

Survey Responses of 2014 Santa Cruz City Council Candidates

Economic Development - Jobs:

Economic development is the public and private sectors' efforts to attract, retain, and grow jobs, tax base, and investment in a community. Most successful economic development strategies are based upon:

- a. the natural resources, education level and skills of the existing workforce,
- b. the strengths and interests of local and regional investors, and,
- c. the opportunities presented by the current and expected future market conditions.

The goals of economic development generally include improving the quality and quantity of jobs, private sector investment in the community, local governments' financial ability to provide quality public services, and the capacity of the community to improve the quality-of-life features it values most, from parks and arts to education, health care, and social services.

Relative to the many goals and responsibilities you will have as a City Council member, how important do you believe economic development resulting in new jobs in and around Santa Cruz will be to you during your term as a member of the Santa Cruz City Council?

Cynthia Chase	Of highest importance	
Richelle Noroyan	Of highest importance	
Leonie Sherman	Of highest importance	We need not just new jobs but better jobs. Higher paying jobs will reduce commuter traffic, increase the spending power of locals, create stronger community ties and promote genuine security. Let's continue to develop our economy, but extend our vision beyond simply increasing profits and taxes. If we recognize and define our community's bottom line we can foster economic growth that benefits us all.
David Terrazas	Of highest importance	
Bruce Van Allen	Of highest importance	I want to see our community - public and private sectors alike - focus policies and investments on economic development that creates well-paying jobs, not just more jobs.
Gary Knutson	Of highest importance	Solar projects with local improvement bonds and job training for the homeless population.

Public Safety - Chronic Offenders.

In response to a series of violent incidents and persistent behavior issues in the downtown deterring some shoppers, visitors, and employees from confident use of the downtown, the City Council formed the Public Safety Task Force in March of 2013. In December the Council received a report recommending more than 100 actions. Implementation of a few of these recommendations was begun immediately including the Downtown Accountability Project (DAP), focused on identifying chronic offenders and getting them off the streets through a portfolio of services and, as necessary, incarceration.

DAP, led by the District Attorney's office with the participation and cooperation of a range of law enforcement and social services agencies, has made an initial report of its progress. This work has been sustained by a reallocation of resources and new funding by the City and the County totalling about \$100,000 for the first 8 months of the project. The initial report suggests that to achieve the DAP's goals will likely require continued funding at this level and, perhaps, additional resources. ***Regarding the DAP program, what do you believe the City should do?***

Cynthia Chase	Significantly increase its efforts	I am a big advocate and supporter of this program model and know that it has the potential of having an significant and sustainable impact on the reduction of crime and the increase in quality of life in the city. This area is one in which I have the most experience and expertise and hope to be involved in this project as a council member.
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Richelle Noroyan	Significantly increase its efforts	I am absolutely in favor of continuing the DAP and will continue supporting funding for it providing data shows it's effective at reducing behavior problems.
Leonie Sherman	Significantly increase its efforts	Inter-agency cooperation aimed at getting chronic offenders into appropriate treatment will benefit them as well as downtown businesses and will free up police resources to address actual crime.
David Terrazas	Significantly increase its efforts	
Bruce Van Allen	Significantly increase its efforts	I strongly support the DAP because it combines a) accountability, b) respect for each individual, however troubled, and c) a portfolio of services tailored to them.
Gary Knutson	Significantly increase its efforts	\$100,000 is seed money. People are human beings that have become chronic drug, alcoholics, and lack job skills(loss of self esteem). They need tailored professional help not jail time which is very costly.
<p>Downtown Parking. The City continues to have more than 220,000 square feet of unoccupied commercial space in the downtown area including more than 180,000 s.f. of office space. However, it no longer has parking available to lease to employees of prospective tenants and has found that its current parking structures are filling up during the weekdays -- a deterrent to retail shopping. This shortage of parking also means that any new construction must include all of parking necessary to address the needs of that building. Do you support the development of one or more additional parking structures in the downtown to address this deficiency?</p>		
Cynthia Chase	Definitely Yes	In my conversations with the community, parking has continually come up as an issue for downtown for patrons, business owners, and the staff and employees of businesses. We can't encourage growth and development in the downtown area and then not provide adequate ability for businesses and patrons to utilize it. I have seen several innovative parking structure designs that incorporate sustainable design and materials, such as solar panels to provide the energy for the structure and surrounding lighting. I would also like to see us explore some creative mixed use designs.
Richelle Noroyan	Probably Yes	While encouraging people to use alternative transportation is needed to meet our city's goal of reducing green house gasses by 30%, not everyone is in a position to ride a bike or bus. My hope is any new garage built will include charging stations for electric cars and lockers for bicycles. It's obvious we need a new garage to encourage businesses to locate downtown.
Leonie Sherman	Probably No	Additional municipal parking structures will likely be necessary if a permanent arena is located downtown. Otherwise, I'm inclined to target scarce public resources toward implementing better public transport, reducing vehicle-miles traveled and increasing bicycle access and pedestrian uses of our downtown.
David Terrazas	Probably Yes	

