

Aram Kazazian

Why are you running for council?

We have a fiscal crisis in Glendale. This city has overspent for years, and projects have gone over budget. No one has been held accountable. The city has tried to balance the budget with higher utility rates passed down to ratepayers.

City planning for our long term future has been put aside. Recycled water, landfill issues, traffic, infrastructure, safety and quality of life have been ignored while the city has catered to big business. Our children, schools and businesses are suffering.

Changing the items that are not working is required if our city is to thrive. I am running for council, because I believe I am the one who can make a difference in bringing and promoting change.

What unique qualities do you bring?

As a 34 year resident of Glendale, I have seen this city grow, witnessing the changes that have occurred. I have been a member of several organizations contributing in various manners to the betterment of this city. As an architect and general contractor, I can read plans and see the benefit in long term planning. My vision for this city is represented in many of the organizations that I am a part of. My ability to look beyond the immediate and plan for the future has helped me gain a better understanding of what this city needs to once again be called the Jewel City.

Whom would you like to replace? and Why?

I would like to replace those individuals on the council and within the city who have neglected the core values and principles the city was built on. We answer to the citizens of this city, and our responsibility lies in ensuring we are offering them only the best. Those individuals and departments who are here to serve themselves do not truly represent the city and should not be part of this government entity.

What are the 3 main issues facing Glendale Government.

Increases in utility rates and fees passed down to the average citizen with little regard for long term energy and resource saving programs.

Spending beyond the budget and increasing the budget each year is a monumental problem at this time.

An increase in traffic and no clear alternative for reducing traffic while planning for future growth.

How will you deal with those issues?

First and foremost, freezing utility rates is a necessity in order to prevent the negative effects the citizens are encountering right now. Next, an evaluation of our recycling programs in order to help reduce the usage of water and promote a greener Glendale will help not only with the efficiency of Glendale's usage and waste, but will help create programs that will promote Glendale as a role model for years to come.

Roll back the budgets that have been submitted for the upcoming calendar year and require city departments to operate within the budget they are allocated. Endless spending is not an option, and departments will be held accountable.

Require all new developments to address street widening measures and ensure increases in traffic are taken into consideration. Traffic mitigation and infrastructure investments must be at the forefront of any development that is proposed.

Your thoughts on the downtown specific plan

The plan lacks a way to work with the current small businesses to promote growth and longevity. It also does not sufficiently address traffic mitigation issues or the need for infrastructure development. A true Downtown Specific Plan would promote the existing businesses, which have been the backbone of this city for years. An investment in those businesses would be an investment in the future of Glendale. Big business may bring in tax dollars; however, their investment in Glendale is purely financial. For that reason, promoting our local establishments is necessary to ensure that the city's Downtown district remains vital.

Your thoughts on the mobility plan.

Increasing the use of public transportation should begin with contacting large businesses which employ large numbers of people. Encouraging them to promote ride-sharing programs and alternative transportation methods can be incorporated into their employee benefit programs. Incentives for businesses that effectively reduce the number of commuters can be rewarded through various city programs. Additionally, public service announcements at the high school level will teach the next generation of commuters there are alternative methods to daily vehicle driving.

How will you deal with the deficit?

Identifying and evaluating the departments that have consistently exceeded their budgets is necessary in determining where the largest problem lies. All departments should be required to roll back the budget they submitted to the previous year's level and to work within that budget to accomplish their job.

In terms of city projects, cost overruns are not acceptable. Any RFP awarded should contain clauses that prohibit cost overrun funding. Furthermore, offering incentives for work that is completed under budget and on schedule will help keep those contracting with the city in line.

Restructuring the city pay scale to set clear guidelines as to who is considered a manager and supervisor is necessary. Furthermore, adjusting pay grades appropriately is not only necessary but logical as well. Excessive monetary increases have led to an over-inflated salary structure.

Contract negotiations with the GFFA, GPOA and the GMA

Streamlining the hierarchy of an organization will reduce the number of positions that are necessary to complete a job. This can be done mostly at the management level without reducing the services offered to the public.

Clear guidelines as to what constitutes a manager or a supervisor should be put into place. Simply taking on more responsibility or a greater workload does not qualify a person to be a manager or supervisor. To be considered either, you must actually manage or supervise lower level staff. Eliminating position titles and pay grades to reflect this requirement will reduce the amount of money the city is paying to those who do not fulfill these requirements.

On what board and commission have you testified?

Board of Zoning Adjustments
Planning
Water and Power
Design Review Board

Do you support the city manager?

The manager is responsible for ensuring that the items brought forth by the council are researched and addressed with the best intentions of the city. It is the city managers job to advise the council when items are not in the best interest of the citizens and of the city. A manager acting in this capacity deserves and will be given the support he/she needs to effectively do the job.

What is your position on the Ballot proposition of the UUT

I am opposed to any new taxes and fees, and I am in favor of reducing city fees and taxes when the opportunity arises.