



# Coalition of Homeowner Associations-Council District 5: Newsletter #1-A

Preserving and Protecting Neighborhoods

January 2022

## Los Angeles Councilmember CD5

Each candidate was individually interviewed in-depth for two hours by the Coalition's 3-member Election Committee. Before leaving the interview, each candidate reviewed his/her responses to the questions. The Coalition interviews candidates who have demonstrated the ability to wage a reasonable campaign. We thank all candidates for their interest in serving Los Angeles. This newsletter is meant to be informative and does not represent support for or opposition to any candidate or issue. This newsletter may be reprinted or emailed in its entirety. Portions may be reprinted only with written permission from a Coalition Election Committee member. For more information, go to the Coalition's website <[www.cd5hoas.blogspot.com](http://www.cd5hoas.blogspot.com)>.

	Sam Yebri	Katy Young Yaroslavsky
		

BASIC INFORMATION		
How long have you lived in Los Angeles?	31 years (lived in Beverly Hills for 4 years of high school and 4 years of college)	30 years (as a child: 4 years in Westwood, 7 years in Pacific Palisades; as an adult: 19 years)
How long have you lived in CD 5?	31 years	Moved back into CD 5 in 2020, previously lived for seven years in CD 10, previous to this lived in CD 5 for 11 years
Current employment	Attorney: Firm of Marino Yebri LLP	On leave as of September 1, 2021
Previous employment	1) Attorney at Proskauer Rose LLP 2) Attorney at Jones Day 3) Law Clerk for Federal Judge Howard Matz	1) Worked for County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl (6 years) as Senior Environment and Arts Deputy. 2) General Counsel at Climate Action Reserve (5 years) 3) Land use lawyer at Latham & Watkins (5 years)
What community service positions (HOA Board, Neighborhood Council, community groups, etc) have you held/participated in?	Comstock Hills HOA Board since 2013, Friends of Westwood Library Board (for 6 years), active in working with Westwood Neighborhood Council	None
During the past five years, what have you done to preserve and protect the quality of life for homeowners & residents in your current immediate neighborhood?	Worked with Comstock Hills HOA doing public safety and obtained RING doorbells for homeowners, lobbied for library security, participated in LAPD 11-week training program	Supported slow streets
During the past five years, what have you done to preserve and protect the quality of life for homeowners & residents in the wider scope of CD 5?	For Comstock Hills HOA coordinated public safety meetings to combat hate crimes	Brought millions of dollars to CD5 through Measure W (for the betterment of parks and public health) and created livable communities through the Sustainability Plan.

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<b>MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE</b>		
A. What is the largest department or unit you have had management responsibility for? B. What was the budget for this unit? C. Final budget authority?	A. 10 people B. \$1 million C. Yes	A. 40 people B. \$10 million C. No
What are your key strengths as a manager of people?	Empower people, instill accountability, have decisiveness	Good listener, don't care who gets credit, empathy and problem-solving
Most serious weakness/drawback as a manager of people:	Impatience	Care about process and sometimes this slows things down
Experience that best prepared you to be CD 5 Councilmember:	Board member of 10 different non-profit organizations, being a City Commissioner for Civil Service, owner of small business, litigation and mediator for plaintiffs	My time at Latham and Watkins helped me understand development and community building, and my time in Supervisor Kuehl's office gave me an introduction to government and its programs
What do you bring to this office that is unique from any of the other candidates?	Started and now run a business where I have a payroll and have to control expenses, understanding of business, longest connection with CD 5, not taking money from cannabis companies, PACs or unions	Significant public and private sector experience, a regional perspective, able to leverage money from county, working mom with young children
<b>GOALS AS CD 5 COUNCILMEMBER</b>		
Why are you running for this office?	I love the City and am disgusted by how current government has run it into the ground, want to continue to raise my children here	We need effective ethical and proven leadership when the City is in crisis
What are the top three issues facing the City and as Councilmember, what action steps will you take to help address each one:	1) <u>Accountability of our leaders/indifference of our leaders</u> : Introduce motions for campaign finance reform and enforcement measures that give the Ethics Department teeth; introduce motions for planning reform. 2) <u>Homelessness</u> : More affordable housing/mental health/addiction services, reform LA Homeless Authority, support ordinances that address homelessness. 3) <u>Public safety</u> : Not defund the police, add new hires, recruit, train, provide oversight, refer 5150 (mental health) calls to social services, have social workers team up with LAPD, restructure deployment of LAPD, use technology for efficiency and effectiveness.	1) <u>Homelessness</u> : Use more resources for prevention, being flexible in finding affordable housing and addiction services, requires regional approach. 2) <u>Quality of Life/Public Safety</u> : Fully funded police department, training/adding to LAPD, provide resources for patrols. 3) <u>Climate Resilience</u> : Update infrastructure, water & power facilities so lights don't go out, plant trees, add transportation to public.
What impediments would prevent you from accomplishing these goals?	Insiders don't want reform, laws not enforced	Need 7 councilmembers to agree with you, self-promotion by other councilmembers who may be running for another office and want to talk about their own accomplishments
As Councilmember, how would you overcome these impediments?	Not let developers and insiders have excessive influence, having the right staffing in place and the right level of funding, enforce laws, outsiders will help promote the groundswell for change	Relationship building and bringing other people along and letting them take credit

