

CD 14 CANDIDATE FORUM
AGENDA AND QUESTIONS
FEBRUARY 27, 2024
@ Skid Row History Museum & Archive

5:30-5:55 Community Networking/Introductions by John Malpede, LA Poverty Dept

6:00-6:45: Candidates respond to questions from the community

6:45-7: Voting Info: March 5, 2024 Primary; submit by mail, or go in person, or drop a ballot at the site

I. Intro & Welcome: start at 5:55.

John on LAPD & SRHMA;

Cathy Gudis on nonpartisanship and rules:

- Self intro: President of the Board of Directors, LA Poverty Dept; scholar in residence; professor of history.
- Nonpartisan: LA Poverty Department in a nonprofit organization; we are hosting this event in the spirit of education and civic engagement, and to ensure that members of this community have a chance to learn about the candidates running for a council seat to represent CD14. We all know CD14 is very diverse; it includes Skid Row as well as Little Tokyo, Chinatown, and much of Downtown as well as Boyle Height, Lincoln Heights, Highland park, and more. Very grateful for the candidates to take time out of their extremely busy day on short notice to share with us their ideas.
- Please know that we invited all candidates running for CD14; we--LAPD will not be endorsing any candidates, nor is our hosting of the candidates here any indication of endorsement.
- We are here in a bipartisan space — place to listen.
- Along those lines I ask with utmost respect that you refrain from excessive exuberance for or against a particular candidate, or what they say. Please hold applause until the end.
- Refrain talking during, or at speakers.
- Rules: each candidate will proceed in alphabetical order to give their opening 3 minute remarks.
- Questions from the audience; some from the community came in advance. We will work to consolidate the questions we pose, since time is short.

II. Three minute remarks by each of 5 candidates. We will go in alphabetical order, then switch that order up as we proceed with the questions.

INTRO/ ALPHA I:

Nadine Diaz

Genny Guerrero

Teresa Hillery

Ysabel Jurado

Eduardo "Lalo" Vargas

III.

Question 1/REVERSE ALPHA--90 seconds:

Eduardo "Lalo" Vargas

Ysabel Jurado

Teresa Hillery

Genny Guerrero

Nadine Diaz

Question 2/REVERSE ORDER OF PROMO POSTCARD--60 seconds:

Eduardo “Lalo” Vargas
Nadine Diaz
Genny Guerrero
Teresa Hillery
Ysavel Jurado

QUESTION 3/LEFT TO RIGHT OF TABLE SEATING --60 seconds

Ysavel Jurado
Teresa Hillery
Eduardo “Lalo” Vargas
Genny Guerrero
Nadine Diaz

Questions 4/FROM MIDDLE TO RIGHT, THEN LEFT OF TABLE SEATING--60 seconds

Eduardo “Lalo” Vargas
Genny Guerrero
Nadine Diaz
Teresa Hillery
Ysabel Jurado

Promo Postcard:

Ysavel Jurado
Teresa Hillery
Genny Guerrero
Nadine Diaz
Eduardo “Lalo” Vargas

Seating:

Ysavel Jurado
Teresa Hillery
Eduardo “Lalo” Vargas
Genny Guerrero
Nadine Diaz

1. Affordable Housing / Land Use Policy. For over seven years, Downtown has been going through the process of updating the Community Plan called DTLA 2040 that asks “what will Downtown look like by the year 2040?” DTLA will be zoned for 100,000 units: HOW? The community-based Skid Row Now & 2040 has advocated for: retaining existing low-income and affordable housing; designating an IX1 zone along the historical boundaries of Skid Row, restricted to affordable housing, and maximizing affordable housing throughout Downtown. We know that if luxury housing, bars, & bougie businesses are built within historical boundaries of Skid Row, poor people will be pushed and policed out. During hearings for DTLA2040, some City Council members said it was unfair for CD14 to potentially have more affordable housing than other council districts. Other people said it was racist to preserve a neighborhood made up of 56% Black and 26% Latinx low-income people. Yet we hear NO-ONE saying it is racist to preserve such neighborhoods as Bel Air, made up of 80% rich white people.

What actions will you take to provide housing to homeless people, and preserve and improve our Skid Row neighborhood—its networks of people, supportive services, arts &

culture—while retaining & expanding availability of low income housing? DTLA will be zoned for 100,000 units: HOW?

