



**SAN JOSE DOWNTOWN
ASSOCIATION**

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April 12, 2019

The Honorable Mayor Sam Liccardo
City of San José
200 East Santa Clara Street
San José, CA 95113

RE: Shifting San José's Mayoral Election Date


Dear Honorable Mayor Liccardo and City Council,

The San Jose Downtown Association shares the desire to increase voter turnout in mayoral and local elections writ large and is happy to support ideas to assist in this effort. However, we do not believe that shifting the City of San José's mayoral election from the gubernatorial cycle to the presidential cycle is the best way to achieve this, nor do we believe it will address our city's political inefficiencies.

The proposal to hold our mayoral elections during the presidential cycle raises two major concerns: First, we believe this change will result in less attention on local government candidates and issues given that the presidential election overshadows other matters. By keeping San José's mayoral election on the gubernatorial cycle, we promote meaningful civic participation by allowing voters to focus on local and regional issues. Furthermore, in researching the 20 largest cities in the United States, it appears that only San Diego holds its mayoral elections during presidential election years. This leads us to believe that other large, well-run cities have determined that local elections should be held separately from presidential elections.

Second, this change will not solve problems associated with our current system of governance. Moving the mayoral election date would neither alter the mayor's mandate nor facilitate the mayor's ability to execute his or her vision. If we want to address these issues, we need to consider changing our city's governance system and not just move the election date.

Sincerely,


Michelle Azevedo
Director of Policy and Operations



April 10, 2019

Honorable Mayor Sam Liccardo and City Council
City of San José
200 East Santa Clara Street
San José, CA 95113

Executive Committee

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PRESIDENT & CEO

Matthew R. Mahood
The silicon valley organization

Re: Proposal to Shift Mayoral Elections – OPPOSE

Dear Mayor Liccardo and City Council:

On behalf of The Silicon Valley Organization (The SVO), I am writing in opposition to a proposal to move the timing of mayoral elections away from the gubernatorial election cycle. By way of background, The SVO is the Silicon Valley's premier business advocacy organization representing nearly 1,200 companies that employ over 300,000 workers, and we represent our membership as the region's largest Chamber of Commerce.

Voter engagement is absolutely fundamental to the strength and success of our democracy. While it is true that voter participation is consistently higher during presidential election years, we observed that the data does not prove that increased voter turnout would be a direct result of moving the timing of mayoral elections. Furthermore, it is not a guarantee that voters will vote down-ballot on mayoral races, especially when national politics will likely dominate news coverage and dialogue. Instead of political maneuvers to change the timing of mayoral elections which would have no measurable impact on voter turnout, the Council should focus on educating citizens about the critical importance of voting in every election – not that certain election cycles are more important than others. Every election matters.

We can focus on driving up voter turnout by partnering with the County of Santa Clara and the State of California. For example, ACA 8 (Low) would reduce the minimum voting age to 17 and allow younger voters to participate in our democracy. AB 59 (Kalra) would require that local election officials designate and give preference to implementing voting centers on university and college campuses, which would make it easier for young voters to participate in local elections. Furthermore, we can explore opportunities to partner with the county to implement a civic education campaign about the importance of voting. These legislative proposals and partnership opportunities would actually move the needle on increasing voter turnout.

In closing, we strongly urge the Council to vote against any proposal to shift the timing of mayoral elections and focus on real solutions that will actually increase voter turnout in every election. If you have any questions about The SVO's position on this issue, please contact Eddie Truong, Director of Government and Community Relations, at 408-291-5267.

Sincerely,

Matthew R. Mahood
President & CEO

From: Arash Firouzjaei [mailto:]

Sent: Friday, April 12, 2019 4:52 PM

To: The Office of Mayor Sam Liccardo <

Cc: District1 <>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <>; District4 <>; District5 <>; District 6 <>; District7 < District8 <>; District9 <>; District 10 <>; Agendadesk <>; City Clerk <>

Subject: keep Mayor's Election in a Gubernatorial Year

Dear Honorable Mayor Liccardo and City Council-members,

I write today to urge you all to **oppose Item 3.3**'s shift of San Jose's Mayoral election to the Presidential election cycle.

As a business owner in San Jose, I value the distinction San Jose receives in a Gubernatorial election in selecting a Mayor to run a City of more than 1 million people. By retaining our current election cycle, San Jose issues, values and accomplishments are brought to the forefront without the shadow of national news coverage. We must make sure that politicians are attentive to the needs of local issues.

While I agree that more voter turnout is better for a robust democratic process, I disagree with the idea that shifting mayoral elections to a Presidential election year automatically drives up voter turnout. Rather, I would urge the Council to partner with other governmental agencies and organizations to drive voter turnout through enhanced civic engagement strategies and initiatives.

