

~ VEP NEWS Supplement ~

June 6, 2006 Primary Election

★ Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire ★

| 1. INFRASTRUCTURE: As mayor, how will you address the physical infrastructure needs of our growing city? How adequately do you think our needs are currently being met? What will your top priorities be? How and when should the city catch up on deferred maintenance? | |
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| Cindy Chavez | <p>I am a staunch advocated for the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI), a program because it enables residents to prioritize investments in their community infrastructure. In the Downtown, we have invested in school improvements, making our streets safer, expanding business opportunities and creating new parks.</p> <p>Thanks to the voters, we have also upgraded our libraries and community centers, replacing old, inefficient buildings with new state of the art facilities that provide better services for the residents of San Jose.</p> <p>Investment in our infrastructure – whether it is our schools, parks, community centers or transportation systems - is critical for the economic success and community vitality of San Jose. I know that every dollar spent on creating and maintaining infrastructure, generates revenue, jobs, tourism and increases the quality of life in neighborhoods throughout San Jose.</p> <p>As Mayor, I will continue to work closely with community leaders to build a stronger more attractive San Jose.</p> |
| David Cortese | <p>My infrastructure priorities include basic services, such as reducing the backlog in pavement maintenance, and larger projects, such as completing the airport renovation, continuing the work required to bring BART to San Jose, expanding the convention center, building a new museum and theatre projects and continued expansion of our highways and expressways.</p> <p>As to funding, I support the half-cent sales tax and continue to support an increase in the TOT tax, creation of community facilities districts, restoration of Prop 42 funding, appropriate use of local bond issues, etc.</p> <p>I don't think our needs are adequately being met, considering the backlog the City has in providing basic services. That would be my number one priority. Completing the airport renovation would be number 2, bringing BART to San Jose would be number 3, and the continued expansion of highways and expressways would be number 4.</p> <p>The city should catch up on deferred maintenance by getting priorities straight. We have a \$28-million backlog in pavement maintenance yet the city council voted in favor of a \$4-million dollar subsidy for the Grand Prix. We have \$9-million in deferred maintenance at the convention center yet we spend nearly that much on a temporary tent! I voted against these measures as a councilman, but the majority ruled. As mayor I will use my budgetary influence to make sure bad decisions like these do not happen in the future.</p> |
| Michael Mulcahy | <p>San Jose has made some big strides in infrastructure in the past few years. For example, our flood control system has been improved along the Guadalupe River and our electricity infrastructure has been augmented with two new power plants. However, our transportation infrastructure remains woefully inadequate.</p> <p>The BART expansion would be one of my top infrastructure priorities as it will provide an opportunity to build more transit-oriented developments along the BART corridor, providing more affordable housing and it would encourage public transit ridership.</p> <p>Creating thousands of new high-rise residential housing units downtown is another top priority as it will invigorate our city center and be the impetus for additional retail. It will also serve to support our vibrant arts and cultural institutions and existing small businesses.</p> <p>Deferred maintenance is a result of politically-motivated budgetary decisions. The long-term solution to solving our perennial budget problems is to grow our economy so tax revenue increases. In my experience, savings can more often be found by finding inefficiencies than by cutting jobs and services.</p> <p>I would also require a more efficient system to keep track of maintenance needs to make more informed judgments about the allocation of scarce public resources. I will create a competitive environment for the delivery of city services by challenging our city departments to deliver services more cost effectively.</p> |
| David Pandori | <p>My top priority will be to put the city back on a course of responsible planning growth. The current city council is planning a new city the size of Milpitas in Coyote Valley, another city the size of Mountain View in North San Jose and weakening traffic policies to allow thousands of new homes in Evergreen. Traffic studies show these plans will create traffic congestion that will overwhelm our highways and streets to such an extent that it cannot be mitigated. The problems will spill over onto neighborhood streets. I will put aside these piece-meal plans and bring the city together to develop a new plan that focus on growth that makes our city better, not just bigger. I will also support balance jobs and housing growth so that our city has the tax revenue to pay for infrastructure and deferred maintenance.</p> |
| Chuck Reed | <p>Our maintenance backlog is growing rapidly, and paying back the \$499-million borrowed to pay for the new city hall will make it worse. I voted against the new city hall project because I thought it was a waste of money that we need for neighborhood services. The street maintenance back log alone is hundreds of millions of dollars. We have to make sure that infrastructure needs are considered when decisions are being made for new spending. For example, the \$4-million budgeted for the car race, which I opposed, should not have been allowed to go to the front of the funding line. The Mayor and Vice Mayor put the item on the Council agenda with almost no public notice and no discussion of other funding needs. That was unfair to the public.</p> <p>Completing the master plan at the Airport is my top infrastructure priority. That will be funded by borrowing against airport revenue streams and by airline lease payments. After that, my priority will be the infrastructure that is needed to ensure the North San Jose area remains the world's innovation leader. Those needs will be funded from Redevelopment Agency revenues that come from North San Jose and from the mitigation fees from the North San Jose Development Plan.</p> |

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2. TRAFFIC: What is your position on maintaining or improving our city's adopted traffic level of service (LOS) standard? Would you require that developers reduce their project scope and/or pay for corrective mitigation when traffic studies show that their projects will cause LOS standards to be violated? Do you agree with the 2005 changes to LOS standards?

