

San Jose

Jim Zito

San Jose City Council, District 8

Trustee, Evergreen Elementary School District

Top 3 priorities citywide

1. Strengthen neighborhood groups and improve public safety across the city
2. Support development of more affordable housing and implement solutions to homelessness
3. Support the creation of more jobs in San Jose, both in the small and large business sector

1. Who is your Campaign Manager?

Finalizing a decision

2. What is your Campaign Budget?

\$100,000 - \$125,000

3. Please share your Top Ten Endorsements:

Former Mayor Chuck Reed; Councilmember Johnny Khamis; Evergreen School District Trustees Bonnie Mace and Chris Corpus; Former Evergreen School District Trustee Balaji Venkatraman; former Evergreen small business owner Denise Belisle; former Council Candidate Jimmy Nguyen; John Goldstein, Pastor, Grace Church

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

Support

As a means to reduce traffic congestion, Caltrain has been an excellent provider of high quality service to commuters along the Gilroy to San Francisco corridor. Despite its good fare-box recovery rate, Caltrain needs additional sources of reliable and permanent funding to maintain its infrastructure and operating expenses. However, any tax increase must be in conjunction with strong oversight measures to ensure that taxpayer money is spent efficiently and wisely. As with any taxes or bonds, I would insist on strong and regular independent oversight.

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

Oppose

While I support the vision of a faster rail valley-to-valley connection, I understand that the costs of the currently proposed high speed rail project outweigh the projected benefits, and there may also be environmental concerns. On the other hand, it is critically important to bring valley commuters into our Bay Area, and therefore I support additional investments in a stronger

regional rail system. There is a high demand for modernizing and expanding our current regional rail system..

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

The vision of a world class, seamless integrated transit system in the Bay Area is commendable. One of the biggest issues in regional transportation is the fractured nature of the system, and the lack of true interconnectedness. However, the details and the costs of this system have not yet been fleshed out. I would support continued analysis of how such a system might be created in the Bay Area, as I do believe that there is a high demand and commuters would benefit from having less stress on their daily commutes. As with any taxes or bonds, I would insist on strong and regular independent oversight.

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

Support

Absolutely. San Jose's job-housing imbalance will benefit from the jobs, and the economic development that the Google project would bring would spur economic growth across a spectrum of small and medium sized businesses. The beneficial effects of the Google project would also help the economic vitality of adjacent regions such as downtown San Jose and neighboring cities. That said, it is very important to listen to community concerns, and I believe that Google has done a good job listening to community input and trying to address some of the concerns such as the potential for increased costs of housing in the area.

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

Support

In principle, I strongly support the need to build more affordable housing. There have been several recent sources of funding – such as Measure A - and I understand the need for additional funding sources. I would advise against exclusive funding sources, such as only a parcel tax, or only a vacant land tax. I believe that the burden of contributing needed resources would need to be shared by land/homeowners, developers and commercial entities alike. I would however, recommend against direct changes to Prop 13 unless it is analyzed thoroughly and supported by a super majority of the voting public. As with any taxes or bonds, I would insist on strong and regular independent oversight.

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 would be adamantly opposed to this measure. Prohibiting contributions from only limited sources is simply unfair. I am not a legal expert, but I believe court challenges would most likely prevail on the grounds of it being unconstitutional from both 1st amendment and equal

protection perspectives. Regarding the move of the mayoral race to the presidential election cycle, I simply do not see the need for this. While I support improved civic engagement opportunities for all voters, it is better to have the Mayoral race in gubernatorial election years in order to focus on our city. The newly enacted "Voter Choice" measures nearly eliminate all barriers to voting. Moving additional races (and possibly measures) would make it that much more challenging for voters to become well versed on what they are voting. It makes more sense to further educate the electorate on the importance of voting.

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

In order to help the environment and to be aligned with San Jose's Smart Climate goals, I support zero-emission buses. It is healthy for residents of our city and it is healthy for the environment as a whole.

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

Having a healthy and resilient SF Bay is vital. There are many areas in our region that are at risk of flooding due to projected sea level rises. We need to address this issue as a regional problem, relying on partnerships and talents of organizations across the Bay Area. Securing funding to both study and implement needed changes in our regional infrastructure will help to protect future generations of residents in the Bay Area.

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

Oppose

Honestly, I have not read the proposed measure, but based on the possibility that commercial and industrial properties would quickly be reassessed to current market values, I would oppose it. Property taxes should not increase so rapidly so as to put an unbearable burden on businesses.

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

Having worked in a charter school serving low income children and also being a school board trustee in a local public school district, I have seen both sides of this discussion. On the one hand, there are many situations in which charter schools provide valuable opportunities for children not served in the traditional public school setting. On the other hand, local school districts face financial ramifications when students opt for charter schools, especially in districts in which there are many charter schools in operation. That said, the issue as described that

would come before the city council would be one of land use, and therefore it would have to be evaluated as to its conformance to the GP and the city's land use policies.

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?

Parcel tax measures - As a school board trustee, we have chosen to ask the voters to support two parcel taxes in my nine years on the school board. There were, however, some of my fiscally conservative supporters who didn't want to support a parcel tax since it is a tax. I spent much time listening to the community, and also talking to the community about why a parcel tax was necessary in this time of fiscal difficulty in my district. I took this information into consideration when helping to draft the ballot measure. The two parcel taxes passed during my time in office were important because they provided a valuable source of funding for items vital to children – lower class sizes, music and art programs and technology. Both measures passed by large margins. Additionally, the parcel tax proposals had strong oversight measures.