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>> Good morning everyone. My name is Chris Sanchez. I'll be your moderator for today. I'm with NBC 11. This forum you'll be able to see but folks will be able to access on NBC11.com. We want to thank you so much for coming in today, and coming for the neighborhood and community leaders, San José mayoral candidate forum. These are obviously very important issues for the folks who live in the safest large city in America. I want to thank each of the candidates for their time, for participating and for your dedication to run for San José mayor. Tough time today. Questions came from San José residents and they'll be asked by our panelists but they were developed by the folks from the neighborhoods. They were sent by mail, by e-mail, and hopefully we'll hear quite a few of them today. Each candidate will get two minutes for an opening statement in the order that we just saw and there are two questions that will be drafted in that opening statement as well and the rest of the questions will be asked by our panelist. Our panelist are Barbara Marsh man, he Ernesto Guzman and Trixie Johnson, league of women voters, our timekeeper is, the questions will be in rotation order so candidate number with one will then get -- you'll be able to follow us. You're smart people. You're here today, right? There are about eight to ten questions. One minute answer allotted. And Lynn will show you your time. And then we can have also a rebuttal and then the candidate can do a counterrebuttal. We'll see back and fort. That's always my favorite part. Again, we'll ask you to hold your applause until the end of the closing statements. If you have a cell phone, we'll ask you to turn it off. Pager, all the other technological gadgets. So should we start? Everybody ready? Okay. You have I believe one rebuttal. Oh, would. There you go. So if I don't have the answer somebody will have the answer. So okay. Let's get started then. You each have a two-minute opening statement, and you should address two things. Why you are the best qualified to be San José's next mayor, and if you could also name two goals that you are going to accomplish in your first year in office. So we'll start with Cindy Chavez. Good morning.

>> Cindy Chavez: Good morning. Thank you all very much for being here. I'm particularly pleased to see so many young girls in the audience. Welcome. My name is Cindy Chavez. I'm currently the Vice Mayor of the City of San José and I'm chair of the valley transportation authority. And I have been a member of the San José City Council for almost seven years. In the time that I have been on the San José City Council I have really enjoyed serving the public and working with so many of you who are here in the audience who are neighborhood leaders. One of the first projects that I took on as a councilmember was to take leadership on the strong neighborhoods initiative and it's a very strong program, where I believe San José opened up. Through that program we have rebuilt streets and schools and just done a lot especially in our neighborhoods. My emphasis since I've been in office has been in working with neighborhoods with an emphasis on education and public safety. And through that public safety program we've done a lot including improving communications within the police department and working on the Megan's law task force. In terms of accomplishments I think what sets me apart is that working with the community leaders in this community, we've done a lot of work. And we've really made change in real people's lives and that includes making San José the first large city, actually the first city in the nation to offer children under the age of 18 access to health insurance which is something I took leadership on that I'm very proud of. In terms of first year my hope is that we expand the strong neighborhoods initiative program citywide. And what that means for me is not that redevelopment money is kind of sprinkled about, it's that the city is responsive to neighborhoods the way it should be. Secondly, I'd like to reengage the schools for educational opportunities for all children in San José. Thank you.

>> Michael Mulcahy: Good morning. My name is Michael Mulcahy. I've never been elected to public office and I've never run for office and I think that's a great thing for us here in San José. My experience is in business and in managing organizations. I know how to lead and I know how to turn organizations around. But most of all I know we need a mayor who is not encumbered by special interests, lobbyists

and insiders. Where do my qualifications come from? Being in this community, working as a commercial real estate specialist but having run the local nonprofit, the San José children's musical theater, taking a grass routes organization and building it for the nation's largest theatre for youth. I'm very proud of that. There are a number of things that I want to accomplish in the first year. But a couple of things I think are important to people in this room, and the United neighborhoods organization. We need a general plan update. I think we can get it done in two years and under my leadership we will do that. And the first year in office will be a very important year to make sure we're setting out on that course appropriately. Although very important piece, I've just released a white paper this week on infill opportunities. We need to focus and tighten our city, to make sure we have opportunities where the community and the development community and the city staff can come together and look forward to how we can build this economy through our land use right now. Because we do have opportunities that are out there. We just need to make sure we're bringing people together, so that we can get them into the process, and get the kind of retail and housing projects we need in this city going sooner rather than later. Thank you very much, and good morning, again.

>> Dave Cortese: Good morning. Let me try to address the questions that were presented here for the opening statements. First of all, I feel like I'm qualified to be mayor of San José for about four different reasons that I think comprise a rather unique package in terms of who I am as a public servant. One of the reasons I'm so happy to be addressing you this morning is because neighborhood empowerment has been a huge piece of what I've done as a City Council member. When I was first elected to council there were six neighborhood associations in my entire district. I made it a huge priority with my staff and with those leaders who were available in the district to do better than that. Over the next 18 months to two years, we set out to organize neighborhoods around issues in neighborhoods and those that wanted to organize and empower themselves and become neighborhood associations have done that now. We then formed community round table so those folks could meet together and participate in a piece of governance in the entire district. Make recommendations and act as an advisory body. I have a private sector background that spans almost three decades. I have experience in education, spending eight years in the largest high school district in Northern California on the school board. I know what programs work, I know which ones need to be supported further. And I've regional government experience. I've been elected unanimously as the president of Santa Clara County cities association and unanimously to represent 100 cities in this region and nine counties as the president of the association of Bay Area governments. What I want to do my first year is, I want to bring a new spirit of ethics to City Hall. It is obviously something we need. I have a strong track in order that regard. The other thing I want to do is consolidate our outreach functions into the City of San José into a single department of outreach so we can reach our city every day on every issue.