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<b>SPECIFICS OF BEING CD 5 COUNCILMEMBER</b>		
<b>As CD 5 Councilmember what committees do you want to serve on?</b>	1) Homelessness. 2) Public Safety. 3) PLUM.	1) Parks and Rivers. 2) Homeless Committee. 3) Budget Committee.
<b>A. What have you done to alleviate the problem of homelessness within the City? B) What is your plan to resolve the homeless problem? C) As CD 5 Councilmember what will you do differently from the current administration to resolve the homeless issue in CD 5? D) Do you think the current CM has failed in solving the homeless issue?</b>	A) Volunteered at Westwood Connect, provided legal services (on Beit Tzedek Board), co-chaired Jewish Community Foundation Grants Committee for Homeless. B) Shift money from new construction to shelters and mental health facilities, build new affordable house, help tenants, provide landlord protection. C) Use community resources like Beit Tzedek to help small business tenants, help them understand benefits, meet with landlords and tenants, enforce ordinances. D) No. Better than other Council Districts.	A) Worked on Project Room Key, the public health side. B) Reduce rate people fall into homelessness and keep these people housed with a hot line and social work; restore safe camping & safe parking, provide food stamps, get people off streets, work with State for mental health. C) Closer collaboration between various levels of government, I'll be a connector. D) Yes, because there isn't collaboration with other levels of government.
<b>Do you support or oppose the homeless living in Westwood Park?</b>	Oppose	Support
<b>What is your plan to alleviate traffic in CD 5?</b>	Get people to use public transportation by keeping it clean and safe, make it easier to get to transportation, teach people to use public transportation, it's a regional issue so work with MTA, repair roads, prioritize projects.	Increase Metro, get people out of cars and have them use Metro, ride bikes and increase number of bike lanes.
<b>What are the top two issues for the east side of the district that are different from the rest of the district?</b>	1) Crime on Melrose. 2) Livability: over-development/traffic.	1) Crime on Melrose. 2) Need infusion of resources for businesses along 3rd Street, Melrose for revitalizing these areas.
<b>What are the top two issues for the west side of the district that are different from the rest of the district?</b>	1) Westwood Park and Rancho Park in disrepair with encampments, trying to turn these areas into housing. 2) Planning issues with subway in Westwood Village, no vision, need more housing at lower rates.	1) Traffic & cut-through traffic. 2) Homelessness
<b>What are the top two issues for the hillsides portion of the district that are different from the rest of the district?</b>	1) Over-development. 2) Benedict Canyon hotel proposal. 3) Ridgeline issues	1) Fire hazards. 2) Over-development and wrong development
<b>Do you support or oppose the "defunding" of the police and transferring those funds elsewhere?</b>	Oppose	Oppose
<b>Crime is on an up-tick. What will you as our Councilmember do about it?</b>	Budget more resources for LAPD in CD 5, encourage every incident/crime be reported, ensure better coordination between LAPD and neighborhood & business groups, use technology like license plate readers and cameras	Bring constituents together to talk about crime and bring top LAPD officers to the community, get resources for CD 5, get people off the streets
<b>What will be the first thing you will do on Day 1 of your term?</b>	Work with staff. I will be judged by how good my staff is and how they do their jobs	Call County supervisors whose districts overlap CD 5 and say, "Let's get to work on homelessness"
<b>Will you pledge to implement recommendations from past and future audits conducted by the City Controller's office that affect CD 5?</b>	Yes	Yes

