



Councilmember John J. Duran

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Councilmember John J. Duran is a native Angeleno and a resident of West Hollywood since 1990. He has been an elected member of the City Council since 2001. Councilmember Duran has a Juris Doctorate degree from Western State University College of Law and a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from CSU Long Beach. He has been a lawyer in private practice since 1987.

Some of his accomplishments and priorities include:

CIVIL RIGHTS ATTORNEY — Long before John J. Duran joined the City Council, he was recognized as a national leader on HIV/AIDS issues and LGBT equality. He started his legal career as an HIV/AIDS attorney in the trenches in the 1980s when most attorneys refused HIV cases. He then expanded his practice into LGBT rights in the 1990s. More recently his law practice is dedicated to criminal defense work — primarily with clients struggling with alcohol and drug

addiction. John was one of the attorneys for ACT UP during the 1980s representing protestors who were demanding HIV treatment and medications. He was the attorney for Clean Needles Now — the Needle Exchange program in Los Angeles that passed out clean needles to junkies to prevent the spread of HIV. He was one of the first attorneys representing medical marijuana patients during the AIDS epidemic before Proposition 215. He successfully sued the County of Los Angeles for denying HIV patients medications while they were in LA County jails. He also represented Deputy Bruce Boland and sued the LA County Sheriff's Department when Bruce was one of the first law enforcement deputies to come out of the closet. John's legal practice was always on the cutting edge for LGBT rights over the past three decades. John has extended his civil rights advocacy for immigrants as a board member at NALEO (National Association of Latino Elected Officials) and as a featured speaker at numerous

AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) conferences.

LGBT EQUALITY — John has served on numerous nonprofit boards including AIDS Project Los Angeles, the ACLU Foundation Board, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. He was one of the co-founders and Board Chairman of the LIFE AIDS Lobby from 1987 to 1992 — the organization that wrote most of the laws on HIV in California. He was also one of the co-founders of ANGLE (Access Now for Gay and Lesbian Equality) in 1989 — the heavily influential political organization that developed AIDS policy with US Senators and helped elect President Bill Clinton in 1992 with millions of LGBT dollars and voters. He was also one of the co-founders of Equality California in 2000 and its Board Chairman until 2008 — the organization primarily responsible for the creation of marriage equality in the State of California. John is also responsible for the permanent establishment of the June Mazer Archives at the West Hollywood Werle Building — the history of the lesbian community in Southern California. John has repeatedly stated that gay men are deeply indebted to their lesbian sisters for the leadership role these women played during the height of the AIDS epidemic. John is also responsible for the creation/establishment of an AIDS monument in West Hollywood Park to pay tribute to those we lost and to the

heroism of the women and men who responded to the plague.

HEALTH & FITNESS, ADDICTION AND RECOVERY — John has been a strong proponent for physical and mental health issues. John is responsible for the creation of the West Hollywood Alcohol and Drug Recovery Center at 626 N. Robertson Boulevard. He transformed a city storage site into a bustling center of recovery for 8,000 visitors per month. He is responsible for significant increases in the city budget to address alcoholism and drug addiction in the community. John is also responsible for establishment and funding of the sober events BOOM and SIZZLE — which ensure sober alcohol and drug-free zones at gay pride weekend and New Year's Eve. John also hosted a series of town hall meetings on the dangers of crystal meth. John is also one of the co-authors of the Zero Transmission City effort — to make West Hollywood a center for PrEP distribution to prevent the spread of HIV and move West Hollywood to zero AIDS cases. John also brought regional attention to the meningitis outbreak in Southern California over the past few years and demanded free vaccines for the community when other leaders turned their heads. John is an avid cyclist who rides in the AIDS/LifeCycle event from San Francisco to Los Angeles to raise money to fight AIDS. He was also the creator of “Buff and Cut” — an event to promote physical fitness and activity for residents of all ages.

FINE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS — John is responsible for doubling the city budget to support the arts. He was one of the founders of the West Hollywood Chorale in 1995. He has been a singing tenor in the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles since 1998 and currently serves as Chairman of the Board of the organization hailed as one of the great artistic treasures of Southern California. John is also the moving force behind the creation of an arts district in the center city. John was behind the city purchase of the Coast Playhouse to create a 99-seat civic theater in West Hollywood. He is also responsible for significantly increasing the parking behind West Hollywood City Hall to serve the various nighttime uses in the center city including patrons of the arts. John believes that the arts are an important economic engine for the City of West Hollywood and constantly demands that music, dance, theater, and art exhibitions be expanded throughout the city. John has been a moving force behind the creation of an AIDS monument at West Hollywood Park and capturing the history of the Sunset Strip.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND TENANTS' RIGHTS — Before John was elected to City Council, he served as a volunteer attorney at the CES (Coalition for Economic Survival) Legal Clinic giving free legal advice to tenants. He then served on the Rent Stabilization Commission fighting for tenant protections until 2001 when he became an elected Councilmember. John was the