>> My name is David Pandori. I'm a candidate for mayor. I offer you my education. I'm an undergrad student, at San José state, received a degree in environmental studies. A master's degree in city planning from U.C. Berkeley and a law degree from Hastings. But more than academics, I had a passion for the Guadalupe river park. We were successful in betting 14 million to create that beautiful park you see there next to the arena. I offered you my experience as a councilmember who's worked on a City Council for eight years and tried to cut a path of being an independent but an effective person. I was pleased to create the ethics commission here at the city, despite initial resistance, I offer my experience as a prosecutor here in Santa Clara County. I've seen another side to the city. I've stood in front of juries trying to convince them to do the right thing, listening to other sides and being persuasive. We need to bring that leadership to a city that's in desperate need of it. I have a few goals for the city. I believe in a city that's better, not just bigger. I want to change this city, where we have a city where it's ringed with hill

sides, blessed with open space, and linked with parks. I believe we need to take a new approach on gangs, and I'll create a joint powers agency that has a goal to make every single neighborhood in San José crime free. I'll create an endowment for this city, so we'll bring things to the whole next generation of San José. Thank you.

>> Chuck Reed: Good morning. Thank you all for coming on this sunny Saturday morning in beautiful San José. I'm surprised actually that anybody's here. Because you could be out working in the garden or doing things with your family. So we appreciate the crowd and I want to thank the sponsors for the fact that it's being webcast so other people can see it as well. And I know the organizing committee has done a lot of work. So that's important. To speak to the question of qualifications in two minutes is hard to do. There are so many things, value, experience, education, record, and objectives so I can't talk about all of those. But I will tell you that I have published some literature called the Reed reformer. You can take a look at that. Let me just focus on one part of the issue, and that's values. I was born and raised in the small farming town of garden city Kansas. You can't hide from what you do in small towns. You have to be responsible for your actions. So I grew up living with tell the truth, keep your word, be responsible for your actions, and follow the law. I was born in that small town, our first house was in a public housing project. I came from a working class family and we worked. If I wanted something, I worked for it. So I learned the value of money and I've learned the value of hard work. I went to the air force academy where we lived by an honor code, 90 lying, no cheating, no stealing and no toleration of those who do. We had core values. Those values help me every day in making decisions about what is the right thing to do when confronted with lots of difficult decisions. They will guide me in the future and can you see those in the actions and the votes that I've taken. And if you look at the Reed reformer, you'll see what I have done and what I propose to do for the good of the city as we move forward. Thank you all for coming this morning.

>> Shall I get started with the questions? I forgot to acknowledge the neighborhoods, the Mercury News and NBC11 is excited to have the whole webcast. Our first question comes from Tom Clifton.

>> First question is, we start with the setup. San José has the lowest tax revenue per resident of any large California city or local city. Up on table 3, let's see, we also have less than one job per employed resident, while other local cities have more jobs than employed residents. Local jobs produce more local tax revenue, and they cost city services while housing costs more than taxes received. San José provides much of the Silicon Valley's housing which means San José gets stuck paying additional city services, service housing cost for other city workers living in San José. And we are double penalized when our retail shops -- when our residents shop in other cities after work or on weekends since we lose retail tax revenues that would normally pay for our residents' necessary city services. The question is, how can we ensure that cities rich with taxes and jobs build their fair share of housing, how will you attract and retain companies with well-paying jobs and increase San José retail stores so we can have sales tax revenues to fund city services?

>> Mr. Mulcahy, remember it's a one-minute answer.

>> To prove the point that we are the bedroom community of Silicon Valley, it is a powerful set of numbers you see. The bottom line is we need an activist mayor. We can go that in a number of ways. One of the large ways we can do that, right now there is a convention in Santa Clara going on called Tycon which is the networking confab for entrepreneurs. It is the largest collection of entrepreneurs in the world. You look in their eyes and you see the future. The mayor of San José and as mayor next year I'll be there, it's like the Woodstock for the entrepreneurial business. I'm going to have my napsack there with business cards and sales pitches why those businesses need to be in this city. We cannot forget about the small business community. We need to make sure that we're bringing people together,

the neighborhoods, the City of San José, city staff, to encourage small business to grow here in San José.

>> Dave Cortese: As I mentioned during my opening remarks I'm the president of the association of Bay Area governments and that's where the regional housing needs assessment is established every year. It's something ABAG does as a function of state law and establishes the quota for the nine Bay Area counties. There are a lot of communities that resist that. San José has done its fair share over and over again and we've got to make sure that we create new incentives at a regional level and perhaps create stricter penalties for those cities who don't do their part on the housing side. Then it will start to level the playing field in terms of where the industrial production goes as well. And the City of San José in the last two years we've heavily studied with outside consultants those, we need to stick to those outside consultant studies, follow what they're saying as best we can, and we have to convert areas from low industrial to retail. Thank you.

>> I will preserve, I will stop the urban sprawl, in Coyote Valley. That will drain city services. That will make the airport a better economic generator. We need to update the plan for north San José but we need to do it with our other cities. And we can come up with a great plan to put housing closer to jobs and we need to look at how the we can make the light rail go faster and fuller. I think at the same time, it's important to think about expanding the convention center, not with a temporary tent but with a real expansion. But most of all, having a great city. A great city is great for attracting jobs. We have a great city that we will get the jobs to.

>> Chuck Reed: There are a lot of elements to hit in one minute. Let me talk about one of them. First have you to keep the driving industries. Those are the technology companies that drive this entire community. If you lose those, you lose jobs. Making sure that companies like eBay, BEA systems, cadence, Cisco, expand in San José, stay in San José is the first thing. We tried to do that in north San José with the north San José development plan. There are companies that will expand, grow here, if we let them do that. The second thing is we need to be the best in the world to start and grow a business. It is a global economy. The startups will generate the most jobs. The small businesses generate the most jobs. People look and say we can go someplace else. The technology companies can do it anywhere in the world. They have choices. So we have to be the best. That means we have to get out of the way. We have to do no harm and we have to do our own job on services.