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| David Cortese | I voted NO on the 2005 changes to the LOS. I agree that developer fees should be used to mitigate traffic impact and that no project should go forward until traffic congestion standards set by the city. Any changes in the LOS should be driven by community-based processes allowing for neighborhood input on traffic impact and all quality of life issues. We have modeled this approach in District 8 during my term of office and I believe it is a model that should be replicated all over the city. |
| Michael Mulcahy | <p>I support improving our city's LOS standard and that would include having developers doing their part in keeping to these standards or contribute financially to corrective mitigation.</p> <p>I support a BART extension to San Jose. Other cities are looking at Bus Rapid Transit and there is good early evidence that these BRT systems are affordable alternatives to fixed rail systems. We need good planning that puts jobs close to housing, car sharing, bike paths, and walking paths. Programs like new and better busses, ride sharing, and promoting telecommuting are proven to work. These are all parts of the equation – and they need to be worked into our answer.</p> <p>One of the things I will address is the incredible duplication in regional transit systems; we need greater coordination of these agencies to improve cost and service.</p> <p>We need greater investment in an intelligent transportation system, which will allow the city to better manage traffic flow by integrating the functions of traffic surveillance systems, traffic control measures, electronic display signs, and advanced communications network.</p> |
| David Pandori | I have a different view than the current mayor and city council. I believe we should maintain our traffic standards. I believe that development should be planned with traffic capacity in mind. Projects need to be sized in scope and/or pay for the traffic improvements they require. I do not agree with the council's recent changes that are designed to weaken the city's traffic policies. |
| Chuck Reed | I support the current LOS standards and requirements to pay for corrective mitigation. I supported the 2005 changes to the LOS standards, because there were some intersections where physical improvements were not desirable. |
| Cindy Chavez | <p>Creating a state-of-the-art, accessible transportation system is one of my top priorities. Developer supported improvements such as traffic calming, signals, and wider street are critical parts of the solution, but they are not enough.</p> <p>As Chair of the Valley Transit Authority, I am leading efforts to keep our airport, transit and roadways moving, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to the 85/101 interchange in Mountain View • Widening of 87, between 101 and 85 • Improvements to the 87/101 and 87/85 interchanges in San Jose • 101 widening between San Jose and Morgan Hill • Improvements to our County Expressways • Opening of the new Light Rail lines • Improvements to the 880/Coleman interchange in San Jose <p>I am convinced we can deliver affordable, safe, convenient transportation alternatives, including BART, CalTrain, light rail, and bus rapid transit, if we work together with other cities in the Bay Area.</p> |

3. COMMUNITY SERVICES: As mayor, how will you address the operating and maintenance needs of our parks, libraries, and other community services? How adequately do you think they are currently being met? What will your priorities be?

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| Michael Mulcahy | <p>It is unacceptable to me that we can build community centers and parks and not have the funds to staff them adequately. San Jose will never be a top tier city if we continue to only get halfway to the finish line on things like this.</p> <p>I will promote fundamental change in organization at City Hall, meaning directing the new City Manager to find ways to use staff more effectively, hold them accountable for performance, and reengineer administrative tasks when necessary. I would establish a complete line-item budget for the council's review and adoption. I will create a competitive environment for the delivery of city services by challenging our city departments to deliver services more cost effectively.</p> <p>Although the budget gap is smaller than originally projected, the ongoing deficit problem remains. And the mayor needs to understand that the only long-term solution is to apply sound business principles and to create more effective delivery of services. These proven solutions will grow our economy to expand revenue. And, we must be very careful not to spend one-time funds on ongoing programs.</p> |
| David Pandori | There is no quick fix to these problems. I do not support tax increases to pay for these items. I do support increasing the city's tax base, by supporting growth policies that seek job growth in our city, not just housing. The massive new housing being planned by the city council will worsen San Jose's position as the bedroom community for Silicon Valley. Our budget will suffer and city services will be diluted. We currently have 11 million square feet of vacant industrial and office space in our city. Clearly, we cannot address the shortage of operating dollars by creating even more demand. In the final analysis economic growth and a better plan to expand the job base in San Jose will yield the dollars we need. |

