

Motor Avenue Improvement Association
Palms Neighborhood Council Candidate Questionnaire October 2012

Candidate Name: Shilpan Patel

1. Why are you running for office?

As a concerned and motivated stakeholder, I'd like to serve the Palms NC as its Motor Residential Representative. As a 10-year resident I have not only enjoyed its diversity, conveniences and charms, but I have also recognized its improving, yet continued needs.

I'd like to help make Palms a more engaged, supportive, cleaner and safer community for not only its current stakeholders (residents and businesses), but also for our guests, visitors and clients – making it more of a destination for all to experience and enjoy.

2. What is the most pressing issue facing Palms and how will you deal with it? What is the most pressing need facing Motor and how would you deal with it.

For Palms, in general, I believe the most pressing issue is infrastructure to support the continued growth we are seeing. We need park improvement, cleaner and safer streets and a more pedestrian/biker environment. Ways in which I aim to address these issues is to collaborate and engage with Palms stakeholders, LA Council members, various city departments and community organizations to gain inclusive, supportive solutions.

For Motor, I believe, infrastructure is also the most pressing issue. Motor Ave. is a major thorough way and with the new mixed-use developments and upcoming Expo Line this corridor is poised to be busier than ever. Motor Ave. will not only need to maintain its marked improvements, but will also need to have sustainability plans in motion to take on the increased traffic and parking challenges. Again, collaborative efforts will need to take place in order to ensure that residential and business interests are heard, acknowledged and acted upon.

3. What are three to five specific tasks (e.g. specific legislation, policies, enforcement actions) you intend to accomplish if you are elected?

If elected, I aim to:

- Increase awareness of the PNC working on improving and creating new outreach methods
- Make Palms a more cleaner and safer environment by increasing cleaning efforts and pushing for street maintenance
- Work on making Palms more pedestrian and bike friendly
- Help guide the Woodbine Park improvement project getting more community involvement

4. What is your profession or current place of employment? Do you have time for this position?

I have a market research and psychology professional background, but am currently seeking a position in marketing/branding/consumer insights. Upon obtaining a new full-time position, I am truly committed to help Palms and will devote the time necessary to make a difference in the community.

Topic-Specific Questions

6. Did you support the creation of the PNC? What do you expect the Council to accomplish?

The PNC was well in place before I knew of its existence. I would have certainly supported its creation at the outset. I expect the Council to serve the needs of all its stakeholders and to think of ways to create a more engaged, supportive community.

7. Please describe Palms and specifically Motor Ave. What would you do to improve it?

Palms is a wonderfully diverse community. Our residents are a mix of all ages and ethnicities and we've also got great mix of businesses that provide needed services. We are all poised for some exciting times ahead with new residential/business development, planned park improvement and the upcoming Palms Expo Line Station.

Motor Ave., in particular, is a "hot spot" which is continually growing and improving. This growth, though, is challenging for residents, business owners and those that use the corridor for their daily work commutes. My Motor Ave. improvement ideas would be to lobby for bike racks along the route in anticipation of the new bike lanes and upcoming Expo Line bike traffic. In addition, I would ask that we look into the possibility of adding a crosswalk at Woodbine to ease access to Woodbine Park.

8. What steps would you take to increase the sustainability of Palms? Do you think there are environmental issues?

There is no doubt that Palms is growing. We've got new mixed-use developments, businesses and Expo Line coming soon. In order to increase sustainability we've got to think ahead to serve the stakeholders. I think a major component of that would be to promote Palms as a pedestrian and bike friendly community. Better outreach efforts would be needed to keep stakeholders informed and involved in the decisions that would affect the community.

With regards to environmental issues, I think that there is one current one and another impending. The current issue is dog waste. This negatively reflects on the look/feel of the neighborhood. It would be nice to have dog bag dispensers and signage on local streets reminding owners to keep the streets clean. A potential concern is noise pollution from the Expo Line. I will need to look into this further to find out what measures are being taken by the Expo Line for noise pollution.

9. What steps would you take to increase public participation in Palms?

I would reach out to my neighbors, talk to them, find out what their concerns are and guide them to the appropriate PNC meeting. I would also work with the Outreach Committee members to figure out how to increase awareness, better target and convert stakeholders to active, participating members. Increased involvement is a top goal of mine.

