

2014 Altadena Town Council Candidate Survey

On Sunday, May 18th, 2014, the day after Town Council Candidates were announced, NBBA forwarded an invitation to all candidates to participate in our Candidates Forum on 5/27/14, and asked each person to respond to seven survey questions. Below are the responses received from all candidates.

NBBA hopes that these responses and the additional forum encourage broader community participation, as well as provide for more transparency and accountability for our town governance.

If you have any questions, feel free to call us at (626)344-7806 or email us at mail@buildingabetteraltadena.org.

Election day is Saturday, June 7th, 2014. There are three polling sites throughout Altadena, each with their own schedule. Information is on the Altadena Election website listed below. ***If Saturday is not a good day for you, you can vote early on Tuesday, June 3, from 4-7 PM at the at the Altadena Community Center, 730 East Altadena Drive, just west of Lake.*** If you are a 18 years or older and a resident of Altadena, you will be able to vote for a candidate in your Census Tract (CT). For more information on the election and your closest polling place, please see www.altadenelection.org.

CT 4601 CANDIDATES

OPEN – No Candidate.

CT 4602 CANDIDATES

Okurie Ezieme: No survey response received.

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Alex Shey: alexshey@gmail.com

- Why are you running for Town Council, and what skills or strengths will you bring to the position?*
I am running for Town Council because I want to help Altadena fulfill it's potential as an entrepreneurial, cultural, natural oasis. Working both in the public and private sector, I have the skills and motivational to work with my colleagues, the community, and our core organizations to help Altadena fulfill it's potential.
- What do you see as Altadena's priorities that you expect to act on as a Town Council representative?*
Altadena's priorities should be to enhance our quality of live through increased local engagement. Specifically, I would push for more educational and cultural programs, create an "Altadena Fest" highlighting local entrepreneurs, and push for more signage and information about our local National Park.
- What is your vision for economic development in Altadena, and what actions do you think the Town Council could take to bring about that vision?*

I envision Altadena as a haven for developing and established entrepreneurs and artists. Recently, Altadena has been generating buzz around its fresh local foods and art. I would like the Town Council to help these

individuals and organizations become more economically viable by (1) creating an easily accessible database of our local products, (2) establish a marketplace (Altadena Fest) to enhance visibility, and (3) work with the county to simplify the bureaucratic process of opening businesses on our major thoroughfares.

4. *What are the special characteristics or resources of our Altadena community, and how can the Town Council help support and capitalize on those?*

Altadena has many special characteristics and resources including its proximity to a major national forest, an extremely diverse and eclectic population, and a rural small town atmosphere. In order to enhance and protect these wonderful features, the Town Council can create stronger relationships with local leaders, businesses, and organizations to ensure that all groups are in communication and have access to available resources.

5. *How do you see Town Council's relationship with County functions and government?*

Although the Town Council's role with the County is somewhat restricted, I see it as a vital mouthpiece for our community to voice and fight for access to needed resources and legislation.

6. *How do you plan to inform and involve the residents of your Census Tract?*

Once I become a member of the Town Council, I will further canvas my Tract and introduce myself to my community. In addition to creating personal relationships with my neighbors, I plan on updating and surveying all interested parties through online communications including Survey Monkey and Google Docs. Regardless of the medium of communication, I will create an accessible means for my community to have a voice.

7. *If you are a new candidate, is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?*

I am a teacher, a husband, a father, a hiker, and food lover, and your neighbor.

CT 4603.01 CANDIDATE

Judy Matthews: 626-827-1900, djmatthews@att.net

Judy is an incumbent on the Council and responded to the last questions pertaining directly to incumbents:

7. *If you are an incumbent, please respond to these questions regarding your previous term:*

- a. *What do you think is needed to move Town Council to a higher level of effectiveness?*

When we are elected to serve the people of Altadena, each council member focuses on the needs of his area and the concerns of those citizens residing in the area he serves. But, over the past two years, I have come to realize that what affects one census tract affects all of us. For us to achieve a higher level of effectiveness, it is important for us to act collectively and strategically on key issues that are a common concern for all constituents. I sincerely believe that coming together and setting annual goals and expectations for the council is one way to unite the many voices of our community. In forming a more unified group, we can work together to create new community partnerships and strengthen current partnerships; collectively tackle the "big picture" problems affecting Altadena and not just pocketed concerns; and embrace newly elected officials and share those skills and ideas that we have implemented in our individual census tract areas so they can have a "blueprint" to effectuate change more readily in their areas.

