno Tongva in relation to other tribes.

**Appendix C**  
**Letters, Maps, and Historical Documents**  
**Received from the San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians - Gabrieleno Tongva**

John Bigler became governor of California January 1852. Among his first actions was to urge rejection of treaties with California Indian tribes and proposed reservations. Instead of ratifying the treaties, the Commissioners recommended a policy removal in reverse Jacksonian policy, moving Indians east instead of west. While some supported California Indian causes, the predominant policy toward Indians was "Kill, murder, exterminate or domesticate and improve them." In the late 1850s local municipalities as well as the state paid bounties for evidence of every Indian killed. See *INDIANS OF CALIFORNIA: The Changing Image* (James J. Rawls), Chapter 7 Extermination. Carey Caldwell, 2006. Bond of the State of California for War Indebtedness, for \$250, bond number 337, dated May 2, 1862, with 11 coupons at the bottom. All coupons Have "paid" handwritten on them, and a large "paid" is handwritten on the center of the bond in ink. (S. Macarron) Transcription of bond: "BOND OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR WAR INDEBTEDNESS IN CONFORMITY WITH" an Act authorizing the TREASURER OF THE STATE to issue Bonds for the payment of the expenses of certain Expeditions against the Indians, Approved May 3, 1852. "The State of California promises to pay to the order of the Governor thereof, on the Second Day of May A.D. 1853, at the Office of the State Treasurer, TWO HUNDRED & FIFTY DOLLARS, provided the same be not sooner paid from Funds anticipated [?] in said Act to be derived [?] from the Government of the United States with interest at the rate of SEVEN PER CENT per Annum payable at the said Treasurer's Office on the surrender of the annexed Coupons on the First Day of January A.D. 1853, and Annually thereafter. This Bond transferable by assignment] on the same by the owner thereof or by his Attorney in fact. "IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF the Treasurer, Comptroller and Governor have respectively Signed, \_\_\_\_\_, and endorsed these presents and affixed the Seal of the State thereto the" [Handwritten] "Thirty first day of March A.D. 1854" [Signed] "S. Andmiano [?]" Treasurer Transcribe by Adam Nilsen 5 June 2007 [11 coupons attached below, each giving a date and the text]: "On the First Day of January the State of California will pay the bearer at the Treasurer's Office Seventeen Dollars & Fifty Cents for the \_\_\_\_ on Bond No. 837." [Each coupon is signed by the treasurer and "Paid" is handwritten over each one. "Paid" is also handwritten across the main text of the bond.]

*Used: California Gold Rush*

**Figure 11.** Excerpt detailing historical abuse of Native peoples by the government of California.

## Appendix D

### Document Received from the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians

#### BEFORE COLONIZATION

Prior to colonization, the ancestors of the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians originally inhabited the villages originating in the Simi, San Fernando, Santa Clarita, and Antelope Valleys. Before settlers arrived, the village organization structure in Southern California was unique in that there was no single leader that ruled over all the villages. Instead, each village was an autonomous self-governing entity that had its own structure of leadership, cultural practices, economy and territory. To strengthen economic and social relations with villages outside of their own, the members of a village practiced exogamy and thus, spoke the languages and dialects that existed at the neighboring villages. Villages were linked by their beliefs about the afterworld, and thus, were known as regional groups. For example, the villages located in the Santa Clarita Valley and surrounding mountain ranges were sovereign, but their beliefs about the afterlife linked them together as the Tataviam people. The name *Tataviam* comes from the word "táta'viam," which is the name given to them by their Kitanemuk neighbors to the north known as the Tejon Indian Tribe.

