

October 10, 2024

Dear Chamber Members and Partners:

Before I get into the substance of this month's CEO Memo, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the devastating impacts of the recent weather events on the eastern coast of the country. With back-to-back natural disasters, communities, businesses and families are being devastated in ways that is almost beyond our ability to comprehend. I know that you all join me in sending thoughts of hope to those impacted and in supporting organizations that will help those families, businesses and communities recover in the days, months and years ahead.

This string of events comes at a critical time in our national and local conversations on issues such as climate resilience, government preparedness and response and business partnership for economic development, housing growth and strong transportation systems to build and support sustainable communities.

As the national and local elections draw closer, with just 26 days until the polls close on November 5, determining who will lead our nation and represent us in Congress and who will carry our voices and be our advocates in Sacramento, at the county building and in city halls in San Mateo County is critical to us mapping out a healthy and prosperous future.

In addition to the issues that continue to drive national headlines, it is important to recognize that locally *BUSINESS IS ON THE BALLOT*. I mean this both literally and figuratively. In Redwood City and Belmont, there are ballot measures relating to business license taxes on the ballot. I gave a full update on these measures in my July Memo, which you can access [here](#). I also mean that as we evaluate the credentials and positions of candidates, their respective approaches to partnering with businesses to create and sustain economic development in our cities and throughout our county matter. One candidate can shape the trajectory of a governing body, and understanding a candidate's priorities and approach to governance is important to the Chamber.

To assist our more than 1,500 members in learning more about the candidates for office this year, and where candidates stand on issues that impact business and are important to our community, Chamber San Mateo County has launched a two-pronged voter education program: Hosting candidate forums through our Good Morning, San Mateo County! program and publishing a Candidate Information Guide.

Chamber San Mateo County does not endorse or financially support any candidate for any elective office. Our goal with this voter education program is to ensure that Chamber members have access to information as they evaluate candidates before they cast their ballots.

Over the course of the last two weeks, the Chamber has hosted a series of five forums for candidates for contested races on the Board of Supervisors (District 4) and the city councils

of Belmont, Menlo Park, Redwood City and San Carlos. Candidates for all of those offices were invited to participate, however, not all participated. You can view the recordings of these candidate forums by accessing the links below:

- [San Mateo County Board of Supervisors - District 4 Candidate Forum](#)
- [Belmont City Council Candidate Forum](#)
- [Menlo Park City Council Candidate Forum](#)
- [Redwood City Council Candidate Forum](#)
- [San Carlos City Council Candidate Forum](#)

The Chamber is also publishing its first-ever Candidate Information Guide, which can be accessed [here](#). This non-partisan, informational tool is designed to provide our Chamber members with additional details about how candidates will approach their work if elected. We, again, invited all candidates to participate in this Guide, however, not all participated. The responses by candidates are presented as submitted by the candidates and have not been altered (except in cases to conform to word limit requirements).

Being part of a campaign is no easy undertaking, and we thank those individuals who offer themselves in service to our community as candidates for public office. Assuming an elected position is a sacred role with immense responsibility, and the Chamber is optimistic that candidates are attentive to this duty as they work to share their visions, values and qualifications with voters. And while we applaud all candidates for entering the arena of public service, it is important for Chamber members to be mindful that not all candidates share the same vision for our future. Elections have consequences, and we must all understand the potential impacts of our votes not only for ourselves and our businesses, but for our community, state and nation as well.

We hope you find these candidate forums and information guide to be useful resources as you fulfill your civic duty and vote in this upcoming election. The participation of all of our citizens in choosing our elected leaders who will provide a vision and the leadership for our future and model behaviors of which we can be proud is our key responsibility as voters and citizens.

Thank you for doing your part!

All my best,

