

Culver City Equity and Human Relations Advisory Committee
Report prepared by Member Rebecca Rona-Tuttle
February 27, 2024 Meeting

The City Council has asked that the Equity and Human Relations Advisory Committee recommend the language to be used for the city's land acknowledgement, which recognizes the role the Tongva People have played in this region.

I (Rebecca Rona) revised Culver City's Land Acknowledgement in collaboration with Linda Childs, who is part Native American. For many years she served as a board member of the Gabrielino/Tongva Springs Foundation, a nonprofit organization whose mission is preserving the ancient village of Kuruvunga, including its renowned springs.

Linda made several points in addition to assisting me with the text:

1.) Unfortunately, today's Tongva are split into a number of factions. Therefore we need to use the term "Tongva People," rather than "The Gabrielino Tongva People" or any other version of the name.

2.) It is important to state that the Tongva People never "ceded" the land, meaning that they never surrendered it (in addition to never having sold the land or handed it over as part of a treaty.)

3.) Some land acknowledgements thank the Tongva People for enabling the non-Tongva to be "guests." Others, such as this one, thank the Tongva People "for the opportunity to live, work and learn on their ancestral homeland." While there is definitely a value in this type of statement, it's important for us to remember, if we are being literal, that the Tongva People never invited us to be guests and never gave us the opportunities described in the acknowledgement. What Culver City residents have is due to the fact that the land was taken from the Tongva People.

Recommended Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are standing and living on ancestral Tongva land, which the Tongva People have inhabited for thousands of years.

The Tongva People are the traditional stewards of present-day Culver City, the Los Angeles Basin in general and the Southern Channel Islands.

The Tongva People did not cede, sell or sign treaties against their land.

We thank the Tongva People for their stewardship of the land and for the opportunity to live, work and learn on their ancestral homeland.