- b. *What do you consider your significant achievements as an individual Council representative?*

There are many achievements that I am proud of from the past two years as a public servant to the people of Altadena. I could say that it's working to implement youth civic projects. As a mother and a resident, I can't stress enough how important it is to give our youth a sense of ownership in their

community by keeping them engaged in positive activities in their communities. I could say that it's working to ensure safer communities by establishing community partnerships with businesses and organizations to offer more resources to our communities and working relentlessly towards better road maintenance, ordinance compliance and the addition of pedestrian walkways and public benches.

There are many things I could say, but from the perspective of a resident, it's those achievements that have unified the voice of my census tract that are my most significant achievements. It's increasing constituent engagement in community concerns while collaborating with Representative Damon Hobdy and neighboring representatives to address the issues that constituents have voiced. We would all like to be able to say that we know exactly what the needs of the individuals are, but it's important for residents to speak with us and voice their concerns. That is why they elected us to not only serve the community but to serve the individuals of the community. Oftentimes residents may feel ignored as their concerns are not met, but they are not being overlooked, perhaps the concerns have not been voiced.

For the past two years, I have worked to be that voice for Census Tract 4693.01, and I look forward to another two years of unifying the many voices of our community.

c. *What do you consider the most significant achievements of the Council as a whole?*

As councilmen and women, our role is actually quite simple. We are public servants. It is our responsibility to make sure that the concerns and recommendations of the constituents of our communities are heard. As I look back over the past two years in office, I am encouraged by the dedication of the council to better our community. Simply, our most significant achievement is working to bring about change in our individual communities to better serve the community as a whole and make lives of our constituents better by giving them a united voice.

CT 4603.02 CANDIDATE

Gloria Sanyika: g.san@sbcglobal.net, Specificnutrition.net

1. *Why are you running for Town Council, and what skills or strengths will you bring to the position?*

I am running for Town Council Member for the following reasons:

- a) I want to get more active in my community.
- b) I have definite ideas on ways to beautify my community through sustainable landscapes and curb appeal and I would like to share with others of like mind in the community.
- c) I have fresh ideas on food preservation and ensuring that everyone has access to organic/ non GMO, healthy, affordable food and I believe that this can be brought about, not only through Community Gardening, but also through Community Harvesting.

I am a Home Economist/ Nutritionist, Child and Adult Care Food Program Consultant and a NETA Certified Aerobic Instructor. I earned a BA Degree from California State University at Long Beach and a Masters from Union University of Oriental Medicine. By joining the council, I hope to bring some of my unique skills and insights as a Home Economist/ Nutritionist to the table to further promote the values and ideals of Altadena Residence.

2. *What do you see as Altadena's priorities that you expect to act on as a Town Council representative?*

As I see it, Altadena's first priority should be maintaining its infrastructure through beautifying the community. However, Community Beautification starts at home. Each resident must be responsible for the upkeep of their

properties to reduce the risk of neglect, eye sores and to promote curb appeal. I believe that community neglect is a precursor to Ghettos and Barrios which in turn produces communities that are unsafe.

3. *What is your vision for economic development in Altadena, and what actions do you think the Town Council could take to bring about that vision?*

Most residents of Altadena want to keep that quiet, small town feel. I believe that Altadeanans should go “Back to the Future” and revive THE “COTTAGE CRAFT INDUSTRY” as a means of economic development. I believe that we should redefine technology and create a “Tech Know logy” in harmony with nature and market it as a tourist attraction. Sometimes a step backward is a giant step forward for our environment in reducing our carbon footprint and maintaining a healthy and prosperous community.