>> Cindy Chavez: Thank you for the question. First of all I do think we need to focus on making it easier for people to start and grow a business here and we've made some changes as part of a program that we have called counter to council to make it easier for businesses to start and grow here. But second and I think this is very critical is that we do need to do a better job of providing support to those businesses that are here and growing. And let me give you one example. Forful businesses I've talked to, those who are thinking about where they're going to take their next step they have two challenges of being here, one is the cost of housing and the other is access to health insurance. I think if the San José want to collaborate it would be possible for us to put together an affordable healthcare program for businesses here. I think that would encourage them to want to start here, stay here, grow here.

>> Our next question. Is from Barbara marshman.

>> Thank you. And truly, this is just the luck of the draw that I got this question. But San José residents often get little or even late notice of important meetings, have difficulty obtaining public records and find decisions have been made outside public view. The question is, what will you personally do to make certain people aren't surprised again by stadium plans or grand prix subsidies? Will you support a comprehensive local sunshine law to set clear standards for openness and allow all San José residents to fully participate in public policy and spending decisions?

>> We'll start with Mr. Cortese first this time.

>> Dave Cortese: Yes, I will support a comprehensive sunshine ordinance just as has been recommended by the Mercury News. My track record indicates that. Councilmember Reed and I have both indicated on the record that we would like to see San José adopt such an ordinance. In terms of what I will do as mayor of San José I think we have to get beyond just an ordinance and we have to get beyond just ethics legislation in the city. I think we need to turn the city back into a city that is committed to two way communication. That hasn't been the style of the current administration. It's been exactly opposite of that. We need to bring the front door of City Hall to the front doors of our neighborhoods. I've done that in Evergreen for my empire term there. I'm proud of what I've done there and we need to do that citywide.

>> David Pandori: Yes, I'll do three other things as well. I want to open up the union negotiations. They're out of whack right now, where those decisions are being made independent of the budget decisions and those are having tremendous impacts on the city's budget. The police budget is going up \$40 million but we have fewer cops. That doesn't make any sense. I would stop the ballpark planning. Not because the ballpark isn't important but it's the cart before the horse. We don't have a team owner and we bought land before getting public approval. I would get things that are being kept under the rug, like the park fee. That should be out in the open, and we should be debating that and it's a shame that neighborhood people are simply getting put off in having a public discussion on that. So those are three things I would do right now.

>> Chuck Reed: My answer is yes, I enthusiastically support open government and sunshine ordinance and I have for years and if you look at the Reed reformer you'll see my record on that. Let me give you one example. Three years ago I specifically tried to stop the bad practice of using late staff reports to surprise the council and the public. I brought forth a proposal to require them to be published earlier. If they weren't, we wouldn't talk about them on a Tuesday. Unfortunately Councilmember Chavez Councilmember Cortese and Mayor Gonzales vetoed that. Move the ball forward to try to get us to a sunshine ordinance. I enthusiastically support the Mercury News proposal as well as others of my own and you can see them in the Reed reformer. It is critically important that the public know what we're doing before we do it. Mistakes, stupid things, they happen. But if the public knows about them they'll tell us in advance.

>> And we saw a couple of rebuttal signs to those now. In the order that we got them. Mr. Pandori.

>> 30 section? First off I want to applaud Chuck because I do think it's good what he's done in terms of being an early advocate for stopping the late memo phenomenon. There have been inconsistencies in the application of that. There was a late memo that Mr. Reed signed with Ms. Chavez and the mayor stopping the Cisco investigation. We still don't have the answers as to what the City Council knew, what the City Attorney knew before that vote. I want to see retroactive action on that not just sunshine in the future.

>> Dave Cortese: Yes, here's my concern. Mr. Reed indicates that I voted against his proposal. Because his proposal was too restrictive. His proposal wanted to require a length of time that was beyond what was reasonable for staff to come out with reports. Those reports should be caught and were being caught at the rules committee the Wednesday before the council meeting. I'm not on the rules committee anymore which is frustrating. It is difficult to do that. But he also wanted Councilmember memoranda out. The memoranda that indicate what our motion is going to be at a council meeting well, well ahead of the meeting and I don't think that's good. I don't think that's good for open government. Because what happens is councilmembers four, five at a time are signing memos recommending consensus that they want to see the council take. They're circulating that in this building and the rest of you aren't seeing those and you wonder why when you come to a council meeting everybody has their mind made up. I think if

someone wants to make a motion they should be putting those out as close to real time as possible and you have a chance for a real meeting.

>> Chuck Reed: Do I get 30 seconds? Let me respond to both of those. First on the Cisco converged network investigation, there was three investigations by the city and after the city was done the District Attorney looked at it investigated again and determined that the city's investigations were lengthy and thorough and no further action was necessary. I don't know what memo Mr. Pandori is referring to. The only memo came out on Friday before the Tuesday vote. And as to Mr. Cortese's issue with the rules committee, yes, the rules committee could do a better job, could do a much better job. I'm not on the rules committee either.

>> Cindy Chavez: Thank you. Let me begin by talking a little bit about my philosophy related to open government. I talked earlier about taking leadership on beginning the strong neighborhoods initiative and that really was an opportunity to engage the public in decisions related to spending in their neighborhood. Steps forward to make change in terms of our relationship with neighborhoods. I think it's very important. I sat on the blue ribbon task force and we made a whole lot of directions and rules but to me the most important thing came out of that was making information available online so you could get it to see who's funding campaigns and all that information that was very important. The other thing we did was add cameras into our committee meetings. Because those meetings are many meatier. PDO fees for the committee that gets a chance to look at that on our council team and I think that's very important. Finally the sunshine ordinance task force will really engage the public on how we want government to function here.

>> Michael Mulcahy: San José has been suffering. The answer to the question is I do support. I support a lot of different types of reform and reorganization in this city. You know, the irony here is with respect to the neighborhood associations, while the City Council and the mayor have been hiding a lot of information from the public, in fact they have strengthened the quality and the depth and breadth of our neighborhood associations as a result of that. And as mayor the most important thing I will do is to utilize that human capital and knowledge that we've sort of built with the sunshine policy that works, make sure we use those neighborhood associations as partners as we move forward. We have the power to doing something significant. As the mayor, I commit to working with the neighborhoods because that's where a lot of the power is and the a lot of the smarts.

