

**Study Session**

**Item #4 - FY 2021/22 &  
FY 2022/23 Biennial  
Operating Budget  
and  
FY 2021/22 Municipal Fee  
Schedule**

**May 25, 2021**

## **Agenda – A Recovery Budget**

- Fiscal Update
- FY 2021/22 & FY 2022/23 Proposed Operating Budget
- Revenue Opportunities
  - Municipal Fee Schedule
  - Ballot Measures / Business Tax
- Next Steps
  - Study Sessions / Budget Adoption
  - Council Priority Matrix Check In

# Fiscal Update

3

## Fiscal Outlook

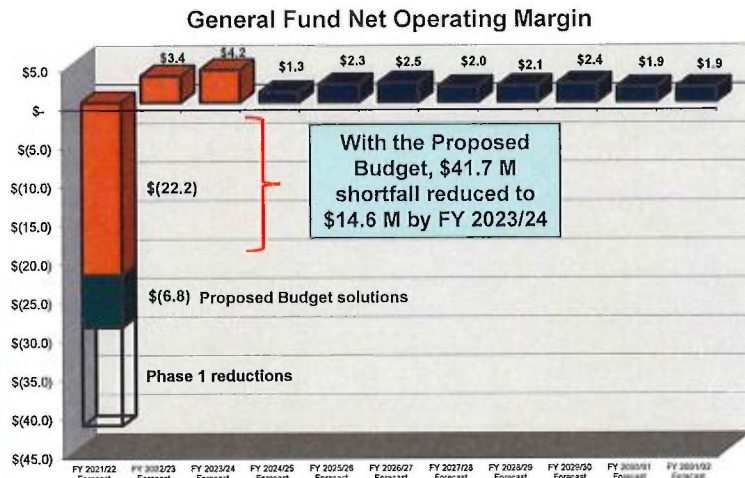


- COVID-19 spurred the abrupt end to the longest economic expansion in U.S. history
- Record breaking increases in unemployment and declines in economic activity in 2020
- Uneven impacts across sectors
- Response and Recovery require well-paced and strategic decisions
- Robust economic growth and recovery expected in 2021

4

## Revised General Fund Forecast \$29 M Deficit after Phase 1 Reductions

- 30% of shortfall addressed with Phase 1 reductions approved in March 2021
- Economic conditions expected to improve in 2021 with vaccine roll out and greater degree of normal activity
- Assumes ongoing reductions and recovery of some revenue
- Strategies to address remaining \$14.6 M include ballot measure and potential labor



## Phase 2 – Budget Balancing for FY 2021/22 and Ongoing Forecast

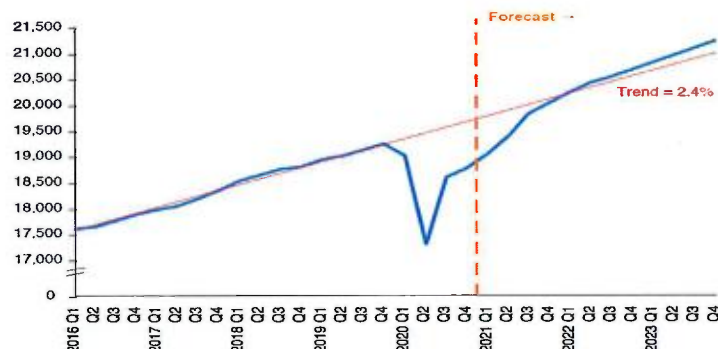
### General Fund Forecast Timeline – COVID – 19 Induced Impact

	January 2020 Forecast	April 2020 Forecast	January 2021 Forecast	April 2021 (With Phase 1)	Ongoing Shortfall w/Proposed Actions
General Fund Shortfall	(\$13 M)	(\$34 M)	(\$42 M)	(\$29 M)	(\$14.6 M)



## Economic Conditions Improving Strong GDP Growth Expected

Real GDP, Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rates (\$ Billions)

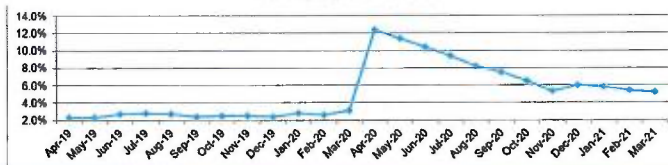


Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis and UCLA Anderson Forecast  
Notes: Pre-pandemic trend line shown in light red.

## Unemployment Rate Down Regional Unemployment Outperforming Nation and State

- National unemployment was 6.0% in March 2021, well below the high of 14.7% in April 2020 but 2.5 percentage points higher than the pre-pandemic level of 3.5% in February 2020
- After the State's largest increase in the unemployment rate in April 2020, the California unemployment rate dropped to 8.3% by March 2021
- California has regained nearly 44% of the 2.7 million jobs lost due to COVID-19 in March and April 2020
- Regional unadjusted unemployment rate was 5.2% in March 2021, well above the pre-COVID level of 2.6% in Feb 2020
- Employment dropped 80,000 jobs (6.9%) between March 2020 and March 2021 with largest declines in leisure and hospitality, private education and health services, and government

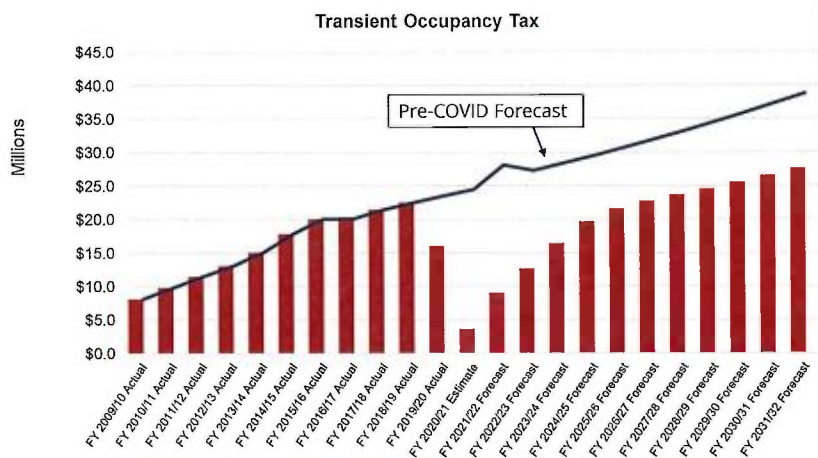
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara Metropolitan Statistical Area  
Unemployment Rate





## Transient Occupancy Tax

- The hotel industry is one of the most heavily impacted sectors and the decline has significantly impacted TOT revenues (down 87%)
- Forecasters expect improvement in second half of 2021; CBRE forecasts a return to 2019 levels in 2024
- Gains are expected to vary by market with business cities and those relying on international travel with the lowest gains
- Santa Clara projected to reach pre-COVID levels by 2026



## Transient Occupancy Tax Increase Direction

Transient Occupancy Tax Scenarios				
	4%	3%	2%	1%
Pre-Covid-19	\$7.0 M	\$5.25 M	\$3.5 M	\$1.75 M
Using FY 2021/22 Projections	\$3.4 M	\$2.6 M	<b>\$1.7 M</b>	\$860 k

Transient Occupancy Tax by City	
City	Rate
Gilroy	9.0%
<b>Santa Clara (w/o CFD)</b>	<b>9.5%</b>
Saratoga	10.0%
Fremont	10.0%
Mountain View	10.0%
San Jose	10.0%
Morgan Hill	11.0%
Los Altos	12.0%
Campbell	12.0%
Cupertino	12.0%
Los Gatos	12.0%
Sunnyvale	12.5%
Milpitas	14.0%
Palo Alto	15.5%

Ten-Year Forecast assumes a 2% increase.  
Recommend January 1, 2022 implementation

### Measure E Ballot Language:

*"To maintain and protect the level of essential city services including 9-1-1 emergency medical/disaster preparedness, police and fire protection, bicycle and pedestrian safety, roadways and storm drains and other vital services including parks, recreation, libraries and senior services, shall a measure increasing the hotel rate up to 4%, generating up to 7 million dollars annually, paid only by hotel/motel guests, until ended by voters, be adopted?"*