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Bruce Van Allen	Choose not to Answer	At this time I can't say Yes or No. I am concerned about the costs of new parking structures, and who would pay for them. At the same time I recognize the deficit in available parking, and I also consider single-level asphalt parking lots to be a terrific waste of space, especially downtown. Single-auto parking is also problematic if addressed without considering other forms of transportation as well as innovations such as car-sharing. If elected, I would look forward to discussing this question with all concerned.
Gary Knutson	Probably No	We know that congestion is a problem and we need more use of public buses, rail and car pooling & cycling in safe routes. This is not a simple issue and UC should raise parking fees to reduce cars.
<p>Water Supply. Economic development professionals find that local governments' most important role in economic development is the creation, maintenance, and improvement of a regions' infrastructure. Four infrastructure elements will in significant part define the City's economic capacity in the coming decades: water, transportation, electricity, and broadband access. The most immediate problem is water supply. After more than 20 years of study a proposal for a desalination facility to increase the City's water supply in drought years and replenish the Soquel Creek Water District's supply of ground water in non-drought years has been proposed. In response to community resistance to that proposal the City formed the Water Supply Advisory Committee (WSAC) to consider the needs and potential solutions related to water supply. WSAC is expected to report back to the Council in the summer of 2015.</p> <p><i>If WSAC reaches consensus and recommends the City implement measures to increase the City's water supply (which may or may not include desalination) will you support implementation of those recommendations?</i></p>		
Cynthia Chase	Definitely Yes	Like many community members, I have followed the process the city went through to arrive at the WSAC. I support the WSAC and the incredible amount of work they've put in thus far and will continue to devote to developing thoughtful recommendations for the council. Because we've struggled with this issue for 20+ years, whatever the recommendations, I think it is the council's responsibility to move forward with those recommendations.
Richelle Noroyan	Probably Yes	The amount of effort the WSAC is putting into this project is admirable. Unless there is something I find fatally wrong with their recommendations, I will most likely support their conclusions.
Leonie Sherman	Definitely Yes	In my view, it's unlikely that WSAC will arrive at a consensus to construct a desal plant, but whatever they come up with—increased storage, surface water transfers, additional treatment of waste water, etc.—will require substantial investment and wide community support, and I'll do my part to implement their recommendations.
David Terrazas	Probably Yes	
Bruce Van Allen	Probably Yes	I consider desal to be too expensive, too energy-consuming, and potentially a discouragement to our visitors in the event of a red tide or word getting out that our coast-facing restaurants serve bad-tasting desalinated water. I was instrumental in steering the City toward forming the WSAC instead of having the popular resistance to desal lead to a political deadlock. I look forward to seeing the Committee's conclusions.
Gary Knutson	Choose not to Answer	Without knowing the recommendation it is difficult to say yes. I do support more use of rain runoff and water reuse. These can be implemented in a shorter time frame and cost than desal.