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| Chuck Reed | <p>Parks, libraries and other community services are under funded. We need to change our policies to allow private sector partners to maintain parks.</p> <p>We also need more money. The key to bringing back the lost revenue from when the boom went bust is getting the jobs back that we lost. We have to make sure our driving industries stay here and grow here. We have to make San Jose the best place in the world for entrepreneurs from anywhere in the world to start and grow a business so that we get back the jobs and revenues we lost in the bust so we can fund city services. To accomplish that the city government must first do three things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do no harm with new taxes, regulations or eminent domain. - Get out of the way so businesses can start and grow easily. - Do the city's job in delivering services and infrastructure. |
| Cindy Chavez | <p>In partnership with the community, we have been able to reallocate redevelopment resources to provide desperately needed resources to pre-kindergarten, elementary, middle and high school facilities and after-school programs in the Downtown and throughout the City. We have been able to rebuild roads and make our streets safer. Importantly, we have been able to provide 1,000's of new homes for young families, teachers, and seniors.</p> <p>There is still much to do throughout San Jose. As Mayor, I will continue to work towards increasing funding for our schools, parks, libraries, transportation system, and housing efforts.</p> <p>We must prioritize City funding on services critical to our residents.</p> |
| David Cortese | <p>I don't think they are adequately being met right now, because over the past five years after the dot.com bust, the City has faced budget shortfalls every year. Wasteful spending, like a \$4 million subsidy for the Grand Prix (approved by the Council despite my "No" vote) exacerbate the problems. Lawsuits like the ones filed against the City because of the North San Jose redevelopment proposal (approved by the City despite my "No" vote) FURTHER exacerbate the problems.</p> <p>As mayor during these challenging economic times I will ask private development to play a role in financing public improvements. This type of community, city and development collaboration is taking place in the district I represent right now. I will also set new financial standards for City Hall to combat waste and bureaucracy to get the most out of every tax dollar. As a member of the City Council's finance committee for almost five years, I have already brought many audit recommendations that combat waste to the City Council in the past.</p> <p>It's important during times like this to draw upon the city reserves rather than cut services. San Jose has adequate reserves and continues to add to those reserves each year. I would also support appropriate bond measures to help maintain parks and libraries and the help of non-profit agencies to operate and maintain community centers.</p> |
| <p>4. DEVELOPMENT: What is your position on Coyote Valley and North First Street development? Will you require development to pay for its own infrastructure? How will you prevent adverse impacts to urban services of existing San Jose and Santa Clara County residents?</p> | |
| David Pandori | <p>I think the time has come for the City to do a complete review of the General Plan and re-examine every policy for thoughtful and sustainable growth. I disagree with the city council's decision to set aside the growth controls--a stable city budget and job growth--for Coyote Valley to rush ahead with planning. I disagree with the city council's decision to build a massive new downtown in North San Jose--five times the size of the existing one--and 32,000 high-density housing units in less than one-half square mile. Both of these plans will destroy the quality of life in San Jose and are being planned without adequate highways, streets or transit.</p> |
| Chuck Reed | <p>The North First Street Development Plan is my top priority for development. That project supports the driving industries in San Jose who generate jobs and tax revenues. Those companies are growing—and we want them to grow in San Jose to bring the jobs and revenues back that we lost when the boom went bust. The driving industries also foster the creation of small businesses that support them, which creates more jobs. The infrastructure needs for this development will be funded from Redevelopment Agency revenues that come from North San Jose and from the mitigation fees from the North San Jose Development Plan.</p> <p>The Coyote Valley development needs to pay for its own infrastructure. I do not support building housing in Coyote Valley without jobs. Putting 50,000 cars northbound on 101 would be a mistake. We need jobs first or jobs and housing at the same time. Coyote Valley needs to generate enough tax revenue to pay for its share of the City services—if the businesses and jobs are brought there, the revenue will be generated to pay for the services without reducing services elsewhere.</p> |
| Cindy Chavez | <p>The key to protecting the local environment while promoting economic growth is to be innovative and inclusive in our future planning and infrastructure strategies.</p> <p>The North First Street Development Policy requires developers to fund hundreds of millions of dollars in improvements to the area's transportation and open space infrastructure, while providing the opportunity for thousands of new jobs and homes.</p> <p>The Coyote Valley Planning process is a one-of-a-kind effort, creating a new benchmark for smart growth policies in this country. The success of this process, however, depends upon the ability to develop a plan that 1) permanently protects the City's greenline, and 2) does not threaten the financial health of neighborhoods throughout this City.</p> <p>As a City Councilmember, we have engaged the community in creative planning processes that have lead to new affordable homes while almost doubling the number of neighborhood parks in District 3.</p> <p>As Mayor, I will continue to focus on engaging the community in open, innovative land use planning that leads to strong communities and healthy neighborhoods.</p> |