Passed with 73.57% voter approval

## FY 2021/22 & FY 2022/23 Proposed Operating Budget



## Proposed Budget Overview

- COVID-19 induced General Fund shortfall of \$29 million addressed in Proposed Budget
- Combination of new revenues, expenditure reductions and use of reserves
- Balance competing goals of aligning ongoing revenues and expenditures and minimizing service delivery impacts to the community
- Phase 2 of budget balancing efforts (Phase 1 approved March 9, 2021) as part of incremental strategy
- Core essential City services will remain high
- Collaboration with all City departments



## Proposed Budget Overview

- Judicious use of one-time solutions as economic conditions are expected to improve
- Federal stimulus funds are a key component of the balancing strategy:
  - Allows time to monitor the rate of economic recovery and its impact on City revenues
  - Address the General Fund shortfall without needlessly making more significant budget and service reductions
- Use of Budget Stabilization Reserve (\$17.5M) and Land Sale Reserve (\$3.2 M) over two-year period

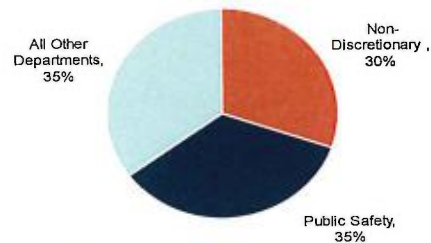
### Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund

“(C) for the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue of such metropolitan city, nonentitlement unit of local government, or county due to the COVID-19 public health emergency relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year of the metropolitan city, nonentitlement unit of local government, or county prior to the emergency”

## Proposed Budget Overview

- Phase 2 General Fund budget balancing actions
  - Elimination of 17.0 Positions
  - No layoffs
  - Ongoing reduction of \$5.0 million
- Phase 1 and 2 Proposals
  - Elimination of 60.5 Positions
  - Ongoing reduction of \$18.0 million
  - Addresses 43% of ongoing budget shortfall
  - Eliminates approximately 10% of discretionary budget

FY 2020/21 General Fund Budget



### Non-Discretionary (30% of Budget)

- Retirement unfunded liability
- Council Appointees / Elected Officials
- Revenue backed
- Mandated
- Insurance
- Debt payments

## Proposed Budget Overview



### Potential Future Budget Balancing Strategies

- Increase Cost Recovery of Fees
  - Develop policy for subsidies of programs that provide highest community benefit
  - Parks and Recreation focus (\$12 M current subsidy)
  - \$500K assumed in Year 2 of balancing strategy
- Tax Measures
- Other Cost Reductions



## Proposed Budget Overview

FY 2021/22 and FY 2022/23 Proposed Budget			
Fund Type	FY 2020/21 Adopted Budget	FY 2021/22 Proposed Budget	FY 2022/23 Proposed Budget
General Fund	\$ 285,968,205	\$ 282,561,469	\$ 261,431,495
Special Revenue Funds	22,709,200	28,214,477	28,201,923
Enterprise Funds	693,847,310	670,175,848	784,562,413
Internal Service Funds	37,533,057	41,211,645	39,254,113
Debt/Other	17,263,562	39,291,994	19,847,647
Less (Transfers, Contributions, and Reserves)*	(210,359,204)	(178,378,596)	(205,298,512)
<b>Subtotal Operating Budget</b>	<b>\$ 846,962,130</b>	<b>\$ 883,076,837</b>	<b>\$ 927,999,079</b>
Capital Funds	342,174,078	124,900,686	100,712,350
Less (Transfers, Contributions, and Reserves)*	(3,986,654)	(6,682,539)	0
<b>Total Capital Budget</b>	<b>\$ 338,187,424</b>	<b>\$ 118,218,147</b>	<b>\$ 100,712,350</b>
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$ 1,185,149,554</b>	<b>\$ 1,001,294,984</b>	<b>\$ 1,028,711,429</b>

\* Adjusts for transfers, contributions and reserves to avoid double counting of the same funds (e.g., internal service funds are excluded)



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

17

## Summary of Funded Position Changes

Summary of Position Changes (All Funds)	
<b>FY 2020/21 Budget</b>	<b>1,151.50</b>
Base Budget Changes (funding of Related positions)	(2.00)
Phase 1 Funded Position Reductions (Approved March 9, 2021)	(43.50)
FY 2021/22 Phase 2 General Fund Reductions	(17.00)
FY 2021/22 Proposed Position Adds (SVP and Building Fee Funded)	5.00
<b>FY 2021/22 Budgeted Positions</b>	<b>1,094.00</b>
FY 2022/23 Proposed Net Additional Positions	0.00
<b>FY 2022/23 Budgeted Positions</b>	<b>1,094.00</b>



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

18

## Summary of Funded Positions by Department

Department	FY 2020/21 Adopted	2021/22 Base/ Phase 1 Changes	2021/22 Proposed / Phase 2 Changes	FY 2021/22 Proposed	FY 2022/23 Proposed
Mayor and City Council	9.00	0.00	0.00	9.00	9.00
City Attorney	8.00	(1.00)	1.00	8.00	8.00
City Auditor	3.33	(0.33)	0.00	3.00	3.00
City Clerk	7.00	(1.00)	0.00	6.00	6.00
City Manager/Non-Departmental	24.00	(5.00)	0.00	19.00	19.00
Community Development	68.75	(0.75)	4.00	72.00	72.00
Electric Utility*	198.00	0.00	0.00	198.00	198.00
Finance	69.42	(0.67)	0.00	68.75	68.75
Fire	168.25	(13.75)	0.00	154.50	154.50
Human Resources	15.75	0.00	(1.75)	14.00	14.00
Information Technology	7.00	0.00	(1.00)	6.00	6.00
Library	46.75	0.00	(4.25)	42.50	42.50
Parks and Recreation	82.75	(4.00)	(2.00)	76.75	76.75
Police	239.00	(15.00)	(3.00)	221.00	221.00
Public Works	131.50	(4.00)	(5.00)	122.50	122.50
Water and Sewer Utilities	73.00	0.00	0.00	73.00	73.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,151.50</b>	<b>(45.50)</b>	<b>(12.00)</b>	<b>1,094.00</b>	<b>1,094.00</b>

\* SVP Electric Utility will submit position changes separately to align with the growth plan strategy and new substation agreements.



**City of Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

19

## General Fund Budget Balancing

- \$29 M shortfall in FY 2021/22 addressed with ongoing (\$6.3 M) and one-time (\$22.7 M) solutions
- Federal stimulus funds key to budget balancing: allows more time for economic recovery and avoids more significant service reductions
- \$14.6 M shortfall would remain to be addressed with continued work over next several years

	FY 2021/22	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24
<b>Forecast (Shortfall)/Surplus</b>			
(Factors in Phase 1 Budget Reductions of \$12.7 M)	(\$29.0 M)	\$3.4 M	\$4.2 M
<b>Carried Over Deficit from Prior Year</b>			
(Due to Use of One-Time Solutions)		(\$22.7 M)	(\$18.8 M)
<b>Ongoing Actions</b>			
Proposed Budget Expenditure Changes	\$5.0 M		
Proposed Budget Revenues	\$1.3 M	\$0.5 M	
<b>Total Proposed Budget Ongoing Solutions</b>	<b>\$6.3 M</b>	<b>\$0.5 M</b>	
<b>Remaining Shortfall After Ongoing Solutions</b>	<b>(\$22.7 M)</b>	<b>(\$18.8 M)</b>	<b>(\$14.6 M)</b>
<b>One-Time Actions</b>			
Transfer to the Special Liability Fund	(\$5.2 M)		
Federal Stimulus Funding	\$25.9 M		
Budget Stabilization Reserve	\$1.9 M	\$15.6 M	
Land Sale Reserve		\$3.2 M	
One-Time Expenditure Reductions/Other Adj	\$0.1 M		
<b>Total Proposed Budget One-Time Solutions</b>	<b>\$22.7 M</b>	<b>\$18.8 M</b>	
<b>Remaining Budget Shortfall/Surplus</b>	<b>\$0.0 M</b>	<b>\$0.0 M</b>	<b>(\$14.6 M)</b>



