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Hopefuls compete for first council seats

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El Dorado Hills voters on Nov. 8 will decide whether their community will become an incorporated city.

On the same ballot, they will choose who will represent them as members of the community's first City Council, should the cityhood measure pass.

Today we present information about each of the active candidates vying for the five council seats.

The following are brief rundowns of candidates for an El Dorado Hills City Council to lead that community if voters on Nov. 8 choose to incorporate.



Larry Brilliant

Age: 57.

Occupation: safety and risk management consultant.

Education: MA, public administration, Golden Gate University, San Francisco; BS, criminology, California State University, Fresno.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: married, three adult children.

Experience: El Dorado Hills Community Services District board member; El Dorado Hills Fire Department board member, 13 years; charter member, El Dorado Hills Incorporation Committee; member, El Dorado Hills Chamber of Commerce and El Dorado Hills Friends of the Library.

"As your new city council member, I will be committed to ensuring the quality of life of El Dorado Hills and to implementing responsible planning that brings limited, quality growth, which is in harmony with the community's quality of life."



C. Howell Ellerman

Age: 46.

Occupation: attorney; business professor, Folsom Lake College.

Education: JD, Loyola Law School, Los Angeles; BA, political science, Occidental College, Los Angeles; post graduate studies in education, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: married, five children.

Experience: vice chancellor for human resources and resource development, Los Rios Community College District, 1997-2003; general counsel, Occidental College; city planner, Glendale.

"Communities are like sharks - they either move forward or they die. From its inception, El Dorado Hills had a vision of itself that demanded the highest quality from those who shaped it. For us to move forward, our elected officials must share that vision of excellence and provide the leadership to get us there."



Jeff Haberman

Age: 50.

Occupation: small business owner, building designer.

Education: studied civil engineering, California State University, Sacramento.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: married, one child.

Experience: member, El Dorado Hills Chamber of Commerce board; El Dorado County Small Business Man of the Year, 1992; vice chairman, El Dorado Hills/Salmon Falls Area Plan Advisory Committee; chairman, El Dorado Hills Design Review Task Force; member, El Dorado County Appeals Board.

"With nearly 20 years of community involvement, I'm respected in our community and perceived as a candidate county government can work with in the transition to city government. I will regain control of traffic congestion, police (better protection for homes and businesses), undesirable development practices (mass site grading, tree clear cutting), and spending (no new taxes or fees for homes or businesses)."



John Hidahl

Age: 54.

Occupation: chief systems engineer, Northrop Grumman.

Education: BS, mechanical engineering, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: married, five children.

Experience: president, El Dorado Hills Incorporation Committee; El Dorado Hills Fire Department board member, 22 years; founding member, El Dorado Hills Area Plan Advisory Committee; chairman, El Dorado Hills Community Services District park task force, oversaw development of 40-acre Community Park.

"El Dorado Hills should have been a city 10 years ago! I am running for City Council to resolve our traffic problems, to improve our law enforcement service, and to expand our parks, recreational and senior-use facilities. We must act now to safeguard our future, without any new taxes."





Bob Hollis

Age: 41.

Occupation: entrepreneur, philanthropist, owner of executive search firm.

Education: BS, industrial management, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: married, two children.

Experience: president, Springfield Meadows Community Services District; chairman, Stonebriar Architectural Control Committee; board member, California Resource Recovery Association; led community opposition to shifting Mather Airport flight paths over residential areas south of Highway 50 and to proposed big-box store in Town Center West.

"My vision for El Dorado Hills is a strong unified community of people, businesses and government working together toward shared common goals. Whether the issue is cityhood, traffic, development, lighted parks, storage facilities, water tanks or high school boundaries, El Dorado Hills is a much stronger community when we all work together to achieve fair and intelligent solutions."



Susan M. Johnson

Age: 58.

Occupation: small-business consultant.

Education: attended West Valley College, Saratoga, and San Jose State University, San Jose, courses in accounting, real estate.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: divorced, two adult children.

Experience: 33 years with Bank of America, last 12 as branch manager in Silicon Valley; taught Junior Achievement classes; volunteer coordinator, Catholic Social Charities; board member, El Dorado Hills Chamber of Commerce, Better Roads for El Dorado, and Crystal Basin Cellars, Coloma.

"When elected, I will develop the basic foundation for a strong, safe and secure city government, including our general plan, and obtain a well-negotiated contract for service with the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department, providing a salary package that will deliver the highest quality staff and ensure 0 percent vacancy and minimal turnover."



John R. Knight

Age: 57.

Occupation: commercial real estate broker.

Education: BS, finance and economics, California State University, Long Beach.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: married, two adult children.

Experience: El Dorado County Planning Commission member; El Dorado Hills Fire Department volunteer firefighter, 16 years; Planning Commission, Fountain Valley, Orange County; Public Works Commission, La Canada, Los Angeles County; American Red Cross board member, 16 years.

"There are two important issues we as a City Council need to focus on. One is fiscal responsibility, and that starts with management of city government. The second is business development and establishing new businesses that can generate sales tax and property tax dollars."



Bruce Lagomarsino

Age: 59.

Occupation: government, history teacher, Mira Loma High School.

Education: MA, government, and BA, history, California State University, Sacramento.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: divorced, two adult children.

Experience: Rescue Union School District board member, 15 years; served on El Dorado Hills-Salmon Falls Area Plan Advisory Committee.

"In spite of the naysayers, the time for cityhood is now. If not now, when? Taxes will not increase, sales tax revenues will. Affordable housing will come, yes, but it will be handled by local government."



Justin Masters

Age: 40.

Occupation: self-employed, online business marketing.

Education: BS, computer science, National University, Sacramento; AS, electronic technology, American River College.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: married, five children.

