

# San Jose

## **Sylvia Arenas**

San Jose Councilmember, District 8

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### *Top 3 priorities citywide*

1. Making our community more friendly for families and our city services more accessible
2. Improving public safety and improving systems to combat crimes against women and children
3. Expand economic development in District 8, including adding additional retail, housing, and mass transit along the Capital Expressway corridor.

### *1. Who is your Campaign Manager?*

Jasmine Gallegos

### *2. What is your Campaign Budget?*

100,000

### *3. Please share your Top Ten Endorsements:*

State Senator Jim Beall, State Assemblymember Ash Kalra, Santa Clara County Supervisor Dave Cortese, Frn Santa Clara County Supervisor and Board President Blanca Alvarado, San Jose Vice Mayor Chappie Jones, San Jose City Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco, San Jose City Councilmember Raul Peralez, Evergreen Elementary School Board President Bonnie Mace, East Side Union High School District President Pattie Cortese, Evergreen Elementary School Board President Pro-Tem Leila Welch

### *4. Would you support or oppose a 3 county ballot initiative for a permanent 1/8 cent sales tax to fund Caltrain?*

Support

The future of Silicon Valley and the Bay Area are a future that revolves around dense transit oriented development and expanded and improved mass transit. That means BART expansion thorough San Jose, and it also means continued improvements around Caltrain like those that would be possible if this measure passes.

Highways 280 and 101 can only absorb so much traffic, and we are approaching that limit. Dedicated transit lines like Caltrain, BART and VTA light rail are the future for our community, but they require that we continue the investments that we've been making.

### *5. Do you support funding to complete a valley to valley connection through high speed rail?*

## Support

I strongly support a Valley to Valley connection for High Speed Rail. Too many families who lived in the South Bay for generations are currently living in the Central Valley and driving endless commutes to support their families and keep a roof over their heads. We need a regional and state rail system that brings communities together and enables fast transportation. High Speed rail is expensive and it isn't easy, but it's vital for the success of our region and for our families. It's not a cure-all, but it's a key and irreplaceable ingredient in a bright future for California.

Additionally, expanding rail is a key strategy to combat climate change, an issue that is already starting to make a really devastating impact on California communities.

Last, for local rail systems, like Caltrain and BART to be successful they need two key things: 1) Land use decisions that support transit, and 2) effective rail connections so that people can rely on rail from end-to-end. Bringing High Speed Rail from the Central Valley to Silicon Valley is key to the long term success of the entire project.

*6. Would you support a measure dedicated to build and operate a world class, seamless integrated transit system to better serve Bay Area residents, funded through a one cent sales tax, to better serve the transit dependent and those of us still in our cars?*

## Support

I would strongly support a measure based on LA's Measure M, because, as I stated above, it's vital that the Bay Area's transit be well integrated, systematic, and robust. There are so many projects that we know would vastly improve the lives of Bay Area residents: From adding two more rail crossings of the Bay, to extending Caltrain's electrification south of the current project, to bringing light rail to San Jose Airport, to modernizing rail cars and buses, to expanding Bus Rapid Transit and other new technologies. And building a new Diridon Station to match San Jose's future needs.

For my own district, Evergreen is currently preparing for the Eastridge to BART Light Rail Expansion, which will connect my residents, for the first time, into the regional rail system. Their counting on that project delivering better access to jobs, entertainment, and regional travel -- so I'm highly motivated to help win a regional measure to support the next steps that we want to see Evergreen and the East Side have access to.

*7. Do you support Google's plans for the Diridon Station Area?*

## Support

I support Google's plans for the Diridon Station Area, because San Jose families need more good jobs to be based inside our city and we need a robust downtown core. I've been proud to work with the Mayor on fleshing out those housing requirements -- I helped author and signed the council memo on the 25% affordable homes in the area -- and I'm glad to see the progress that Google has made with starting to envision how they will invest in our community.

And even beyond the direct investments, Google's addition to the tax base in our community (compounded by the additional tax base from companies now following them into our downtown) will dramatically change the financial picture of our city government, and affect everything from our ability to keep our pension fund solvent to our ability to provide services for our residents.