**City of Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

20

## General Fund Budget Balancing

Department	Phase 1 Proposals (March 2021)	Proposed Budget (Phase 2) Proposals	Total Phase 1 and 2 Proposals	% of Discretionary Budget
Mayor and City Council	(\$0.02 M)	(\$0.00 M)	(\$0.02 M)	(16.8%)
City Attorney	(\$0.14 M)	(\$0.00 M)	(\$0.14 M)	(11.1%)
City Clerk	(\$0.19 M)	(\$0.00 M)	(\$0.19 M)	(16.7%)
City Manager/ Non-Departmental	(\$1.88 M)	(\$0.03 M)	(\$1.91 M)	(12.7%)
Community Development	(\$0.31 M)	(\$0.27 M)	(\$0.58 M)	(19.7%)
Finance/Auditor	(\$0.30 M)	(\$0.13 M)	(\$0.43 M)	(17.8%)
Fire	(\$2.66 M)	(\$1.25 M)	(\$3.91 M)	(9.5%)
Human Resources	(\$0.20 M)	(\$0.25 M)	(\$0.45 M)	(16.6%)
Information Technology	(\$0.73 M)	(\$0.34 M)	(\$1.07 M)	(11.4%)
Library	(\$0.24 M)	(\$0.73 M)	(\$0.97 M)	(10.0%)
Parks & Recreation	(\$1.61 M)	(\$0.92 M)	(\$2.53 M)	(16.4%)
Police	(\$3.65 M)	(\$0.51 M)	(\$4.16 M)	(7.2%)
Public Works	(\$0.75 M)	(\$0.92 M)	(\$1.67 M)	(8.8%)*
<b>Total</b>	<b>(\$12.68 M)</b>	<b>(\$5.35 M)</b>	<b>(\$18.03 M)</b>	<b>(10.2%)</b>

\* The Public Works actions would total approximately 14% when factoring in the Vehicle Replacement Fund savings



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

21

## Proposed Budget Actions – Promote and Enhance Economic, Housing and Transportation Development

### CDBG and Housing Funds

- Funds public services to assist low-income families and children such as Tenant-Based Rental Assistance and Family Advocacy Services
- Continue affordable housing projects (e.g., Agrihood Development – 165 affordable senior apartments)

### Convention Center

- Phased approach to adding staff: goal to increase from 2 to 19 in FY 2021/22 and to 32 in FY 2022/23)
- Assume 211 events/120,000 attendance in FY 2021/22; 374 events/ 250,000 attendance in FY 2022/23

### Downtown Master Plan

- Funds for Downtown Precise Plan identified by the Downtown Task Force



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

22



## Proposed Budget Actions – Deliver & Enhance High-Quality Efficient Services and Infrastructure

### Community Development

- Add 4.0 fee supported positions to improve Building development services and shift 1.0 position to fee program
- Add more third-party plan check and inspection services
- Support for the Accela permit system, plans and document digital scanning, remote workstations for vehicles
- New Building Development Services Fund

### Electric Utility

- Investments to ensure compliance with North American Electric Reliability Company requirements and work more effectively: updated CAD drawings, a field audit of SVP's electric distribution system, automated process for maintaining SVP system circuit models
- Add Assistant City Attorney position to enhance the SVP legal support

## Proposed Budget Actions – Enhance Community Sports and Recreational and Arts Assets

### Parks and Recreation Capital Improvements

- Planned investments in the Maywood Park and Warburton Park playground rehabilitations as well as a new accessible entrance and additional parking at Central Park
- Reed and Grant Sports Park now open with 5 lighted sports fields, 4 synthetic turf fields, and 1 natural grass field as well as a playground, concession stand, restrooms, and on-site parking



## Proposed Budget Actions – Enhance Community Engagement and Transparency

### City Manager and Non-Departmental

- Adds funding to support the Task Force on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

### Mission Statement and General Governance

*"In response to the national call for police use of force reform, the City of Santa Clara created the Task Force on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Through an open dialogue with the communities of Santa Clara and directed by community input, the Task Force shall make recommendations for changes in government policies, structures, services, and culture that negatively impact or do not fully benefit historically disenfranchised communities. The Task Force will continuously involve the communities on recommendations and progress."*



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

25

## Proposed Budget Actions – Enhance Compliance with Measure J and Manage Levi's Stadium

### FY 2021/22 Stadium Authority Operating, Debt and Capital Budget

- Adopted by the Stadium Authority Board on March 23, 2021
- \$65 million budget provides funding to administer the duties of the stadium authority
- Operating the stadium for non-NFL events through a management company, payment of debt obligations, five-year capital improvement program
- Reflects deletion of Deputy City Manager position and addition of a Management Analyst position
- \$38 million for debt service expenses
- \$14.6 million capital budget for general building, security, furnishings and equipment, and public safety investments

**SCSA**

SANTA CLARA STADIUM AUTHORITY



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

26



## Proposed Budget Actions – Manage Strategically Our Workforce Capacity and Resources

### Police Department

- Eliminate 3.0 positions, including 1.0 vacant Jail Service Officer position assigned to the Temporary Holding Facility, 1.0 Public Safety Dispatcher position that has remained unassigned for two years, and 1.0 vacant Community Service Officer (CSO) in the Records and Evidence Unit

### Fire Department

- Reconfigure the rescue apparatus and hazardous materials apparatus services and realign the dedicated staff for these units to the relief pool, resulting in a reduction in minimum staffing overtime
- Add funding for resiliency training in FY 2022/23 (first year cost will be absorbed by the department)

## Proposed Budget Actions – Manage Strategically Our Workforce Capacity and Resources

### Parks and Recreation Department

- Reduce recreation facility hours, adult sports programming, the Theater Program (eliminate performances), the Therapeutics Program, and cultural commission community grants
- One-time proposals to reduce cultural commission events and replace the 2021 Art & Wine Festival with a family friendly, one day four-hour event
- Eliminate programming at the low use Montague pool and Jr. Giants funding

### Library Department

- Eliminate the Footsteps2Brilliance funding
- Eliminate 4.25 vacant positions in the Adult and the Youth Services Units, Technology Program, and Mission Branch Library (**no reduction in library hours**)
- Reduce as-needed staffing to support in-person programming and events
- Reduce library materials resources



## **Proposed Budget Actions – Manage Strategically Our Workforce Capacity and Resources**

### **Public Works Department**

- Eliminate five vacant positions in Streets Division and reduce maintenance funding
- Eliminate as-needed staffing one-time in Facilities, Field Services, Land & Property Development, and Traffic Divisions
- Reduce General Fund transfer to the Downtown Parking Maint. District Fund (use excess fund balance for 2 years)
- Transfer from the Vehicle Replacement Fund to account for savings generated by electric vehicle replacements

### **City Manager and Non-Departmental**

- Combine the Community Grants Program and Championships Teams budget (combined \$140K) and reduce by \$40K
- Eliminate funding for the Miss Santa Clara Pageant (\$12,000)
- One-time reduction to the Triton Museum allocation

## **Proposed Budget Actions – Manage Strategically Our Workforce Capacity and Resources**

### **Strategic Support**

- Eliminate 1.75 positions in the Human Resources Department that support recruitment and processing personnel transactions
- Reduce City Auditor position funding to reflect anticipated partial year vacancy
- Eliminate 1.0 City position in the Information Technology Department
- Eliminate a contractual project manager position in the Information Technology Department
- Reduce the as-needed budget for cable, franchise and telephone services in the Information Technology Department

## Proposed Budget Actions – Promote Sustainability and Environmental Protection

### Electric Utility

- Several initiatives are funded by the Greenhouse Gas Program to expedite Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reduction: Battery Storage Program, the Bike, Pathway, and Park Program, the City Electric Vehicle (EV) Replacement Program, and Distributed Energy Resources Management
- EV Replacement Program results in General Fund savings as this program will replace vehicles that would have otherwise been funded by the General Fund



## Proposed Budget Actions – FY 2021/22 Capital Budget Amendments

- **Fire projects (\$0.5 million)** – replace defibrillators, automated external defibrillators placed in City facilities, and diesel exhaust removal systems; install alerting systems in the fire stations; assess Fire Training Tower repairs; and implement the Accela system for Fire Dept. annual operational permits
- **Parks projects (\$0.5 million)** – add grant funding for the Maywood Park Playground Rehabilitation project and shift funds from the Rotary Park Playground Rehabilitation project to the Henry Schmidt Playground Rehabilitation project given the equipment failure at the Henry Schmidt park
- **Silicon Valley Power Electric Utility projects (-\$11.1 million)**
  - Funding adjustments to several projects to reflect current project timelines and necessary project augmentations
  - Funding will support improvements to transmission systems, transformers, transmission lines, receiving stations, as well as other infrastructure needs
  - Funding removed for projects that are not expected to move forward in FY 2021/22 based on the current project timelines