>> We'll move on to our next question. And it's about parks.

>> Ernest Guzman. Strong neighborhoods initiative. Parks being the key element of great livable cities necessary to attract jobs. In the city's greenprint some of the land clarified as parks are school grounds that are fenced and posted for no trespassing. Developers are supposed to buy park land nearby but the discounted fees are substantially less than new park acquisition cost. Currently San José does not have the tax revenues to buy additional park land. According to a recent study of eight south bay cities, for like project development and impact fees, San José's total fees are thousands of dollars less than the average total fees per unit than other local cities. And there's a table 2 and 3 that's behind you and you have in front of you. Other cities in the county have more park land per capita than San José. I have a three-part question which you have 60 seconds to answer. The question is, what will you do to get residents more park land that improves our quality of life? Will you raise park fees as long as our total fees don't exceed the eight-city total development cost average, and would you consider a fee for park maintenance as well?

>> We'll start with Mr. Pandori this time.

>> David Pandori: When I launched my campaign for mayor, one of the four main things I wanted to do was talk about parks. And it's very important for me as a planner or someone who has lived here for 30

years and lived on the same street downtown is to create a great set of parks in this city. Specifically this is what I will do. I will bring the park fees up to date. It's a shame that the council has deferred action on this for so many years now. We did that when I was on the council, and because of that, I was able to provide funding to double Parnell park downtown and to provide seed funding for Olinder park. We set aside a percentage, and like the county we should set aside a percentage for maintenance because parks without maintenance are no parks at all. And I'll establish a goal to connect 100 miles of creeks in this city with trails in the next ten years. And my last priority is to work in partnership with the county to create a great park at the fair grounds. Not a good park, a great park. And we'll chain one of the most dilapidated pieces of property into a great piece of property.

>> Chuck Reed: 60 seconds, that's not much. Let me be as specific as I can. School grounds should never be closed off from the public and to the extent this city can we need to negotiate with schools as has been done in my district to make sure that their grounds are open to the public as they are an essential part of having a park. Second thing PIO fees the park land dedication in lieu fees should be I think 100% of land value. They are currently at 70% and I have been in favor of raising that to 100% for a couple of years now. Park maintenance is a problem. I have land in my council district and I have money in my council district budget but we don't have the operating dollars to launch the parks. So if we don't get the revenues up and be a little more fiscally responsible, there are parks we can't build. New parks, whenever we are doing new development I think we have to have a creative approach. Park funds are turned over to us for maintenance and maintenance is not up to par so we have to think of new ways to do that.

>> Cindy Chavez: So working with many of you in this room, we've almost doubled the amount of neighborhood park space in downtown in the most dense part of the city. So I know there's a lot more we can do. I took leadership on supporting both measures O and P, building parks and libraries which I also think is very, very important to the future of this city. I do believe that the PDO fees need to be raised to 100%. I think that's the right thing to do. I know this discussion will come to council in about a month. But finally and this is something that is very important, we're using a guiding document the green print that sets goals that are citywide, instead of close ore to council district wide. And the problem with that is that when someone, a developer is putting money in but primary money, we need to do a better job of being specific both for the public and the developers so we know where we can plan for the future there are lots of examples of people who bought their homes across pieces of dirt that someone promised would be a park some day. And we need to have an answer to that question and make sure that people know what to expect in their community.

>> Michael Mulcahy: Absolutely yes on more parks. It goes to the core of our quality of life and our ability to make sure that we're able to keep a driving economy in a place where people continue to want to live and work in San José. As far as the fees are concerned, I think that we have to look at the fees and raise them according to today's land prices. Because in order for us to provide those new parks, we've got to be competitive with the dollars we have to spend. So I think that as long as we're competitive with the City's -- according to the chart I'm in favor increasing those. But I think we have to make sure that we create a balance there so that we're not shooting ourselves in the foot by being a place where people want to open businesses and build and contribute to our economy. As far as park maintenance, you know, we've talked a lot about the budget. I believe that our budget has a lack of priority and I believe we, as we go through the process, we prioritize, make sure that parks and community centers and those affecting quality of life are taken into account.

>> Dave Cortese: This is a great question. Cut to the chase on the question of whether fees need to be raised. Yes they need to be raised absolutely but I think the entire PDO ordinance is a bad approach the

way it's structured now and we need to get stakeholders together with leadership on this City Council and from city staff. Even if we raise fees immediately and take a look at what needs to be done to make sure we're actually getting turnkey parks built at, point either absolutely concurrent or immediately after residential development occurs. I wish you could come out to Evergreen. It is two completely different worlds. The community service districts were set up that handle not only the capital construction based on developer fees before they would be allowed to build houses but the maintenance money for those parks were built in over years and years and years so that's being paid for now. Yet we have PDO fees aren't producing anything. You can't find the parks, the land costs are escalating that even if you were collecting the 100% a year ago, it wouldn't be keeping up with inflationary land prices.

>> Okay, next question from Trixie Johnson.

>> Cindy's already partially addressed this. You now have a opportunity to as well. Strong neighborhoods initiative has been, only covers about one-third of the city. The question is, will you support a citywide extension of the strong neighborhoods concept, with a neighborhood commission to involve all city residents in the decisions that affect them and their neighborhoods?

>> And Mr. Reed you get to go first.