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| David Cortese | <p>I support economic development in Coyote Valley as long as job creation materializes as currently required by the city council. I voted against the North San Jose plan because the EIR did not adequately address traffic congestion, air quality, and school impact was essentially left out of the plan. I support growth in North San Jose to meet the needs of the City's driving industries located there, but it must be done wisely by adequately addressing the education, traffic and environmental concerns. I will encourage development to participate in private/public partnerships to help pay for infrastructure.</p> <p>As president of the Assoc. of Bay Area Governments and past president of the Santa Clara County Cities Association, I have been and will continue to collaborate with our neighboring cities to help prevent adverse impacts to urban services. As chairperson for the Evergreen-East Hills Vision Strategy Task Force, we have included representatives from neighboring San Jose City Council Districts 5 and 7 to get their input on the impact of development in my District 8.</p> |
| Michael Mulcahy | <p>It is important to acknowledge the tremendous work that has been done by many San Jose residents and other local partners to plan for future growth in Coyote Valley, in what has been an inclusive and extensive 40-month task force process. As we wait to see more financial analysis, and decisions are being made about triggers for jobs and housing, we need to really weigh the actual benefits in terms of economic development, against the cost of providing services and the mitigation of environmental consequences. I believe that there is a way to develop Coyote wisely, without negative impacts to the rest of the city, and that should be paramount in our planning. We need to take the long view and not be rushed by short-term goals.</p> <p>As part of an overall revision to our city's general plan, San Jose is ultimately going to need some "Smart Growth" in Coyote Valley as we work to create a strong and balanced economy. We can and must create a vibrant economy, which is my number one goal. For San Jose to compete with other cities over the long-term, we need to create a diversity of industrial choices that respond to the various physical needs of companies. Coyote will eventually offer corporations something distinct from what is available in North San Jose and downtown; each area will offer distinct attributes for job growth and corporate needs.</p> |
| <p>5. REDEVELOPMENT: What priorities would you set for the Redevelopment agency? Should the RDA continue to grow? How should redevelopment tax increment funding be spent? What are your thoughts on eminent domain?</p> | |
| Chuck Reed | <p>If we don't grow our economy the Redevelopment Agency will be out of business in two years. Two thirds of the RDA revenues come from the North First Street redevelopment area. My top priority for the redevelopment agency is the North First Street Development Plant so that driving industries in San Jose stay here and grow here. RDA budget growth is dependent upon economic growth. We do not need to expand geographically.</p> <p>There are both good and bad uses of eminent domain, but recently the city has been abusing its power of eminent domain. I opposed the City's taking of the Tropicana Shopping Center and 60 small businesses by eminent domain. Councilmember Cortese and Vice Mayor Chavez supported the taking. The lawsuit that followed cost the taxpayers \$8 million in damages after the council's action was reversed by a court order.</p> <p>I was the only candidate to oppose expanding the redevelopment area to allow use of eminent domain over the Mitchell Block, where once again the council's decision was reversed by court order. I was the only candidate to oppose increasing the power of eminent domain over neighborhoods in the Strong Neighborhood Initiative areas.</p> <p>I support the state initiative being circulated for signatures to restrict use of eminent domain in California.</p> |
| Cindy Chavez | <p>The Redevelopment Agency must be focused on neighborhood improvements, job creation, education, affordable housing, and transportation.</p> <p>During my tenure on the Council, we have seen more redevelopment funding spent on childcare, schools, and libraries than at any other time in the City's history. This trend must continue.</p> <p>Thanks to SNI, we have also seen unprecedented investment in our neighborhoods. By working with residents, we have been able to target available funds for community priorities, including new streets, parks, traffic calming, and other efforts.</p> <p>During my tenure as Councilmember, the City will have approved over 10,000 affordable homes – an accomplishment unmatched by any other city in California.</p> <p>As Mayor, I will focus redevelopment and city efforts on the services crucial to our residents - affordable housing, safe streets, excellent schools, well-tended parks, open libraries, reliable public transit and prosperous businesses.</p> |
| David Cortese | <p>San Jose has the largest redevelopment agency in California. Bigger is not necessarily better, but I do expect the agency to continue to grow, especially as we develop downtown and North San Jose further. That is not necessarily a bad thing, so long as there is money to invest in the neighborhoods. Assuming continued tax increment growth, there needs to be a balance struck between investment in downtown and investment in neighborhood priorities.</p> <p>One priority I would set for Redevelopment Agency is to complete the \$100+million already committed to the neighborhoods. Secondly, I want the Agency to continue to look at some of the needs of our downtown, including expansion of the convention center.</p> <p>The use of eminent domain should be a last resort, and I don't support eminent domain at all when pure revenue generation is the only goal. When a public benefit is apparent, like the building of a school or library, I support it. In the rare cases when a property is actively creating a negative influence in the neighborhood and decreasing home values, and the blight is impacting neighbors with increased crime and reduced safety, eminent domain may be the answer, but only if a property owner is uncooperative and in effect, vetoing the will of the public, ie., blocking a road widening or public works or other major municipal project.</p> |