## Proposed Budget Actions – FY 2021/22

### Capital Budget Amendments

- **Downtown Master Plan (\$0.3 million)** – add funding to support work identified by the Downtown Task Force to complete additional tasks associated with the Downtown Precise Plan
- **COVID-19 Safety Improvements (\$0.1 million)** – add funding for facility improvements necessary to safely reopen facilities and address any COVID-19 safety protocols
- **Street and Highways (\$0.6 million)** – add grant funding to augment the Lafayette Basset Bike Lane project and allocate General Fund Capital Project Reserve funding to fund emergency street tree services, tree removals, and tree plantings in FY 2021/22

## General Fund Revenue Changes

- Balancing Strategy assumes a net increase of \$1.3 million in revenues in FY 2021/22 and an additional \$0.5 million in FY 2022/23
  - Transfer of approx. \$1.0 million in FY 2021/22 and FY 2022/23 from the Vehicle Replacement Fund to reflect savings resulting from EV Replacement Program
  - Limited number of new Public Works engineering fees to recover costs
  - Fee adjustments to increase cost recovery for fire operational permits
  - Increase billing service charge for late utility payments
  - Downward adjustments to Parks and Recreation fee revenue due to budget reductions that reduce fee activity
  - FY 2022/23 assumes fee improving cost recovery with focus on Parks and Recreation
- Fee changes will be brought forward separately in the FY 2021/22 Municipal Fee Schedule



## Utility Rate Change Assumptions

Utility Service	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22	% Change
Water - Residential per HCF	\$6.69	\$6.95	3.8%
Recycled Water - Irrigation per HCF	\$3.74	\$3.93	5.0%
Sewer - Residential Single Family per month	\$44.53	\$45.76	2.7%
Solid Waste - 32 Gallon Cart (Includes recycling and yard waste charges)	\$44.10	\$49.05	11.2%
Solid Waste - 3-Cubic Yard Bin (Serviced one time per week)	\$322.03	\$389.02	20.8%
Electric - Residential per KWH (Effective January 1, 2022)	\$0.1289	\$0.1327	3.0%

## General Fund Reserves

- Budget Stabilization Reserve (BSR)** – Used for weathering economic downturns, emergency financial crisis or disaster situations. Per Council policy, the BSR target is 25% of the expenditure budget. Given the significant impacts of COVID-19, the Council adopted the FY 2021/22 budget principles that allow this reserve to drop to 15%. The Proposed Budget includes use of \$1.9 million in FY 2021/22 and \$15.6 million in FY 2022/23. The Reserve totals \$55.6 million or 21% of expenditures in FY 2021/22 and drop to \$40.0 million or 15% in FY 2022/23.
- Land Sale Reserve** – Allocates the proceeds from the sale of City-owned land. This reserve is projected to total \$24.7 million in FY 2021/22 and drop to \$21.5 million in FY 2022/23. The use of \$3.2 million is planned in FY 2022/23 as a General Fund budget balancing action.
- Capital Projects Reserve** – Used to support the City's Capital Improvement Program. The target funding level is a minimum of \$5 million. This reserve is projected to drop below this level in FY 2021/22 to \$4.2 million in order to fund critical health and safety projects, such as the replacement of defibrillators, AEDs, and Fire station diesel exhaust systems as well as funding for critical tree services and the Downtown Master Plan.

# Revenue Opportunities

37



## Municipal Fee Schedule

- City Council Budget Principle Related to Cost Recovery for Fees

*"With limited exceptions, establish fees based on full cost recovery where individuals/businesses rather than the community at-large are benefitting from City services.*

*This preserves limited unrestricted resources for providing services that benefit the community as a whole."*



38

## Municipal Fee Schedule

- Most recent comprehensive study of fees completed in calendar year 2019
- Fees adopted as a result of 2019 study, generally targeted full cost recovery
  - Adjustments toward full cost-recovery included multi-year phase in approach to enhance cost recovery when staff and City Council determined that immediate adjustment to full cost recovery was impractical
- In years between comprehensive studies, fees are adjusted annually to reflect inflationary changes
  - Inflationary change for FY 2021/22 fee schedule is 1.72% for most fees; this represents the annual change in regional CPI
  - Some fees use alternate inflators as determined by enacting legislation or previously adopted phase-in patterns



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

39

## Municipal Fee Schedule

- There are several changes to fees being introduced as part of this schedule:

Department	Action	Fee Description	Proposed Fee	Targeted Cost Recovery
Community Development	New fee for service	Building Conformance Fee	Valuation x \$0.00032	100%
Public Works	New fee for service	Stormwater Municipal Regional Permit (MRP) Regulated Project Operations and Maintenance Administrative Fee	\$193	100%
Public Works	New fee for service	Stormwater Planning Application Review Fee	\$773	100%
Public Works	New fee for service	Stormwater Mgmt. Building Application Review Fee	\$1,546	100%
Public Works	New fee for service	Solid Waste Mgmt. Planning Application Review Fee	\$773	100%
Public Works	New fee for service	Solid Waste Mgmt. Building Application Review Fee	\$773	100%
Public Works	New fee for service	Solid Waste Mgmt. Construction & Demolition Materials Management Plan Fee	\$193	100%
Finance	Increase Existing Fee to Target Full Cost Recovery	Billing Service Charge for Late Payments	\$14 or 1.5% per account, whichever is greater	100%
Fire	Add Technology Fee	Add Technology Fee for Permits Processed Through Accela Permitting System	3.37% of Fee	100%



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

40



## Municipal Fee Schedule

- Current Cost Recovery Levels Established for “**Fee-Related Services**”
  - Building: 100%
  - Engineering: 100%
  - Planning: 100% with exceptions for certain application types or requests (e.g., single family architectural review, historic preservation, appeals, zoning verification, minor variances, etc.)
  - Housing and Community Services: 100%
  - Fire: Target 100% Cost Recovery (with multi-year phase-in pattern)

## Municipal Fee Schedule

- Current Cost Recovery Levels Established for “**Fee-Related Services**”
  - Police: Target 100% with exceptions for alarm permits and false alarm responses (false alarm response fees scale based on number of responses)
  - Finance: Target 100% Cost Recovery (with proposed FY 21/22 adjustments)
  - City Clerk: 100%
  - Library: 35% (Full cost recovery is not currently targeted, approximately \$0.2 million in current costs current absorbed by General Fund)
  - Parks and Recreation: 17% Current Cost Recovery (approximately \$12 million in costs currently absorbed via non-fee General Fund revenues)

## Municipal Fee Schedule

- Updated Comprehensive Fee Study is currently in process; results to be delivered in FY 2021/22
  - Focus on Parks and Recreation Programs cost recovery objectives and corresponding fee adjustments.
  - Engage committees, community stakeholders, and City Council to determine priorities for:

After School Programming	Camps
Cultural Arts	Enrichment
Fitness Classes	Swimming Lessons and Aquatics
Sports Classes	Therapeutic Recreation
Use Rates for Fields, Picnic and Park Areas, Meeting Rooms and Buildings	
Youth Programs, Adult Programs, Senior Programs	
Resident and Non-Resident ; Non-Profit and Commercial	

## Ballot Measures/Business Tax

- Council expressed interest in reviewing and updating the City's business license tax as a potential revenue generation effort for the Nov. 2022 election
- Today's discussion will start the conversation with foundational information
  - Business Tax Structures
  - Santa Clara Business Tax Overview
  - Benchmarking
  - Ballot Considerations
  - Next Steps
  - Timeline

## Business Tax Structures

- **Employee Count** – assessed on employee head count
- **Parcel Tax** – assessed on square footage developed on a given property
- **Square Footage** – assessed on square footage occupied and used by a specific business
- **Gross Receipts** – assessed based on the gross receipts of a business
- **Payroll** – business tax based on an organization's total payroll

## Santa Clara Business Tax Overview

- All businesses, including those located outside of the city, but operating in the City, must have a license to transact business or occupy space in the city
- Business Tax last updated in 1992
- Business Tax ranges from \$15 to \$500 per company
- No cost escalator
- Current annual revenue of approx. \$0.9 M



