

Questions for Mayoral Candidates

Candidate: Cindy Chavez

From the San Jose Branch of the American Association of University Women

1. What will you do to decrease the impact of this area's enormous wealth gap? While some people pay \$6M-16M for a house, others cannot afford \$1600 for monthly rent

We need to take steps to make sure our city is once again affordable for working families to live, raise a family, and retire here. By building all housing with an emphasis on affordability for all worker

This includes giving the city's Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement Department the resources it needs to move projects through the approval pipeline more quickly. We also need to allow up to four General Plan updates per year in order to be able to respond quickly to changing circumstances and opportunities that arise to increase the housing supply and grow smartly.

San Jose Deserves a Fair Deal from the Legislature

San Jose is not Cupertino or Palo Alto and that is why I am opposed to SB 9. That legislation imposes a one-size-fits-all approach to residential zoning that does not take into account a community's history or commitment to smart growth. San Jose is by far Santa Clara County's leading city for building both higher density and affordable housing. We should not be held to the same standard as other communities that both historically and currently are resistant to adding affordable housing and increasing density.

I was one of the leaders of the effort to pass the \$950 million Measure A housing bond because it dedicates significant funds for first time home buyer assistance and for building affordable rental units. The bond has already resulted in 4,400 units of affordable or supportive housing being built or being in the construction pipeline.

I currently sit on the Valley Transportation Authority Board of directors and am leading the effort to develop affordable housing on approximately 200 acres of land that are on transit corridors. This will not only add more affordable housing in San Jose but also help decrease the regional carbon footprint by making transit more attractive to those living in the adjacent developments.

2. The homeless population is a top concern for all. How, specifically, can/will the

city work with the county to coordinate resources to address the issue? How is accountability for the success/failure of these programs established? 3. How will you keep homeless women and children safe?

We know that housing ends homelessness. We need to ensure strong coordination across all of our government and non-profit partners to make sure the needs of the unhoused are met.

Over the last several years, I have created partnerships between government and nonprofits that have moved 14,000 homeless Santa Clara County residents into long-term, stable housing.

I led the creation of the Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness as well as its subsequent update. To measure success, this plan had specific benchmarks, including regular progress report updates to hold us accountable. We should apply this methodology across initiatives. This year's progress report update found the following:

- Nearly 6,000 people in Santa Clara County exited homelessness through permanent housing since January 2020
- More than 96% of people connected to permanent supportive housing remain in their home for more than a year
- Year-round temporary shelter capacity has increased by almost 20%, with 2,227 more beds since January 2020
- More than 1,200 affordable homes are currently under construction

I believe we can end family homelessness by 2025.

In 2020, I convened and chaired the County's 2020 Unhoused Task Force and during the pandemic, my colleagues and I placed thousands of households into congregate and non-congregate shelter, distributed more than 50,000 pieces of personal protective equipment, and provided mobile shower and sanitation services for individuals living in encampments throughout our region. I also raised money to make sure people could pay rent and their mortgages so that they wouldn't be behind on their payments or become homeless.

I've also led efforts to make period products available for low income women, expand housing opportunities for homeless women, expand resources to victims of domestic violence, invest in domestic violence prevention, and expand services for victims of human trafficking.

As Mayor, I will continue to support and expand the creation of local community

development corporations, as I have as a County Supervisor, that are focused on specific job creation and affordable housing needs for a specific neighborhood. Using vehicles like limited equity housing cooperatives to create ownership opportunities that could never exist is another critical step. And it continues with direct investment in groups looking to dive into the housing conversation and figure out other innovative approaches. Without these types of targeted interventions, the systems we have in place will continue to deny access to those who need it the most and continue to displace those who might have an affordable and safe place to live.

4. What have you done to show your support of reproductive rights? What is your plan to make reproductive healthcare, including abortion, more accessible in our community?

I promise to protect reproductive rights in Santa Clara county as well as expand access for those who need them. Throughout my career I have been an advocate for reproductive freedom:

- I secured \$3 million in new funding for Planned Parenthood Blossom Hill clinic
- I supported Joe Simitian's initiative to help Planned Parenthood Mar Monte maintain services in North County
- The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, on which I serve, partnered with Planned Parenthood Mar Monte to augment health care services in North County and improve care coordination
- The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors pushed to move forward with a proposal that would maintain women's health services that are at risk of losing federal funding due to Trump's gag rule. This proposal was first of its kind in the Bay Area and state wide

I will continue my efforts to make reproductive services available to not just San Jose residents but any person seeking services, and I support Proposition 1, which will codify abortion rights into our State Constitution.

5. With the pandemic and the rise of 'work at home' or other remote work options as an ongoing model, how will this affect the city's tax base, and what are plans to address any projected revenue shortfalls?