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| Michael Mulcahy | <p>The purpose of the Redevelopment Agency is to improve the region's infrastructure, promote economic growth and improve our quality of life.</p> <p>When you develop the right kind of projects, you gain new sources of revenue that create investment in the city and our neighborhoods. I have the same goals for redevelopment that I do for other aspects of city government. First – stop the political process that is concerned with dividing the economic pie and is almost never concerned about growing our economy so that there is enough to go around. Second – do what really works, not what sounds the best in a headline. My goal is to expand services and amenities in both the neighborhoods and downtown. I am going to apply economic principles, not political imperatives, to achieve that goal.</p> <p>As far as expanding the RDA, I support doing what makes the most sense to grow our economy, not what is the politically most-popular answer. I intend to maintain a focus on neighborhoods but not to the exclusion of projects that benefit the entire city.</p> <p>I am a property owner and I believe in property rights. I also believe that eminent domain is a valuable tool when used wisely, but it should never be used casually. We need to prevent abuse of its use but we need to define what the abuses are before we try to cure them with any particular proposal.</p> |
| David Pandori | <p>I support the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative and would continue to fund it. I believe the Redevelopment Agency should spur the completion of the downtown, by supporting housing development and much better parking. These two elements will create the conditions to bring retail back downtown. I do not support the callous use of eminent domain that the current mayor and city council have sought. We should not be using eminent domain to land bank--as the council proposed with 40 housing sites downtown. We should not use eminent domain to transfer property to a developer. Eminent domain should be reserved for extraordinary public projects, like highways and public facilities.</p> |
| <p>6. CITY MANAGEMENT: How will you select and interact with a new city manager? What will you do to encourage the council to act with a city-wide focus? Should there be criminal penalties for ethics and/or open-government codes? How often should our General Plan be reviewed?</p> | |
| Cindy Chavez | <p>Integrity is built on trust and confidence and I believe we can re-build public trust and confidence in our City's leadership by improving access to information, inviting neighborhoods to participate more fully in decision making that affects them and promoting greater government accountability. Through these actions, we must ensure that the standards rightfully demanded of our elected officials and public employees are the standards being met.</p> <p>Most recently, the open and transparent government reform proposal I drafted with three of my colleagues was approved by the City Council. As part of the Ethics Blue Ribbon Task Force I led the effort to require lobbyists to disclose their fundraising activities. As City Councilmember, I have used the process of inclusion, input, and coalition building to further strive to democratize City government.</p> <p>It is crucial that the new City Manager recognizes the importance of rebuilding the communities trust and confidence in our City's leadership through open, transparent government.</p> |
| David Cortese | <p>I will select a city manager who is independent and who recognizes all of his powers under the charter. The city council should not micro-manage the city.</p> <p>I will use all the powers at my disposal, budget, appointments, and any other persuasive abilities I have to encourage the council to act with a city-wide focus.</p> <p>I am the only council member who has recommended both civil and criminal penalties for ethics violations. You can see my entire reform package at www.davecortese.com.</p> <p>Our general plan should be updated at least every ten years. The current general plan update is overdue. It needs to be done immediately.</p> |
| Michael Mulcahy | <p>One of the strengths of our city is that we have a professional, strong city manager system; it just hasn't been utilized well. The mayor should work to support that, not undermine it. My view is that the City Manager does not work for me as the Mayor, he/she works for the city. Also, I would set the tone and provide the direction for the council to make their decisions with a citywide focus when faced with opposition forces on particular issues.</p> <p>There are already criminal penalties for violations of many ethical laws imposing ethical standards, including open-government codes. It is reasonable to have penalties for violation of the law.</p> <p>The General Plan is a long term planning document. I believe it should be completely reviewed and updated at least every ten years.</p> |
| David Pandori | <p>I believe San Jose government has lost its checks and balances. We currently have a strong mayor, and a weak city manager, and a weak city council, controlled by the mayor. We should have a strong mayor, a strong city manager and a strong city council. I would return to the concept that the City Manager runs the professional staff and the Mayor and Council set policy and direction. I will ask for a Charter Review at the beginning of my term, involving the community, to create a strong system of government that restores these checks and balances.</p> <p>To encourage the council to act with city-wide focus, I will do at least these things. First, I will renew public support in our citywide plan by convening a major update to the plan. Second, I will return the city to one general plan review per year, so we maintain the integrity of the city's plan. Third, I will require that development decisions be consistent with the plan. Fourth, I will propose new rules to prevent council members from meddling in the administrative affairs of the city.</p> <p>As a prosecutor, I believe that there should be consequences for violation of city laws and review local laws to determine if there are adequate penalties.</p> |