# Santa Clara Business Tax Overview

## Current Rates by Type of Business/Number of Employees

Schedule No. 100 - Commercial/Industrial				Schedule No. 200 - Professional				Schedule No. 300 - Manufacturing			
1	Employee(s)	\$	15	1	Employee(s)	\$	15	1-3	Employee(s)	\$	15
2-5	"		30	2-3	"		30	4-20	"		45
6-10	"		70	4-6	"		70	21-30	"		65
11-15	"		90	7-10	"		90	31-50	"		100
16-20	"		115	11-20	"		115	51-75	"		135
21-25	"		175	21-25	"		175	76-100	"		175
26-30	"		225	26-35	"		225	101-125	"		225
31-40	"		280	36-40	"		280	126-175	"		280
41-55	"		330	41-45	"		330	176-225	"		330
56-75	"		380	46-50	"		380	226-300	"		380
76-100	"		460	51-55	"		460	301-400	"		460
101+	"		500	56+	"		500	401+	"		500

## Business Tax/Benchmarking

CITY	BUSINESS LICENSE TYPE	GENERAL OR SPECIAL
Cupertino	Square Footage	General
East Palo Alto	Gross Receipts	Specific
Mountain View	Employee Count	General
Redwood City	Employee Count	General
San Francisco	Gross Receipts Payroll	General
San Jose	Employee Count	General
San Mateo	Gross Receipts	General
Santa Clara	Employee Count	General
Sunnyvale	Employee Count	General

Source: Matrix Consulting Business License Tax Program Comparative Assessment and Initial Revenue Projections for the City of Palo Alto, December 2019

## Business Tax/Benchmarking

City	Annual Rate	FY 21 Budget
Cupertino	\$155 - \$306 plus per unit; Square Ft. amount (0.0413-0.0052)	\$0.6 M
Gilroy	\$40 - \$2,000 (primarily gross receipts)	\$0.7 M
Los Altos	\$75 - \$335 plus addtl. amt. per employee/unit; \$3,200 max.	\$0.5 M
Mountain View	\$75 - \$584K + \$150/employee (tiered by no. employees)	\$4.4 M
San Jose	\$204 - \$164K (tiered by no. employees/units)	\$25.7 M
Santa Clara	\$15 - \$500 (tiered by no. employees/units)	\$0.9 M
Sunnyvale	\$40 - \$13K (tiered by no. employees/units)	\$1.9 M



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

49

## Business Tax/Ballot Measure Considerations

- A ballot measure is needed to establish new taxes or increase existing taxes
- Ballot measure will need to include the structure of the tax
  - General Tax Measure
  - Special Purpose Tax Measure



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

50

## Business Tax/Ballot Measure Considerations

### General Tax Measure

- Levied to be expended on any program, service, or capital need, at the discretion of the local government's governing body
- A simple majority vote (50 percent of voters plus one additional voter) is required for approval of a general tax
- Non-property related taxes which cities and counties are authorized to levy may be imposed as a general tax

## Business Tax/Ballot Measure Considerations

### Special Purpose Tax Measure

- Dedicated to a specific purpose, including a special tax for a specific purpose that is deposited into a city's general fund
- Requires a 2/3 supermajority vote
- Taxes levied on property, excluding ad valorem but including parcel taxes, are considered special taxes



## **Business Tax/Ballot Measure Considerations**

### **Council Policy Decisions**

- Tax Method/Unit of Tax
- General/Specific Tax Passage Rate
- Legally Required Exemptions
- Rate Structure
- Total Annual Revenue Estimates/Assumptions
- Data Sources
- Administration

## **Business Tax/Next Steps**

- To place a measure on the Nov. 2022 ballot more detailed analysis is needed
- Staff will need to retain consultants in the following disciplines:
  - Financial Analysis
  - Voter Education & Polling Services
  - Business Outreach & Engagement Support
- Options will be brought back to Council for discussion and recommendations

## Business Tax/Estimated Timeline

Action	Date
Council Priority Setting Session Check-In	July 2021
Retain Financial Consultant	Summer/Fall 2021
Council Study Session - Business License Tax	Fall 2021
Council Priority Setting Session	February 2022
Polling/outreach to determine community interest/priorities	March - June 2022
Evaluate options and make final determination	May - June 2022
Submit final measure for Nov. 2022 ballot	July 2022
Election Date	November 2022

## Business Tax/Recommendation

- Direct staff to begin work on a potential ballot measure for the November 2022 election and agendaize a study session for Fall 2021 to discuss the following:
  - Tax Method/Unit of Tax
  - General/Specific Tax Passage Rate
  - Legally Required Exemptions
  - Rate Structure
  - Total Annual Revenue Estimates/Assumptions
  - Data Sources
  - Administration

## Other Potential Revenue Ballot Measures

- Potential Measures in November 2022 or Later
- Utility User Tax / SVP Charter Language Clarification
- Documentary Transfer Tax
- General Obligation Bond or Parcel Tax

*Note: City Council will need to prioritize ballot measures as there are many being considered.*



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

57

## Revenue Opportunities Proposition 218 Restrictions

- Approved by California voters in 1996 / limited exceptions
- Restricts local governments' ability to impose assessments and property-related fees; requires elections to approve many local government revenue raising methods
- Specifies that no property-related fee may be levied to pay for a general governmental service (e.g., police and fire), imposed for a service not used by, or immediately available to, the property owner, and/or used to finance programs unrelated to the property-related service



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

58



## Revenue Opportunities

### Proposition 26 Restrictions

- Approved by California voters in November 2010
- Broadened the definition of a state or local tax to include many payments previously considered to be fees or charges
- Does not impact most user fees, property development charges, and property assessments because these fees and charges generally comply with the approval requirements of Prop. 26
- Increases legislative voter requirements to two-thirds for State levies and charges



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

59

## Next Steps

60



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

## Next Steps

### FY 2021/22 and 2022/23 Budget Calendar

Date	City/Stadium Authority Budget Schedule
February 1-2, 2021	Council Priority Setting Retreat / Adoption of Budget Principles
March 2, 2021	Study Session on Stadium Authority Budget
March 9, 2021	FY 2020/21 Rebalancing – Phase 1
March 16, 2021	Approval of Stadium Authority Budget
May 7, 2021	Release Proposed Biennial Operating Budget and Summary of Capital Improvement Program Changes
May 25, 2021	Study Session to review Biennial Operating Budget and CIP changes, Municipal Fee Schedule
June 8, 2021	Study Session to review Biennial Operating Budget and CIP changes, Municipal Fee Schedule
June 22, 2021	Public Hearing/Adoption of Biennial Operating Budget and CIP changes, Municipal Fee Schedule
July 12, 2021	Council Priority Setting Mid-Year Check-In



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

61

## Recommendations

### June 22<sup>nd</sup> Recommendations

1. Approve the FY 2021/22 and FY 2022/23 Biennial Operating Budget and FY 2021/22 Capital Budget Amendments
2. Direction to increase the Transient Occupancy Tax rate from 9.5% to 11.5% effective January 1, 2022
3. Approve the FY 2021/22 Municipal Fee Schedule
4. Direction on Parks and Recreation fee cost recovery policy



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible

62



## **Study Session**

**Item #4 - FY 2021/22 &  
FY 2022/23 Biennial  
Operating Budget  
and  
FY 2021/22 Municipal Fee  
Schedule**

**May 25, 2021**





# City of Santa Clara

The Center of What's Possible


**Date:** May 25, 2021

**To:** City Manager

**From:** Executive Assistant to the Mayor & City Council

**Subject:** Correspondence received regarding item 4 on the May 25, 2021 Council and Authorities Concurrent Meeting Agenda

As of May 25, 2021, at 3:00 p.m. the Mayor and City Council Offices received the attached communications regarding item 4. Joint Study Session to review Proposed FY 2021/22 and FY 2022/23 Biennial Operating Budget and FY 2021/22 Capital improvement Program Budget Adjustments and to review the Proposed FY 2021/22 Municipal Fee Schedule.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Julie Minot  
Executive Assistant to the  
Mayor & City Council

*Documents Related to this Report:*  
1) *Communications received*

**POST MEETING MATERIAL**

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Josh Rubietta <joshrubietta@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 21, 2021 12:27 PM  
**To:** Josh Rubietta  
**Subject:** Proposed Budget

Hello!

