SAHBA-PAC

The Political Action Committee of the Southern Arizona Home Builders Association

CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Your response to these important questions will be reviewed by SAHBA's Political Action Committee and help us evaluate whether we engage in the race through an endorsement and/or PAC contribution. Please note, after reviewing your completed questionnaire, you may be asked to meet with the PAC. Thank you for your interest in seeking public office and taking the time to answer our questionnaire.

Candidate Name: Nikki Lee

Campaign Contact Person (If different from candidate): Chesney Richter

1. What are your top three policy priorities?

1. Continue focusing on delivering high-quality, reliable core services - This is key to building a brighter future for Tucson and includes public safety, roads and infrastructure, and city parks, pools, and recreation facilities. 2. Addressing homelessness and the affordable housing crisis - Rising housing costs affect both homeowners and renters alike. Tackling affordable housing is a marathon, not a sprint, requiring long-term dedication and strategic investments. By consistently investing in housing affordability and actively supporting a diverse housing market (market rate and higher), we can provide opportunities for all residents. 3. Water security - I am deeply concerned about the ongoing water crisis. We must manage and secure our water resources and infrastructure to ensure we have a safe and clean water supply for future generations.

2. What would be your approach to evaluating policy and regulatory issues and how will you determine your position on an issue?

My approach is always to gain as much information as possible before making any decision or determining my position on an issue. It's essential to solicit input from all stakeholders on any issue and understand the different perspectives on the topic. I always value hearing all sides of the issue and understanding how any position that I take will impact different stakeholders. Having that information is critical to making the best possible decision on any issue. It's critical that we remain curious and always learning about the different perspectives of all groups and people impacted by our actions and do our best to mitigate any negative impacts.

3. What are your ideas for how the City can better encourage infill projects and what areas of your Ward would you like to see infill and/or redevelopment? What kind of infill and redevelopment will have the greatest impact to your residents?

Infill incentive districts and economic development incentives have proven to be successful within the city. Along with that, we need to ensure we have development plans in place in our major growth corridors. The best way to encourage infill is to make it easier to build in the city. I continue to advocate to simplify our codes and approve additional resources to help the PDSD become more efficient and effective. I have consistently advocated and approved projects and economic incentives related to infill along Houghton. I recognize the significant economic value of the Sonoran Corridor infill area and I have prioritized resources within my team for the entitlement process with the State Land Department.

4. What are your ideas for encouraging suburban development especially facilitating State land coming to market?

Ward 4 differs from the other wards as we have a substantial amount of State Trust Land. I am extremely proud of the relationships my Ward 4 team and I have built with State Land and the Arizona Commerce Authority. During the last 4 years, we have worked with the State Land Department to entitle several thousand acres of land for future development – identifying residential, multifamily, commercial and light industrial zones. With our expertise, we have also actively facilitated State Land entitlements in other wards. KB Homes Bella Tierra and the Escalara PAD are shining examples. Having the land entitled, zoned, and planned with community support ensures a successful home building process.

5. Do you think we have an affordable housing crisis in Tucson? What ideas do you have to encourage new home construction and promote homeownership in the City of Tucson?

Affordable housing has been a top issue during my entire first term, and well before I joined the Council. Many strategies are in place to create more affordable housing. In 2022 alone, 226 new affordable rental housing units were constructed and opened with City of Tucson funds. To encourage responsible new home construction, I support improvements in PDSD to remove unnecessary barriers and delays and overall streamline the permitting process. In terms of home ownership, I support investing funds to provide low-income homebuyers with down payment assistance to get into homes, grants for local nonprofit organizations that provide community services related to housing, and continuing the City of Tucson's Housing Choice Vouchers program.

6. Are there any regulations, fees or processes that you see as an impediment to housing that you would like to see eliminated? If so, which ones?

Overall, we need to improve efficiency and remove unnecessary barriers and complications. This includes streamlining codes, ensuring technology is working properly and not charging fees incorrectly, improving staff and PDSD turn around time, and making sure new staff have adequate training and oversight to cut down on resubmittals and inaccuracies in code and process interpretation.

7. Builders/developers often struggle with neighborhood groups when seeking a rezoning. Describe your approach to how you'd balance the perspectives of neighborhood groups with those of builders/developers seeking a rezoning in order to achieve a win/win resolution.

My approach is always to seek input from all interested parties and listen to their concerns. Finding a balance takes time, and is sometimes hard to achieve, but ultimately is the most rewarding and successful outcome. I will always listen to the concerns of neighborhood groups as they are deeply invested in their neighborhoods, but I also have to look to the larger good for our city and community as a whole.

8. What is the biggest challenge facing the City of Tucson at this time? In your opinion, what are the greatest opportunities?

Biggest challenge - crime, including violent crime, theft, and fentanyl/other drug use. The housing shortage and homelessness are also major challenges that we are working hard to address.

Greatest opportunities - economic development is our main opportunity to ensure Tucson has an adequate housing supply and high wage job opportunities. This will then create tax revenue to help fund public safety and homelessness. I also believe we have an incredible opportunity to embrace technological innovation and lean into advances in technology. This will enable us to deliver services more efficiently and cost-effectively, as well as supplement gaps in staffing.

9. Would you accept a SAHBA endorsement if given?

Yes

***Please complete and return this survey by September 8th. Surveys may be returned to*: bbg@theriver.com (520) 241-9557**

ABOUT SAHBA:

The Southern Arizona Home Builders Association (SAHBA) is a non-profit trade association representing 300 member companies within the home building industry. Collectively, we estimate those member companies employ over 5,000 employees. One of our core priorities is to advocate for home builders and related professionals to ensure a favorable regulatory, policy and business environment that will enable our members to succeed in meeting the housing needs for our growing region. As such, we actively engage in government and political affairs including political campaigns and candidate endorsements.