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<b>Would you consider keeping key people in the CD 5 office who have been very effective and already know CD 5 issues?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes, would consider</b>
<b>Who will be your chief-of-staff?</b>	<b>Everyone is welcome to apply</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
<b>SPECIFIC ISSUES: What actions will you take to address:</b>		
<b>A. Climate change?</b>	1) Inspect oil and gas wells, phase out. 2) Get people out of cars. 3) Protect ridgelines, wildlife, views and enforce the laws.	Transportation investment, 100% renewable power, local sources and recycling water, make all water potable (drinkable)
<b>B. Solar power?</b>	Make it easier for homeowners to get and install it, scale it, the issue is storage.	DWP must offer incentives so more people will use solar. Micro-grids and more substations
<b>C. Electric vehicles?</b>	Mandated by State, need more charging stations and incentives.	DWP offers incentives, more public charging stations
<b>D. Disposal of batteries from electric vehicles?</b>	Need safe places for disposal, educate the public, work with Tesla	Recycle them locally, better treatment for disposal
<b>E. Driverless vehicles?</b>	It's the future. LA should be on forefront of regulation. Explore possibilities	Won't happen in meaningful way
<b>F. Reduce cost of waste disposal?</b>	Recycle LA a disaster, revisit program, do not have any monopolies not just Athens for trash pickup, demand better results, work with next City Attorney	Upgrade waste infrastructure, but don't know if we can reduce cost, reduce plastics, don't know about existing contracts, but should have appropriate bidding for waste disposal contracts
<b>G. Speeding and street racing on key thoroughfares in CD 5</b>	Change State law to lower speed limits, have more cameras, use traffic car decoys, increase penalties, be proactive and have devoted teams to prevent speed racing, use social media, enforce the laws	Speed cameras, policing
<b>H. Gun control?</b>	Promote ghost gun removal, have buy-back programs, enforce laws, more LAPD penalties	Support buy-back program, do public service announcements
<b>I. Systemic racism in the City?</b>	Rooting out police violence, enforcement can do better	It's everywhere, people need to understand it and root it out
<b>J. Anti-Asian and Anti-Semitism in the City?</b>	Educate,, use non--profits, protect institutions, more security/LAPD on Shabbat, use ADL to track hate on social media, put more money towards anti-hate programs	Leaders have to stand up across the City to oppose it, prosecute hate crimes, invest in public education and cross-community programs
<b>K. Increase emergency and fire response times in CD 5?</b>	Increase funding, use more technology for prevention, do not overbuild on ambulance and first-responder routes	Fully fund LAPD and LAFD, fill empty positions, and have LAPD and LAFD not respond first to non-emergency calls regarding the homeless

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<b>L. Increase the process of public comments on development and planning?</b>	Hold line on fees, start process at neighborhood level, proactive to find win-wins	Create more opportunities for public comments, have field staff talk to people around the project, have good relationship with Mayor, hold press conferences to talk about bureaucracy in government
<b>M. To counteract SB9 and SB 10?</b>	Oppose SB 9 and 10, support litigation and ballot initiative opposing SB 9 & 10, lobby colleagues, should be local control over local issues	Oppose SB9 and SB 10 (NO SPECIFICS STATED BY CANDIDATE)
<b>SPECIFIC PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND SCENARIOS:</b>		
<b>As our Councilmember will you demand that the Planning Department conduct an infrastructure review every year as required by the Charter?</b>	Yes	Maybe yes, maybe no
<b>How will you counteract development in high-fire hazard zones in the hillsides?</b>	Would oppose development that endangers the hillsides in high-fire zones	Not allow density there
<b>Would you support or oppose developments that create population density without infrastructure improvements?</b>	Oppose, and I oppose SB 1401 that says a City can't impose parking requirements on any housing near a transit area, which will prevent the area from having sufficient parking spaces	Oppose
<b>What restrictions would you place on population density developments?</b>	Issue of density is a case-by-case neighborhood by neighborhood issue, any proposed density must make sense for that particular area especially in terms of infrastructure, emergency services, traffic mitigation and other neighborhood-specific issues	Density should go where there are job centers, no upzoning of single-family neighborhoods
<b>What is your position on Specific Plans and the granting of variances and adjustments?</b>	Grant variances in rare circumstances, update specific plans	Should update community plans, no variances or exceptions as a rule, but it depends on the project
<b>The Planning Department allows as a bonus a reduction in the number of parking spaces or bicycle spots in both commercial and residential developments. Given the shortage of parking in already densely population areas, what would you do to stop this?</b>	Be involved with the Planning Department early on and proactively on the front-end of a project. No up-zoning or spot-zoning. Have more public comment.	Depends on where the project is. Can't answer this.
<b>Do you support historical preservation?</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>If a developer wants to take a 100-year old church apart to build a 16-story residential building and then put the church back together would you support or oppose the developer's plan?</b>	Oppose	Need more information on how community feels

