

# MODESTO CITY COUNCIL, DISTRICT 1

## Question 1) What are your Qualifications?

### Joel Campos – Candidate

I currently work as a Senior Regional Planner at the San Joaquin Council of Governments, managing both formula and discretionary state and federal transportation funding programs. I also help administer the local Measure K sale tax for transit and bike/ped funding programs. I serve as the Chair of the Stanislaus Union School District, Measure Y Bond Citizens Oversight Committee, and a member of the Modesto Equity Commission and Modesto VFW Post 3199. I have a Master's in Urban and Regional Planning from San Jose State University, and have been serving in the CA Army National Guard for over 12 years.

### Rosa Escutia-Braaton – Incumbent

I was elected to the City Council to represent District 1 in 2020. Prior to serving on the Council, I spent 25 years in the public and private sectors, including as a gubernatorial appointment under two administrations. I later served on the Modesto Planning Commission for 7 years. I ran for Council because I wanted to find solutions to the problems facing our city. Together, we have made significant progress and I want to continue that momentum for another 4 years.

### John Gunderson – Candidate

Board of Governors, Stanislaus Union School District 2009–11. Modesto City Council, District One 2011–15. Guest teacher various school districts within Stanislaus County, mostly MCS (21 years and continuing). Three seasons of National Park Service. Weld shop, backhoe service, retail nursery, landlord, handyman in Mariposa County approximately 24 years.

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## Question 2) What Would be your top priorities?

### Joel Campos – Candidate

My top priorities are securing funding for infrastructure projects, keeping homeless people accountable, and supporting economic growth and development.

### Rosa Escutia-Braaton – Incumbent

I will continue to be a strong advocate for our public safety sector. We must have a city where all residents feel safe in their homes, schools and workplaces. That will continue to be my number 1 priority. Economic development and housing will also be top priorities. Our City is currently developing an economic development strategic plan and we are also updating our General Plan. I want to use these processes as a way to get robust public feedback about the direction of our city for our economic sector and future growth. On housing, I am committed to adding housing that is affordable and attainable to all residents of Modesto, from permanent supportive housing, affordable housing, workforce housing, and market rate.

### John Gunderson – Candidate

Introducing new ideas on how to shelter the most marginalized of the unsheltered. Modesto City Schools has expressed interest in constructing micro shelters in their building trades program. I am in contact with them. Would like to see signage for the John Muir Yosemite Historic Highway. This moniker was adopted by County and cities a number of years ago, still no signage for this low hanging fruit. May continue with vegetation management on the Tuolumne River during the cooler months. Would like to focus some on star thistle, puncture vine, tumbleweed, Arundo and any other invasive species. Have some ideas for that.

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**Question 3) How do you evaluate the impact to business when making voting decisions?**

## Joel Campos – Candidate

When making voting decisions, I would evaluate whether my vote streamlines business opportunities within the City for the private sector, and/or offers more work opportunities to publicly employed labor, without burdening the constrained city budget.

## Rosa Escutia-Braaton – Incumbent

Whenever I am voting on an issue, I think about the potential ramifications for all of my constituents. During my time in office, I have consistently sought feedback from constituents, community leaders, and local business leaders. A thriving business sector is fundamental to having a vibrant city. Our business sector forms a portion of our tax base, is the source of employment for our residents, and an important part of our city's identity. If reelected, I will continue to have an open door policy and hope to continue collaborating with local business representatives to improve the economic outlook for the City of Modesto.

## John Gunderson – Candidate

I am concerned about anything that increases costs for businesses. Necessary to analyze the parameters of the agenda item and understand how it will affect business. I would listen to the business community's concerns and have them explain their point of view. I am sensitive to the cost of doing business in California and understand the problem in the macro sense. Anything I can do to make Modesto attractive for business is a priority. Addressing the unsheltered issue effectively would do wonders.

# MODESTO CITY COUNCIL, DISTRICT 1

**Question 4) What are your plans to make government more transparent, responsive, and effective?**

## Joel Campos – Candidate

I plan to encourage more opportunities for community engagement, whether it be through apps, meetings, or my own personal efforts. In my opinion, the city only hears from a small very informed group of people.

Furthermore, on the Equity Commission, I am actively requesting that city staff evaluate where the members of city boards and commissions live, not just what those members look like. I think it's important to have representation from all sides of the city, and in order to do that we first need to review where committee members reside. Geographic equity is important to me.

## Rosa Escutia-Braaton – Incumbent

I am deeply committed to transparent and effective government. One example of that is the City's Forward Together Initiative. We came to a point where there had been a breakdown in trust between local law enforcement and community groups. I fully supported and was very involved in the creation of the initiative, bringing together community stakeholders and law enforcement to restore trust. It led to the creation of our Community Police Review Board and hiring of an independent police auditor. I support taking approaches like this, which bring together community and government to solve problems. We also instituted a Measure H Oversight Board as part of the Measure H initiative. I firmly believe that government officials work for the people and need to ensure that community voices are integrated into all the work we do.

## John Gunderson – Candidate

During my time on Council, I used FaceBook to inform on much of what Council was doing. I scanned and posted documents often, explained what they were about and elaborated on the details. These posts still exist in photos and on the wall. I used FaceBook to organize volunteer days on TRRP for vegetation management events.

We move many tons of material. I use YouTube to further document as needed. The effort for shelter would be covered thoroughly. I am good at responding to emails, messaging answering phone calls and accepting/arranging meetings. I was very active in communications. Sometimes folks would approach me with a specific problem and I would do my best to help them. Part of the job and I have the time to do it.



# MODESTO CITY COUNCIL, DISTRICT 1

**Question 5) Is the organization for which you seek office operating with a balanced budget? If not, what are your plans to make the organization more sustainable?**

## Joel Campos – Candidate

My top priorities are securing funding for infrastructure projects, keeping homeless people accountable, and supporting economic growth and development.

## Rosa Escutia-Braaton – Incumbent

When I was first elected to the Modesto City Council, our City was facing a significant budget deficit and looming cuts to public safety. I supported the passage of Measure H and it has been a game changer for our city. We have been able to close the budget deficit, reinvest in our public safety programs, and invest in deferred maintenance across the city. I remain committed to making sound financial decisions moving forward to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and that the City's budget is sustainable.

## John Gunderson – Candidate

To the best of my knowledge, City of Modesto is not under any budgetary angst. When I served, we were coming out of the Great Recession and yes, there was plenty of suffering to go around. I along with other school board members rified teachers and tightened the belt wherever possible. When I came to Council, it was a similar story. Modesto was considering closing a fire station. I opposed that, didn't happen but Council did look for ways to trim. Believe hours were reduced for many on staff. I am able to go through it again if necessary.

Looking for revenue should be on the mind of every Council member. Part of the job. We're about as far as we can go on Sales tax. I am not supportive of any increases there. Not interested in any add ons to property taxes, increases in any fees. If any increases for any tax or fee is proposed by the managers, would study it for impacts and probably oppose. WE are taxed enough. Applying pressure to commercial properties that are habitually vacant is worthy of consideration.

One of the best ways to grow revenue is to attract shoppers, tourists (much can done for that) and nurture housing in the form of apartments and condos at this point. I am definitely supportive of affordable housing.

Thank you for the opportunity to make my views known,  
John Lane Gunderson