



CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: Rosie Zepeda

Age: 47

Family: I am the oldest of 4 from a working-class family. We live 5 minutes away from each other. My father, a janitor, retired recently from Evergreen College. He worked for many years at the Police Academy, before it was moved to South San Jose. My mother retired from a pre-school. My brother is an electrical engineer at Lockheed Martin and my sister-in-law is a teacher at Presentation High School. One of my sisters works in accounting and my nephew attends one of the best public schools in D9. My dad's brother and his family live in the heart of Willow Glen. My 90-year old grandmother lives in a mobile home park, off Curtner Avenue.

Hometown: San Jose

Lived in San Jose since: 1975

Education: Master's Education, Herbert Lehman College, Bachelor's – Santa Clara University; Overfelt High School

Occupation: Communication Instructor/Businesswoman

Employer: Compelling Conversations, LLC

Political experience: Canvassed and signed up voters for the Obama campaign

Notable affiliations: Kiwanis of Cambrian Park; Team member of Small Business Development Center (SBDC) of Northern California; former President of Society of Professional Hispanic Engineers (SHPE) Silicon Valley

1. **What do you see as the greatest challenges when it comes to providing residents with a livable, affordable and safe community?**

I believe everything comes down to the budget and prioritizing solely on funding the essentials every city needs to function: Public Safety, Fire and infrastructure (like roads, lights and basic maintenance). It is difficult to concentrate on building and developing for density when basic services are not being met.

As for affordability, new development should provide 30% of their units for working families making \$50K and under. There are currently two high rise buildings going up in downtown and I can guarantee working families will not be able to afford to live there. We are missing the opportunity to house our teachers, police officers, counselors and tradesmen/women. We are missing having them be part of urban experience and forcing them to commute long hours and add to our already congested highways. If we are going to reduce impact fees for developers, we must get something in return, since that is lost revenue for a City facing a shortfall.

2. **What is the biggest opportunity for your district or city during the next four years?**

The biggest opportunity in my District is to bring back the level of safety in all of our neighborhoods. The second opportunity is to develop the Cambrian Park Plaza with a development that reflects the community and its values, which means lower density than is currently being proposed. Achieving this will be a

The biggest opportunity for the City is to transform itself from suburban sprawl to urban center, while conserving the charm of its various neighborhoods and avoiding the least amount of displacement. I believe most cities achieve this by starting at the downtown level and providing housing and job opportunities for all of its own residents.

3. **Describe your commitment to your district or city leading up to your bid for office.**

I am a member of the Kiwanis of Cambrian Park. Our focus is to improve the lives of children. We also raise money for scholarships. Once a month all the Kiwanians from all of San Jose come together to share their work and projects.

Since 2014 I have run a women's organization, made up of students, working moms and small business owners with its sole mission to provide a support network and professional development in the areas of leadership and business development. The women live in various parts of San Jose and Silicon Valley.

For the last three years I have led workshops for students on communication, negotiation and leadership at the Women in Engineering Conference (WIE) at San Jose State University.

For six years I served as the President of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) of Silicon Valley, providing STEM resources and family science nights to underserved communities in San Jose. A second component of this work was offering professional development and a collaborative platform between employee resource groups from various tech companies, non-profits in the community and local education institutions.

4. **Silicon Valley and the Bay Area are at the center of global, technological advancement. How do you see technology's role in changing the lives of both longtime residents and transplants?**

Technology should be able to provide sustainability to existing communities. Technology proves successful if it makes life easier and brings opportunity for all. We cannot have a select few reap the high rewards of creating technology and others be passive users. Case in point, Facebook has caused the largest displacement of working families in all its surrounding areas, without offering much opportunity for the millennials in these families, who are themselves digital natives. It is a known fact that for many years they only hired from Ivy League schools. The children of working families are not absent from these schools because they lack the brain power, but more due to economic limitations. Two thirds of the jobs at tech companies are none engineering related. I would like to see more of our youth at community colleges and state schools offered a permanent place at the table.