4. *What are the special characteristics or resources of our Altadena community, and how can the Town Council help support and capitalize on those?*

According to the ALTADENA COMMUNITY PLAN, its setting, structures, history, Residence and landscapes are all characteristics that Altadeanans want to preserve. I feel that we should use the plan as our basis of operation. I believe that the Council should prioritize the issues, set a goal, designate a time frame and manifest the issues that were already discussed by Altadena residents during the development of the plan.

5. *How do you see Town Council's relationship with County functions and government?*

I see the Town Council as a strong, proactive advisory council that uses the Altadena Community Plan as its basis for creating changes in our community.

6. *How do you plan to inform and involve the residents of your Census Tract?*

I plan to create an informational newsletter that could be distributed to each household though the revival of the paper boy delivery route, as an after school activity. Newsletters will be delivered to churches, community Centers and other places where residents of my Census Tract gather. The newsletter will contain activities and instructions for community mobilization.

7. *If you are a new candidate, is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?*

If you want to see change in your community, you must first change your mind...

CT 4610 CANDIDATES

Felicia M. Lee: (626) 372-3806, flee1545@aol.com, Felicia.lee.7564@facebook.com

1. *Why are you running for Town Council, and what skills or strengths will you bring to the position?*

I am running for Town Council so that census tract 4610 can have a voice that will effectively be spoken for. Census 4610 exhibits a group of community members who are passionate about Altadena.

As a former West Altadena Project Area Committee I understand the concerns the Altadena community. The strengths I bring to the Town Council would be taking note of issues and making sure their voice is heard. One of my current skills are volunteering with John Muir’s African American Parent Council and PTSA to encourage our children to read, graduate, and have college options.

2. *What do you see as Altadena's priorities that you expect to act on as a Town Council representative?*

As a Town Council representative the Altadena priorities I would expect to act on would be:

- Working relationships with our sheriff and fire departments
- A relationship between our school principals, staff, parents and students
- A relationship with parishioners involvement with Altadena
- A relationship with our businesses to include West Altadena Redevelopment area.

3. *What is your vision for economic development in Altadena, and what actions do you think the Town Council could take to bring about that vision?*

My vision for economic development in Altadena would be:

- Housing restored on vacant West Altadena Home lots
- Landscaping and Upkeep of corners and vacant Altadena streets lots
- Continued monitoring of the Altadena Community Standards

The Town Council could bring the vision to fruition by:

- Listening to concerned Altadena community members
- Reviewing the Altadena Community vision plan and making revisions

4. *What are the special characteristics or resources of our Altadena community, and how can the Town Council help support and capitalize on those?*

Altadena's special characteristics are:

- West Altadena redevelopment and commercial
- Community involvement
- Hiring within the community
- Altadena Sheriff and Fire Department answering the community calls
- Clergy involvement with the community
- Altadena's library district

Having a community meeting such as the Altadena Town Council have already and will continue to support these organizations and can capitalize on the community's voice which will help strengthen the organizations

5. *How do you see Town Council's relationship with County functions and government?*

The Altadena Town Council's relationship is already strong with County of Los Board of Supervisor Michael Antonovich supporting the Town Council and Pasadena Unified School District. The Altadena community carries 4 public schools. I see the relationship getting stronger which could include a Town Council subcommittee for private schools.

6. *How do you plan to inform and involve the residents of your Census Tract?*

During my Town Council interview I mentioned that informing and involving residents of my Census Tract by email, texting & Facebook is not enough. I would entertain sending out a quarterly newsletter to inform residents on the updates for the community and monthly flyers to area school and shopping locations.

7. *If you are a new candidate, is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?*

Being a new candidate but not new to Altadena I would want the voters to know that as a former Human Resources Manager I believe in hiring from within the community and believe Altadena has the training resources to prepare for further Altadena businesses.

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Jessica Mack: No survey response received.

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Michelle Martinez: (626) 831-6577, michellemartinezforatc@gmail.com, www.facebook.com/MartinezforATC

1. *Why are you running for Town Council, and what skills or strengths will you bring to the position?*
I wish to serve my community and ensure that our neighborhood/census tract is well represented by creating connectivity and communication in our community. An engaged community is one that

is well informed and involved. I wish to create a two-way line of communication that not only informs our community of the happenings in the town, but also brings back to the town council the needs and concerns of the community. Building a more beautiful Altadena begins at home with each one of us participating and having our voices heard.

