



## Equine Enthusiast, Sigrid Williams Running for Norco City Council

<https://sigridwilliams.com/>

I have been a resident of Norco since February, 2009. But even before I became a resident, I was actively involved in the City, its nonprofits and riding clubs. I decided to run for City Council because I do not like what I see: Hillsides with dead vegetation, ingresses and egresses that are not aesthetically pleasing to draw in visitors, small businesses that are barely scraping by because they lack the foot traffic and clientele to make a sustainable living, inequities within this city, and decisions based on emotion and not sound judgment.

I have six platforms that are very important to me:

**Preserving our rural/animal keeping lifestyle** – We consider ourselves a rural community but we are surrounded by suburbia. Progress in the Inland Empire, state legislation, and our low tax base on our larger lots, is impacting our city's tax revenue which in turn is weighing heavily on our ability to sustain our community. We need problem solvers, collaborators, and leaders that will be the driving force to find innovative ways to draw in the tax revenues necessary to sustain our community. We need leaders that can rally the residents in this town and make them stakeholders in the development of plans to move our community forward. We need to recognize the 2,300 businesses in this town and make a conscious effort to patronize this businesses. We need to use local developers that live here and understand our lifestyle.

**Infrastructure** is also very important to me. Our streets are deteriorated and our trails need a lot of work with their ruts, overgrowth, and some of our trails are even encroached upon. I have made it a point to visit our pocket parks to meet the residents, Those I have spoken to have made mention of these problems. What I found were dead cut down trees and rubbish piled behind buildings in parks, park signs and shelters that have peeling paint and broken wood, trails that are unusable because of the overgrowth of weeds, and drainage systems in our city that are filled with dirt, leaves, and trash that appear to have been neglected for years. The beautification of our parks and trails will bring residents and visitors outdoors to venture through our city.

It goes without saying that since March we have all been overwhelmed with this COVID-19 Pandemic. Our businesses are struggling. As a member of the Economic Development Advisory Council, we collectively collaborated together over the last several months, designed, and presented to council this last month a program to help small businesses. BUT that is not enough. Norco needs to continue to find ways to

**stimulate its economy through economic development** – We need to find innovative ways to bring other businesses, vacationers, trade shows and events to Norco to offset the City's rising expenses. We need to embrace Norco College and their ability to train students in a career or trade in a very short period of time, so students can begin to make a livable wage. We need to market our city and our unique lifestyle to draw others in neighboring communities to shop and dine in Norco. We live in a recreational community but the costs and cost recovery in this town is not working in our favor. The only positive cost recovery in this town is recreational programs and youth sports. Our facility rentals, event center, and field usage are only earning on average 64% of the cost which is unacceptable. We need to find ways to bring more events into this town to at least break even if not make a profit which in turn can go back into the town's infrastructure.

Another area that is extremely important to me is **public safety**. While we hear many communities screaming about defunding the police, we need to increase funding for public safety by increasing training for our patrol officers, by increasing community awareness and having programs that can help reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim, and by reaffirming our commitment to develop programs that bridge public safety and the community. However, public safety also extends beyond law enforcement. We need to protect ourselves against natural and manmade disasters but participating in fire mitigation efforts, creating defensible space, pruning trees and vegetation in and around our community. Cleaning up the riverbed when able without disturbing the migrating birds and without violating county and state ordinances. Educating residents to look for and see the warning signs, and having readily available a list of resources to call in the event something should occur. We need to accept the fact that we have a homeless problem in the riverbed and those using the cover of the trees and sage brush to hide their illegal drug production and manufacturing. We should not engage, but gather enough information to allow the proper authorities to handle the situation. This requires more, not less. We also need to invest in technology and real time cameras to help law enforcement investigate and solve crimes.

Much of what I have seen and have been hearing from the residents I have met over the last several weeks is the lack of ability of this city to clean and groom our trails. This is where we need to **empower our nonprofits**. We need to utilize the talents and resources of the many nonprofits in this town and our younger generation to volunteer for trail cleanups, trail fence repair, and when approved cleaning and repairing our beautiful Santa Ana River trail system. Empowering the nonprofits and those willing to help will continue to build a strong bond within our community. Empower our nonprofits can also offset the costs to our City. In California, the estimated value of a volunteer hour is \$31.51 according to philanthropy news digest. Nationwide it's \$27.20. This is a huge revenue savings the City is not currently embracing and it needs to.

My last major concern is the lack of **education and information** provided to the residents of Norco. We need to find ways to get the residents engaged. Very few have the time to read 150+ pages every other week and attend all the council, commission and advisory boards to stay informed. We need to embrace social media and other

forms of news outlets to keep residents informed. The information must be easy to find with as few clicks as possible with weekly, bi-monthly, and monthly overviews and updates. While the City is already providing their News for Norco, I think we can do more. Very few people knew that they could ask for a meeting with council members if they had a concern. This information and much more should be known by all its residents. When people are educated and informed, better decisions are made, and decisions made by city council will be better received.

**So people have asked, what can I bring to the table as a member of the City Council?** My years of experience working in public service and my formal education. I understand the political context and bureaucracy because I work in it and primarily because I teach it. I am a critical thinker and will not make a decision without fully understanding what is needed for the future of Norco. I will make decisions based on sound judgment, not emotion.

Bringing people to this city will require an aesthetically pleasing and friendly atmosphere. I believe one of my greatest attributes is the ability to influence through education, educating this town and informing them of what will happen if we continue to be reactive instead of proactive. I like to think of it as a chess game, I am not about the move I'm about to make, but I'm thinking about the moves in the future. A chess player will tell you if you are only working the next move, and not thinking five moves ahead, you will lose. I refuse to lose.

I welcome the opportunity to meet and speak with the residents of Norco. I am making myself available every weekend throughout the city, available through email, and my website: [sigridwilliams.com](http://sigridwilliams.com). I am walking neighborhoods in hopes of being able to meet those that I will serve as one of your next city councilmembers. AND if you see me, don't be afraid to stop me and say hi. I am not taking this position lightly and want to serve the people in Norco to the best of my ability.

Other candidates that are running for Norco City Council include: Robin Grundmeyer, Ted Hoffman, Patrick Mitchell, Sam Tavallodi, Brent Sakamoto, Susan Olmstead-Bowen, and Katherine Aleman.