

Glendale City Council Candidate Questionnaire

June 2026 Municipal Elections

The following questionnaire is intended to help inform the members of the Glendale Association of REALTORS® and the public about candidate perspectives on key issues facing the City of Glendale. The questions reflect voter priorities, findings from the Glendale Smart Growth Poll (2025) (<https://gaor.org/smart-growth-poll-2025/>), current fiscal realities, and ongoing land-use policy discussions in the City. Please answer all questions as completely as possible.

Candidate Information

Candidate Name: Ronnie Gharibian

Campaign Email: ronnie@ronnieforglendale.com

Campaign Phone: (818) 371-3588

1. Traffic & Road Safety

Glendale voters overwhelmingly cite traffic and road safety as the top issue. What specific, measurable steps will you take in your first 12 months to reduce speeding, improve pedestrian safety, and manage congestion without removing vehicle travel lanes?

Candidate Response:

Traffic and road safety are major concerns for Glendale residents, and addressing them requires practical solutions that improve safety without unnecessarily removing vehicle lanes and worsening congestion.

In my first 12 months, I would focus on several measurable steps.

First, increase **targeted traffic enforcement** in high-incident corridors and school zones in coordination with the Glendale Police Department. Data shows that visible enforcement is one of the most effective ways to reduce speeding.



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Second, implement **data-driven traffic studies** on our most congested streets to identify where signal timing adjustments, smart traffic management systems, and better intersection design can improve traffic flow and reduce dangerous driving behavior.

Third, expand **high-visibility pedestrian safety improvements** such as improved crosswalk markings, better lighting at intersections, pedestrian countdown signals, and flashing beacons where appropriate — particularly near schools, parks, and senior centers.

Fourth, accelerate **technology upgrades**, including synchronized traffic signals and real-time traffic monitoring to help move vehicles more efficiently through our major corridors.

Finally, before making permanent roadway changes, I support **pilot programs and impact studies** so we can measure real-world effects on emergency access, congestion, and safety before implementing long-term solutions.

Additionally, through my service on the **Glendale Police Foundation Board over the past several years**, and my involvement as a **Glendale ANCA Chair and member for more than 15 years**, I have worked closely with both the Police and Fire Departments. Through that work, I have gained a clear understanding of many of the operational challenges they face as well as practical solutions that work on the ground. That experience will help guide my decisions on the Council to ensure that traffic safety improvements are both effective and realistic while protecting emergency response access.

2. Balancing Growth Perception vs. Data

Nearly half of voters believe residential development is happening too fast, even though Glendale's 10-year data shows otherwise. How will you balance voter perception with actual production data when evaluating development proposals and RHNA-related obligations?

Candidate Response:

Both community perception and factual data matter, and leadership requires listening to both.

If many residents feel development is happening too quickly, that perception should not be dismissed. People experience change in their neighborhoods through traffic, parking, infrastructure pressure, and quality of life impacts. Even if the data shows that overall



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production may be lower than people believe, their concerns are still real and deserve to be heard.

At the same time, as policymakers we must rely on accurate information and understand our legal obligations, including RHNA requirements from the State. Ignoring those obligations is simply not responsible governance.

Data by itself is not always right or wrong. It must be carefully evaluated to determine whether it is practical, necessary, and achievable without creating unintended consequences. We need the right strategy and the right path to ensure that whatever direction we take continues to move the city forward responsibly.

As a youth girls' basketball coach, I often tell my players that a good player listens to the coach — but also doesn't just blindly listen to the coach. What I mean by that is you must think, analyze, and understand the situation on the court. The same principle applies in leadership. Data and guidelines are important, but good judgment and thoughtful evaluation are equally critical.

The goal is to find the balance between meeting our obligations and protecting the quality of life for Glendale residents through smart, responsible planning.

3. Housing Policy: Perception vs. Evidence

Glendale must plan for more than 13,000 additional housing units under the State's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). At the same time, the Smart Growth Poll indicates that many residents believe development is occurring faster than the available data suggests.

When voter perception conflicts with objective housing production data and state housing requirements, which principle should guide your decisions?

☐ Development decisions should primarily reflect voter perception and neighborhood sentiment

☐ Development decisions should primarily reflect objective housing data and state housing requirements

X A balance of both

Please explain:

I answered this question in an earlier response, but I will repeat it here again.