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<b>If a developer wants to build an office building on stilts above and around an existing historic structure would you support or oppose the developer's plan?</b>	Oppose	Oppose
<b>Do you support or oppose the Fox building project in Century City?</b>	Oppose	Support
<b>Do you support or oppose up-zoning of Pico Blvd?</b>	Transit corridor parts of Pico Blvd, I support. Pico-Robertson oppose.	Support
<b>Do you support or oppose the expansion of Cedar-Sinai?</b>	Would like to find a way to make mitigations work for neighborhood. I'll say oppose until Cedar-Sinai pledges mitigations	Support
<b>A proposed development project has entitlement, but the neighbors/HOA oppose it. How would you handle this issue?</b>	Every project can be changed. Talk to the developer using the "carrot and stick" approach or whatever we need to do	Sit down with HOA/neighbors and the developer, see if developer would make concessions to community, advocate for HOA
<b>A developer is seeking a variance for height so that more condo units can be built, but the neighbor/HOA oppose the variance. How would you hand this issue?</b>	Support neighbors. They know what's good for the neighborhood	I don't support variances when HOA opposes, I would sit down with HOA/neighbors and the developer, see if developer would make concessions to community, advocate for HOA
<b>What will you do to advance: A) The Ridgeline Ordinance B) The Wildlife Corridor</b>	A) Support revised language regarding the rebuilding of homes and the scope of neighborhoods included B) Support and want to get it implemented	A) Support updated ordinance and want to keep development off ridgelines B) Buy every parcel of open space in Santa Monica Mountains and create passages under roads and freeways.
<b>Do you support or oppose the proposed hotel in Benedict Canyon?</b>	Oppose	Oppose
<b>Do you support or oppose the Berggruen project in the Santa Monica Mountains?</b>	Oppose	Oppose
<b>A community plan is due to be reviewed and revised. How would you involve HOAs in this process?</b>	Don't wait--have the HOAs involved on the front-end, have the HOAs meet and be in involved with the Councilmember	Have people at the table and more than once
<b>How do you think the remaining HHH funds should be allocated?</b>	It's a mistake to use the \$1.2 billion on new housing, shift to housing we can build fast and cheap, identify city property that's under-utilized	On cost-effective housing, adapt & reuse existing office & residential buildings, conversion of motels & hotels
<b>How would you address the current cost of units to be built with HHH funds (\$500,000 per) with timing of more than 3 years?</b>	As needed, build pre-fab, modular housing	Do alternative housing that is faster to complete

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<b>INTERACTION WITH CONSTITUENTS</b>		
Will you pledge to adopt and operate according to the Coalition's <i>Constituents Bill of Rights</i> (see last page)?	Yes. Signed pledge.	Yes. Signed pledge.
Will you commit to meeting with the Coalition of HOAs-Council District 5 at least three times per year?	Yes	Yes
When a new project is proposed will you meet as many times as necessary with homeowners who oppose or have questions about the project?	Yes	Yes
Will you provide homeowners with the same and all information as to a developer?	Yes	Yes
Would you ask CD 5 leadership their opinions regarding your proposed choice for Planning Deputy?	Yes	Yes
If disputes arise between developers and homeowners/HOAs, do you pledge to give equal access to homeowners and mediate fairly?	Yes	Yes
<b>CAMPAIGN METHODS</b>		
Will you pledge to the Coalition to provide its Election Committee with evidence/back-up material within 24 hours when accusations against another candidate are stated?	Yes	Yes
If you had a previous campaign, did you receive any contributions that were later shown to be laundered funds? If yes, what did you do?	No previous campaign	No previous campaign
Did you ever refuse to accept/keep any campaign contributions? From who?	In this campaign, yes. From developers, Chevron, some PACs	Not accepting money from developers with active or pending projects within City of LA, oil & gas, cannabis, billboards, corporate contributions
Did you ever have ethics violations in a previous campaign? How were they resolved?	No previous campaign	No previous campaign

