Builder Charged With Violating Campaign Rules : Contributions: A state panel alleges Geoff Palmer hid the fact that he was a true source of donations to fight Santa Clarita cityhood and back an L.A. councilwoman.

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State officials Friday charged a real estate developer, who has been involved in controversial housing projects in Santa Clarita and Woodland Hills, with 15 counts of illegally laundering campaign contributions.

The state Fair Political Practices Commission said that Geoff Palmer and his Los Angeles development firm, G.H. Palmer Associates, had violated rules that require that the true source of campaign donations be identified on state-required reports.

The commission said that campaign statements filed by a committee opposing the 1987 incorporation of the city of Santa Clarita showed that seven Palmer employees and one employee's mother donated a total of $7,000. But the commission alleges the employees were then reimbursed by Palmer or his firm for their contributions, making him the true source of the money.

The commission also alleges that Palmer contributed $3,500 to Los Angeles City Councilwoman Joy Picus in 1987 under a similar scheme to disguise the source of the money.