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Both voter perception and objective data must be taken seriously, and responsible leadership requires balancing the two.

If residents feel that development is happening too quickly, those concerns should not be dismissed. People experience change in their neighborhoods through traffic, parking, infrastructure pressure, and overall quality-of-life impacts. Even if the data suggests that production levels are lower than perceived, the community's concerns are still real and deserve to be heard and addressed.

At the same time, the City must rely on accurate housing data and recognize its legal obligations under the State's RHNA requirements. Ignoring those obligations would not be responsible governance.

Data itself is not always simply right or wrong. It must be carefully evaluated to determine whether the path forward is practical, sustainable, and properly planned. The key is creating the right strategy to ensure that growth happens responsibly and that infrastructure, public safety, and quality of life keep pace.

As a youth girls' basketball coach, I often tell my players that a good player listens to the coach — but also doesn't just blindly follow without thinking. Players must understand the situation on the court and make smart decisions in real time. Leadership works the same way — data and guidelines are important, but judgment, experience, and thoughtful evaluation are equally critical.

The goal is smart, responsible growth that respects both the facts and the voices of Glendale residents.

4. Housing Types & Development

In general, which types of housing development do you believe Glendale should prioritize?

- ☐ Large apartment buildings
- ☐ Mid-scale multifamily developments (approximately 8–16 units)
- ☐ Ownership housing such as single-family homes, condominiums, and townhomes

X A balanced mix depending on location

Please explain:

Glendale is a diverse city with different types of neighborhoods, and housing solutions should reflect that reality. A one-size-fits-all approach does not work.



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Some areas, particularly near major commercial corridors, transit routes, and downtown, may be more appropriate for larger or mid-scale multifamily developments. At the same time, other neighborhoods are better suited for ownership housing such as single-family homes, condominiums, and townhomes that support long-term community stability and investment.

Homeownership opportunities are extremely important because they allow families to build equity and remain invested in the community. Many first-time homebuyers who are just starting their own families do not want to leave the hometown where they grew up. Unfortunately, affordability often puts homeownership out of reach. We should look for ways to provide more attainable starter housing options such as condominiums and townhomes so young families have the opportunity to stay in Glendale and build their future here.

The key is thoughtful planning — making sure development fits the location, infrastructure capacity, traffic conditions, and neighborhood character. Growth should be balanced, responsible, and carefully evaluated so that it strengthens Glendale rather than overwhelming it.

Smart planning means matching the right type of housing to the right location while protecting the quality of life for our residents.

5. Building Permit Process

Developers, homeowners, and small property owners often cite slow permitting and plan-check timelines as a barrier to housing production and renovation. What specific steps would you support to streamline Glendale's building permit and plan-check process while maintaining safety and quality standards?

Candidate Response:

Streamlining the building permit and plan-check process is important, but it must be done without compromising safety, structural integrity, or quality standards.

First, I would support improving the City's **digital permitting and online tracking systems** so applicants can clearly see where their project stands in the review process. Glendale's current digital platform is more than six years old and has had little to no meaningful upgrades, and it currently has no AI capabilities. Modern AI tools could significantly enhance accuracy, improve review speed, and provide innovative support to existing staff. These technologies should not replace staff, but rather serve as tools that help our professionals work more efficiently.



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Second, we should evaluate **staffing levels in plan check and permitting departments** to ensure the City has enough qualified personnel to handle the workload. When departments are understaffed, backlogs grow and projects slow down unnecessarily.

Third, I would support **clear timelines and accountability benchmarks** so applicants know what to expect and departments have measurable goals for processing applications.

Fourth, we should continue to review **internal processes to eliminate unnecessary duplication between departments** while still maintaining all required safety reviews.

Finally, communication is key. Creating better **pre-application meetings** between applicants and city staff can identify potential issues early and prevent costly revisions later in the process.

The goal is not to cut corners, but to create a more efficient, transparent, and predictable process that helps homeowners, small property owners, and developers move projects forward while maintaining Glendale's high safety and construction standards.

6. Bike Lane Policy

Do you support or oppose removing vehicle lanes to create bike-only lanes in Glendale? If you support lane reductions, what evidence do you have that voters agree? If you oppose lane reductions, what alternative mobility or safety improvements do you propose?

Candidate Response:

I do not support removing vehicle lanes in a way that creates additional congestion or negatively impacts emergency response times.