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Transportation. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) has adopted a strategy to fund a variety of transportation measures, from pedestrian and bicycle programs to continuation of the auxiliary lanes project on highway one from Morrissey to State Park Drive in Aptos. This strategy relies upon the a ½ cent sales tax and a \$10 vehicle registration fee proposed by SCCRTC to be placed on the 2016 ballot. As a City Council member will you be a strong supporter of this ballot proposal?		
Cynthia Chase	Probably Yes	I know that these are projects that are important to many community members and the need for less reliance upon vehicles is also an important value in our community. This seems like a project I would support but I need to get more details and information about it before I could say definitely yes.
Richelle Noroyan	Definitely Yes	This type of infrastructure improvement was needed two decades ago. I will support this proposal.
Leonie Sherman	Probably No	Santa Cruzans have proved remarkably willing to impose new taxes and property assessments on themselves for specific programs to promote health, safety and recreation. But there's a limit to what any electorate will tolerate, and in my view, we are at or near that limit. I doubt there is political will in the city electorate to tax itself to reduce freeway traffic in mid- and south-county, especially when our own city streets need repair.
David Terrazas	Definitely Yes	
Bruce Van Allen	Probably Yes	The proposal contains a fairly balanced mix of transportation improvements, and I expect to be able to support it.
Gary Knutson	Definitely No	Hwy1, is the State's problem and new lanes should be as well. I choose to live in Santa Cruz City rather than Soquel and Aptos for good reasons.
Relationship between the City and the University. For decades the relationship between the City and UCSC was characterized by disagreements, including more than two dozen lawsuits. In 2008, after a year of negotiations, the City, UCSC, neighbors, and the County entered into a Comprehensive Settlement Agreement, resolving all of the outstanding lawsuits. The settlement also created a framework which the City and the University continue to use successful to fairly allocate costs related to issues such as infrastructure, public safety and housing. This agreement has also been the catalyst for other shared initiatives and expanded cooperation between the City and the university yielding improvements in neighborhoods, traffic, collaboration on economic development activities, and mutual support in addressing local and regional issues. UCSC's Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) was part of this negotiation, addressing the transportation, water, housing, and other issues necessary to accommodate the addition about 2,000 student and the development of the "north campus" at UCSC. <i>Will you strongly support the implementation of UCSC's LRDP and the terms of the City/UCSC settlement agreement?</i>		
Cynthia Chase	Definitely Yes	It is very important to me to sustain the positive and productive momentum that has developed between UCSC and the city in the past few years. This is in part due to the work to create the settlement agreement and in part due to a real recognition of the importance of this relationship for the city's future growth and development. It is one of my primary goals to focus on the continued strengthening of this relationship.
Richelle Noroyan	Definitely Yes	This was a well thought out agreement that included compromise from both parties involved.

