

## **ABOUT YOU**

**Please provide your name as it will appear on the ballot:** David Cohen

**What office are you seeking?** San Jose City Council, District 4

**Are you an incumbent in this office?** Yes

**Do you now or have you ever held elected office(s)? *If so, please list title(s), jurisdiction(s), and years in each office:*** San Jose City Council (2021-present), Berryessa School Board (2006-2020)

**Where's your hometown?** McLean, VA

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

**What is your highest level of education?** PhD in Chemical Engineering

**What is your current primary vocation/occupation?** Councilmember, City of San Jose

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

Long time piano player, starting at age 5. Also did musical theater and improv in high school.

## **ABOUT YOUR CAMPAIGN**

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

A Leader Who Listens. Progress That Works.

Being your Councilmember isn't about running for office and getting elected. It's about service. I'm proud of my service to this community. In my first term, we've gotten a lot done and we're just getting started. As your Councilmember, I've delivered much-needed housing, increased police staffing and improved interface between police and residents, cleaned creeks and neighborhoods at dumpster days and cleanup events, and created a Sustainability Commission to address climate change. I've planted trees, improved vehicle and pedestrian safety, added amenities, and accelerated construction of new parks, including the district's first dog park.

As a chemical engineer, I understand the importance of listening to find solutions. As a father and community advocate, I've spent decades working to strengthen San José for all. I'm asking for your vote so I can continue serving as your Councilmember, to advocate on your behalf, delivering results and investing in safer and cleaner neighborhoods.

Let's continue working together to tackle San José's greatest challenges and build a community we can all be proud of!

Endorsed by League of Conservation Voters, Planned Parenthood, Congressmembers Zoe Lofgren & Ro Khanna, California Treasurer Fiona Ma, Assemblymember Evan Low, Supervisor Otto Lee, San José Councilmembers Sergio Jimenez & Dev Davis and more! [ElectDavidCohen.com](http://ElectDavidCohen.com)

**What is your campaign budget?** \$110,000

**How much have you raised to date? *Please specify if you have loaned or contributed any personal funds to your campaign and how much.*** \$99,000

**How many doors have you personally knocked to date?** 3,000

### **ABOUT THE ARTS**

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

We have a growing arts scene in downtown San Jose. SOFA has a number of thriving and exciting museums, and our theaters are busy with many shows throughout the year. The city invests in local artists to add color to our cityscape. I'm excited buy our utility box projects that are located across the city, and we have great muralists who have livened up downtown, Alviso, Berryessa, and other parts of the city. I celebrated the grand opening of Open San Jose, where local artists have a venue to display their work and several art and culture groups are based.

I'm proud to be a member of the San Jose Rotary, which annually provides grants to local artists through the Leigh Weimer awards. Every year, 4 local artists receive money to help them continue to do their work.

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

A thriving arts scene is important to a city's local economy. Besides drawing people into town for theaters, museums, and to explore, it is also important to employ local artists. I was excited to see the Norm Mineta statue unveiled at the airport was created by a San Jose State artist. And the utility box/mural program offers local artists and opportunity to display and promote their work.

**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](#).***

I'm open to considering such a policy, but we have to be very careful in the current economic climate not to add costs that will prevent development from being able to move forward. Good developments, such as the Miro in downtown San Jose, have voluntarily created gallery space, which makes the building more attractive to renters and offers space for local artists to display their work.

**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?**

We need to continue to invest in arts and culture, which brings tourists to the city. I support maintaining funding from the TOT for that purpose. In fact, we ought to increase our investment in Team San Jose, because their work to promote San Jose brings more tourists and therefore economic benefit to the city.

**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?**

Again, I'm open to the idea, but our tight budget makes adding additional positions to our city staff difficult.

### **OPEN FORUM**

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

Our cultural affairs department ought to be seeking grants to support arts and culture and also look for partnerships with our large employers. It's to everyone's benefit to have a thriving culture, because it attracts visitors and also makes our community a better place to live.

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