Across the nation, the largest cities agree that local issues are important and still have their Mayoral elections in non-Presidential election years:

The City of Los Angeles

The City of New York

The City of Austin

The City of Charlotte

The City of Columbus

The City of Dallas

The City and County of Denver

The City of Fort Worth

The City of Indianapolis

The City of Jacksonville

The City of Philadelphia

The City of Phoenix

The City of Seattle

Washington DC

Please vote No on Item 3.3 to ensure that San Jose issues remain at the top of everyone's minds each Mayoral election. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Arash Firouzjaei
President

Achievement Engineering Corp.
www.achievenq.com

Item 3.3 April 16th meeting

Harris, Todd < >

Sat 4/13/2019 9:25 AM

To:

The Office of Mayor Sam Liccardo

Cc:

District1;District2;District3;District4;District5;District 6;District7;District8;District9;District 10;Agendadesk;City Clerk
Inbox

Dear Honorable Mayor Liccardo and City Councilmembers,

I write today to urge you all to **oppose Item 3.3**'s shift of San Jose's Mayoral election to the Presidential election cycle.

As a business leader in San Jose, I value the distinction San Jose receives in a Gubernatorial election cycle while selecting a Mayor to run a City of more than 1 million people. By retaining our current election cycle, San Jose issues, values and accomplishments are brought to the forefront without the shadow of national news coverage. We must make sure that politicians are attentive to the needs of local issues. They mayoral contest is a local election and local issues of significant importance are likely to be overshadowed during a presidential election cycle. It is best for San Jose to ensure local issues have the highest visibility during the election of the mayor, and keep the mayoral election as isolated as possible from the dysfunction of national politics.

While I agree that more voter turnout is better for a robust democratic process, I disagree with the idea that shifting mayoral elections to a Presidential election year automatically drives up voter turnout. I do believe running a mayoral campaign during a Presidential cycle would dramatically increase the cost for candidates thus squeezing our lesser known, lesser funded candidates potentially resulting in less inclusion in government. Rather, I would urge the Council to partner with other governmental agencies and organizations to drive voter turnout through enhanced civic engagement strategies and initiatives.

Across the nation, the largest cities agree that local issues are important and still have their Mayoral elections in non-Presidential election years:

- The City of Los Angeles
- The City of New York
- The City of Austin
- The City of Charlotte
- The City of Columbus
- The City of Dallas
- The City and County of Denver
- The City of Forth Worth
- The City of Indianapolis

- The City of Jacksonville
- The City of Philadelphia
- The City of Phoenix
- The City of Seattle
- Washington DC

Please vote NO on Item 3.3 to ensure that San Jose issues remain at the top of everyone's minds each Mayoral election. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Todd

Todd M. Harris

President & Chief Executive Officer

Technology Credit Union

2010 N. 1st Street, San Jose, CA 95131



Mayor Liccardo and City Council
City of San Jose
200 E. Santa Clara St.
San Jose, CA 95113

April 15, 2019

RE: Item 3.3 Shifting Mayoral Elections

Dear Mayor Liccardo and Council,

The Business San Jose Chamber PAC is opposed to recommendations to move the timing of San José's mayoral elections from the gubernatorial election cycle to the presidential election cycle. Rather than change our elections to partisan election cycle we believe in the need to keep the focus on practical needs of the community in our local non-partisan races.

While overall voter participation is generally higher during presidential election years, that does not necessarily hold true for down ballot elections in municipal races. In this current political climate, we do not want to nationalize our local elections, which are non-partisan for a reason; because local solutions should not be based on partisan affiliation. That said, it is not a guarantee that voters will vote in down-ballot races, especially when national politics will overwhelm local news coverage and thoughtful discussion.

We ask that the Council focus on educating citizens about the critical importance of voting in every election. There are many tools to increase voter engagement and strengthen our democracy here in Silicon Valley. For instance, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors recently passed an ordinance that would send a mail in ballot to every registered voter in the county and open new voting centers to drop off those ballots. Counties that implemented a vote by mail system pilot program in 2018 saw an increase in turnout and participation. The solutions to increased turnout are practical and nonpartisan because every vote counts. Again, we strongly urge the Council to vote against any proposal to shift the timing of San José's mayoral elections and focus on pragmatic solutions that will increase voter turnout in every election.

Business San Jose Chamber PAC represents local businesses and is a voice for common sense governance that promotes growth and a vibrant economy for all. We look forward to working with you on this and other important policy issues facing our community.

Sincerely,

Tracey Infantino
Chairperson

Business San Jose Chamber PAC Board of Trustees

Tracey Infantino * Jeff Cristina * Phil Boyce * Dan Bozzuto * Nicole Goehring * Steve Lopes
Suzanne Salata * Jan Schneider * Bernie Vogel * John Davis