Experience: vice president, El Dorado Hills Community Services District Board; led volunteer effort to restore Bertelson Pool; volunteer, Brooks Elementary School; member, PTA technology committee.

"El Dorado Hills has always been about quality of life. It's a place we're proud to call home. We deserve to shape our future in preserving our quality of life - by eliminating traffic problems, gaining local land use control, additional parks and local control of our tax dollars."



Greg Murphy

Age: 46.

Occupation: El Dorado County Sheriff's Deputy.

Education: BA, Liberal Arts, California State University, Sacramento; Butte College Basic Law Enforcement Academy.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: married, two children.

Experience: deputy sheriff, 14 years; employed in retail business, 10 years; three years in U.S. Marine Corps.

"I've been a deputy sheriff for 14 years and currently patrol El Dorado Hills. My family and I have lived in El Dorado Hills for seven years. Serving on the City Council will enable me to further serve our community by keeping our citizens safe and improving services for El Dorado Hills."



Dorothy Nesbitt

Age: 67.

Occupation: retired community and economic development specialist.

Education: graduate, Abraham Lincoln High School, San Francisco.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: divorced, three children.

Experience: Pleasanton City Council member, 1990-94; League of California Cities community development committee; Tri-Valley Economic Development Committee (Danville, San Ramon area); community and economic development specialist for city of Danville and for downtown associations in Hayward and Danville, Va.

"The challenge is to protect and enhance the quality of life. Passionate about community involvement, I have vast experience in bringing people together to voice concerns and prioritize goals. I understand government and how to mold consensus into an action plan with a realistic budget to accomplish the chosen task."

Beau Palley

Age: 36.

Occupation: owner of advertising firm.

Education: studied marketing, advertising at Sierra Community College.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: married, two children.

Experience: business owner and CEO, Orion Outdoor Media, 14 years; lobbied local government on land use, permit issues.

"My priorities are increased and improved parks and recreation facilities for our children, efficient and effective city government, encouraging new and existing business enterprise, quality land use planning and improved traffic flows."



Sunday L. Pearson

Age: 55.

Occupation: branch chief, real estate division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Education: career-related courses, USDA Graduate School; attended College of the Sequoias, Visalia, and University of Maryland's European Campus.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: married, two adult children.

Experience: real estate specialist with Army Corps of Engineers, overseeing \$650 million real estate program; volunteer, Union Gospel Mission, Sacramento; organized visits for homeless children to Corps of Engineers' offices; volunteer with programs supporting orphanages in Bali and development projects in Uganda.

"One of the reasons we moved to El Dorado Hills was the expressed value for 'family.' It is evident in our parks, schools, churches and recreation. I believe this value is sustainable, and I will work within the council to ensure that it is built into our decisions and policies."



Norm Rowett

Age: 69.

Occupation: retired electrical engineer, 40 years with Aerojet.

Education: BS, business, University of San Francisco; AA, computer science, American River College.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: married, three adult children.

Experience: vice chairman, El Dorado Hills Incorporation Committee; El Dorado Hills Community Service District board member, 1985-89, oversaw funding and development of 40-acre Community Park; founding member, El Dorado Hills Area Plan Advisory Committee, El Dorado Hills Community Council and El Dorado Hills Community Enhancement Advisory Committee.

"We have completed three independent comprehensive fiscal analyses for the proposed incorporation of El Dorado Hills, and they all show the city will be financially viable. It's time for El Dorado Hills to take its place as the next new city in California. I believe, as a city, we can solve our traffic problems and improve our municipal services. We can restore the quality of life we enjoyed prior to the rapid growth approved by the county."



David M. Trapani

Age: 43.

Occupation: attorney.

Education: JD and BS, political science, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: married, three children.

Experience: owns and operates law firm specializing in real estate, construction and business cases; El Dorado Hills Community Services District board member; served on Design Review Committee task force to rewrite guidelines for CC&R enforcement; member, El Dorado Hills Rotary

and El Dorado Hills Chamber of Commerce.

"As an attorney, I can assist with contracts and the myriad of legal issues facing cities. I support increased public safety and protection. I will work hard to solve traffic and roadway problems. I will continue my focus on new parks/fields. I will insist on fiscal responsibility/accountability."



Charel Winston

Age: 45.

Occupation: computer entrepreneur/rancher, semiretired from automotive sales and Internet businesses.

Education: studied photography at DeAnza College, Cupertino; career-related technical and management programs.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: domestic partnership, no children.

Experience: worked for startup companies and high-tech firms; established nonprofit civil rights legal defense fund; operates 5-acre ranch and pet sanctuary.

"My priorities are no new taxes, an Internet Auto Mall to increase sales taxes and facilitate business growth, new parks and sports complexes for families, affordable senior assisted living in a state-of-the-art facility, (and) luring high-tech companies to increase economic development/tax base while ensuring a better quality of life for residents."



Constance "Connie" Wyatt

Age: 52.

Occupation: attorney specializing in family law.

Education: JD, University of California, Hastings College of the Law, San Francisco; BA, political science, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

Residence: El Dorado Hills.

Family: divorced, one child.

Experience: El Dorado Hills Community Services District board member; founding member, El Dorado Hills Incorporation Committee; member, El Dorado Hills Rotary Club, El Dorado Hills Chamber of Commerce, El Dorado Hills Newcomers Club.

"Twice elected and currently a director of the El Dorado Hills Community Services District, founding member of the El Dorado Hills Incorporation Committee, and 15-year resident of Waterford Village, I am dedicated to maintaining the quality of life and want to help create a community we can all be proud of."

Editor's Note: *The names of Gerry Tryhane and Bart Cox also will appear on the Nov. 8 ballot. Tryhane said he no longer is a candidate. Repeated efforts by The Bee to contact Cox were unsuccessful.*

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