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| <p>Chuck Reed</p> | <p>If you want to know what needs to be done to fix what is wrong in city hall, check out the Reed Reforms. They are posted on line at www.chuckreed.com.</p> <p>San Jose's form of government is set by the people in the City Charter. There should be penalties for violating the Charter. It should be easier to remove the Mayor and Councilmembers from office for violating the Charter. The Mayor and the Council need to follow the Charter. It is not optional.</p> <p>The mayor must be a leader, a collaborator and a coach ,but not a dictator or the boss. The Mayor should lead the Council ensure that the policies set by the council are executed. I would have public hearings monthly to allow the public and the Council to make sure the staff was following the Council's direction.</p> <p>I have served on two General Plan committees. My vision for San Jose is set forth in the General Plan which I helped write in 1992 as co-chair of the General Plan 2020 Task Force. The major elements of the General Plan should be reviewed in a public process about every 10 years.</p> |
| <p>7. OUTREACH: As mayor, how will you solicit community inputs? Will you seek any changes to the current "two minute rule" for speakers at city council meetings? How will you encourage and reward volunteerism?</p> | |
| <p>David Cortese</p> | <p>I will continue to solicit community input as I have in my own Council district—by going directly to the neighborhoods. When I first became councilmember in my district, there were only six neighborhood groups. Now there are over 25 neighborhood associations/groups, as well as an independent roundtable representing all of the neighborhoods in Evergreen. The best ideas often come from the neighborhoods. I will encourage volunteerism through recognition at the State of the City address, by frequently awarding commendations to groups and individuals, etc</p> <p>As for the two-minute rule for speakers at city council meetings, I am very flexible on this issue. I have chaired many meetings in my public service career and have never had a problem with being flexible about community speaking time.</p> |
| <p>Michael Mulcahy</p> | <p>I believe the "two minute rule" serves the purpose of allowing as many residents possible to voice their opinions. However, I would be in favor of organizational leaders having additional time to address the council. I think it is important to have controversial items on the evening agenda so that more citizens can attend.</p> <p>Volunteers are the underpinnings of our city in so many ways. I spent many years at the helm of such an organization and I know firsthand about the concrete and long-lasting positive changes that take place due to the efforts of caring and committed people. Being involved in these efforts is part of my heritage and part of my character. As mayor, I will encourage volunteerism and look for ways to drive more people to get involved throughout this community.</p> |
| <p>David Pandori</p> | <p>I believe in working very closely with community associations and have a track record of doing that for eight years when I was on the council. My district – the downtown district – is an area of the city that has a large number of active groups, and I worked closely with them. I will reach out to and meet with neighborhood and community associations personally.</p> <p>The current mayor and city council have imposed a hard and fast rule regarding time limits.</p> <p>I've been to council meetings where the people who come down are treated fairly disrespectfully. Councilmembers don't pay attention. Even if the person is making a good point, the mayor still cuts them off when that two minute limit comes up. The people in our city deserve better and I'll make sure they get treated better.</p> |
| <p>Chuck Reed</p> | <p>I would encourage volunteerism by giving the people a fair chance to engage in policy debates. The practice of making secret deals like the \$11 million deal with the garbage company made by the Mayor and approved by the Council majority (I voted against it) discourage public participation.</p> <p>Three years ago I tried to stop the bad practice of using late staff reports to make policy by surprise. None of the other candidates for Mayor came to my assistance. Councilmember Cortese and Vice Mayor Chavez and Mayor Gonzales issued a memo to kill my proposal to require earlier staff reports.</p> <p>I would do more to engage our neighborhood associations. One way is to move to a community based budgeting process that starts with a survey of the public in early January and then has a conference on priorities with neighborhood associations in late January. See the Reed Reforms, item 33 at www.chuckreed.com. Council hearings on New Initiatives and Unfunded Programs (UIUPS) need to start in February so the Council can set spending priorities in a public meeting.</p> |
| <p>Cindy Chavez</p> | <p>The economic and social vitality of our city and region in the future is dependent upon the ways in which we engage, encourage and empower our youth, neighborhood activists and public officials today. We must be committed and innovative in our approach for cultivating and supporting the next generation of leaders.</p> <p>Programs such as the Strong Neighborhood Initiative have done just that. SNI has been the single largest step forward in participatory democracy in a generation, encouraging greater community engagement in crafting the city budget and focusing its resources. As Mayor, I will work to expand the SNI process to all of San Jose: providing every neighborhood with the opportunity to participate and prosper.</p> <p>I recognize that neighborhoods are the heart and soul of the city, and that the empowerment of our community leadership is vital for San Jose's success. That is why every year I host a Neighborhood Summit which brings together neighborhood, business, and community groups under one roof to assess the progress we have made and discuss the work that needs to be done in order achieve the vision we have for the future. In creating the Sunshine Ordinance, my most recent effort for instituting a more transparent and inclusionary decision making process, I went directly to the people for their comments and feedback. This collaboration between the residents and the government of San Jose resulted in the successful passing of the Sunshine Ordinance which has enabled me to take the budget directly to the people through budget hearings at the City Council and in through out San Jose.</p> |