2. Representation/Self Representation/Anti Corruption. Many people living in Downtown (and CD14) are majority minority, low income, and do not own property. According to democratic political systems, their needs and interests count as much as those who own property and businesses. We have not seen democracy in action. Legacies of racism and corruption reign in CD14, with developers, the downtown central Business Improvement District (now called DTLA Alliance), and Center City East Association having outsized power.

Historically, downtown council members have supported BIDs over Skid Row residents. How will you correct these imbalances and ensure racial equity? What steps will you take to ensure the densely populated, majority minority community of Skid Row is represented equitably and given opportunities for meaningful self-representation?

3. Mental Health & Policing. **What is your plan for supporting mental health services/resources AND ensuring that police do not abuse their powers when working with people experiencing homelessness? What do you think is the heart of community safety and how will you prioritize it?**

For the last question, please choose one of the following, or both:

4. Workforce Development and Training. The Skid Row Action Plan has recommended training for service providers, sro workers, building managers, case workers, to increase care and compassion and the ability to treat people with knowledge of trauma and resilience. What is the City Council's role in creating Citywide training opportunities?
5. Incompatible Use/Nuisance/Environmental Justice. As we know from the noxious, explosive, and nearly uncontrollable fires in recent years on Boyd Street, Downtown LA is home to the largest wholesale market of smoke shop accessories—including huge quantities of butane, nitrous oxide cartridges, and other chemicals used to cut and enhance drugs. Bars have come to predominate, well beyond what the Skid Row recovery community ought to sustain, and also beyond City and State limits.

Downtown residents live right beside the wholesale and retail smoke shops, and live in housing with wraparound services for recovery that are right next to bars! **Please tell us what steps you will take to protect residents—and ensure accountability in terms of incompatible uses and environmental justice?**

With apologies, we haven't gotten to all the questions that were sent in advance and during this session. We hope you can all speak together now, more casually, in order to get into dialogue about what you might do about harm reduction; people on the street now; sex workers unduly arrested; and more.

Do you support expanding the IX1 Zone to all of historic Skid Row?

What are your ideas/plan for the homeless people?

What is your vision for advancing racial equity in Skid Row?

What kind of policies would you propose to hold greedy and abusive landlords accountable?

What is your plan for supporting mental health services/resources to help combat the homelessness crisis?

Employment opportunities present a challenge for individuals who rely on benefits that require them to have a limit to their amount of money. Can City Council influence change this policy?

Knowing historically the Downtown councilperson has worked closely with the BIDS at the expense of Skid Row residents, how do you see yourself not falling into the same, deadly pattern?

What policies will you pursue as councilmember to expand the availability of affordable housing for Skid Row residents?

What will you do about the immigration problem in Downtown and what plans do you have to assist the communities?

What's your plan for vacant office buildings Downtown?

Will you support building Affordable Housing in areas currently zoned for single family use -- will you support rezoning middle income and wealthy parts of Los Angeles to allow Affordable Housing everywhere?

What do you believe is at the heart of community safety that you can impact as a councilmember? What will you do to prioritize that?

Our new City Attorney is waging war on sex workers under the guise of stopping sex trafficking which includes arrest of sex workers? What is your perspective on these failed operations?

How do you plan to prevent gentrification and the onslaught of alcohol uses?

With regards to Skid Row, how do you plan to create space for businesses and housing that is targeted towards populations (markets, banks, things communities need) more so than supportive/unhoused population?

What policies will you pursue to support existing affordable housing in Skid Row?

The Skid Row Action Plan has recommended training for service providers, SRO workers, building managers, case workers, to increase care and compassion and the ability to treat people with knowledge of trauma and resilience. What is City Council's role in creating Citywide training opportunities?

Will you commit to hiring a DTLA area rep who lives Downtown?

What problems do you see our schools are facing and how can we fix these problems?

What will you do or change about the law enforcement in the red zone in Downtown after three shootings in the past four months?

How will you expand or decrease 41.18 zones in CD-14? How will you ensure that police do not abuse their powers when working with homeless communities?

I feel contractors should not be allowed to bid on new contracts until they go back and fix bug infestation, broken elevators, etc. in housing before they can bid on new contracts. What will you do differently to address the illegal conditions of SRO housing sites? How will you hold them accountable to address our human rights?

Police consistently abuse their power. What policies would you put in place to increase transparency and hold law enforcement accountable?

DTLA is zoned for 100,000 new units of housing between now and 2040. What is your stance on making it easier to build more housing and welcome more neighbors to Downtown?