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Leonie Sherman	Choose not to Answer	The Comprehensive Settlement Agreement and the University's ability to grow without regard to local land use laws are facts on the ground. But the North Campus is desirable open space connecting Wilder Ranch State Park, Henry Cowell State Park and the Pogonip. I am among the 80% of voters who believe that the electorate—not the Council—ought to decide whether or not to extend city water and sewer extra-territorially.
David Terrazas	Probably Yes	
Bruce Van Allen	Choose not to Answer	While I will honor the negotiated agreement between the City and the University, I have some objections to the LRDP, especially development of the upper campus. The biggest single improvement UCSC could make would be to provide affordable housing on campus. This is a matter of University system-wide policies; if elected, I would do my best to help the University find solutions to this problem.
Gary Knutson	Choose not to Answer	Traffic is a very grave problem on the West Side, traffic flow, speed, and pedestrian safety. These are concerns of west side. Look at Mission Street congestion.
<p>The Visitor-serving Economy. A significant source of funds for the City comes from the Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT) paid by lodging facilities in the City. These revenues support the infrastructure and services necessary to address the needs of visitors, but are also a significant source of income for other public operations.</p> <p>There is demonstrated demand for new and upgraded hotel/motel rooms, especially those within easy walking distance of the Coconut Grove or another Beach Area property that could house a modern conferencing facility. The City has adopted two programs to encourage these lodging improvements / developments:</p> <p>(1) the hotel Façade Improvement Program to match investments of up to \$100,000 made by hotels/motels on interior remodeling with similar amount to improve the property's façade and,</p> <p>(2) the TOT Hotel Incentive Program rebating a portion of the TOT revenues collected from room rents to developers of new, large hotel properties near the Beach Area to assist them in obtaining the financing necessary to begin construction of new, large hotel/motel projects. These rebates of TOT are limited both by a time period and by a maximum rebate amount. <i>Do you support these and other similar investments to encourage private investment in Santa Cruz's visitor serving businesses?</i></p>		
Cynthia Chase	Definitely Yes	I've spoken with several hotel owners who have taken advantage of the Façade Improvement Program and have seen increases in their revenue which increases their contribution to the TOT and also creates more attractive areas for residents and visitors. The TOT Hotel Incentive Program has been a subject of a lot of controversy when I've spoken to voters, but the more I am understanding about the intention behind it, the more I hope I can help alleviate some of their concerns.
Richelle Noroyan	Definitely Yes	Most of our beach area hotels are lower end and while they are an important part of our lodging industry, we need more mid and higher end facilities to attract multiple day vacationers.

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Leonie Sherman	Probably No	Matching funds to upgrade small hotels has worked alright, but rebating millions of dollars of TOT to facilitate financing for big hotel developers is corporate welfare and a misuse of scarce public resources. Post-recession financing is difficult for everybody. Tax allowances can be used sparingly to attract new businesses (and new kinds of businesses—for example, eco-tourism, green infrastructure, recreational services, University-related start-ups). Such investment needs to be applied strategically with the goals of creating better-paying jobs, inducing innovation and fostering genuine and equitable prosperity.
David Terrazas	Definitely Yes	
Bruce Van Allen	Probably No	If a hotel can make its finances "pencil out" without subsidy, how do we have any assurance they won't come back to the public trough again later?
Gary Knutson	Definitely Yes	But not the use of TOT taxes which are better used for public safety. I support subordinated bridge loans. The three hotels now being considered are high end operations.
<p>Housing. This City's General Plan provides for significant "densification" of housing along transportation corridors such as Mission Street, Ocean Street, Lower Pacific Avenue, and Soquel Avenue. The plan proposes to permit "mixed-use" buildings (generally, first floor commercial, upper-floors residential) in these areas and housing which is "affordable by design" (generally, smaller units). It encourage's two- and three-story rental housing on these corridors and other, denser housing in the downtown area. <i>Will you strongly support the implementation of these elements of the City's General Plan regarding housing densification?</i></p>		
Cynthia Chase	Definitely Yes	I support dense design as it not only the only option we have in our community for growth and development, but the designs are smart and sustainable and allow for a level of diversity that is important to our city and for our future.
Richelle Noroyan	Definitely Yes	Not only will this type of housing allow people home buying opportunities that might not exist otherwise, it encourages more walkable communities and will hopefully encourage talented young people to stay in Santa Cruz.
Leonie Sherman	Definitely Yes	We need to manage the growth of our city so that our children's children will have a livable affordable place to call home. Increased density along high traffic corridors, smaller units and mixed residential and commercial use are all part of a vision of Santa Cruz that preserves our greenbelt, reduces traffic and results in a safer town.
David Terrazas	Definitely Yes	
Bruce Van Allen	Probably Yes	Assuming impacts such as traffic, water consumption, and affects on quality of life in existing neighborhoods are incorporated in such plans, I think we can accommodate additional density.
Gary Knutson	Definitely Yes	Affordable housing is very important for businesses to succeed.