>> Chuck Reed: I think one of the best things that Mayor Gonzales has done has been the strong neighborhoods initiative and I give credit to him and to Vice Mayor Chavez for making that happen. It is important that we not turn our back on any neighborhood. But expanding strong neighborhoods and fulfilling the promise that we've made to our strong neighborhoods is a difficult part because it is about money and funding. The redevelopment budget is headed towards zero. If we don't get redevelopment dollars increased there won't be any money to fight over. I don't think we can expand it to the rest of the city unless we're prepared to do something about it. Just raising people's expectations and planning is not enough. We need to have the resources. We have wasted money on other things that could have been spent on strong neighborhoods initiative. The city county lawsuit, which I voted against, much of that is going to come out of the redevelopment budget. That could have been used for strong neighborhoods. We have overpromised and underdelivered on that. We need to get the neighborhoods up in order to fulfill our promises.

>> Cindy Chavez: The strong neighborhoods initiative have a bunch of different elements to it. One was to spend redevelopment dollars in poor neighborhoods and some of that we've accomplished. Second was to make sure we developed neighborhood leadership that was aggressive and forceful and not matter who was sitting in these chairs up here could demand and get their needs met. And I think and I can tell you in downtown it works very well. But the third is, getting the city to respond to the public, in a way that is respectful, cross-department. So whether that means you're calling the Department of Transportation or you're calling code enforcement you're not getting disrespected, you're not getting blown off for lack of a better word. Part of the things we need to do is work with the strong neighborhoods initiative, the neighborhoods in our area, and is it all about money, services, relationship? I think there is a lot of work that needs to be done with neighborhood leaders. But to answer your question on a neighborhood commission I think it's a really good idea. A really good idea.

>> Michael Mulcahy: Well, as mayor I would ensure that the top 10 list of the various SNIs are full by filled. I think that's a contract that we made with our neighborhoods. One of the most important things that has come out of SNI wealth of knowledge. I'm very active with the business association of willow glen. I think one of the extension of SNI if you're talking about taking some of those substantive issues of the SNI is theIDs. And they need help. -- and they need to make sure that they're able to be empowered to provide the kind of services at a local level that our neighborhood residents want. And we need to do a good job of relating and linking our neighborhood associations and our business associations

together. Because when they're working in synch they can be powerful for this city.

>> Dave Cortese: My opening statement, we created a round table just in district 8 alone that serves the neighborhood associations in and became an advisory body for quite significance. Certainly as I said earlier that should be done citywide and that group meets all the time. This isn't a once a year neighborhood summit or once a year let's get feedback from the neighbors. This is governance every day month by month. And that's what should be happening. SNI is a good concept financially in a way to move redevelopment money into the neighborhoods. Mr. Reed is absolutely right. I will tell you, if you want to see redevelopment budget, people who are telling you there's money in that budget to go further, that's wrong. I believe you deserve to have more money in the neighborhoods. Please, there are great leaders in some of these SNIs and after five years, there is no leadership and no neighborhood associations. And that needs to change before we expand it.

>> David Pandori: I'm open to all neighborhoods, I'm open to a neighborhood commission idea but I want to focus also on broader ways to involve the public. I think the public's been excluded on the ballpark planning. It's been wrong how that's moved forward. I think the public's been excluded on budget decisions like the grand prix. And I think the public's been excluded on participation in for instance major planning decisions that are being piecemealed in the city. We're way overdue for a general plan. With respect to the strong neighborhoods initiative and the areas that are focused on that, sometimes it's easier but sometimes it's more important to do the right thing. We need to focus this. There are neighborhoods in desperate need of significant help and this is spread out too far. It can't do everything that's there. There are areas with million dollar homes, million dollar homes in strong neighborhood initiatives that should never have been done in the first place. We should narrow that program.

>> Our next question is from Tom Clifton.

>> Okay, 30 second answer question for you. If you weren't running for office this year what would you be doing right now?

>> Cindy Chavez: Okay. I represent the downtown of San José. I would do what I've been doing for seven years which is going to a lot of meetings and getting a lot of work done. I think the only difference maybe I might be reading a little bit more.

>> Well, I'm cooking for my mother, my mother-in-law and my wife tomorrow. I'd go to a children's musical theater, and I'd have a nice dinner with my family tonight.

>> Dave Cortese: As a City Council person on average I'd still be working 65 hours a week as a councilmember. You can imagine what it's like campaigning on top of that. I'd be spending a lot more time with my family and this morning I'd be with my wife mentoring juveniles at juvenile hall and that's where I intend to go after this forum thank you.

>> I'm on leave from the DA's office. I'd be prosecuting gang cases in the city in neighborhoods of desperate heal. Connect of connecting the parks in my free time. Going to day camp, which I'm going to have to give up this year because of this and spending time with my daughter and my wife.

>> Chuck Reed: Well, on Saturday morning I would be reading my council packet getting ready for the Tuesday meeting. So as to that moment this is what I'd be doing. I'd also try to figure out which creek trail I'm going to ride my bike on this day. Unfortunately, that's had to take a back seat to campaigning. So I would be spending -- well, I'd be cleaning out the garage, too, another thing that's been delayed. The honey-do list has gotten very long. So I'm sure I would be working on those if I wasn't sitting here this morning. I'd rather be here, of course.

>> All right, let's move on to our next question from Barbara.

>> Okay, that was a nice break but -- San José's general plan is so outdated, as to be meaningless. There have been hundreds of amends and exceptions over the years now made four times

a year, many of them in direct conflict with the adopted policies. Neighborhood leaders now feel they need to carefully research and often oppose development plans simply because they cannot trust the city will follow any particular policy. The question is, questions are actually, but I'll keep this brief, would you support an immediate general plan update, I think you all do. Would the task force composed like our sunshine task force, and including a fiscal analysis of all development plan impacts looking out five to seven years on the city budget, if analysis shows continuing deficits, would you consider a moratorium on development until the budget irons out and would you return to looking at general plan amendments only once a year instead of four times a year? And I apologize for asking to you do that in a minute.

>> Mr. Mulcahy.

>> Michael Mulcahy: Talk about a loaded question, Barbara.

>> I just like to remind that I did not make up these questions. These are questions from the neighborhood. Not my question.