Glendale residents have made it clear that traffic and congestion are already major concerns. Reducing vehicle lanes without fully understanding the real-world impact can worsen traffic flow, delay emergency vehicles, and affect local businesses.

That said, I do support improving safety for cyclists and pedestrians — but through **smarter, more balanced solutions**.

Instead of removing lanes, I would support:

- **Pilot programs** before permanent changes, allowing us to measure real impacts on traffic, safety, and emergency access
- **Dedicated bike routes on appropriate streets** where they do not interfere with major traffic corridors
- **Improved striping and shared-lane markings** rather than permanent physical barriers in certain areas



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- **Enhanced traffic signal timing and smart traffic management** to reduce congestion overall
- **Safety improvements at intersections**, where most accidents occur

The example on North Brand Boulevard showed that changes should be studied more carefully before full implementation. A phased or pilot approach could have provided valuable data before making permanent lane reductions that impacted traffic and emergency access.

My approach is simple: improve safety, but not at the expense of mobility or public safety. We need balanced, data-driven solutions that work for drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and most importantly, allow our Fire and Police Departments to respond quickly and effectively.

7. Publicly Owned Parking Lots

Do you support or oppose developing publicly owned parking lots—such as in Montrose or around the Civic Center—into mixed-use housing? If you support the idea, how will you address parking displacement and protect small businesses?

Candidate Response:

I am open to the idea of developing publicly owned parking lots into mixed-use housing, but it must be done very carefully and responsibly.

Parking is critical to the success of our local businesses, especially in areas like Montrose and around the Civic Center. Removing parking without a clear and well-executed plan can directly harm small businesses, reduce customer access, and negatively impact the local economy.

If we consider this type of development, it must include a **comprehensive parking replacement strategy upfront** — not after the fact. That could include structured parking, shared parking solutions, or smart parking management systems to ensure that businesses and visitors are not impacted.

Equally important is **partnering with well-qualified developers who have a proven track record of building for communities**, not short-term rental markets. We should prioritize developments that serve Glendale residents — not projects that cater primarily to transient visitors who benefit from our city’s safety and services but do not contribute to the long-term strength of our local economy.

Design also matters. New developments should be thoughtfully designed so they enhance the neighborhood and reflect the character of the community. When done right, projects



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should be something residents look forward to — not something they fear will disrupt their area.

We also need to conduct **thorough impact studies** to understand how any changes will affect traffic, accessibility, and surrounding neighborhoods. Small businesses must be part of that conversation, and their needs must be protected.

The goal is to find a balance — creating opportunities for housing where appropriate, while protecting the economic vitality of our business districts and maintaining accessibility for residents and visitors.

Smart planning means we do not create one solution while causing another problem.

8. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Do you support or oppose the creation of dedicated Bus Rapid Transit lanes on streets such as Glenoaks, Central, and Broadway? If implemented, what performance metrics or contingency plans should the City establish if BRT results in significant traffic congestion or reduced access to local businesses?

Candidate Response:

I am open to improving public transportation options, including Bus Rapid Transit, but I do not support dedicated lanes if they significantly reduce vehicle capacity and create additional congestion or negatively impact emergency response and local businesses.

Streets like Glenoaks, Central, and Broadway are already heavily traveled corridors. Removing lanes without fully understanding the real-world impact could worsen traffic, delay Fire and Police response times, and reduce access to our small businesses.

If BRT is considered, it must be approached with caution and accountability.

First, I would require **clear, measurable performance metrics**, including:

- Impact on traffic congestion and travel times
- Emergency response times
- Business accessibility and parking availability
- Actual ridership versus projections

Second, we also need to consider **long-term maintenance costs**, including keeping dedicated lanes clean, functional, and properly enforced. These are ongoing responsibilities that must be factored into the decision.



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Third, detailed **intersection analysis is critical**. We must study how left and right turns from a reduced number of lanes could create backups that extend through multiple traffic signals and negatively affect overall traffic flow.

Fourth, I strongly support **pilot programs before permanent implementation**. This allows the City to measure real-world impacts — including how many people actually use the system and during what hours — before making long-term commitments.

Finally, there must be **built-in contingency plans**. If data shows that BRT is causing significant congestion, harming businesses, or impacting emergency access, the City must be willing to adjust, modify, or even reverse the changes.