There are critical details still left to review, and no specific project has yet come to the Council. But if we continue to do this project correctly, we will dramatically improve our city and the lives of our residents.

8. *Do you support any revenue generating vehicles (please be specific) to build more affordable homes?*

Support

I support putting an affordable homes measure on the ballot and am looking forward to seeing the research on the potential measure come back from the City Administration. When we saw it last at Council, many of my colleagues were dubious about individual methods, but I believe that as a Council we needed more information about what the voters want us to do to solve this crisis. I hope we will find broad-based solutions that fairly shares the burden between residents and businesses. I have concerns about proposals that specifically put the tax burden on any one group -- such as the commercial-only parcel tax.

9. *Are you in favor of a ballot measure that will prohibit campaign contributions from advocates for development and tie the San Jose Mayoral term to the Presidential Election Cycle?*

Oppose

I'm conflicted on this measure, because I support efforts that bring more people into the democratic process and one part of this measure does that, while the other part does the opposite. I've expressed my concerns to the sponsors of the measure and let them know that I currently can't support the measure as written. While I do not foresee formally opposing the measure, I have not endorsed it.

10. *Do you support requiring all new buses purchased with federal funds be zero-emission beginning on October 1, 2029 (which is California's deadline for transitioning all transit bus purchases to zero-emission buses)?*

Support

Making future bus purchases be zero-emissions buses is a smart step to move forward on combating climate change. It's also an effective way to bring the cost down, as the scale of everyone shifting their purchases over should have a positive effect. The transportation sector will be one of the hardest places to make the level of reductions to greenhouse gasses that we need, so it's vital that the public sector provide leadership with our own fleets.

*11. Will you work with the Silicon Valley Leadership Group to secure additional funding to protect our region and help advance a common vision for a healthy and resilient SF Bay?*

Support

I thank the SVLG for their leadership on promoting a regional common vision on this issue. When one municipality addresses it alone and negatively impacts others, too often the others affected are low income communities, and often people of color. Building regional partnerships on this issue that value all communities is the solution, and I thank SVLG for their determined commitment to that approach.

*12. Do you support or oppose a proposed amendment to Proposition 13?*

Oppose

While I do believe that we need to reform Prop 13, I have serious concerns about the details of the measure currently placed on the ballot -- chiefly about the effects that it will have on small businesses. I'm also concerned with how high the costs would be to administer it. That said, the current system puts way too much of the property tax burden on young people trying to buy their first home, which is another major factor in our housing crisis.

*13. If a public charter school's petition is approved to operate within your local school district, meaning their proposal meets key pupil outcomes as indicated by state law, would you approve the school's bid to rent or build facilities beyond those already owned by the district?*

Support

As a member of the City Council, my role in reviewing the building of facilities is a land-use decision. That's a critical role of the council, and one I do not take lightly. If a charter school comes before the City Council with a land use proposal, my role is to review the proposal from the same criteria I would apply to any school expansion.

*14. Tell us about a time when you were opposed to a position of one of your major supporters. What was the issue? How did you handle this situation?*

Last year, Measure B was on the ballot and it threatened to override San Jose's General Plan with a land use at the ballot box vote. Beyond the terrible precedent, the initiative was filled with specific loopholes and would have been a blank check for the proponent. The measure not only targeted an industrial land in my district but would have converted much of the remaining industrial land to luxury housing across the city. Many of my supporters in the labor movement were initially planning on supporting the Measure, as it was expected to bring an influx of jobs in the field of construction and trades.

I had many conversations with those unions, who had also been approached by the developer and author of the Measure, and persuaded them that while initially the development of housing on industrial land would be beneficial to union members it would also bring long term tax burdens for residents. The high infrastructure costs of traditional high end single family detached homes aren't affordable nor congruent with our current general plan.

The unions involved agreed that the detrimental long term effects of the initiative outweighed the short term benefits of a job for their members. They agreed to not support the Measure.