Remote work can, long term, affect our city's revenue streams, with tax sources affected being our property taxes, income taxes, and sales taxes. To safeguard our fiscal health, we must recognize that, for many, remote work is the new normal. We must take remote

work into account when making our long term transportation infrastructure and development decisions.

For instance, large employers shifting to remote work may lead to higher vacancy rates of commercial property. In turn, this could allow other businesses to move into these office spaces.

Along with these, we must keep in mind that San Jose's development review process takes longer than many communities for projects of all sizes, and much longer than it has in past eras, especially those that require CEQA review. San Jose can dramatically improve processing times for applications by requiring departments to implement a predetermined timelines for each type of project. The City Manager must ensure departments coordinate to resolve conflicting positions in the very first project review rather than waiting months until much later in the process. For large and potentially controversial projects, establishing an early community engagement requirement to resolve issues and generate better consensus will dramatically improve overall project timelines.

6. How can the needs of business, developers and workers/employees be balanced through city policies and actions?

As a Councilmember in the downtown district for 8 years, I regularly managed challenges of advocating for more dense development which often drives resident concerns and the need for new housing. Early and active engagement with both neighbors and developers to set clear parameters for development, resolve issues and generate better consensus was a very successful strategy.

As mayor, I will work with council members and the administration to implement a community engagement strategy on a project-by-project (and city-wide) basis, that results in plans that work from a community perspective, creates more certainty and reduces conflict and risk for everyone, and speeds up the approval process so housing can get built faster as a result.

I have secured the endorsement of the entire City Council (with the exception of my opponent). No other mayoral candidate has achieved this feat since Janet Gray Hayes in 1978.

I am someone who has proven that they can balance the concerns of those in disagreement to truly move our city forward.

In collaboration with my Board of Supervisors colleagues, I led Santa Clara County's response to COVID-19. By working with colleagues, cities, the business community, neighborhood groups, professional sports teams, and schools, we secured more

coronavirus testing sites in our neighborhoods, helped raise funds for healthcare institutions needing protective gear and other medical supplies, and became the most vaccinated county in the nation.

7. What will you do to decrease the level of federally-funded military equipment inventory?

President Biden reinstated Obama-era reforms that place sensible restrictions on the transfer of highly militarized equipment to local law enforcement agencies from the Department of Defense.

I support these reforms and I share the goal of ensuring our law enforcement officials work to protect and serve our community without prejudice and with full accountability.

When I served on the Board of Supervisors, we put in place an oversight committee to monitor the County's correction and law enforcement functions. We created a Blue Ribbon Commission on Custody Operations. The Commission pushed forward over 600 recommendations around these issue areas.

The County's Office of Correctional and Law Enforcement Monitoring (OCLEM) and the Community Correction and Law Enforcement Monitoring Committee was one of these recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Commission. OCLEM is tasked with providing independent civilian oversight through reports and thoughtful policy recommendations to the Board around law enforcement operations, use of force, custody operations, and access to medical and mental health services.

8. How will you focus on non-violent interventions to keep San Jose safe?

In March 2019, I rolled out county-wide participation in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) efforts to bring systemic analysis and an innovative approach to complex race issues to help people take effective action toward racial equity. Moreover, Supervisor Dave Cortese and I provided a resolution in June 2020 to affirm Black Lives Matter and gave direction for next steps regarding the County's internal and external efforts.

In collaboration with San Jose City Councilmembers, I invited all cities to sign the Silicon Valley Equity Pledge to invest in the structural changes necessary to meaningfully advance equity, uplift communities, and ensure justice and prosperity for all residents. In terms of policy initiatives, I worked with San Jose councilmembers to launch the Hate Crime Prevention Task Force to track hate incidents, develop school programs, and use existing laws to protect against gender-based and race-based hate

crimes. I will institutionalize working with community members to implement new strategies to reduce hate crimes throughout the city.

9. What will you do to screen potential police candidates to avoid hiring policemen who make the community less safe?

As an Assemblywoman, Shirley Weber reformed police use of force. Last year, State Senator Steven Bradford won a law banning police officers with a proven racist/abusive record from being able to move from one city to another and continue working. I will make sure San Jose enforces these new laws.

10. San Jose's police force has diminished over the past years—what are your plans to address this issue of concern?

When I was Vice Mayor, San Jose was the safest big city in the country. Now, the San Jose Police Department is severely understaffed, leading to lagging 911 response times and officer burn out.

I recently called upon the city to review the current budget to find funding for additional officers, and one of my top priorities as Mayor will be to fund 45 additional officer positions yearly, tripling the current approach by the city.

I am the only candidate endorsed by both the San Jose Peace Officers Association and the San Jose Police Officers Association.