

# Citizens for Fiscal Responsibility

6490 Camelia Drive  
San Jose, CA 95120  
www.cfr-sj.org



## San Jose Mayor and City Council Candidate Ratings

November 4, 2014 General Election  
[Decision Matrix Method]

Citizens for Fiscal Responsibility (CFR) believes that our elected representatives should be obsessive about keeping San Jose on a sustainable financial path so that we can fulfill our long term commitments, improve the effectiveness of city government, and restore services that are essential to all San Joseans, services that we all deserve and that will enhance our quality of life.

To that end, our members have ranked the remaining Council and Mayoral candidates according to how closely they are aligned with our objectives. The ranking is on a scale of 1 to 100, with 100 being most closely aligned.

<u>Mayor</u>					
		Liccardo*	62		
		Cortese	45		
<u>District 1</u>		<u>District 3</u>		<u>District 7</u>	
Jones*	70	Gagliardi*	85	Esparza	N/A
Fong	24	Perealez	42	Nguyen	N/A
* = returned questionnaire		N/A = insufficient information for rating			

Our city is in a massive financial hole, with at least \$12 billion and potentially as much as \$15 billion of long term debt. Topping the list is our outstanding debt: San Jose has over \$5 billion of obligations outstanding, costing the city around \$350 million per year in debt service. Deferred maintenance (costs that the city has neglected to spend on maintaining the infrastructure crucial to our quality of life) totals about \$3 billion: an estimated \$2 billion for our waste treatment facility, and \$1 billion for street repair and maintenance. Finally, unfunded retiree obligations include an estimated \$2 billion shortfall in our pension funds, and nearly \$2 billion more for retiree health care. Adding to the “official” shortfall in retiree accounts, a more prudent assumed rate of return on invested pension assets increases the unfunded pension liability by nearly \$2 billion (Joe Nation, Shrinking Services: Public Pension Costs and Their Impacts on San Jose, Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research, 12/14/11). Add this all up and, as of this moment, every man, woman and child in the city of San Jose needs to pony up nearly \$15,000 to close the gap.

CFR’s rating methodology measures candidates relative to traits that we believe are critical to responsibly dealing with San Jose’s financial obligations: independence, leadership, fiscal responsibility, trustworthiness, communication skills, business experience, knowledge of city government and issues, history of civic involvement, private sector support, stewardship and public service attitude, and understanding of the proper role and limits of government. We do not consider party affiliation or positions on social issues in determining our candidate ratings. We share our analysis to help the voting public decide which candidates are most likely to be aligned with the goal of a fiscally responsible and sustainable city government.

We base our ratings on responses to our questionnaire, reviews of candidate web sites, voting records, available campaign materials and our members’ personal knowledge of and experience with the candidates. Our members independently grade candidates using the following three point scale: 1 (little or

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no alignment with our objectives), 3 (some alignment), and 8 (highly aligned). We consolidate members' ratings, then normalize the totals so that a candidate who is highly aligned across all members for all eleven traits, a "perfect score" so to speak, would receive a rating of 100. The higher the index, the more aligned we believe a candidate is to our objectives. For a more thorough explanation of this methodology, and for more information about Citizens for Fiscal Responsibility, please visit [www.CFR-SJ.org](http://www.CFR-SJ.org).

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