

Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council

Mayoral Questionnaire

The citizens of Los Angeles have become skeptical concerning the current abuse of their adopted Community Plans, through exemptions and changes ordered by Zoning or Council.

- When a zoning change is requested, would you favor notification of all residents in the Community Plan area and have all the hearings held in that area? Yes X No ____

- Should Neighborhood Councils be given land-use powers? Yes ____ No X

While current laws prohibit giving Neighborhood Councils that type of power, I want to work with NCs to give them a greater role in guiding the city services that shape the quality of life in their community so that city government is more responsive to neighborhood needs and concerns.

You might remember that in 2002, I proposed a boroughs plan that would have created neighborhood governments with land-use and other local powers. Unfortunately, the City didn't agree and instead implemented much stricter guidelines on the role of NC's.

- The City, at one time, adopted "K" overlays to protect horse-keeping and open space in the City. Since the City falls far short in meeting its open space requirement and the overlays are now being abandoned as "conceptual only", would you move to give these maps a greater level of enforcement? Yes X No ____

- Traffic is a major concern in our Council area. The first exit from areas to the north, including Palmdale, Lancaster, Santa Clarita, Castaic, etc. from the I-5, is Balboa Blvd. This street is completely congested with cars, morning and evening, as commuters from the north converge at this point. There are a tremendous number of new developments planned to the north, which will exacerbate the situation. We have thought of several partial solutions. Which of these will you support?

Improving traffic conditions throughout the City will be one of my top priorities—I've already proposed a Commuters' Bill of Rights with some common-sense solutions to end our city's endless gridlock. However, I don't think it makes sense for me to answer specific questions about individual roads and projects without consulting with the people who live near them and will be

affected by them. I believe in bottom-up government, and think that the solutions for local, specific intersections and roads have to be driven by the people who deal with them everyday. I look forward to working with Councilman Greig Smith, the GHNNC, and other community groups to deal with traffic problems specific to Granada Hills and the North Valley.

1. Prohibit left turns 3 to 7 PM, from N/B Balboa Blvd. to Balboa Road and also to Foothill Blvd, Mondays through Fridays and right turns from San Fernando Road to Balboa Road and left turns from Sierra Hwy to Foothill Blvd, 6 to 10AM on the same days? **Yes**___ **No**___

2. Permit turns at those same hours to high occupancy vehicles? (more than 80% now have a single occupant) **Yes**___ **No**___

3. Charge a toll? **Yes**___ **No**___

4. Will you propose offering financial incentives to businesses that allow a substantial portion of their work to be done electronically by employees working from their homes? **Yes****X** **No**___

5. In order to expedite traffic from the northern Los Angeles County areas including Santa Clarita, Palmdale, Lancaster and the new Fort Tejon project to the west San Fernando Valley, would you support the extension of any of the major arteries such as De Soto and Topanga Canyon over the hill? This would alleviate traffic on the 5 Freeway, 118 Freeway and Balboa Blvd. **Yes**___ **No**___

- If a situation arose that the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy blocked construction through their areas, would you support tunneling?

Yes___ **No**___

- Would you support funding for this project through a toll system?

Yes___ **No**___

- The public has grown to believe that commission appointments have become a reward for contributors and the well connected. Would you support any of the following: (Yes or No answers to each please)

1. Direct election of commissioners? **Yes**___ **No****X**

2. Positions set aside for Neighborhood Councils and the grass roots representatives of the community? **Yes**___ **No****X**

I want Neighborhood Councils and other local groups to have more direct representation in city government, but I don't believe that a quota system is the answer. I will appoint more community and NC members to boards and commissions where their input is most needed and can have the most effect in making city government more effective and responsive.

3. Prohibition of any financial connection between the Commissioner, his/her family, subcontractors, etc. and projects that might come before the Commission? **Yes** **X** **No** _____

• Should Council members be asked to abstain from voting on any issue upon which they have accepted money or favors from the proponent? **Yes** **X** **No** _____

• Council members and City staff are allowed to return as lobbyists after only one year. This practice allows unrestricted and unfair access to City officials.

Would you be willing to increase the time period to

Four years? _____

Five years? _____

Seven years? _____

Ten years? _____

I think that the current one-year rule needs to be strengthened, but I don't know what restriction will be most effective to prevent unfair lobbying. I want to study best practices from other cities and jurisdictions, and hear from both grassroots organizations and government ethics experts before making a decision.

• Sunshine Canyon will, with the phasing out of Puente Hills, become the largest dump in the U.S. The impacts on the surrounding community will be enormous. How can we handle trash more responsibly?

1. Will you renew the BFI contract for residential trash in 2006?

Yes _____ **No** **X** _____

2. If no to the above question, and it reaches your desk will you veto it?

Yes **X** **No** _____

3. When the city contract expires in 2006, arrange to have trash taken to destinations away from populated areas and sensitive water facilities?

Yes **X** **No** _____

2. Set a goal of price leveling so that MRFs (Material Recovery Facilities) can compete economically with lower landfill costs?

Yes X No ___

3. Base the city franchise fee on only the tonnage that has not been MRF'd, recycled, or converted?

Yes X No ___

4. Construct at least one conversion facility in each of the of the City's five waste sheds?

Yes ___ No X

I do not support the construction of new waste-to-energy conversion facilities within the city. We can deal with our waste problems through increased MRFing, diversion, and transportation to remote destinations without the environmental and health impacts of waste-to-energy plants.

5. The Bureau of Sanitation was ordered, in 1999, to implement a recycling program for apartments and multi-family facilities. This has still not been completed. Would you commit to its full and timely implementation?

Yes X No ___

- The EIRs for the City are prepared by the proponent and are invariably biased as a result. Would you be in favor of having them financed (as they are now) by the proponent, but be contracted out to an independent contractor chosen by the city?

Yes ___ No X

At first blush, I don't think that this proposal would work. The City's professional staff is more than capable of impartially reviewing EIRs, and I am concerned that this kind of proposal would push development from within the city—where we can have input and regulate it to preserve residential quality of life—to our neighboring border cities, where it would increase sprawl and traffic congestion.

- Neighborhood Councils receive “early notification “ of a project only after the application is deemed complete. Unfortunately, the environmental documents have already been prepared, the maps adopted, etc., by this time in the process. Would you support giving notice to the Neighborhood Councils when the first applications are filed and the first meetings are held between the proponent and staff?

Yes X No ___

We are grateful that you have responded to our questions and we will make every effort to put any detailed responses on our website. We also invite you to include your website if it contains discussions of any plan or vision you have for the City,

Your website www.changela.com

Please return no later than January 20, 2005 to:

Kim Thompson

GHNNC

11862 Balboa Blvd. PMB 137

Granada Hills, CA 91344

Any questions, call Michael Greenwald 818 368-0096