

Motor Avenue Improvement Association

**Palms Neighborhood Council Candidate Questionnaire
April 2014**

Dear Candidate:

The **Motor Avenue Improvement Association** is pleased to consider your candidacy for our endorsement in the election for member of the Palms Neighborhood Council. As you know, the **Motor Avenue Improvement Association** seeks to identify and endorse those candidates who demonstrate a strong understanding of and a commitment to Motor Avenue, communal development and environment, including issues pertaining to quality of life and health. This questionnaire is designed to provide you with an opportunity to both explore your own knowledge, understanding and feelings about Palms as well as articulate your vision about them to us.

You are receiving an electronic version of this questionnaire *only*. Please note that we will only accept your responses electronically in PDF format, Microsoft Word or some other universally accepted word processing program. Answers should be presented in the same order in which they appear on this questionnaire. Answers should be brief and limited to no more than two paragraphs. The deadline for this information is **Wednesday, April 30 at 5pm**. *Answer carefully: Many of the questions have multiple parts. Be sure to answer all of them. Unanswered questions could result in an incomplete questionnaire that will not be considered for endorsement.*

PLEASE READ THIS QUESTIONNAIRE THOROUGHLY BEFORE ANSWERING AND FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS. We suggest that you save the questionnaire to your computer so that you can type in your responses (This document is in Microsoft Word).

Candidate Name _____ Ryan Bradley _____

Position Name (if applicable) N/A

Responses dealing with campaign strategy and finances will not be made public.

Introductory Questions

1. Why are you running for office?

I have lived in this neighborhood since 1997 when I moved here to attend UCLA Law School. Since graduating from law school in 2000, I have worked as a staff attorney for Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, assisting all the communities of Los Angeles. Now, I would like to assist my own community. My daughter also attends the local elementary school, and I would like to do all I can to support that school, so that residents will view Palms as a place to lay down roots and raise a family.

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.

Palms is a burgeoning and diverse neighborhood with lots of good schools, shops and culture. However, Palms has little sense of itself as a distinct place. It defines itself primarily by what it is not; that space separating the restaurant of Culver City from the suburbs of Westside Village and Cheviot Hills. Many of its residents identify themselves as living in "West L.A." (rather than Palms) and only intend to stay in the area while they finish their grad school program or their screenplay. In short, Palms is a place in desperate need of identity. Motor Avenue's most pressing need stems from Palms identity crisis. Even as a resident of Palms (or at least of Lawler Avenue), I was first aware of Westwood's shops before I knew of the charmingly idiosyncratic shops of Motor Avenue and its other cornerstone, an ever-improving elementary school. The row of Motor Avenue shops are largely unknown outside of the immediate area. I have an idea to address this. The council should make a special two-sided document that

will be handed out to incoming renters. One side would be a renter's welcome guide with phone numbers and websites for cable companies, phone companies, the local DMV and all the other vendors that they need to get set-up as new residents. The other side would be a novelty map of the Palms that would set out the community's boundaries and the unique shops, stores, churches and museums (The Center for Land Use on Venice Blvd.), along with little mentions of local history. These novelty maps are frequently handed out by universities to incoming Freshmen to introduce them to the surrounding community. First, this would inform the incoming residents that this is such a place as Palms and that they live in it. Secondly, it would point them to the strange and wonderful institutions that give this community its distinctive flavor.

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

- A. A series of community education presentations that would draw the community out of its apartments and hopefully into the orbit of the Palms Neighborhood Council. I have already set up a free Landlord Tenant Training for local residents so that they can learn about their rights (and eat free donuts). I will host and take some time at the beginning of the presentation to talk about the Council and how the public can have a role.
- B. The map as described in my response to query no. 2.
- C. Reaching out to property managers to have Donuts in the Courtyard. Palms is largely an apartment-based community where most residents live in locked courtyards. I would ask property managers to allow me to set up a card table with a Palms Neighborhood Council banner on a Saturday morning and meet residents one by one (again with donuts) to discuss what the council is doing, what concerns or policies can be addressed and when we meet.
- D. Find ways to fund or find funding sources for Palms Elementary. The number one consideration that young, college-educated parents have when choosing whether to come to or to stay in a community is the quality of the local school.

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

I am an attorney with Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles. I have served as Vice President and a member of various committees for the past few months and have fit this within my schedule.

5. Please provide a copy of your resume.

I will attach to the email containing my questionnaire.

Topic-Specific Questions

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

I was not aware of the PNC at its inception. The council should engage in outreach to engage with the community and to assist the community in engaging with what can seem like a monolithic, unresponsive city government to obtain services and information.

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

Please see my response to query no. 2 of the Introductory Questions section.