>> I think the most porn thing we have to do is visit the general plan and do an update. We've allowed ourselves to get out of control, with the decision making. I think the most important thing we can do is come together as a community, focus on a two year general plan update and make sure we are hooking at the accountability in terms of what that development entails. I do think we need to broaden the type of people that are coming together to form the task force that will tackle this challenge. But it's a challenge that we have to manage, because we're out of control in terms of our land use. Short term gain on housing is killing us in the long term and how we're going to grow this economy and grow it more appropriately so we can improve the quality of life in San José. The most important thing we can do is do a comprehensive review of that general plan and do it as soon as possible in as best time as possible and I think we can do it in two years.

>> Dave Cortese: Yes, absolutely on the immediate update of the general plan and I do think whether it's a task force like you described like a sunshine task force or some other form of essentially massive grass roots or bottoms up processing, there needs to be community involvement, neighborhood by neighborhood involvement in the general plan process when we do it. Obviously the final word has to be with the city elected and appointed institutions here, the Planning Commission and the City Council and so forth. But we need to gather all the input from our neighborhoods first. And again, I think that's what we've tried to model in my own district while we're waiting for this general plan update to occur. The thing about continuing deficits in a moratorium, I'm not afraid to put a moratorium on growth in the city. I believe we have to be very careful with that because it may be that we have to do if we do moratoriums a more surgical approach make sure our transit corridors are protected so we can continue to build houses and slow down opportunities in other parts of the city. One time per year is fine with me.

>> David Pandori: This City Council hats changed planning in San José. We used to have a win time a year they voted for four times a year. I would take it back to one time a year. The real question is what do you want to do? What do you want to do with that plan? Here's what I want to do. I want to stop the planning in Coyote Valley right now. It's the wrong time. This council voted out the development controls that said we shouldn't do planning there, until our budget can afford it, until our neighborhoods can afford it approximately I'll restore that. I'll stop the planning in Evergreen because that's a piecemeal plan. And we have to take a second look at north San José. Chuck's had good motivation to do that but we need to address, I'd like to hear the other candidates, do they support stopping these piecemeal plans and focusing back on a city that's better before bigger? That's the philosophy I want to take.

>> Chuck Reed: There have been three general plan task force necessary this city, 76, 84 and 94. I served on two of them and co-chaired the one in 1994. I think the new mayor has to take the lead on a general plan revision because the general plan should be our collective vision of where we want to take

this city. And getting the people engaged in that is important. And it needs to be done with a task force that is not something people perceive as being fixed in some way by loading it up by developers or land owners or any particular special interest groups. So the kind of thing would be useful to help bring credibility to it but ultimately it needs to be a very broad based community approach because it is our collective vision and general plans usually stay in place for ten years or so before they're reviewed. But if you look at from 76 through 94 we have been remarkably consistent about the direction we want to go to the city at the policy level. Thank you.

>> Cindy Chavez: The counter to council task force I co-chaired, general plan as soon as the new mayor comes in and I think that the whole task force thought that was very, very important. But what the task force also recognized is that we can't do community outreach in an old fashioned way, we have to work with other stakeholders of interest, the historic community. Those folks that are advocating for more green space, that there needs to be a way to do outreach and include the broadest part of our community to be part of the general plan decision. I think once the general plan is completed, we should reevaluate how often the general plan is updated and under what terms and conditions it would need to be updated. I think we need to look at other tools such as specific plans which are helpful in planning areas that needs a little more detail, more meat on the bones for future development. I want to respond what Mr. Pandori raised related to stopping planning. Now I have to stop. Maybe I'll get a chance to respond.

>> Mr. Pandori. Your rebuttal.

>> I think Cindy has a good record on projects she's done. But I have a different point of view in terms of, we haven't done it well. The Coyote task force is heavily weighted with the developers and the property owners. No neighborhood representatives from districts 2 or 10 on that. No committee put together on the north San José plan and Dave's done a good job in involving people in Evergreen but the first nine months were without public participation and key decisions were made. I think we're making a mistake for waiting until the next mayor.

>> And you get 30 seconds.

>> Cindy Chavez: Part of the reason we have to wait is we have a lot of groundwork to do in terms of putting lists and strategies to do the outreach. If we could do it quicker maybe that would be right process and it was a community process. Let me just say this about planning. I think planning is very important. And I think the idea of onot planning or stopping planning sells the city short long term and I hope that we continue to, whether it's in Evergreen or other communities that and Coyote Valley that we don't stop planning. In I'll direct this to Councilmember Chavez but it sort of goes to three sitting councilmembers. We've been hemorrhaging with our land use issues in San José for so many years. Why is it taking so long when general plan becomes sort of the new dialogue? When you've been criticized for many mayor decision making for land use what's taking so long and why now, for the general plan update?

>> Cindy Chavez: Well, let me respond to that. First of all, and in the downtown, I can speak to the area I know best, we have been since I've been in office very collaborative to come up with plans that are very for the most part come to us noncontroversial. That's very important. We have built a lot of different types of housing and businesses and we've done such a good job working in the community that we don't have a lot of people coming forward saying this isn't working. As it relates to the general plan I agree with you that that is something, I could have taken leadership on bringing forward to us earlier but I'm pleased to be doing that now.

>> Next question, Mr. Guzman of the strong neighborhoods pack.

>> Budget cuts have reduced enforcement staff. Until recently, there was no staff on call Saturday. And there was still no staff on Sunday. Violators know, weekends are the best time to engage in this

activity. How would you provide weekend enforcement when many of these violations occur?

>> Dave Cortese: Of course, code enforcement has been one of the casualties of budgets, we need to restore code enforcement services. But I think one of the best things that came out of the SNI process was doing code enforcement sweeps. You concentrate code enforcements in neighborhoods. I like those when the neighborhood is notified in advance that they're coming and when the neighborhood associations help welcome them in. They've been very, very successful. We need to be strategic with our budgeting. You can't do across the board cuts. It's not just code affected disproportionately in that area too. Even environmental review has been bottlenecked by across the code cuts. Complaint driven system, and put our resources there and not just say we're going to have two people covering the whole city or half the city.