author of the moratorium on development when long-term tenants were being evicted and displaced by applications for new condo construction. John's moratorium helped stop the overheated markets and gave the city breathing space to move the creation of new housing units to the boulevards and avoid tearing down rent controlled housing in the neighborhoods. John has been a fierce advocate for the 20% set aside requiring all new housing developments in the city to set aside 20% of the units for low income housing. John is also responsible for the seismic earthquake studies that the city has done to determine which buildings are subject to collapse. John is working with finance staff and experts to determine the best way to retrofit these buildings. John is a tenant and one of two tenants who currently serve on the West Hollywood City Council.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT — John has been very active with the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce over the years since his business/law practice is situated in the City of West Hollywood. He is a strong advocate for local businesses believing that a strong economy creates local jobs and creates the taxes needed for social services that many residents depend upon. Under his continuing long-term leadership, the city remains in an exceptionally strong financial position with a triple AAA bond rating. The City of West Hollywood was one of the few cities in America (8%) that weathered the last

recession of 2008 in the black and without having to lay off any employees or cut back any programs. In fact, during the Great Recession, the City of West Hollywood had the financial resources to invest in capital improvements — building a new library, City Council chambers and restoration of West Hollywood Park. John is committed to making sure that the three economic engines of West Hollywood (the Sunset Strip, the Design District, and Santa Monica Boulevard/Boystown) remain vibrant and strong.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION — John is a long-term resident of West Hollywood since 1990 and a history buff about the City of West Hollywood and its colorful past. John was the author of the Craftsman Preservation Ordinance to protect the historic homes on the city's Eastside. He was also the only Councilmember to support creating a bungalow district citywide to protect the history city bungalows. John was the deciding vote to preserve the “Tara” house at 1343 N. Laurel Avenue and safeguard its future. John also supported the commercial structure inventory to preserve and protect many of the historic buildings and businesses on the Sunset Strip and Santa Monica Boulevard. John also supported the ordinances to prevent “McMansions” being created in the West Hollywood West and Norma Triangle districts of the city.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES — John has supported adding hundreds of new parking spaces across the City of West

Hollywood each year. He is also responsible for the creation of the West Hollywood PickUp — a free polka-dotted shuttle service that runs on weekends and holiday evenings. This free nighttime/weekend service has greatly benefitted residents who no longer have to worry about finding parking or drinking and driving. The city is now considering expanding the service onto the Sunset Strip. John is also responsible for the city's robotic garage behind City Hall. Many businesses were suffering in the area because there was insufficient parking in the center city. The robotic garage tripled the number of parking spaces in the area and has received numerous regional and national awards for being such an innovative and creative solution for the city.

PUBLIC SAFETY — Before being elected to the West Hollywood City Council, John was a member of the Public Safety Commission. He brought a voice of balance to the Commission as an ACLU Board member to ensure that residents' rights were being protected. John was one of the proponents to establish an independent West Hollywood Police Department in 1991. The initiative failed on the ballot by a vote of 49%-51%. However, it propelled significant changes in the West Hollywood Sheriff's Department to be more responsive to the West Hollywood Community, especially the LGBT community. John now stands as one of the greatest supporters of the LA County

Sheriff's Department. He has worked extensively with numerous captains at the station to ensure neighborhood safety and livability. He is currently working with numerous stakeholders to address the issue of homelessness in West Hollywood. He believes that the homeless problem is complex and deserves a comprehensive approach including building new low income housing for the homeless, substance abuse treatment, and mental health funding.

ANIMAL WELFARE AND ANTI CRUELTY — John has been recognized as a Southern California champion for the protection of animals. He is the author of the first “anti-declawing” ordinance in the USA banning the declawing of cats which removes tendons and bones from the paw of a cat. He has also worked closely with his colleagues on the Council to ban puppy mills in West Hollywood and ensure that tenants be allowed animal companions in their apartments without retribution. John has received recognition and awards for his work on behalf of animals at the local level. John has also worked with the Public Works Department to make sure that there are adequate fecal containers across the city for dog waste and strict enforcement of the laws that require a pet owner to pick up after his/her dog.

You may contact West Hollywood City Council offices via email at council@weho.org or by phone at (323) 848-6460.