

## **ABOUT YOU**

**Please provide your name as it will appear on the ballot:** Vanessa Sandoval

**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:*** No.

**Where's your hometown?** Bishop, CA

**What is your current city of residence?** San Jose

**What is your highest level of education?** Juris Doctorate

**What is your current primary vocation/occupation?** Chief of Staff

**Do you have an arts background of any kind? *If so, please explain.***

Unfortunately, I do not have an arts background. However, even though I lack artistic talent I very appreciate and respect art.

## **ABOUT YOUR CAMPAIGN**

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

I am a mother, policy maker, immigrant rights activist, and nonprofit advocate with nearly 20 years' experience in serving diverse communities. San Jose has been my home since 2006. As District 2 Chief of Staff, I have worked with our community directly to build consensus and inspire action. Residents care about housing affordability and homelessness. I will pursue housing solutions that streamline affordable housing and safeguard against displacement of tenants. I will focus on equitable distribution of homeless solutions to reduce encampments and avoid over concentration. Residents care about vibrant and safe neighborhoods. I will champion re-investment in public safety, parks, libraries, and community centers. Residents care about climate change. I will work to leverage Silicon Valley's wealth and resources to fast-track our sustainability goals. I will protect our environment and preserve Coyote Valley for future generations. I have used my knowledge and law degree at City Hall to hold Union Pacific accountable for maintaining the railway, increase fines for illegal dumping, champion eviction protections for renters, and permanently protect mobile home parks. I am proudly endorsed by Councilmember Sergio Jimenez, (Fmr.) Supervisor Mike Wasserman, and neighbors across District 2. Respectfully, I ask for your vote. [www.VanessaForSanJose.com](http://www.VanessaForSanJose.com)

**What is your campaign budget?** Our goal is to raise \$50k

**How much have you raised to date? *Please specify if you have loaned or contributed any personal funds to your campaign and how much.*** \$40k

**How many doors have you personally knocked to date?** Our team has knocked close to 10,000 doors, I estimate I have knocked at least 50% of those doors myself.

### **ABOUT THE ARTS**

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

I feel the City in its effort to reduce crime, address homelessness, and blight has not put enough energy recently into public art projects. The pandemic hit the economy as we were just starting to build up POW WOW San Jose. Efforts were redirected to very important issues such as addressing food insecurity, health and keeping families in their homes. Art took a back seat. Now that we are moving forward again, I would like to see efforts continue to grow to enhance arts and culture in San Jose. We know our community values the art installations we have added over the years and are looking forward to seeing more in their neighborhoods. For a city to thrive it must incorporate art into all aspects of placemaking from parks, community centers, transit corridors, business centers, and the like to add uniqueness and vibrancy. Our City is made of distinct neighborhoods that should be celebrated - why not with a unique public art component? Art can act as a therapeutic relief to a stressful workday, as conduit for self expression, and a way to simply appreciate the beauty of our City and environment.

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

Public Art creates a sense of identity and character within an urban or suburban environment. Public art pieces can become iconic landmarks contributing to a city's brand identity and can add to economic vitality to neighborhoods in San Jose. When tasked with working with local artists to develop murals in district 2, one of the first questions asked is what do you feel is most important to the residents in the area? Residents value incorporating their favorite spaces and the diversity of the community into projects as it makes them identifiable and integrated into neighborhoods. One can just point to the beautiful mural on the Edenvale Branch Library as a placemaking success story. We are blessed by the diversity in our city - art is a way of capturing the culture and history that is shared with visitors to our City. It is also a way of deterring graffiti and blight especially in areas commonly known for tagging. We have seen areas significantly improved by the addition of a public art element, especially one that the community worked directly with the artist on. In sum, art is a way to help grow our economy by activating spaces and creating cultural vibrancy both key components to economic growth.

**Were you familiar with SJAA before receiving this survey?** Yes

**If yes to the above, are you familiar with our current [policy priorities](#)?** Yes

### **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, in order for such a policy to be successful we will need to work together to garner the support of the majority of the council and work to implement a successful policy.

As part of my work in District 2 we have an example of a very successful art dedication consisting of two street facing murals at the Blossom Valley Senior Apartments, an affordable housing development. These murals reflect the input of the community and have been very well received.

**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'm not sure 40% is the magic number but I do support setting aside a percentage of the General Fund set aside from TOT funds to support arts, culture and tourism programs.

**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?**

Yes, because I am a big proponent of strong community engagement and know from experience that art enhances pride in our neighborhoods. We partnered with POW WOW San Jose and few years ago to bring nine murals to District 2. The investment from our office has brought lasting impact and I want to see that work continue.

**OPEN FORUM**

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

Continuing to build partnerships with local developers and non-profit housing partners to develop a plan to integrate art into new projects. Advocate for grant funding for small business owners to incorporate public art components and work with local schools, artists and organizations to display more art work at City Hall.

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

What is my favorite art installation in San Jose? I love the butterfly mural on Coronado Ave in the Village Oaks shopping center and I am thrilled to have the sonic runway at City Hall.