

Motor Avenue Improvement Association
Palms Neighborhood Council Candidate Questionnaire

April 2016

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 Friday, April 22 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	Elena Albright
Address	[REDACTED]
Phone Number	[REDACTED]
Position Name	Residential Representative Area E
Email	[REDACTED]
Website	N/A

Responses dealing with address, phone number, campaign strategy and finances will not be made public.

Introductory Questions

1. Why are you running for office?

I am running for Residential Representative for the Palms Neighborhood Council because I have chosen to make Palms my home, and I want to keep Palms authentic to itself while making the improvements that will improve the quality of life of the residents and business owners. I moved to Los Angeles in 2014, and I made a very careful decision

when deciding where to live; I chose Palms for its geographic location, diversity, affordability, and growth potential. The neighborhood already has so much to offer in terms of services, dining, shopping, and community events (many of which have been the brain-children of your organization). After attending council meetings and speaking with current representatives, I realized that neighborhood council system of Los Angeles can have such a meaningful impact on this community that I love.

Beyond my passion for this community, I also have the problem solving and communication skills that are needed to make significant progress towards furthering the platform that the council agrees upon. My professional life as a Product Manager has trained me to foster collaboration and mutual understanding between people from very different perspectives. Then, after achieving consensus, I am able to put together action plans through which we can execute. I can solve problems and create change, and this is what I would do with the PNC.

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.

The most pressing need facing Motor Avenue and Palms as a whole is balancing economic development and livability. With the opening of the Metro station and rising real estate prices in Los Angeles, Motor Ave/Palms can blossom through this investment but at what risk? As part of the neighborhood council, I would consider carefully the ramifications of development on the lives of current residents and business owners. We constantly need to be asking ourselves of what the tradeoffs are for having economic development – it can be done in a such a way as to allow all stakeholders to prosper, but if not done in a careful way, we can push out the kinds of residents and business owners that make Palms an already-great place to live.

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

I think Motor Avenue and Palms can thrive when we encourage the right mix of businesses and community activities, while managing the aspect of livability that affect us all (e.g. parking, crime, traffic, walkability, beautification, sustainability, etc.)

Specifically, if elected to the council, my focus will be four pillars:

Supporting local businesses and sensible development

- Organizing small-business events (for example, restaurant “crawls”)
- Marketing Palms on the Metro as a destination

Expanding parking availability

- Evaluating red-zones and painting parking guides (T’s) on the pavement
- Pushing back or reorganizing street sweeping times

Safety, homelessness, and crime

Encouraging visible LAPD presence at key times of week

Scoping out how to improve the street lighting

Beautification and fostering community engagement

Working with organizations like Beautify Earth to create beautiful street art

Encouraging Parklet development

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

I am currently a Product Manager at a technology company called Convertro. We are an analytics software company, and my role is to coordinate the development of our product by working with customers, prospects, internal users, business stakeholders, and technical engineers to create a vision for our development and execute against it. This experience is highly relevant as previously explained.

I work very reasonable hours, and I have a lot of ambition to fill my days with meaningful activities. Short answer: yes, I have time for this position.

5. Please provide a copy of your resume.

Please see attachment.

Topic-Specific Questions

6. What do you expect the PNC to accomplish?

The PNC can make significant progress in the next two year towards improving parking and neighborhood beautification with coordinated actions. With the opening of the Metro, we will have a great opportunity to market Palms within Los Angeles as a destination for dining/shopping.

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

Palms is a neighborhood with incredible diversity. We have residents who are young, old, single, families, every religion, every race... And Motor Ave/National Blvd reflects this: from It's Game Time to Irish Times, C&M Café to Commissary, El Nopal to Simpang. With Palms Elementary to the Post Office to the Fire Station, it's also a center of our public services as well as community centers like Iman Cultural Center. I would improve it by improving the experience of pedestrians (looking into installing cross walks and street lighting), analyzing traffic flows to see if we can alleviate, and of course finding creative solutions to parking concerns.