>> First, I think staff has to be more multifunctional. On weekends, during the daytime it's not the busiest time for a police officer. I think a police officer in a free moment ought to be able to drive by and have a word. I'll tell you away, that will stop that. But we also have to take a new approach on code enforcement too. Something's wrong in a city where you can park at a parking meter for a few extra minutes and get a \$25 or a \$35 ticket but you can be a slumlord and have one of the worst properties in the city, and your punishment is getting a nasty letter from code enforcement. Code enforcement needs to have some teeth. They need to have fines. They need to give people the opportunity to do things. But once they generate these fines they're going to be able to pay for these kinds of things on the weekend. So I think that would be a good approach.

>> Chuck Reed: I forgot to welcome you to our new \$507 million City Hall. Isn't it beautiful? It's a wonderful place to have meetings where we can talk about cutting the code enforcement budget. Which is exactly what we do during the month of may. The debt service on this building is \$25 million next year. The operating cost is \$8 million. That's \$33 million. That's vastly more than the money we save by terminating leases. So we have money. We're spending it on the building. We don't have enough money to hire enough code enforcement officers. If you don't have enough code enforcement officers you're going to have poor code enforcement services. They work very hard but there's not enough of them. We need to add more money to the budget. Having somebody on Saturday and Sunday is important. The manager has proposed adding one position for Saturday code enforcement work. I think that's important for the neighbors to deal with weekends. But being fiscally responsible and not spending the money on other things. I knew it was going to cost us an extraordinarily large amount of money and it's going to come out of services to the neighborhoods and it has.

>> Dave Cortese: I just want to try to clarify the record on the City Hall vote. Councilmember Reed didn't vote -- he voted against this City Hall but he didn't propose not to build any City Hall. He sat with me in front of the downtown rotary club and said the worst thing we could possibly do is not replace the old City Hall and get people out of leased buildings. I don't know how he can say buying somebody else's building for 200 million or 300 million or however less it was wasn't going to put debt service on the table.

>> Mr. Reed you get 30 seconds.

>> Chuck Reed: There were several alternatives which I proposed which would have saved \$150 million plus interest. That would translate into probably six or \$7 million this year, that we wouldn't have to spend on the budget, for this building. There were other ways to do it. And the council voted, the council majority voted to go ahead and spend the money. Now it's \$507 million. That's how much we borrowed. We have to pay it back for interest. We will save some money in this building in about 38 years, we'll realize the savings.

>> Cindy Chavez: So back to code enforcement. I want to just acknowledge the importance of the question. Because as we have been working to rehabilitate and spruce up neighborhoods code

enforcement has been an incredible help to us. I'm excited we're moving back to weekend code enforcement but it's only one person. The thing that's important is as we grow the city back, I think that the council in advance of starting to get money back needs to plan for how we're going to grow back. And so here's what that means to me. If the city remains thinking that police and fire and public safety are the most important, then how are we going to grow those elements back? And I think code enforcement for me is part of that. The second thing we've asked staff to take a look at is increasing the fines for code enforcement. People can get \$250,000 worth of fines but when they know they can sell their home for so much more than that believe it or not that is still not a motivation. We have caps for how much that can increase up to and how long it takes to get to that benchmark. We are thinking of increasing those fines particularly for serious offenses so we have a little more leverage sooner.

>> Michael Mulcahy: Effective immediately, code enforcement will have an inspector available between 8:00 and 3:00. If you have a heritage tree you want to cut make sure you do it after 3:00. Those of you in the room that have witnessed these offenses there is not you can do on the weekend right now. But if you see a heritage tree getting cut, call the police. We need to find these people and fine them. And our police department should be empowered to be able to participate in that effort. As far as our neighborhoods are concerned, we've talked about -- we've empowered our neighborhood communities. We need to make sure that our neighborhood watch programs are developed so they can be inclusive of the code enforcement type of offenses. Slumlords don't do their business and go away, they're there all through week. We've got to make sure we have code enforcement officers who are empowered to go out and nail these people. We need to find them and fine them.

>> We have many other questions, unfortunately we know Mr. Reed is not the only one for a honey do list for today. We are starting with closing statements, with Ms. Chavez first.

>> Cindy Chavez: Let me thank all of you very much for being with us today. And I apologize that I'm going to need to leave in just a few minutes, because we are opening the Almaden library today. I -- you know, I've chosen to run for mayor because we've done such great work in the downtown. And I do believe that if we can continue to collaborate and -- that we're going to make new changes. Or better changes. Let me give you an example. Downtown San José we used redevelopment money to rebuild Horace Mann school. And the merger of the library, that began under Mayor Hammer. I know if we continue to work together we can make changes like that citywide. I am supported and endorsed by former Mayor Susan Hammer, Sheriff Lorie Smith, former Chief Lansdowne and Zoe Wheatley. The reason I share that with you is I've had a chance to work with these people and we've done important things for the city in moving the city forward. Those endorsements mean a lot to me. I have the endorsement of neighborhood leaders, I thank you because all the endorsements that one can receive the people you work with day in and day out is probably the best. I want to ask you for support. This is an important race for the City of San José. It's important for the future of this city. What will be different for me as mayor, than what's happening now, I think that we'll continue to expand our communication but not just communicate with people. Continue to meet those accomplishments that really change people's lives. And one of the most important, the city needs to take a leadership role in improving education in our valley because if we don't it will impact everything else we do. Thank you very much and I really appreciate all of you being here today.

>> Mr. Pandori, second.