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

While I support environmental causes broadly speaking, the environment is not a high priority for me as a council member. However, the council can affect environmental attitudes (if not the environment itself) by supporting the

creation and improvement of parks and community gardens so as to educate the community and the kids about the importance of green space in an urban environment.

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

Besides the map/renters guide and the Donuts in the Courtyard proposal, the Palms Neighborhood Council should use its contacts with the local school to request local parents to be involved in the community, i.e. to reach out to speak in support of parks supported by the council. The local residents have opinions and concerns about the community, but are not aware that there are ways to express those concerns. The PNC should seek to make themselves that transom between the community and the other powers that be. This can be achieved through a constant drum beat of outreach.

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

The park system is obviously inadequate to the needs of the community. The past council has taken great steps to improve Woodbine Park, but still large swaths of Palms have no parks within walking distance. The dearth of parks is compounded by the lack of play space at the local school. While there are lovely gardens on the campus, the school's play areas consist of ONE play structure along with painted lines on asphalt to give structure to game play. Because the play structure is not sheltered from the sun and temperatures can get very hot, children are often barred from playing on the structure by the school administrators or children choose to avoid the structure when the sun makes it too hot to touch. Children are often left to use the structure as shelter (rather than for play) ducking underneath to avoid the hot sun. A shade shelter over the structure would allow the school to partially make up for the dearth of parks by allowing for more outdoor play. The council should also look for ways to make more open space by identifying property on which parks may be established or working with the school to request that they remain open on weekends or after school or work with the city to establish below the curb street plazas where children can play or families can eat outside. The council already has begun working with schools such as Palms Middle School to gauge the practicality of having their play areas open on weekends or after school.

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

I support (and am volunteering at) the bike rodeo and believe that more street signs in Palms' more residential areas could serve to slow down traffic and make them safer for bike travel.

12. What measures would you propose to make the Motor Avenue Farmers Market more successful?

The farmers market currently has free parking and a small intimate feel, so reinvention, in my opinion, is not in order. However, the market may want to employ theme days based on the varying harvests of the seasons, as well as incorporating the holiday of Halloween into the market given its popularity and its association with the autumn harvest.

13. Do you support the activities of the Motor Ave Association? If so which ones and how?

I support the community gardens at the schools, and my wife and children have volunteered at the Palms Elementary garden.

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

I think that mail-in election ballots are potentially a good idea, though I would want to consider it in the larger budget context and I would want to look at what safeguards there are against voter fraud.

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

I hope that the 2014-2016 council will be a more productive and harmonious one, and I, as vice president, will ask the members of the council to measure themselves based on what they are able to achieve rather than by what they are able to deny their enemies.

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

There are traffic jams and parking can be nearly impossible. Hopefully, the incoming Expo Line will alleviate this problem.

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

I have worked with the Palms Elementary School to support their holiday activities. I have supported the Palms Recreational Center as an advisory board member and as a junior league coach for soccer and tee ball. I have scheduled a landlord tenant legal clinic free to Palms residents.

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

As a Legal Aid Foundation attorney, I have worked with many many different community groups (California Food Policy Advocates, Maternal Child Health Access [MCHA], Hunger Action Los Angeles, The Economic Round Table) and county agencies such as Department of Public Social Services [DPSS] and the Department of Child and Family Services [DCFS], as well as with Social Security and the Veterans Administration.

Campaign Activities and Structure

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

My campaign will largely consist of encouraging people to participate in the election as a whole with an eye toward their eventually participating in the council as stakeholders.

20. What is your campaign outreach goal? As of the date of this questionnaire, how much have you raised? What is your plan for raising awareness of your candidacy? (Please be as specific as possible.)

I am running unopposed, so I am only interested in increasing voter turnout as a whole, rather than just drumming up support for myself. I have already started going door to door, handing out the notices informing people of the upcoming election, though I only identify myself as a representative of the PNC (not as a candidate). I do not intend to raise money or to mount an individual campaign for myself.

21. Why do you want our endorsement? How you will use it in your campaign?

I would like to work with your organization to increase civic participation in our community and to bolster the area's local schools and parks. I do not intend on campaigning individually for myself.

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

I have not sought or been granted any endorsements.

Completing This Questionnaire

Please provide the *names, phone numbers and websites* of your campaign if relevant.

Please list names, titles/affiliations/agencies **and a current phone number** for the person or people who helped you with this questionnaire, including staff and family members.

"I affirm that all the information I have provided in answering this questionnaire is true to the best of my ability and reflects my personal beliefs, ideas and plans. I understand that my answers will be available to the public on the Motor Avenue Improvement Association website." (Campaign Strategy and Finance responses will not be published)

Candidate Signature

Candidate Name (printed)

Date