My approach is simple: support innovation and transportation improvements, but not at the expense of mobility, public safety, or our local economy

9. Electrification Policy

What is your position on building electrification policies that restrict or phase out natural gas appliances in new construction or building upgrades? How would you balance climate goals with housing affordability and renovation costs for homeowners and small property owners?

Candidate Response:

I support moving toward cleaner energy and reducing emissions, but I do not support policies that place an unreasonable financial burden on homeowners, small property owners, or make housing less affordable.

Having worked in the alternative solar energy field for the past 15 years, I have seen firsthand both the opportunities and the limitations of electrification. One thing I have learned — and it is especially true for Glendale — is that the amount of power we would need to fully electrify everything, including homes and vehicles, is significant.

At this point, we simply do not have the infrastructure — particularly within our power grid — to reliably generate, import, or distribute that level of electricity. That is a major challenge that cannot be ignored.

So while I fully support the goal of cleaner energy, the question is not just whether we want it — we all do — but whether we are realistically prepared to implement it at scale. Right now, that remains uncertain.

My approach would be to move forward in a **practical and balanced way**:



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- Encourage electrification through incentives rather than strict mandates
- Ensure infrastructure keeps pace before requiring widespread adoption
- Work with State and Federal programs to maximize financial assistance
- Avoid policies that significantly increase housing or renovation costs

We need to be honest about where we are today while planning responsibly for where we want to go. Clean energy is the future, but it must be implemented in a way that is realistic, affordable, and sustainable for our residents.

Smart policy means aligning our goals with our actual capacity.

10. Rent Registry

Do you support or oppose a mandatory rent registry in Glendale? If you support it, what specific data should be collected and how should sensitive information be protected? If you oppose it, what alternative data sources should the City rely upon for rental market analysis?

Candidate Response:

I am cautious about implementing a mandatory rent registry, especially if it creates additional burdens on small property owners or raises concerns about privacy and data security.

I generally prefer minimal government interference and believe the market should be allowed to find its balance. That said, this does not mean there should be no oversight. The role of government is to provide direction, transparency, and the right tools — not to impose heavy mandates that can create unintended consequences.

While I understand the intent of a rent registry — to better understand the rental market and make informed policy decisions — we must be careful about how that information is collected, stored, and used. Many small property owners are not large corporations, and additional administrative requirements can be both costly and time-consuming.

Privacy is also a major concern. Any system that collects rental data must have strong protections to ensure sensitive information is not exposed or misused.

Instead, I would first look at **alternative data sources**, such as:

- Market data from reputable housing and real estate platforms
- Regional and state housing reports
- Local surveys and voluntary reporting
- Information already available through existing City departments



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If additional data is truly needed, I would support a **limited and targeted approach**, focusing only on essential information — such as general rent ranges and unit types — without collecting personally identifiable information.

The goal is to make informed decisions while respecting privacy, avoiding unnecessary burdens, and allowing the market to function properly with thoughtful guidance rather than heavy regulation.

11. Glendale's Budget Deficit

According to City financial projections, Glendale faces an ongoing structural budget deficit of roughly \$20 million per year over the next several years. What are the three most specific actions you would take in your first year on the City Council to address this structural imbalance?

Candidate Response:

Addressing a structural budget deficit requires discipline, transparency, and making responsible decisions early — not waiting until the problem grows larger.

In my first year, I would focus on three specific actions:

First, conduct a top-to-bottom financial review of City operations.

We need to identify inefficiencies, redundant processes, and areas where costs can be reduced without impacting essential services — especially public safety. This includes reviewing contracts, internal workflows, and opportunities for technology improvements that can increase efficiency.

Second, prioritize spending based on core services.

Public safety, infrastructure, and essential city services must come first. We need to evaluate all programs and expenditures and distinguish between “needs” and “nice-to-have” items. In times of deficit, difficult but responsible prioritization is necessary.

Third, focus on growing sustainable revenue without overburdening residents.

A key part of this is attracting more major businesses and corporate headquarters to Glendale. Bringing in large employers strengthens our tax base, creates jobs, and supports our small businesses, housing market, and overall local economy. We need to position Glendale as a business-friendly city while maintaining our quality of life.

Additionally, I believe in **long-term planning and accountability** — setting measurable financial goals, tracking progress, and being transparent with the public about where we stand.