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<b>Campaign Funding</b>		
Information is as of 9/30/2021 as reported on the Los Angeles City Ethics website: < <a href="http://ethics.lacity.org">http://ethics.lacity.org</a> >. Best efforts were made to accurately report contribution data.		
Amount raised to date:	\$520,062	\$358,924
Loans to campaign:	\$0	\$0
<b>LEADING INDICATORS OF POSSIBLE SPECIAL INTEREST FAVORS OR CONSIDERATIONS: SIGNIFICANT CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS FROM A PARTICULAR SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP. BEST EFFORTS WERE MADE TO PROVIDE ACCURATE INFORMATION. HIGH PERCENTAGES OF CONCERN ARE IN YELLOW.</b>		
Percentage of money from:		
◆ Developers, construction industry, real estate interests, building suppliers, any real estate connection or interests, etc.	9%	6%
◆ Finance, banking, accounting, investing, money management, etc.	6%	4%
◆ Lawyers, attorneys, associates in/of the legal profession	31%	15%
Out-of-State contributions if excessive may indicate potential for special interests seeking favors. Percentage of all contributions from people living/working outside California:	7%	5%
Out-of-City contributions if excessive may indicate potential of special interests seeking favors. Percentage of all contributions from people living/working outside the City of Los Angeles:	14%	38%
Do you pledge to <u>NOT</u> advocate for or be involved in any way with any project or issue that involves a campaign contributor or client thereof, or give special treatment in any way to a campaign contributor or a contributor's client?	Yes	Yes
<b>ENDORSEMENTS ARE A LEADING INDICATOR OF POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND/OR POSSIBLE BIASED BEHAVIOR IN OFFICE. INFORMATION WAS OBTAINED FROM EACH CANDIDATE'S WEBSITE AND/OR CAMPAIGN LITERATURE. CONCERNS ARE IN YELLOW.</b>		
Endorsement(s) of concern that might inhibit job performance as City Councilmember:	None	None
For more information about the candidates, please go to their websites:	<a href="http://www.samforla.com/">www.samforla.com/</a>	<a href="http://www.katyforla.com">www.katyforla.com</a>



On December 1, 2007, the Coalition adopted a basic Constituents Bill of Rights that each candidate was asked to accept and sign. The Constituents Bill of Rights for the City Councilmember includes the following:

- i. The right to prompt, professional and efficient service.
- ii. The right to be treated with dignity and respect by friendly, courteous and attentive City employees and our elected official without arrogance or stone-walling.
- iii. The right to ask questions and receive accurate and useful answers.
- iv. The right to prompt return and follow-up calls concerning complaints or requests.
- v. The right to be educated about the services provided by the City, how these services are used to support the needs of the City and the right to obtain such services.
- vi. The right to expect frequent communication of the City Councilmember's office regarding audits, on-going issues and their process of resolution and information about what is going on in the District.
- vii. The right to inclusive and transparent processes, especially for development, parks and transportation decisions.
- viii. The right to have a City Councilmember's Office that is not bloated with inexperienced and ineffective deputies who are not responsive to the needs of constituents and do not solve constituent problems quickly and effectively.
- ix. The right to zero tolerance for corruption, waste and special treatment for any constituency group or campaign contributor.
- x. The right of all constituents to meet with their councilmember at weekly "open office hours" in the district, and with meetings for urgent needs to be held within 72 hours.
- xi. The right to advance notice and reports for all neighborhood/development projects, early in the planning process/deliberations, to constituents beyond 500 feet of the project, as soon as information is available to any City entity, including, but not limited to the Planning Department, Building and Safety and/or anyone in the Council office.
- xii. The right to have a City Councilmember who keeps and executes campaign promises.
- xiii. The Councilperson will meet with the Coalition not less than three times per year.