My name is Josh. I've been contracting with the city of Santa Clara for 4 years. I currently work with hundreds of kids each week in my various piano, singing, and dance classes. I graduated from Northwestern University in 2013 with degrees in Dance, Musical Theatre, Piano, and Environmental Policy. I like to think that I've found my dream job with the City of Santa Clara, where I can use all of my gifts to enrich the community and raise up the next generation of artists and change-makers.

Two things that have been extra important to me over the last couple years, aside from my regularly programmed classes, are the summer RJJT CATS production and the Nutcracker. Respectively, they allow me to work with huge numbers of students in a directorial capacity, as well as a professional performer capacity. I recently heard about the proposed budget cuts, which include defunding the theatre program. This was troubling to me for several reasons.

The first is the obvious dog whistle of saving \$160k by cutting a recreation supervisor--This position is currently vacant, and the city is not spending this money annually. To post this number publicly is irresponsible and alarmist, as the funds are not actually being disbursed for this position.

The second is the massive opportunity that the City would be missing out on. Roberta Jones founded the theatre program with a vision for community theatre that brings people together and provides vital growth experiences, for next to no cost. This was a beautiful idea, that worked for many decades, with the help of an endowment. Regrettably, that model isn't as sustainable in 21st century silicon valley. With just a little tweaking, a new payment model could easily be created which would generate revenue simply from student involvement. Coupled with revenue from thousands of ticket sales annually (again, with a small, reasonable price adjustment), this stands to become a much more profitable program than it is currently. Many of the staff and contractors involved simply ask that you give us the chance to restructure the program.

It's worth noting that the theatre programs in other surrounding cities are shutting down. This is sad in and of itself, but my suspicion is that many of the students that were participating in neighboring cities' productions will be looking for other productions. Santa Clara could potentially gain hundreds of new participants, even requiring an expansion of budget-savvy programming, further boosting the financial gains from the program.

However, money aside, my heart breaks to think that hundreds or even thousands of kids and families will see this elimination of the theatre program, and think "there is no place for the arts in our fast-paced, high-tech society". Or the budding artists like 10 year-old me, who see budget cuts that target performance programs, and interpret it as a reflection of the value of a life pursuing the arts. The reality is, we need art in our lives. We need artists, and we need people who devote their lives to their crafts. If the last year taught us anything, as we're cooped up in our homes watching netflix until our eyes are blurry, it's that we need the arts. People don't just simply arrive in a netflix show--they participate in community theatre programs, they gain the confidence to decide to study theatre in college, they work themselves to the bone to create the art they love. But it all starts somewhere, and that place is *almost always* community theatre.

Cutting this theatre budget is a death knell for the arts in one of the Bay Area's most central and important cities. Please don't take away one of the few theatre programs remaining in the area. Our residents deserve better, and Santa Clara would be missing out on the opportunity of a lifetime to revamp this program.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you'd like to discuss anything further.

Sincerely,

Josh Rubietta

847-345-9949



Julie Minot

---

**From:** Corinne Phipps <ckphipps@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 18, 2021 9:09 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Cc:** Chris hubby Phipps  
**Subject:** Do NOT cut RJJT

I am utterly shocked and disappointed to hear there is consideration of closing Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. An institution of Santa Clara, a way for kids to connect outside of school and learn confidence. My daughter has flourished in her personal growth and confidence thanks to this program. We all know it's an unusual time in life, but to cut funding for this program would be a true travesty.

I am a resident of Santa Clara and I'm writing to encourage you NOT to approve the proposed budget which cuts funding for Roberta Jones Jr Theater. The RJJT program has been a part of Santa Clara for 50 years. My sister in law had fond memories of her middle school years on the RJJT stage, and inspired my daughter to try out for her first play (Seussical). My daughter went on to participate in RJJT until she graduated and aged out. We loved the fact that everyone was cast, and that the end production was always polished and professional looking. We were proud to invite family and friends, and they always gushed over the fact that it wasn't just a school play, it was amazing. My daughter was always excited to meet members of the audience who came year after year simply to enjoy the professional looking production and cheer on the young performers.

As a representative of the city of Santa Clara, please consider the benefits this inclusive youth theatre program provides before approving a budget proposal which would remove funding for this valuable resource. RJJT is an asset to Santa Clara, it has introduced generations of children to the joys of theatre while building valuable life skills in teamwork, responsibility and public speaking, while strengthening self esteem.

**You have the power to save this program which has encouraged generations of children and families to engage in city programming. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.**

Kindly,  
Corinne Phipps  
408-332-3655

Sent from my iPhone

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Rylee Weon <ryleepeon@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 17, 2021 11:32 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** Please do not defund Roberta Jones Junior Theater

Dear Santa Clara Mayor and City Council

My name is Rylee Weon and I am 16 years old. I have been a participant of Roberta Jones Junior Theater for 6 years now and I am heart broken to hear the news that my home, RJJT, is planning on being defunded. This place has been a routine in my everyday life for the past 6 years. I would go to school, go to rehearsal, go home and repeat. Going to rehearsal was always the highlight of my day. Currently due to covid the highlight of my days have been being able to see my beloved friends who I have all meet through Roberta Jones Junior Theater. With out RJJT I wouldn't have been able to meet these amazing people and wouldn't have been able to be who I am today. RJJT has truly been the source of my happiness for the past 6 years and really, truly, whole heartedly hope RJJT will continue to be my happy place, my safe place, and my home. Please reconsider and understand that taking away RJJT from me and my friends and family will bring us pain and misery. I really hope you understand.

Thank you.

Sincerely, Rylee Weon.

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Alexandra Murillo <alexandra.ponce.murillo@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 17, 2021 9:01 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** RJJT Funding

Dear Mayor and Council of Santa Clara,

I have learned that funding for the RJJT (formerly SCJT) is at stake for the children of the Santa Clara community. As a former Junior Theatre participant who was lucky enough to work with Roberta Jones and whose first job was with SCJT as a recreation staffer, I highly encourage the city council to reconsider adequate funding for the theatre. This theatre has been a second home to many youth in Santa Clara and has provided a safe haven for youth to learn more than singing, dancing, and acting—but life long skills of team work, cooperation, self confidence, and to value ones own strengths/assets. Having funding for a Program Director (or designated Recreation Supervisor), creative team staff, and funds for employing teens and young adults as theatre assistants are foundational to its success. Please don't take away this program and opportunity for the youth of Santa Clara to engage with the arts. Now more than ever will the role of make believe, music, and dance through a musical theatre experience be needed to get our youth to feel a sense of community and belonging.

With much respect,  
Alexandra Murillo  
SCJT Alumna & Santa Clara resident

Sent from my iPhone



## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Roger Cloud <joeshiro9623@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 17, 2021 11:49 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** RJJT

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

To Mayor Lisa Gillmor and Council Members:

My name is Roger Wilcox Cloud, and I am a former resident of Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties. While no longer a resident, I practiced law in both counties and contributed to Santa Clara County as a Senior Council, Intellectual Property for Informix, SGI, and Verity, and represented E-mu Systems, Inc., Summit Audio, and several other Silicon Valley business interests, and as Chairperson of the Software Industry Coalition. I am writing to urge you to not approve the proposed budget that eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT). RJJT has been an asset for over 50 years by providing programming for the youth of our community as well as the families and residents who attend performances right here in the city of Santa Clara.

While I now live in Alabama for family reasons, when I heard of the prospect of Santa Clara losing the rich benefits of this vital theater program, I felt compelled to write to you. I am a firm supporter of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre because I was a fervent participant in local theater and summer stock productions while growing up in the farm country of New Jersey. I would eventually earn the High School Senior Poll Best Actor Award as a four year thespian. I also starred in the Summer Stock Production of "Toot '66," a Central New Jersey theater work I helped to author. I cannot adequately express how important the RJJT and all such facilities and programs are to informing, growing, and developing our nation's youth in healthy and positive ways, that also help them avoid destructive and wasteful pursuits.

As a representative of the city of Santa Clara, please consider the benefits a youth theatre program provides before approving this budget proposal. RJJT is an asset to your, and my former, community.

