



# CITY OF SANTA CLARA A COUNCIL OF TRUST PRINCIPLES, NORMS, STANDARDS, AND BEST PRACTICES



*Approved by City Council August 20, 2002, Updated August 31, 2010*

At the Monday, July 29, 2002, Special Meeting on "Managing Change," the Council discussed managing change brought about by the implementation of *The Code of Ethics and Values*. The Council's goal was to draft a set of norms to guide those running for elected office. By the end of the session, the Council had described "running for office and living our values" as looking like:

## 1. Following These Guiding Principles

- Look at the law and also at "the right thing to do."
- Hold yourself and each other to the higher standard.
- Honor the common good. Represent community.
- Separate role as Council member from role as candidate. Honor your role as a Council member. Act as a member of the Council Team.
- Assume all are here for service of city.
- Think strategically. Educate.
- Communicate consistently that ethics is upfront in this campaign.

## 2. Using These Specific Norms and Standards

- Don't jump to conclusions.
- Avoid finger-pointing.
- Stick to the issues.
- Tell the truth. Don't mislead.
- Rely on facts and interpret them as fairly as you can.
- Avoid impression of representing city, overstating our contributions.
- Don't assume you know someone else's motive. Attribute positive motive of service to community.
- Treat others with respect. Golden Rule ("Treat others as you would want to be treated." Alternately: "What you do not wish done to yourself, do not do to others.")
- Respect the process.
- Respect City resources

## 3. Adopting These Best Practices

- Wait. Get Facts.
- Talk to each other. Go directly to the other person. Discuss.
- Arrive at ground-rules with your opponents beforehand, if at all possible.
- Communicate your ethics clearly ahead of time to your staff and workers.
- Make clear to all supporters and Third Parties how you're running your campaign and what you'll do if anyone distorts that or attacks an opponent in an unethical manner.
- Appoint and empower a campaign staff conscience to help when time is short and stressed.
- Ask the ethics questions by habit: Use the decision-making tool, and especially ask: How does this decision advance the City's values in best practice? What ethics reasons make this the right thing to do?
- Use ethics language to explain your decisions.
- Have something written stand "the test of time."
- Maintain a sense of humor. Take the responsibility of the office seriously – don't take yourself too seriously.
- Be able to look at yourself in the mirror at the end of the day...and set a high standard for what we want to see.

The Council agreed that these practices would create behavior that they would trust, thus the "Council of Trust".

On August 31, 2010, the City Council approved the following additions to *A Council of Trust*:

**GOOD GOVERNMENT GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

*We foster public trust when we:*

- 1. Honor the spirit and the letter of the law.**
- 2. Treat everyone equitably and respectfully.**
- 3. Do the greatest good and the least harm.**
- 4. Impose the lightest burden possible.**
- 5. Fulfill our duties and protect personal rights.**
- 6. Act only in the community's best interests, guided by the City's *Code of Ethics & Values*.**



**City of Santa Clara**

*At Our Best Every Day For Public Trust*

ETHICAL • PROFESSIONAL • SERVICE-ORIENTED • FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE • ORGANIZED • COMMUNICATIVE • COLLABORATIVE • PROGRESSIVE

*Council of Trust Vision Statement*

As a Council of Trust, we pledge to conduct and support campaigns which increase public participation and public trust. We will inspire high voter registration and large turn-out by a *Vote Ethics* public engaged in the issues, evaluating candidate conduct, and continuing to participate after the election.