

Why I Am Running For City Council

The easy answer is because I care about Greenwood Village, and I believe that my experiences in the political arena have prepared me to meet the challenges and opportunities certain to arise in the years ahead. While I am a strong believer in building coalitions and forging consensus on most political issues we will face, there are times when the issue demands unwavering commitment. The current battle over home rule pitting local decision-makers against state politicians is such an issue. Rather than focus on statewide issues like balancing the budget and homelessness, the Governor and the Legislature want to take a direct role in land use and zoning decisions best handled at the local level so that the people can decide the type of community in which they wish to live. Building on the success of the Save Our Village campaign almost a decade ago, residents of Greenwood Village and its leaders have made that position clear.

The past decade has been one in which the City Council has made important planning and growth decisions about the future of our community, one of the latest being the raising and rebuilding of the Hickey ministry site at Orchard and I-25. Assuring that this project complies with its stated goals, as well as the consideration of several fledgling proposals which would add new housing developments and the fate of undeveloped land to the South of Landmark are likely to be important matters for the new Council.

What I Bring to the Table

Throughout my career I have worked with diverse parties, ranging from sophisticated Fortune 500 corporations and federal, state and local government agencies to individuals, small businesses, school districts, Indian tribes, etc. Each situation required an assessment of the political realities, developing and enhancing alliances with stakeholders, working with multi-functional teams, responding to the needs of external groups, providing briefings, and making and implementing recommendations as to how best to accomplish the established goals.

I have a strong record of diffusing hostilities and coalescing parties to arrive at mutually acceptable, creative solutions. I have developed and facilitated the implementation of solutions that address the diverse interests of the various parties while continuously ensuring that the underlying goals are achieved. These qualities led to my appointment by Governor Pete Wilson to the Board of the California State Fair and I was elected Chair of that board two years later. Later the governor appointed me a commissioner of the California Horse Racing Board which oversees all the horse racing activities in the state. After Arnold Schwarzenegger was elected governor, First Lady Maria Shriver, appointed me to the first Board of Directors of the newly-created California Museum for Women, History and the Arts.

In addition to the political aspects of my experience, I have developed performance objectives and standards for staff, helped line managers ensure a bias-free employment process, and encouraged and invested in staff development and career opportunities to maintain a hospitable, productive work environment.

My Background And Experience

How did I – graduating from Notre Dame with a BS in Civil Engineering and an MS in Sanitary Engineering (a precursor to Environmental Engineering) – wind up with a career spent entirely on the fringes of politics? I say “fringes” because I have never stood for election to any public office, never worked for either a political body or elected official or a government agency, yet I lived and breathed politics for 41 years.

It all began with summer engineering jobs I found unrewarding. I worked on surveying teams (including a summer of night surveys in the New York City subway system underneath the site of proposed twin towers of the World Trade Center), and on drafting tables producing construction plans for the lower level of the George Washington Bridge (or the

Martha Washington Bridge as it was referred to in the office). One unique experience was working at the elephant house of the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. Federal regulations required that only the waste generated by U.S.-born elephants, giraffe, hippos, rhinos, etc. could be sent to the local sewage treatment plant – waste produced by these foreign-born animals (ruminants) had to be segregated and treated on site. I learned much about the bathroom habits of these large animals but – fortunately – I have not had to use that knowledge often during my career.

As my graduation approached and I evaluated full-time employment with a range of consulting engineering companies (with several years on a drafting board as a career first step with any one of them) and government agencies (running a municipal sewage treatment plant in Washington, DC), I was intrigued by an offer from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (the largest business trade association) to fill a new position to advise its members in dealing with this new field of environmental legislation and regulation.

I reported to James Watt (later Secretary of the Interior under Ronald Reagan and formerly an aide to Senator Milward Simpson of Wyoming) and from whom I learned much of how the politics of Capitol Hill functioned. As I stumbled through the learning process, I soon began to do things I never thought possible for a reticent engineer fresh out of school. I testified before Congress, gave speeches to large business groups, and drafted parts of key environmental legislation. I spoke at several local universities at their first Earth Day programs (April 1970) and introduced its Congressional sponsors to business organizations. The first law dealing with air pollution – the Air Quality Act of 1967 – contained some of my language for key provisions.

But my true interest was how the legislative/political process worked and how to influence its direction. After 10 years at the Chamber and another 10 years in DC working for Chevron and then another 20 years with Chevron in California's capital Sacramento, I had been promoted to lead Chevron's nationwide State and local government affairs programs. By then, my strengths were being able to forge compromises and alliances necessary to secure legislative and administrative goals. My final accomplishment was to chair the successful \$95 million opposition campaign to a Statewide California initiative which would have cost consumers hundreds of millions of dollars in higher gasoline prices yearly.

Over these last years, I participated in various community issues (minor efforts to get out the vote in the Save Our Village campaign) and have served as an election judge in the most recent Greenwood Village election and a ballot box collector for Arapahoe County in the last Presidential election. As I stated earlier, looking at the current politics affecting Greenwood Village, no issue is more important than to protect future of "home rule" for our city from those state officials who wish to meddle in local issues (like planning and zoning) rather than deal with the larger problems of balancing the budget and homelessness. In 1975, the U.S. Congress attempted a similar maneuver to inject the Federal government into local land use decisions and an alliance between the Chamber and the Brotherhood of Carpenters defeated the bill twice and it never resurfaced.

On a more personal note, I met my wife (Lynn) at an industry meeting in Washington on the future of oil shale development in Colorado. We had a prolonged courtship necessitated by the long distance between our career locales, but I routinely commuted to Colorado for weekends to the home Lynn had built in Greenwood Village. We married in 1999, and upon my retirement in 2008 (after years of commuting from California to Colorado), I settled in with Lynn, 3 Great Danes, and a rescue pup. It's been great and I want to see it stay that way.