You have the power to save a program that has helped generations of children and families engage in city programming. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre productions

Sincerely,  
Roger Wilcox Cloud  
1201 Liberty Drive  
Madison, AL 35758  
256-617-1395

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Reina Stevens <reina.stevens318@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 16, 2021 10:02 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** RJJT Productions are Important!

Dear Santa Clara City Council,

My name is Reina Stevens, and I was born and raised in Santa Clara. I am writing to urge you to not approve the proposed budget that eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT). RJJT was such a cherished part of my childhood in Santa Clara as it has been for children over the course of RJJT's 50 year legacy.

As a former participant of Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, I can speak firsthand to the positive effects the program has on children. During my time at RJJT I participated in six summer productions, sat in the audience for countless productions, and started working for the City of Santa Clara. I made so many friends that I was excited to see every summer and support in the school year shows. Some of my favorite memories as a kid were going to see the RJJT shows with my mom.

Now, as an adult, I recognize the importance of arts to a thriving community. As a representative of the city of Santa Clara, please consider the benefits a youth theatre program provides before approving this budget proposal. RJJT is an asset to Santa Clara because it helps children use their imaginations and gives them confidence to perform in front of a large group of people. The arts are so important! Not everyone is sports focused and the kids that aren't need a space to express their individuality. Even though I loved both sports and arts, I remember, as a kid going to see the shows, I couldn't wait until I was eight years old and could be a part of one of those shows.

You have the power to save a program that has helped generations of children and families engage in city programming. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre productions

Sincerely,

Reina Stevens

[reina.stevens318@gmail.com](mailto:reina.stevens318@gmail.com)

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Ronan Havlice <ronan.havlice@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 16, 2021 9:25 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Cc:** Manager  
**Subject:** Roberta Jones Junior Theatre

To whom it may concern,

My name is Ronan Havlice and I am an alumnus of the RJJT program.

A little back story about me. I am a second-generation stage technician who currently tours North America with some of the biggest Broadway shows. Most notably the Second National Tour of The Book of Mormon and the First National Tour of Disney's Frozen the Musical. I am a Journeyman Member of I.A.T.S.E. Local 134 in Santa Clara County.

I can safely say that a large part of the success in my career is because of my time at RJJT. I was homeschooled my entire childhood; RJJT was my school theater program. In the spring of 2008, while on an outing with my 4-H Performing Arts group, I found myself at the MCCPA to see a production of Seussical the Musical. I immediately realized that this was a group I wanted to be a part of. In the fall I signed up to work on the tech crew for Oliver! and we were off to the races. During my time at RJJT I worked on almost 20 productions in different rolls including: Stage Manager, Lightboard Operator, Flyman, Scenic Designer, Set Construction, Props Master, and most notably as the Head of Performer Flying/Rigging for our productions of Peter Pan in 2014 and The Wizard of Oz in 2016. Not many other theater groups would have given me the opportunity to do so many different theater jobs. I also worked as tech staff for countless city events and was an instructor for Tech Camp.

RJJT is a vital part of the city's life blood. It is such a rarity to find a children's theater group that puts on the high caliber productions that RJJT does while still being able to cast everyone who auditions.

I respectfully ask that you take the time to find the money you need somewhere else instead of cutting arts funding like so many others do. Ensure that the legacy of Roberta Jones can be enjoyed by the community for years to come and continue to be a place for young artists to come and share in the joy that is live theater.

Respectfully,

Ronan M. Havlice



## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Carolyn Blumenson <carolyn.blumenson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 16, 2021 5:45 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** Opposition to Roberta Jones Junior Theater Budget Cuts

Dear Mayor Gillmor,

My name is Carolyn Blumenson, and had a wonderful childhood in Santa Clara. I am writing to urge you to **not approve** the proposed budget that eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT). RJJT was such a cherished part of my childhood in Santa Clara as it has been for children over the course of RJJT's 50 year legacy.

As a former participant of Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, I can speak firsthand to the positive effects the program has on children. During my time at RJJT I gained confidence, made friends, and developed a love of musical theater.

My mom first signed me up for CATS in the summer of 1994 or 1995--I don't remember the exact year, but I know the show was Free To Be... You and Me--it was my first experience on stage and couldn't wait for my next chance to participate again. As an extremely shy child, and not particularly interested in or good at sports, RJJT (then SCJT) gave me a place to belong to, a team that I would've otherwise never been a part of. After that first summer, I participated in CATS every year until the summer I turned 16 and was in the majority of fall and spring shows from the fall of 1998 until I graduated high school in 2004.

Now, as an adult, I recognize the importance of arts to a thriving community. As a representative of the city of Santa Clara, please consider the benefits a youth theatre program provides before approving this budget proposal. RJJT is an asset to Santa Clara because it provides children and teens the opportunity to express themselves and to learn to appreciate all that musical theater has to offer--it's a place for those that might not otherwise fit in.

I think back often to those days in the Mello Auditorium. The hours learning and rehearsing dances with Judy. The excitement of opening night. Secrets whispered in the wings. The friendships and relationships formed during rehearsals and between scenes.

I can wholeheartedly say I would not be who I am today without RJJT and everyone that made the shows possible.

To lose RJJT is losing childhood. To lose RJJT would be losing friendships. To lose RJJT would be losing a safe space--a space where kids can be themselves and to grow into who they are supposed to be. To lose RJJT would be losing a home.

**You** have the power to save a program that has helped generations of children and families engage in city programming. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre productions.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Blumenson

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Lorna Strachan <lorna.j.strachan@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 15, 2021 6:41 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council; Lisa Gillmor; Kathy Watanabe; Raj Chahal; Karen Hardy; Sudhanshu Jain; Anthony Becker; Manager  
**Subject:** Save Roberta JONES Theatre

Dear Mayor, City Council, and City Manager,

My name is Lorna Strachan and I am writing to you regarding the proposed budget cuts to reduce staff and eliminate performances for Roberta Jones Theatre.

I grew up in Santa Clara and I am so proud of the robust Parks and Recreation and Adult Education offerings in our city. While I was not part of Roberta Jones Theatre myself, I was a student of Ms. Kimberly Davey in the dance department for many, many years. My experiences taking ballet classes at the Recreation Center in Santa Clara, particularly my performance experiences, shaped me into who I am today. I went on to dance with Ballet San Jose and now have a BA in dance from the George Washington University.

Many of my grade school friends had the same experiences with the Roberta Jones theatre program. Affordable access to the arts, and more importantly affordable access to stage performance experiences, is so crucial to fostering a healthy and well-rounded population of kids. For many kids, they would never get an opportunity to learn valuable public speaking skills and stage performance skills without an affordable program like Roberta Jones. Performances are an absolutely crucial part of learning acting, singing, dancing, and any other performing art. Kids need to have the ability to participate in the 4 annual performances Roberta Jones normally puts on, and this program certainly should not be cut to be "theoretical" only, that is to say the currently proposed zero annual performances.

I urge you to reconsider and find funding to continue the Roberta Jones theatre program with performance opportunities for kids of all ages. Please reach out with any questions you may have.

Best,  
Lorna Strachan  
SCHS Class of 2014

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Lauren Uriarte <laurenu252@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 15, 2021 3:54 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Cc:** Manager  
**Subject:** Roberta Jones Jr. Theater

Hello Mayor and Council,  
We saw on NextDoor that the city is contemplating reducing funding for Roberta Jones Jr. Theater. My husband and I support continuing to maintain current funding for Roberta Jones Jr. Theater. We took our kids (now 17 and 15) to see the shows and their friends participated. This program is a valuable resource, improves the life experience of many in this city and surrounding neighborhoods, and provides wonderful memories to families (our kids first live theater experiences). Please do not reduce city support of this important program.

Thank you,  
Lauren and Stephen Uriarte  
257 Rodonovan Dr  
Santa Clara, 95051  
408-627-2341



## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Lisa K... <mistofviolets@cheerful.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 15, 2021 2:48 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Cc:** Kathy Watanabe; Raj Chahal; Karen Hardy; Sudhanshu Jain; Anthony Becker  
**Subject:** RJJT

Hi,

I am a resident of Santa Clara and I'm writing to encourage you NOT to approve the proposed budget which cuts funding for Roberta Jones Jr Theater.