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| 8. UNIONS: As mayor, will you seek any changes to union contracts? For example, do you believe that evening and weekend neighborhood services could be staffed more efficiently? What are your thoughts on city pension costs? | |
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| Michael Mulcahy | <p>I would enable the new City Manager to totally revise the city organization, finding ways to use staff more effectively so that neighborhood services run more efficiently.</p> <p>I believe that police and fire jobs are critical to our community and I am proud of our fine police and fire departments. We also need to be realistic that the police and fire pension funds are subject to binding arbitration.</p> |
| David Pandori | <p>I believe that unions can be made to see that the best interest of the citizens is their best interest too. I believe that new contracts should not be approved without public notice and disclosure of the proposed terms of the contract.</p> <p>I believe that services can always be provided more efficiently. As a prosecutor, I've seen how the court system wastes city resources, by having police officers sit unnecessarily long around the courthouse, costing the city millions in overtime and wages. I know we can create a better system.</p> <p>Pension benefits across all arenas are becoming a huge burden. We must examine all the options and understand the future costs that are being borne by the city.</p> |
| Chuck Reed | <p>I want to have full-disclosure budgeting so that the entire costs of all union contracts are known and made public at the time they are being negotiated. I also want all offers the city makes to the unions to be disclosed to the public at the time they are made to the unions. See the Reed Reforms, item 8, at www.chuckreed.com.</p> |
| Cindy Chavez | <p>Providing better services to the residents and businesses in San Jose must be a priority for everyone involved in their delivery, from elected officials, to City management, to the workers themselves. I have led numerous efforts that have changed the service delivery model of the City and resulted in improvements for the City. SNI has led to new programming at every level – from how parks are maintained to how streets are made safer. Team San Jose and their management of the Convention Center and other venues represent a sea change in how the City does business downtown.</p> <p>Innovation must be part of the City's culture as we seek to provide the highest quality service to our residents.</p> |
| David Cortese | <p>I do not believe any major changes are needed in union contracts at this time. Current employees have settled for zero and 1.5% pay increases recently. We do need to focus on essential services and neighborhood services first. In our city the pension funds have been managed independently of the city council and they have outperformed most in the country. I do not think we have a problem here.</p> |
| 9. VISION: Describe your vision for the city of San Jose. What big projects do you envision? How should these projects be funded? How will you maintain and grow the job base? How will you promote San Jose? | |
| David Pandori | <p>I have four priorities: (1) bring responsible development and transportation planning back to San Jose; (2) create a joint powers agency to take on the gang problem in San Jose; (3) leave a legacy of great parks for our city by connecting the 100 miles of creek trails in our city, becoming partners with the county on the renovation of the fairgrounds; and (4) put the city on a 25 years savings plan to create an endowment for the next generation of our city. I believe these projects can be funded by re-ordering the priorities of city government. Visit my website, www.bettersanjose.com to learn more.</p> |
| Chuck Reed | <p>My vision for San Jose is about the people, not about the buildings. My vision for San Jose is written in the General Plan. It's a couple hundred pages long so I won't explain it but let me hit the highlights:</p> <p><u>Better and safer neighborhoods and schools.</u> The quality of our neighborhoods determines the quality of our lives. The quality of our schools determines the quality of our future. There are many things we can do to make our schools better and safer and we should do them. Unfortunately, the money we have to spend helping our schools is shrinking because of bad decisions, that I opposed, that diverted funds to pay for the new city hall and to subsidize the car race.</p> <p><u>Downtown that is safe, economically strong and vibrant</u> with the arts, entertainment and culture. Rebuilding downtown has been a 25 year project for me, but the work is not finished. Downtown is the heart and the face of our city. It belongs to all of us.</p> <p><u>Housing that our children can afford to live in</u> so our grand kids can grow up around us. That's not an easy job in this expensive market, but we have to do it for our future. And we have to do it while protecting our hillsides and open space.</p> <p><u>Best place in the world for people from anywhere in the world to start and grow</u> a business. We have lost 200,000 jobs since the boom. We will get those jobs back if we are the best place in the world for small businesses. Small businesses create jobs and that is how we will get our tax revenues growing.</p> <p><u>City government must be honest, open and accessible to all people</u> of all races, religions and income levels, without having to hire a lobbyist. We can have a government that we are proud of. We don't have to be like Sacramento or Washington DC where government only responds to the wealthy and the politically well connected special interest groups.</p> |