>> David Pandori: Thank you. I don't think neighborhoods have gotten fair treatment by the city for the last eight years. It's nothing intentional that the council's done. But it's just the way its politics sometimes plays out. For instance, in the police budget it's gone up \$40 million. We don't have one new officer in the city. It's gone up \$40 million in the last five years. We have fewer officers than we had a few years

ago. That hurts neighborhoods. We've done bad planning, putting the cart before the horse, buying land for sausage plants and spending \$10 million for a ballpark, when we don't have team owners. That money could have gone into neighborhoods. We've spent money on grand prix. Of course the grand prix's a great event but we have more serious issues these days. Your garbage rates have been increased to meet the interest of some special groups here at the city. That money could have gone to something else. The list goes on and on. I want to focus, though, on the things that are going to shape the city's future for the long time to come. I believe in a better city, not just a bigger city. I want to preserve land for job growth and do good planning where we preserve the hill sides. Have a city blessed with open space and linked with parks. We can do that if we set the right budget priorities. I want to create a new agency that will seriously take on the growing problem of gangs in our community. We need to work differently, and we've lost our focus and priorities. I want to create a parks charter fund to link our creek trails together. We've done it at the county. We can do it here. And I want to create a savings plan different than this city has ever seen before. Where we save money for 25 years, we borrow so often from the city in bond issues, let's give back. 25 years, saving 1% of the General Fund, we can create a half a billion endowment for the neighborhoods of San José of the future.

>> Mr. Mulcahy.

>> Michael Mulcahy: Well, I'm a member of my local willow glen association as well as my business association down on Lincoln avenue. And one of the things that struck me in the last couple of weeks, as we've gone to neighborhood association meetings, including today, willow glen meeting last week, there's tremendous power. When we open up the government and put the reforms in place to make sure that our neighborhoods actually get the information that they need and want, there's tremendous power in giving them the ability to weigh in, to be creative innovative. As mayor of San José it is one of the most powerful tools I have is to look towards our neighborhoods in bringing them together. Now, this race comes down to a couple of key questions. Who's the best candidate to reform City Hall and who will be the strongest steward of San José's future? I don't think the best person is a politician. That's why I'm running. As most people who live in San José I'm very proud in San José. I was born and raised here, I'm raising my family here and I'm running my businesses here. But I'm not so proud of our city government right now. The politicians make decisions behind closed doors. They make excuses and they don't make the changes to reform City Hall. I want to change that. Because I think San José has an incredibly bright future but we've got to work together, clear the hurdles, make sure that government is open so that neighborhood associations have a role in shaping this you future. As mayor of San José I will use my collaborative leadership skills and change house business is done. Because it ain't going to be business as usual anymore. Thank you.

>> Mr. Reed.

>> Chuck Reed: Thank you all for coming on this sunny Saturday morning when you could be cleaning out your garage. I appreciate you being here. I'm running for mayor because I want San José to be the best place in the world to live, to work and to raise a family. And I'm been working on that vision for over 25 years in San José. Unfortunately we have some problems. Any time you have three independent investigations two grand jury investigations and a councilmember and a mayor are censured in a little over a year you know you have some trouble. That's why I focus my campaign on honesty fiscal responsibility and open government. If you want to see my record on those issues, they're in here in the Reed reformer. If you want to know what needs to be done in City Hall, check out the Reed reforms. Those are my proposals. Those are potholes, on the road to the future but eventually we will fix those and we will do that early next year. Then we have to look to the future. When you look to the future you have to consider our place in the world. We are the capital of Silicon Valley. The innovation center of

the world. What we do here is important and San José's role in Silicon Valley is important. We have changed the world for the better of hundreds of millions of people and I am not ready to sit back and say our best days are behind us. I think San José has to take an active leadership role in making sure that Silicon Valley gets better and brighter in the future. And there are two elements to that. There are many elements, let me talk about two. The first I mentioned earlier, we need to be the best place in the world to start and grow a business because we compete in a global economy. The other element is it is something we can do here to show the world how people of different races ethnicities, religions, can come together to work play and prosper where you consider the problems that bee set the world, racial and ethnic hatred is at the top of the list. We show the world how it can be done. Peace and prosperity, what can be better than that?

>> Mr. Cortese.

>> Dave Cortese: Thank you. I got into public service to help people and I still believe that's the only reason to do it now. You certainly don't do it for income or job security, at least I don't. It's cost me a lot of income to become a public servant. I've accepted that and come in with my eyes wide open. I have no intention to run for higher office after being the best mayor San José can possibly have and I think that's very, very important for the next mayor of San José, to do this job, do it right and not be worried about what people think in Orange County or somewhere else in the region. What people are you going to help? That's the real question. It's the people in this room and I always believe that the next mayor of San José should be focused on. I fought hard on ethics issues. I thought our residents were being short changed, that is still happening and we need to fix that. I fought hard in my own district as you heard about, to maybe sure neighborhoods are empowered and heard. I fought with this council to try to keep 15 neighborhood leaders from being kicked off from the Evergreen task force and be replaced by developers. I lost that battle. I fought hard as a school trustee for eight years to make sure that mentoring problems and student achievement and school safety were issues that were being addressed and arts in our schools and I've continued my education efforts as a councilmember. I fought hard as a regional leader as the president of the association of Bay Area governments to make sure that housing and transportation planning are linked up. Difficult battles at that level but that's what I want to keep doing for you. That's why I'm asking for your support. I would gladly accept whatever challenges this job presents, to get the opportunity to help you and to serve you as mayor of San José.

>> And we'll thank all of the candidates. We know your time is very valuable and you have other things going on as well. Thank you for coming in and giving all these folks and the folks that are watching on NBC11.com to make wise decisions. I thank the panelists, Barbara marshman, Tom Clifton, Ernest Guzman and Trixie Johnson, league of women voters, also our timekeeper Lynn Caruso. Did a great job didn't she? And our sponsors are the same organizations, United neighborhoods of Santa Clara County, league of women voters, San José Mercury News and NBC11.com. A reminder, our questions came from the citizens of San José and we were only able to get to a handful of them today. But we are going to forward all of your questions to the candidates so they know what the most important issues are to you. Thanks for coming out today. Thanks for clicking on NBC11.com. Hope you bet all your anchors done this afternoon. Have a good day.

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