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The goal is not just to close the gap for one year, but to create a sustainable financial path forward while protecting the services our residents rely on.

12. Revenue Measures

To address Glendale's projected structural budget deficit, some have proposed placing various revenue measures before voters.

Would you support placing any of the following measures on the ballot?

Measure	Yes	No
Parcel tax	☐	x
Real estate transfer tax	☐	x
Sales tax increase	☐	x
Vacancy tax on residential or commercial property	☐	x

Please explain your reasoning:

At this time, I would be very cautious about supporting new taxes or additional financial burdens on Glendale residents, property owners, or local businesses.

Before asking voters to approve any new revenue measure, the City must first show that it has done everything possible to control spending, improve efficiency, modernize operations, and grow revenue through economic development. Residents should know that City Hall has fully reviewed its own budget and priorities before coming back to taxpayers.

My approach is to first focus on attracting more major businesses and corporate headquarters to Glendale, supporting our local business community, improving efficiency within City departments, and using technology to reduce waste and streamline operations. That creates more sustainable long-term revenue without immediately placing more pressure on families and small businesses.

A sales tax increase would affect everyone, especially working families. A parcel tax would place another burden on property owners. A real estate transfer tax could make housing transactions even more expensive. And a vacancy tax could create unintended consequences in the market and may not produce the results people expect.



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I believe the first responsibility of City leadership is to manage existing resources wisely, strengthen the local economy, and earn the public's trust before considering new taxes.

13. Cost-Cutting Strategy

If your plan relies primarily on cost reductions, which specific services, positions, or budget categories would you reduce or restructure? How much savings do you estimate your proposal would generate?

Candidate Response:

My approach is not to rely on across-the-board cuts that risk impacting essential services, especially public safety. Instead, I believe in **targeted, strategic cost management** based on a full financial review.

First, I would conduct a **comprehensive audit of City operations** to identify inefficiencies, duplication of services, and outdated processes. Many savings can be found by improving how we operate rather than reducing critical services.

Second, I would focus on **modernizing systems and technology**. Upgrading outdated platforms and incorporating smarter tools can reduce manual workload, improve efficiency, and lower long-term operational costs.

Third, I would closely review **contracts, consulting services, and non-essential spending** to ensure the City is getting maximum value. This is extremely important. I have seen firsthand situations where contracts are extended with significant cost increases, but without any clear plan to generate revenue or offset those expenses. That is not sustainable, and it is an area where stronger oversight and accountability can lead to meaningful savings.

Fourth, I would look at **process improvements and departmental coordination** to eliminate redundancy between departments.

At this stage, I would not assign a specific dollar amount until a full review is completed, because responsible budgeting requires accurate data. However, in cities of similar size, operational efficiencies and modernization efforts can typically generate **millions of dollars in savings over time** without cutting essential services.

The goal is not simply to cut — it is to **operate smarter, eliminate waste, and protect the services our residents rely on**, especially public safety.



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14. Council District Elections

Do you support or oppose transitioning Glendale from at-large elections to district-based Council elections? Why? If you support districts, how many should Glendale have and what criteria should guide the map? If you oppose districts, how would you address the City's CVRA exposure and potential litigation costs?

Candidate Response:

As the saying goes, "why fix something if it's not broken." I truly believe Glendale is unique, and I see our city as one unified community. I remain hopeful that we can continue to stay united rather than divided.

Under an at-large system, every Councilmember is accountable to every resident in Glendale — not just one district. That encourages citywide thinking and decision-making that benefits the entire community, rather than focusing on smaller, potentially competing interests.

My concern with district-based elections is that they can create division and shift the focus from what is best for Glendale as a whole to what is best for a specific area. I believe our strength comes from unity.

That said, I do take the California Voting Rights Act seriously. Ignoring potential legal exposure would not be responsible. If concerns are raised, we should proactively review the data, seek legal guidance, and ensure that all communities in Glendale feel represented and heard.

My goal is to preserve what makes Glendale strong — a unified city — while also being responsible and prepared if changes are ever legally required.

15. Campaign Information

Please provide a brief update on your campaign.

Total funds raised to date: \$70,000

Campaign fundraising goal: \$250,000

Approximate campaign budget: \$200,000

Key endorsements received (if any): Kathryn Barger, Ara Najarian, Armine Hacopian, and few more.



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