~ VEP NEWS Supplement ~
 June 6, 2006 Primary Election
 ★ Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire ★

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| Cindy Chavez | <p>San Jose is the 10th largest city in the country, the first large city in the country with no majority ethnicity, home to top universities, and serves as the Capital of Silicon Valley.</p> <p>Yet San Jose's success is not guaranteed. We must strive to evolve, pursue new opportunities, and create an environment that rewards innovation. We must continue to be a City where diversity is honored, education prized, the health of our children valued.</p> <p>We must fight to create the highest quality of life of any large City in America.</p> <p>Education, public safety, and economic development will form the basis of my top priorities. Specifically,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am committed to supporting programs to have every child reading at grade level by 3rd grade; restoring arts education to foster creativity and experiential learning; and working with local public and private sector institutions of higher learning to guarantee that no local high school graduate who meets the entrance requirements will be turned away for lack of funds. • As Mayor, I will work to ensure that San Jose remains the Safest Big City in America and that every one of our neighborhoods will have clean and safe streets. • We must remain vigilant about gang abatement and support of after school and learning center programs. Giving youths more opportunities for success will ensure the success of San Jose. • Increase investments and incentives for affordable housing to retain and attract a diverse and talented workforce and to provide working families and first-time homebuyers with new opportunities. • Creating the state of the art public transportation system that will increase the quality of life for San Jose and Bay Area residents by reducing traffic congestion, air and noise pollution. • Generating opportunities for good jobs and living wages. • Guaranteeing the health of our residents and their families by championing the Children's Health Initiative and supporting the Healthy Neighborhoods Venture Fund. • These are not easy goals to achieve. It will take a leader with a strong record of accomplishment, a proven ability to build coalitions, and a dedication to making this City great. <p>I believe I can be that person.</p> |
| David Cortese | <p>San Jose is more than the 10th largest city in the United States. It is melting pot of nationalities where no one single ethnicity is a majority. San Jose should promote its multicultural strengths and serve as a role model for other big cities in the U.S.</p> <p>Many of my previous answers have touched upon my vision for San Jose, but I'd like to expand on my thoughts of a vibrant downtown that serves as an international hub of arts, history, travel sports and entertainment that all residents of San Jose and neighboring cities will want to visit frequently.</p> <p>To demonstrate our cultural pride and power of diversity, we should be working toward an international shopping district downtown as a must-see destination for airport travelers. We could create a Smithsonian West in downtown San Jose that combines history as a city with that of the western United States, the Pacific Rim and the global economy.</p> |
| Michael Mulcahy | <p>My vision for San Jose starts with being a solution-oriented leader and running our government with the same creativity and vision that we run businesses here in Silicon Valley. I want our government to utilize nationwide best practices, and to fight every day to become more efficient and more responsive to its citizen shareholders. I believe in the art of the possible and that San Jose is a "can do" city.</p> <p>I envision a San Jose that includes world class parks, sports and cultural facilities, a variety of high-rise residential downtown, a state-of-the-art airport, premiere schools, and mass transit.</p> <p>Due to word limitations, my answer about promoting San Jose and growing the revenue and job base can be found above.</p> |

[Editor's Note: Candidates were asked to limit their answers to 1500 words total. As submitted, actual word counts are: Chavez = 1616; Cortese = 1402; Mulcahey = 1494; Pandori = 1127; Reed = 1560. Due to publication deadlines, there was no time to request revisions to comply with our word limit, so we printed answers in their entirety, giving an unfair disadvantage to those who complied.]