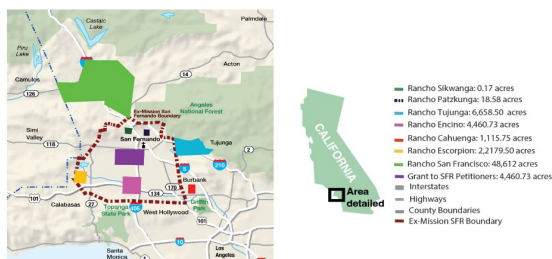
#### SPANISH COLONIZATION

Mission San Fernando Rey was established on September 8, 1797. Enslavement at Mission San Fernando by the Spanish drastically changed the daily lives of the Native Americans who would be called Fernandeños. Families were separated, children were married off, sacred sites were demolished, culture was suppressed, traditional ways of life were destroyed, food sources were removed by environmental degradation from invasive species, and the Fernandeños were massacred through Spanish-brought disease, hunger, violence, and slavery. The life of a Fernandeño person was completely overseen and controlled by the Mission Padres. For example, the Fernandeños could not leave the Mission grounds without the Padres' permission and often received corporal punishment for violating the rules. Against incredible odds, some Fernandeños survived and maintained aspects of their cultural practices privately while others refused to identify publicly as Native as an act of survival.

#### MEXICAN COLONIZATION

In 1821, Mexico gained independence from Spain and California fell under the jurisdiction of the First Mexican Empire. After the Missions were secularized by Mexico, approximately 50 surviving Fernandeño leaders negotiated for and received several land grants amounting to over 18,000 acres (10% of the San Fernando Valley) that were held in trust by the Mexican government. These land grants included Rancho El Escorpion (Chatsworth), Rancho Encino (Encino), Rancho Cahuenga (Burbank), and Rancho Tujunga (Tujunga), and were meant to be preserved in the American period.

MAP OF MEXICAN LAND GRANTS. THE FERNANDEÑO HISTORICAL INDIAN TRIBE PETITIONED FOR AND RECEIVED LAND GRANTS LOCATED ON THEIR ANCESTRAL AND HISTORIC VILLAGES.



#### AMERICAN COLONIZATION

Throughout the 1800's, the United States was on a mission to eradicate Indigenous nations. In the era of California's State and Federally funded Genocide and campaign to exterminate California Native American people, Fernandeños lacked U.S. citizenship and yet, fought to defend their lands in local state courts for several decades to no avail. In the first years of its statehood, California also passed the 1851 Land Claims Act, which would pass lands into public domain that was not filed within a two-year period. Land in northern Los Angeles County, particularly areas with natural water sources such as the Native-owned land grants, became extraordinarily valuable. The Fernandeño ancestors, who could not read or write English, lost their lands within this two-year period to encroaching settlers. Several Fernandeños had cases heard in the Los Angeles Superior Court [for example, see *Porter et al v. Cota et al.*] but the local state courts were against the Fernandeño ancestors' claims to the land, which made it impossible for the San Fernando Mission Indian defendants to affirm rights to land that would have formed the foundation for a reservation.