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

One of the major issues facing the sustainability of Los Angeles in general is the use of cars. The Metro will definitely improve this, but we can also encourage alternative methods of transportation in our neighborhood. This could be accomplished through public transportation incentive programs, bike sharing, and improved bike paths. I would also like to see the community participation of the community garden increase. As well as help this effort feed back into the restaurants in our neighborhood.

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

I think marketing Palms as a destination in Los Angeles could do a lot. The opening of the Metro is an opportunity. When we let the rest of the city see our personality, we will see more active participation in the community.

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

Other than green-space associated with schools, I believe the only park in Palms is Woodbine Park. This is a shame because residents of all backgrounds and businesses of all types agree that they benefit from green space. I have seen some parklets pop up in the recent months, which is great. They are definitely community-gathering spaces. It's a very creative solution to a difficult problem. I would like to see these pop up around Palms after vetting the usage and benefits with data that we can gather from the existing parklets.

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

Yes. I think the best way to do this is to have bike-dedicated lanes on streets that are wide enough. These should be painted a different color than the rest of the street to give higher visibility and increase safety for riders. Palms could also benefit from having a bike sharing program in conjunction with the rest of the city.

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

The Farmers Market is incredible and already super successful. If anything, I would look into how we could get additional funding/grants for marketing and vendor incentives while offering increased assistance for EBT/Food Stamp holders.

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

I mostly participate by benefitting from the awesome programs as a stakeholder. I love the Farmers Market and parklets. I drive on Motor Ave everyday and benefit from the organization that has been thought out along the intersections of Motor/Venice and Motor/National

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

Yes. I believe that online elections will overall improve the turnout of elections this year and encourage more people to take part in the democratic process. Ultimately, those elected will represent a larger set of voters. It is true that those who vote online may be somewhat less invested and informed in the candidates and issues, but I believe that will ultimately improve the way that we are making decisions for the neighborhood.

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

There are many things the council does very well – the budget seems reasonably spent and the decisions made in the meeting I think are ultimately made with the best intentions. However, I have observed that the meetings can be a bit chaotic, and there seem to be divisions between members. If elected, I would encourage a review of the bylaws, amend any that are nonsensical, and hold very firmly to the parliamentary rules. I believe professionalism and communication breeds innovation.

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

Transportation on Motor Ave and Palms in general is primarily by personal car. We have a huge opportunity with the opening of the Metro (which is right across from my apartment) to improve the walk and bike –ability of the neighborhood. I tend to be able to avoid the most highly-trafficked times of day in Palms, but overall, we can do more to improve the gridlock in places and slow down traffic in other places for safety (for instance, we could have areas where parking is limited at certain times of the day to increase the number of lanes).

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

None applicable – yet.

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

As a private citizen, I would be an outsider to many of the existing community groups and city officials. I see this as a positive though – When you are new to a group of people, you are able to ask more questions and potentially expose inefficiencies in the existing commonly held beliefs.

Campaign Activities and Structure

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

As you can probably tell from my answers already, I am really excited to work with the existing small businesses in Palms/Motor Ave. In fact, this is my primary interest in

joining the Palms Neighborhood Council. I am a huge advocate for making Palms the best place to live, work, and play, and that is all about joining forces with the existing organizations that have the same goals.

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 plan to fund my own campaign personally and generate votes through grassroots organization, mostly meeting individually with those who live in my building and around my immediate area.

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

Your endorsement would be a testimonial from an objective third-party, which would bolster my credentials as a candidate even though I do not already have a role in local or city government. I would like to mark this on my campaign flyers. I would also like to talk to local voters at Motor Ave events (i.e. the Farmer's Market).

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

Of course, the only support that truly matters is from the residents in Area E who have the ability to vote for me and whom I would represent. I am simply a community member who wants to do right by my neighbors. I am hoping I can earn their vote individually, by proving my problem solving skills and passion for Palms.

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." (Contact information, Campaign Strategy and Finance responses will not be published)

Candidate Signature

Elena Albright

Candidate Name (printed)

Elena Albright

Date

4/22/2016