

July 8, 2023

Dear members of Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council and community leaders,

Today, after many days of sleepless nights and long thoughts, I have decided to submit my resignation from my Presidential position as well as my board member position of the Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council. It has been a pleasure working with all of you for over half a decade. This decision was not easy but was necessary. Porter Ranch is my heart and will always be. I have met many wonderful people from the community and we have made great changes within our community to keep our community safe, enjoyable and thriving. We have gone through fires, natural gas leak / blowout, evacuations, and at the same time watched the community expand and grow. I see all of you as family and it will be sad to leave. I will always be there for each and every one of you. My journey has not ended; in fact, this is the beginning of my new chapter. I made my decision after seeing how the Neighborhood Council functions and how the NC's are underestimated, underappreciated and taken advantage of, as well as being treated like we are worthless. I joined the Neighborhood Council to make good, to help, to listen, and to be a part of change, as well as to lead the city into a better future by bringing better quality of life to the city I live in. To grow and empower the city. To keep the city clean and safe. To keep family values and to become a better society. The hardships that the NC's are put in by Empower LA and DONE is just not called for. The logistics and hoops NC's have to go through just to meet is not justified. The logistics behind fighting for what is right and doing what is right is always a struggle with the NC System and the city. We are all volunteers. We all take time away from our families, friends, work, and life to be here and represent the people of Porter Ranch and to make good happen, but when everything we try to do is questioned and made very difficult to achieve, nothing happens. We are given \$35k a year budget to spend in our community for our community. We listen to what the community wants and do everything we can to make it happen by following through and fighting with different agencies to make it happen. We are there to take the hardship from other government agencies and work within the community we are a part of to keep the streets clean and to support our schools, police departments and fire stations. We are here to help and welcome new businesses that come to our community and bring the community together, but I have noticed that no matter how much we want to accomplish our goals and do the things we were elected and promised to do, our hands are tied 99.9% of the time and we get no guidance, no help, no assistance, and most of the time ignored when we try to contact Empower LA, DONE and other agencies. With no support and the feeling of being ignored, questioned every time we want to do something good for the community, questioned every time we want to spend a few dollars for the community, and/or when we pass a motion to improve something within the community, we run into walls. Having NEAs but no guidance is not ideal. Emailing Empower LA with questions or submit issues just to be ignored for weeks and months at a time is not a method of success. It is a broken system that is set up to fail and implode.

I do not call that teamwork. Without teamwork, nothing progresses. For example, Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council has not had a meeting place for over 4 months. After the

10 year master plan of Porter Ranch expired, which was allowing us to meet at our local schools, we were pushed to the side. I followed the plan and arranged the board to meet at the Vineyards. We negotiated a rental rate of under \$100 a month. Every meeting we try to hold, we have been blocked without any reason given other than the fact that the City Attorney does not want to sign the Vineyards contract and Vineyards does not want to sign the city's contract. A simple contract has taken over 5 months, and yet, we are not getting answers of what the issues are other than you cannot meet there. No reason, help, assistance or guidance is ever provided. We are just told to find another place in a city that is limited. The worst part is that Porter Ranch is not like other cities that have dozens of places to meet. We are limited, but without help or guidance, the NC is left with all the burden to figure it out. When we do figure something out, we are avoided by no email replies or call backs leaving us to ponder what we should do? Our meeting in May was forced to be cancelled by the city because they didn't want to agree on a simple contract literally an hour or so before the meeting that was scheduled, posted, and published, forcing us to postpone our guest speakers and stakeholders that were attending. They could not even make an exception for one meeting. I do not call that support. I call that a sabotage to avoid us from meeting. Once again, we are put in a position of trying to figure out how to contact everyone without knowing who was planning on attending in order to advise them that the meeting was canceled, which is not an easy or fun project, especially when we have important agenda items to cover and vote on, as well as obligations to do. We are supposed to have guidance and help but there is none. Empower LA and DONE just want more and more from us volunteers, yet at the same time, they do not care about the complete NC system, which I can decipher based on everything I have seen and dealt with in the past 7 years. I see the NC system as an asset to the city but I feel that we are just another volunteer to take the beating from stakeholders about issues that we cannot control or assist due to the fact that our hands are tied. We are like a buffer between government agencies and the stakeholders. When complaints and suggestions come in, we cannot do anything most of the time, solely on the idea that we just cannot. When we can do something, we are micro managed and we have walls placed in front of us to disable us from doing good and right.

It is time for me to resign and rethink what I can do in the future that will allow me to make the right changes needed and to give more power to the NC board members to do what the community wants. Board members joined and were elected for a reason. They care and love the city they are a part of. A simple thank you or a sign of appreciation can go a long way. We should not need to fight to immediately fail, making the community see us as the bad guys when we, the NC board members, are here to do what is right for everyone. When your hands are tied and you cannot break free, there is not much you can do other than just pay the bills and spend money we cannot spend before the city inevitably takes it back after the fiscal year ends. We cannot even meet because the city doesn't want us to meet without reasonable reasons, preventing us from having the ability to spend said money. The NCs need more money and more power to do what is right in the communities they serve in as they know the community better than others. What Porter Ranch might need is much different than, let's say, Reseda or Sherman Oaks may need. Every community is different in every way. We are not all identical. The priorities for every city and community is different and that should be respected. Some cities have

homeless issues, while others have brush and fire issues. Some communities consist of primarily businesses as others might be mostly homes. We are the same as humans and we are all one blood but we all live in different environments that require different attention. I wish everyone the best. The current system is failing and I hope change comes fast as time is running out.

It has been a pleasure working with everyone and I want to recognize and thank Councilmember John Lee for always being there for us when we needed help. He has always been there for us and supported us. He also made sure he sent someone from his office to represent his office at literally every meeting. Most of the time, it was Colin Crews which I want to thank deeply as well. He has always been at our meetings to give city updates and answer questions provided by the stakeholders and the board; Support from Councilmember John Lee was much appreciated but we need more figures like him to fix this issue as a whole. Teamwork requires every agency to work together and not against each other, as it is the right thing to do for our community. Meanwhile, I will continue to give my full support and time to LAPD, LAUSD and all government agencies to keep our city safe and clean, to expand our kids' education, and to make a better future for our kids.

Sincerely,  
Gabriel Khanlian  
PorterRanchCA@hotmail.com

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gabriel Khanlian', with a stylized, flowing script.