10. Please describe the Park system in *Palms*. Does it need improvement? If so, what would you do to make those improvements?

The only true open space land we have in Palms is Woodbine Park. I do think it is in need of improvement for the better enjoyment of all its residents and guests. As the PNC has already taken measures to get the

community's input and hear proposals, I would aim to further help by raising awareness and securing additional capital for the park improvement as well as get thorough input and guidance from the community to figure out the most sensible, desired option.

11. What steps would you take to deal with the problem of non participation in our community?

Again, increased involvement is a top goal of mine. Non-participation is a serious issue. I would propose that we do some type of survey (probably on-line due to cost implications) that would allow us to get a baseline and incremental reads on Palms stakeholders. Those that opt-in to the survey could serve as our sample pool. Of course, findings would be used for research, informative purposes only. We could track not only awareness of the PNC, Palms events and new development, but this could also serve as a way to build awareness for various activities in Palms.

12. Do you support making Palms more bicycle friendly? If so how?

As a bike owner, I certainly support making Palms more bike friendly. With the upcoming striping on Motor and Expo Line Bike route we are on our way.

Promotion would be needed at all levels – school, residential and business. We could even take steps to promote the need for a campaign asking for submissions/help from the community on ideas. Lastly, the Bike Rodeo would be used as a platform to promote as it has been a well-liked, large turnout event.

13. What measures would you propose to make the Motor Avenue Farmers Market more successful? Do you support the activities of the Motor Ave Association? If so which ones and how?

To make the Motor Avenue Farmers Market even more successful I would propose, if not already done, to get more feedback from its patrons and Palm stakeholders to find out if the current setup is agreeable and whether or not the vendors are in demand. People will come out, but will only return and spread the word if they like what is available. I would also propose cross-promotion at other Farmers Markets and with other neighborhood councils.

I fully support the activities of the MAIA. I am a big fan of the new benches, trashcans and Farmers Market. Keep moving forward!

14. Do you support mail in election ballots? Why and what if elected will you do to support your position?

I do support mail in election ballots as I believe they can serve to not only allow stakeholders to vote (given the challenging day/time of the election itself), but also allow the PNC to increase its awareness with another touchpoint. In my time I will aim to find a way to have a mail-in option for the next election. This will take a careful look at the budget and lobbying for and gaining support from other members.

15. How do you feel the PNC currently functions? If elected what would you do differently?

From my few months of discovering and attending PNC monthly meetings, I feel that the PNC currently functions close to a self-governing group on most issues as there is a lack of involvement from the community at-large. I understand that there have been and are challenges with Outreach and getting people to participate. I'd like to work with the PNC and stakeholders to help create new and refreshing ideas to gain more traction with stakeholders -- have the PNC become a go-to destination for any questions and concerns.

16. What do you think about the state of transportation in Palms? On Motor Avenue?

As Palms is nestled in between the work-centric and popular areas of Century City and Culver City car traffic can often be unbearable when commuting along the north/south routes of Overland and Motor Ave. during the morning and evening rush hours. Traffic calming measures being undertaken along Motor Ave. need to be given special consideration and attention.

17. How many programs have you initiated, developed and implemented in Palms? Please list. (Please be as specific as possible)

I have not had any such experiences, yet. Despite the result of this election, I aim to investigate the demand/feasibility of a Bike Share program. In addition, I'd like to put together a proposal/motion to initiate a city-wide online survey which would help us get a read on the various demographics and psychographics of our community. This will, I believe, help us better target and serve Palms stakeholders.

18. How familiar are you with other community groups, city hall, city agencies and city departments?

As I have only recently become involved with the PNC I am just getting familiar with other community groups and city agencies.

Campaign Activities and Structure

19. Explain your plans to incorporate a Motor Ave agenda into your campaign.

I believe that each of my goals (from question 3) tie into some Motor Ave. agenda points. I aim to make Palms a more engaged, cleaner/safer and pedestrian/bike-friendly community. As Motor Residential Representative I would certainly lobby for improvements to be made along the Motor corridor.

22. Who in the community supports and endorses your candidacy?

I do not have any endorsements from the community.