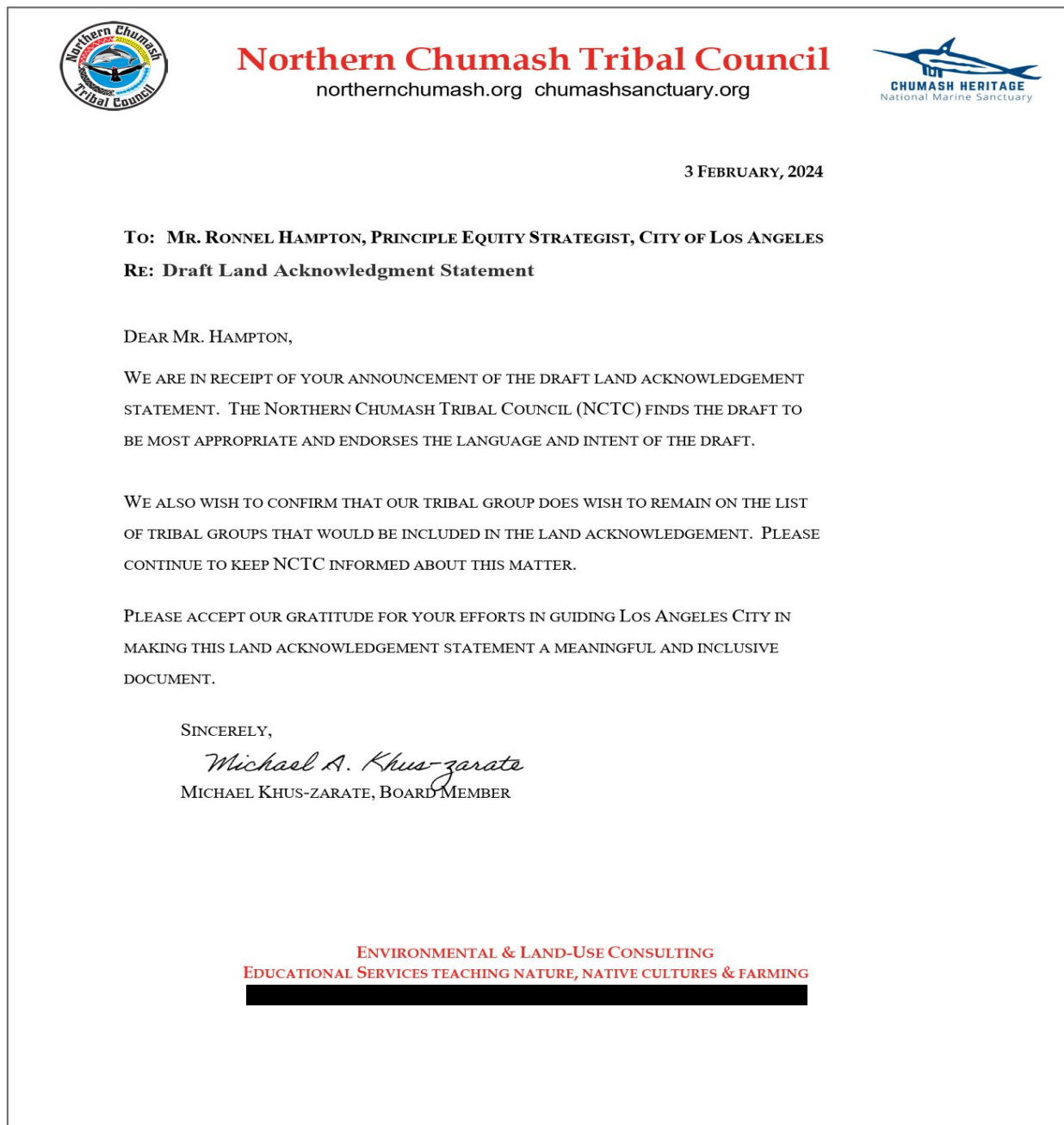
By 1900, the Tribe lost all its lands and members were left as refugees on their own homelands. As result of the land evictions, the Tribal leaders were defended by attorneys commissioned by the federal government. For example, official representatives of the United States, such as Assistant United States Attorney G. Wiley Wells and United States Special Indian Agent and Special Attorney for Mission Indians Frank D. Lewis, pursued land for the evicted Fernandeños. Yet, the historic Fernandeño tribe was not made a federally recognized tribe. Today the Tribe, the descendants of the historic Fernandeño Indian tribe, consist of 3 surviving lineages of 900+ people. These lineages are known by the surnames of their family leaders: Ortega, Garcia, and Ortiz.

Every single part of the landscape was and continues to be of great importance to the Tribe. Today, the Tribe views the lands of *Tataveaveat* as a sacred cultural space containing thousands of years of activity, memories, stories, and ancestral lifeways.

**Figure 12.** Historical scholarship detailing the gradual undermining of Fernandeño Tataviam land ownership over multiple phases of colonization, alongside multiple other crimes perpetrated against Native peoples in the Los Angeles area.



**Appendix E**  
Correspondence Received from the Northern Chumash Tribal Council



**Figure 13.** Letter from the Northern Chumash Tribal Council to LA Civil Rights confirming receipt and endorsement of inclusive language that may be foundational to the development of a future City land acknowledgment statement. Contact information has been redacted.