

GRANADA HILLS NORTH NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL QUESTIONNAIRE
Responses from Mayor Jim Hahn

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 and have all the hearings held in that area?

Yes. I have supported unprecedented community notification and involvement. Currently, residents within a five mile radius of any zone change request are notified. Over 1,200 hearings are held each year on land use related matters. The Planning Department holds public hearings for all zone change applications at the Marvin Braude Constituent Services Center or appropriate public location prior to public hearings by the Area Planning Commission or Citywide Planning Commission. Additionally, all Neighborhood Councils are notified when land use changes are requested.

Should Neighborhood Councils be given land use powers?

No. The people of Los Angeles voted to give final land use power to the City Council. As Mayor, I have been working to increase input from Neighborhood Councils to Area Planning Commissions and the Planning Commission by increasing notice to the community and participation by the community in land use decisions.

The City, at one time, adopted “K” overlays to protect horse-keeping and open space in the City. Since the City falls 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. I will continue working to implement the community’s vision of equestrian access in these areas.

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?

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 10 AM on the same days?

Yes. I support this idea and will work with you to implement it.

2. Permit turns at those same hours to high occupancy vehicles? (more than 80% now have a single occupant)

Yes. I support this idea and will work with you to implement it.

3. Charge a toll?

No. Generally, I am against charging fees for access to public roads.

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. I support incentives for telecommuting. This year, I enacted an elimination of business taxes for Los Angeles' small businesses, which affects thousands of people who work from their homes.

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 DeSoto or Topanga Canyon over the hill? This would alleviate traffic on the 5 freeway, 118 freeway and Balboa Blvd.

Yes. I strongly support efforts to expedite traffic to and from Northern Los Angeles County. To make such significant transportation improvements, we must stop the Sacramento Legislature's raids of Los Angeles gas tax dollars that the voters specifically designated for transportation. These Sacramento raids have cost us \$850 million in transportation funding. I negotiated with Governor Schwarzenegger on behalf of all California cities to stop Sacramento raids of our property tax dollars through Proposition 1A, and will work to protect our transportation funding as well.

If a situation arose that the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy blocked construction through their areas,

would you support tunneling?

Yes. I would consider tunneling, but would first have to evaluate a tunnel's safety, effectiveness and environmental impact.

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

No. Generally, I am against charging fees for access to public roads.

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:

1. Direct election by the electorate of commissioners?

No. The people of Los Angeles voted to establish the current system to create a more balanced government in which commissioners are appointed by the Mayor and voted on by the City Council.

2. Positions set aside for Neighborhood Councils and grass roots representatives of the community?

Yes. As Mayor, I have strongly supported community involvement in City Commissions. I was proud to ensure that a majority of Harbor Commissioners is from the communities surrounding the port, and I work to make sure community members have a strong voice in all aspects of city government. Granada Hills residents currently serve on the Affordable Housing, Disability, Environmental Affairs, Housing Authority, and Taxicab commissions.

3. Prohibition of any financial connection between the Commissioner, his/her family, subcontractors, etc. and projects that might come before the commission?

Yes. As Mayor, I have led the way to ensure integrity in government by issuing an executive order banning fundraising by City Commissioners and proposing a comprehensive ethics reform package that would ban contributions from city contractors and contract bidders, ban fundraising by lobbyists, and enact several other reforms that would make Los Angeles a national leader in good government.

This plan has been praised by good government experts, including

Bob Stern of the Center for Governmental Studies. My reform plan has also received approvals from the City Ethics Commission and one of my opponents is proposing a plan of his own to be put before the voters as a ballot measure.

Should Council members be asked to abstain from voting on any issue upon which they have accepted money or favors from the proponent?

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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:

I would consider increasing the length of the restriction in addition to supporting increased reporting requirements for lobbyists to increase the transparency of their interactions with City Hall.

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. To handle trash more responsibly will you commit to the following:

Will you renew the BFI contract for residential trash in 2006? No.

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

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

Set a goal of price leveling so that Material Recovery Facility (MRF) can compete economically with lower landfill costs? Yes.

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

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 completion? Yes.

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. I would seriously consider this recommendation or a similar system in which EIR consultants would be chosen from a list that is pre-approved by the city.

Neighborhood Councils receive “early notification” of a project only after the application is deemed complete by the Planning Dept. 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. Notification to Neighborhood Councils is given at the earliest possible time that the Planning Department is fully informed of all aspects of project and entitlement requests. Neighborhood Councils are notified several months prior to any public hearing on a project.

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