Renewing the Altadena Town Council Website to include up to date information and also identify the various formats of communication we can employ, social media, video blog, mailers, and phone banking. I am experienced in making certain information is dispensed as well as gathered, in order to ensure a project stays on target and all contributors stay apprised of proposed changes or improvements.

2. *What do you see as Altadena's priorities that you expect to act on as a Town Council representative?*

Disbursement of information to our community, and collaboration before debate are all key elements in making certain we are working toward the common good of our community. There are various priorities that one can emphasize, but in order to make any objective a priority, we have to look to our community, as well as our board to ensure progress and resolution. As a fairly new participant to the Town Council, I have experienced the difficulty of finding a common place to get information. I believe the Altadena Town Council is an excellent point of reference for being able to engage the happenings of our town.

3. *What is your vision for economic development in Altadena, and what actions do you think the Town Council could take to bring about that vision?*

There are several paths to grow an economy, but I believe that the first is entrepreneurial encouragement. We must support our local businesses, community projects, and residents to promote their goods and services to our community, as well as create events that attract surrounding communities.

This is something that can be done with as little as posting new event to our web site or also in promoting and supporting projects with attendance and our patronage.

4. *What are the special characteristics or resources of our Altadena community, and how can the Town Council help support and capitalize on those?*

In my census tract, alone, there are several opportunities to engage the neighborhood in community building activities. We have the canyon, the fitness gym and local businesses that make for walkability in our neighborhood. If we work with organizations to engage the community we can help to promote business as well as building neighborhood relationships.

5. *How do you see Town Council's relationship with County functions and government?*

We can be effective in bringing to the county the expressed concerns and expectation of the community. Be sure to not lose the opportunity to have our community's voice be heard and if need be, stand for or in opposition to what works for and against our community values and expectations.

How do you plan to inform and involve the residents of your Census Tract?

Keeping the residents informed with up to date information is no small task, but it can be done. It requires making certain that we each survey and understand the best form of communication for each household in our census tract. Being mindful that there are various generations and preferences with the forms of communication available today, I would be careful to implement various formats so that every home received up to date information in a format that works best for them.

Engagement will follow if we reach out to our census tract and ask what if their current concerns. In order to have the community become involved, we must address those items relevant to their homes and businesses. We have the ability to listen and gather the pertinent information from our community and share that with those higher up the chain or possibly take matters into our own

hands and begin the necessary petitions, calls, or correspondence to ensure our concerns are heard and resolved

7. *If you are a new candidate, is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?*
I'm the kind of person, what you see is what you get! I work hard, like to have fun, and trust in the good of people! If we all come to the table willing to work, find the joy in working with one another, and exercise respect and courtesy much can be accomplished!
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CT 4611 CANDIDATES

OPEN – No Candidate.

CT 4612 CANDIDATE

Jennifer Lee: jenniferhlee@earthlink.net

1. *Why are you running for Town Council, and what skills or strengths will you bring to the position?*
I am running because I believe in representative government and I love my community. I have never before run for office.
 2. *What do you see as Altadena's priorities that you expect to act on as a Town Council representative?*
We need to fill our storefronts with local businesses. The building site on Lake at Calaveras needs to be dealt with in a way that enhances our community. I am interested in listening to people about this topic.
 3. *What is your vision for economic development in Altadena, and what actions do you think the Town Council could take to bring about that vision?*
I would like to see vibrant businesses that add to our community. I would like to see a "Buy Local" campaign in Altadena.
 4. *What are the special characteristics or resources of our Altadena community, and how can the Town Council help support and capitalize on those?*
[No answer.]
 5. *How do you see Town Council's relationship with County functions and government?*
[No answer.]
 6. *How do you plan to inform and involve the residents of your Census Tract?*
I walk everyday in my census tract and that is the way I will inform the residents. I believe in helping to create community participation.
 7. *If you are a new candidate, is there anything else you would like voters to know about you?*
[No answer.]
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CT 4613 CANDIDATE

Diane Marcussen: No survey response received.