

ABOUT YOU

Please provide your name as it will appear on the ballot: Babu Prasad

What office are you seeking? San Jose City Council, District 2

Are you an incumbent in this office? No

Do you now or have you ever held elected office(s)? *If so, please list title(s), jurisdiction(s), and years in each office:* N/A

Where's your hometown? NEPAL

What is your current city of residence? San Jose

What is your highest level of education? Masters

What is your current primary vocation/occupation? Healthcare Admitting Clerk/ Small Business Owner

Do you have an arts background of any kind? *If so, please explain.* No

ABOUT YOUR CAMPAIGN

Please share your candidate statement as it will appear in voting materials. (approx. 200 words)

I am Babu Prasad, a devoted resident, father, husband, healthcare worker, and local small-business owner in District 2 for over 20 years. Serving as the Chairman of the District 2 Leadership Council and President of the Hayes Neighborhood Association, I am deeply committed to enhancing our community's quality of life.

My extensive experience uniquely positions me to tackle our critical housing crisis through compassionate and sustainable solutions. As a neighborhood leader, I prioritize public safety, smart balanced development, and fostering a strong community.

I passionately support robust after-school programs, recognizing their importance in providing safe, educational environments for our youth and aiding working parents. Another key focus is addressing the needs of our unhoused population with dignity and effectiveness, committed to finding solutions that tackle the root causes of homelessness. I will promote safer communities through collaborative public safety efforts and local partnerships.

I am honored to have the support of notable leaders like Senator Dave Cortese, Assemblymembers Ash Kalra, Evan Low, Supervisor Arenas , and many others. As your Councilmember, I pledge to work tirelessly for a safer, more vibrant, and inclusive District 2. To learn more about my vision and plans, please visit www.babu4d2.com

What is your campaign budget? \$90,000

How much have you raised to date? *Please specify if you have loaned or contributed any personal funds to your campaign and how much.* \$70,000

How many doors have you personally knocked to date? 15,000

ABOUT THE ARTS

What is your perception of the current state of arts and culture in San José? (250 words)

San José's current arts and culture scene is in a state of growth and transformation. The city has recognized the immense value of fostering a vibrant cultural community and has taken significant steps to support and expand its artistic landscape.

One notable aspect of San José's cultural evolution is its commitment to diversity and inclusivity. The city's diverse population has contributed to a rich tapestry of artistic expressions, celebrating various cultural backgrounds. Institutions like the Mexican Heritage Plaza and MACLA have played pivotal roles in promoting Latino and multicultural arts, while the San José Museum of Art showcases a broad spectrum of contemporary art.

The public art program initiated by the San José Arts Commission has added aesthetic beauty to the city's public spaces, making art more accessible to residents and visitors. Additionally, San José's music scene has been on the rise, with local venues and festivals drawing both local and national talent.

Despite these positive developments, challenges remain. Affordability and accessibility to the arts are issues that need attention. Ensuring that all residents, regardless of income or background, can engage with and benefit from the city's cultural offerings is essential.

In conclusion, San José's arts and culture scene is on an upward trajectory, characterized by its diversity and commitment to inclusivity. As the city continues to grow, nurturing and expanding its cultural assets will be vital to building a thriving and accessible cultural community for all. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the city's art programs are growing but need additional funding and support to fully reach their potential, ensuring they are accessible to residents of all backgrounds and ages.

How would you define the role of arts and culture in San José's economy? (250 words)

Arts and culture in San José are economic drivers. Public art installations and cultural events attract visitors who spend on local businesses, benefiting our economy. Performing arts, like concerts and festivals, draw audiences, leading to increased spending on tickets, dining, and accommodations, supporting the hospitality and service sectors. Additionally, the creative industry itself, including artists and musicians, contributes to job creation and innovation, diversifying our economy. In summary, arts and culture not only enrich our lives but also fuel economic growth, making them vital assets for San José's prosperity.

Were you familiar with SJAA before receiving this survey? Yes

If yes to the above, are you familiar with our current [policy priorities](#)? No

ABOUT OUR PRIORITIES

The following questions are directly related to SJAA's policy priorities. Your direct responses are appreciated!

Would you support a policy requiring large private developments to contribute funding and/or space and other resources to public arts and cultural programs in San José — similar to existing policies in

Bay Area cities like Sunnyvale and Berkeley? Why or why not? You can read an overview of SJAA's policy proposal [here](#).

Yes

Would you support reallocating the current 40% General Fund set aside from the Transient Occupancy Tax (aka TOT or Hotel Tax) to arts, culture, and tourism programs? Why or why not?

I believe in the importance of supporting arts, culture, and tourism programs in San Jose. These programs contribute to the vibrancy and economic vitality of our city. However, before considering reallocating the current 40% General Fund set aside from the Transient Occupancy Tax, we should conduct a thorough assessment of the needs and priorities of our community.

It's crucial to engage with stakeholders, including residents, city officials, and representatives from the arts and culture sectors, to determine the most effective allocation of resources. This collaborative approach ensures that our decisions align with the interests and aspirations of our diverse community.

I am committed to exploring ways to enhance support for arts, culture, and tourism programs while maintaining fiscal responsibility and considering the broader budgetary landscape. We should evaluate the impact of any reallocation on other essential services and responsibilities of the city to strike a balance that benefits all residents.

In summary, I am open to discussions about reallocating funds to support these vital programs, but it should be a well-informed decision that reflects the best interests of our community as a whole.

Would you support the creation of positions within city departments for artists in residence to coordinate with staff on community engagement and strategic planning — as other municipalities like [Los Angeles County](#) are already doing? Why or why not?

I am open to exploring the idea of creating positions for artists in residence within city departments, as it could bring fresh perspectives to community engagement and planning. However, we should thoroughly assess the feasibility, benefits, and costs, while engaging with artists and stakeholders to ensure it aligns with our broader goals for arts and culture in San Jose.

OPEN FORUM

What are some other ideas you have for increasing City support for arts and culture?

One idea I have for increasing city support for arts and culture is the establishment of art districts. These districts could allocate a portion of property taxes specifically for enhancing and sustaining the arts in our community. This approach would create a dedicated and sustainable source of funding for artistic endeavors and cultural initiatives, ensuring the longevity and growth of our vibrant arts scene. Additionally, I believe in fostering partnerships with local businesses and foundations to further support the arts in San Jose, allowing us to leverage resources and broaden our cultural impact.

What do you wish we had asked but didn't?

I wish you had asked about strategies for engaging residents beyond downtown in arts and culture initiatives. It's important to ensure that all neighborhoods in San Jose have access to and actively participate in cultural activities. Engaging residents from various parts of the city in arts and culture programs can help foster a sense of community and strengthen our city's cultural fabric. I believe it's

SJAA Candidate Questionnaire – March 5, 2024 Primary Election

crucial to explore innovative ways to reach out to neighborhoods outside the downtown area and encourage their involvement in the arts.