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Mayor Sam Liccardo Announces Council Appointments

SAN JOSE – Mayor Sam Liccardo has named several councilmembers—including three who did not support his mayoral election—to chair the San José City Council’s five standing committees. He is also expanding the size of each committee to the maximum allowed under state law, so that more Council members can be involved in critical policy work.

“If we’re going to solve the critical issues our city faces, we need to encourage public discussion of the very best ideas, not merely those ideas that appear politically comfortable.” Liccardo said. “That’s why I’ve assigned chairperson roles based on expertise in the issues, not political alliances.”

The City Council will vote Tuesday to approve Mayor Liccardo’s 2015-2016 appointments to City Council Committees, as well as ratifying appointments to various Boards and Commissions.

“I look forward to seeing the creativity and initiatives that emerge from these committees,” Mayor Liccardo said. “We won’t always agree on solutions and strategies, but we are all committed to making San José the best city it can be.”

2015-2016 Committee Appointments

Neighborhood Services and Education: Councilmember Donald Rocha (District 9, Cambrian), a former board member of the Cambrian School District, will chair the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee, with Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco (District 5, East San José) as vice chair. Carrasco formerly served on the East Side Union High School District board. Councilmembers Tam Nguyen (District 7, Southeast San José) and Raul Peralez (District 3, Downtown), and Interim Councilmember Margie Matthews (District 4, North San José, Berryessa, Alviso) round out the committee. Both Matthews and Peralez have experience as educators.

Transportation and Environment: Councilmember Ash Kalra (District 2, South San José/Blossom Valley) will chair the Transportation and Environment Committee. Kalra just completed a term as board chair for the Valley Transportation Authority. Nguyen will serve as vice chair. Committee members will be Councilmembers Rocha, Matthews, and Rose Herrera (District 8, Evergreen); all have served on the committee and VTA board previously.

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Public Safety, Finance, and Strategic Support: Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio (District 6, Rose Garden/Willow Glen) will chair the Public Safety, Finance, and Strategic Support Committee. He has served on this committee for several years. Councilmember Peralez, a former San José police officer, will serve as vice chair. Committee members will be Councilmembers Carrasco, Charles “Chappie” Jones (District 1, West San José), and Johnny Khamis (District 10, Almaden).

Community and Economic Development: Councilmember Khamis will chair the Community and Economic Development Committee, with Councilmember Jones as vice chair. Prior to election to the Council, Khamis and Jones both served on the Small Business Development Commission. Members will be Councilmembers Oliverio and Kalra, both previous members of the committee, and Herrera, a previous chair and vice chair.

Rules and Open Government: As has been customary, Mayor Liccardo will chair the Rules and Open Government Committee. Members will be Councilmembers Carrasco, Herrera, Jones, and Khamis.

Key appointments to boards and commissions include:

- Association of Bay Area Governments: Carrasco, Jones, and Rocha, board members; Herrera, Nguyen, and Kalra, alternates
- Caltrain Joint Powers Board: Kalra
- Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force: Liccardo, chair; Herrera and Peralez, members
- Schools/City Collaborative: Liccardo, Carrasco, and Rocha
- Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority: Carrasco, Herrera, Kalra, Khamis, and Liccardo, board members; Peralez, alternate

The memo outlining the appointments, released Friday, January 2, is online here: <http://sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/38796>.

These appointments continue Mayor Liccardo’s pattern of working to build bridges with those who did not support his election, including:

- Appointing several individuals who endorsed his opponent to his Transition Committee.
- Inviting the leaders of every city union to meet with him, and meeting with more than a dozen union leaders already, including the leadership of the San José Police Officers Association.
- Meeting with the leadership of the South Bay Labor Council immediately after the election.
- Prioritizing negotiation with the POA, Local 230, and other employee unions over Measure B pension reforms. (Note: the Mayor’s proposal will be heard at the Rules and Open Government Committee meeting on Wednesday. See memo: <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/38785>.)
- Deferring the investigation into the POA’s alleged role in undermining police recruitment (memo: <http://sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/37158>).
- Recommending the appointment of an interim councilmember in District 4, Margie Matthews, who had received labor backing in both of her prior elections.

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