The RJJT program has been a part of Santa Clara for 50 years. My sister in law had fond memories of her middle school years on the RJJT stage, and inspired my daughter to try out for her first play (Seussical). My daughter went on to participate in RJJT until she graduated and aged out. We loved the fact that everyone was cast, and that the end production was always polished and professional looking. We were proud to invite family and friends, and they always gushed over the fact that it wasn't just a school play, it was amazing. My daughter was always excited to meet members of the audience who came year after year simply to enjoy the professional looking production and cheer on the young performers.

As a representative of the city of Santa Clara, please consider the benefits this inclusive youth theatre program provides before approving a budget proposal which would remove funding for this valuable resource. RJJT is an asset to Santa Clara, it has introduced generations of children to the joys of theatre while building valuable life skills in teamwork, responsibility and public speaking, while strengthening self esteem.

You have the power to save this program which has encouraged generations of children and families to engage in city programming. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Lisa Govorko

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Rowan Biesemeyer <rowansummer7@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 14, 2021 7:00 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** Roberta Jones Junior Theatre  
**Attachments:** RJJT.docx

To Whom It May Concern,  
Please see the attached letter regarding budget cuts to Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.



Virus-free. [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** christin heintz <mom2sweetlets@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 14, 2021 6:34 PM  
**To:** Lisa Gillmor; Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** SAVE RJJT!  
**Attachments:** davesam.JPG; micdave.JPG; midsummer.JPG; suessical.JPG

Dear Mayor Gillmor and City Council Members:

My name is Christin Heintz, and I am a Santa Clara resident. I am writing to urge you to reconsider the proposed budget that eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT). RJJT has been such an asset in our community for over 50 years by providing programming for our youth as well as those who attend performances right here in the city of Santa Clara.

Nine year old Peter Heintz wanted to do everything, so it was no surprise when he stumbled upon auditions for "Fiddler on the Roof" and had to join. We were in the lobby of the CRC waiting for little brother, David, to finish his drawing class. Not having grown up in Santa Clara, I didn't know about RJJT. I had no idea what a huge part of our lives it would become. As I said before, Peter Heintz wanted to do everything. He played tournament baseball and competitive soccer. But, he had no idea the feeling he would get from performing, or the love and support he would get from the other children and adults at RJJT. After his first audition, he was convinced he would be cast as Perchik. If you know anything about "Fiddler", you know that wasn't going to happen. The age range for the Spring play was 8-18. He was 9 and a first-timer. He was cast as a Jewish Boy/Yeshiva Student. That didn't stop him from learning all the songs, and begging to fill in as a "bottle dancer." Again, I go back to the love and support. They didn't need to humor him, but they did. This was the last ensemble part Pete ever got. He went on to be a staple in the Spring and Summer shows. I remember one night after a cast party, he came home nearly giddy. That was the same night he realized that he may not get any playing time on his tournament baseball team. I asked him which he would choose. There was no contest. It had to be RJJT. From his connections at RJJT, he went on to star in shows for SBMT, Lyric Theatre, WVLO and TheatreWorks. These remain some of the best experiences of our lives.

I almost forgot to return to the aforementioned little brother, David. As you could imagine, Dave spent a lot of time waiting in the CRC lobby for Pete to finish rehearsals. Then he found crew. Dave did props, lighting, and sound board for many RJJT productions. He loved the technical aspects, and loved having a tiny part of each show that didn't belong to Pete.

I hope this gives you some idea of what RJJT has meant to our family. It would do our city a great disservice to lose it.

Sincerely,

Matt, Christin, Peter and David Heintz  
408-690-7882



## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Arwen Hirsch <piggy.mushrooms@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 14, 2021 3:59 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council; Lisa Gillmor; Kathy Watanabe; Raj Chahal; Karen Hardy; Sudhanshu Jain; Anthony Becker; Manager; Finance  
**Subject:** Please Save RJJT

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Santa Clara City Council Representatives,

My name is Arwen Hirsch, and I was raised in Santa Clara. I am writing to urge you to not approve the proposed budget that eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT). RJJT was such a cherished part of my childhood in Santa Clara as it has been for children over the course of RJJT's 50-year legacy.

As a former participant of Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, I can speak firsthand to the positive effects the program has on children. During my time at RJJT, I learned many valuable teamwork and communication skills I could not have elsewhere. The workshops I've done and lessons I've learned have all been taught by the kind staff. My fellow participants showed me how to express myself through acting, singing, and dancing.

Theater is an art form that comes with the most accepting, safe communities. To see that reduced would endanger the spirits of a lot of the youth in this area. With loosening COVID restrictions, many kids are eager to jump back into this program and need your full support.

You have the power to save a program that has helped generations of children and families engage in city programming. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre productions.

Thank you for your time,

Arwen Hirsch (she/her)

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Carley LaPlaca <carley.laplaca@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 14, 2021 3:17 PM  
**To:** Anthony Becker; Sudhanshu Jain; Karen Hardy; Raj Chahal; Kathy Watanabe; lgillmor@santaclaraca.go; Mayor and Council; Manager; Finance  
**Subject:** Defunding Roberta Jones Junior Theater

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

To whom it may concern,

I would like to express my disdain for the proposition to defund Roberta Jones Junior Theater. I find this proposition to be absolutely appalling and to have no backing. As a former participant and employee I am devastated that the organization I grew up with could cease to exist. As city representatives you are supposed to represent the desires of the citizens and you have clearly dropped the ball on this. I have had children come to me crying in the past few days worried that they will have no place to be safe. Roberts Jones Junior Theater is a safe space for so many children: those who do not have parents at home to care for them after school, those who may come from unsupportive families, LGBTQ+ children, those who may be unpopular at school, and countless other children. I personally participated in RJJT from ages 4-18 completing over 50 productions. I spent almost every day there. I saw my friends and teachers there more than I saw my parents for the most part. It truly became a second family for me and has been so incredibly influential to my upbringing. I cannot believe you are trying to take this away from future generations of students and those who are currently hurting from this news.

I am shocked that you would all provide such misleading information in your budget proposal. We all know that Robin has been filling this same position just under a different title. It is baffling to me that you would all spread this information. I am also appalled that you would strip RJJT of its name in the budget proposal and redirect our website to make it appear as though Roberta Jones Junior Theater is no longer around. It is so incredible to such influential pillars of our community, namely Roberta Jones and her daughter Judi Thomas, who both devoted their lives to RJJT. By doing so you are disrespecting the Thomas family and everything that they have produced over the past 50 years.

Getting rid of RJJT productions will only drive students to other production companies outside of Santa Clara that are more expensive, more rigorous and time consuming, and not as inclusive as RJJT.

I strongly disapprove of any defunding to RJJT and I will not back down from this issue until it is resolved, as is the case for many others who love RJJT.

I am awaiting action on your behalf to resolve this issue.

Disapprovingly,  
Carley LaPlaca

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** George Doeltz <gdoeltz@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 14, 2021 8:32 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** RJJT

My name is George Doeltz, and I am a resident of Santa Clara. I am writing to urge you to not approve the proposed budget that eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT). RJJT has been an asset for over 50 years by providing programming for the youth of our community as well as the families and residents who attend performances right here in the city of Santa Clara.

I am a firm supporter of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre because of the incredible work they do with and for our kids. I volunteered with Roberta for 10 years, and one memorable moment is Roberta saying "we're raising kids here". That was over twenty years ago and so many of those participants are still connected and helping each other. Some of them are even still involved in theatre!

As a representative of the city of Santa Clara, please consider the benefits a youth theatre program provides before approving this budget proposal. RJJT is an asset to Santa Clara because, among other things, it teaches kids how to work together and to help each other.

You have the power to save a program that has helped generations of children and families engage in city programming. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre productions

Sincerely,

George Doeltz  
Santa Clara Players  
408-307-6783



## Julie Minot

---

**From:** George Doeltz <gdoeltz@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 14, 2021 8:32 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** RJJT

My name is George Doeltz, and I am a resident of Santa Clara. I am writing to urge you to not approve the proposed budget that eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT). RJJT has been an asset for over 50 years by providing programming for the youth of our community as well as the families and residents who attend performances right here in the city of Santa Clara.

I am a firm supporter of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre because of the incredible work they do with and for our kids. I volunteered with Roberta for 10 years, and one memorable moment is Roberta saying "we're raising kids here". That was over twenty years ago and so many of those participants are still connected and helping each other. Some of them are even still involved in theatre!

As a representative of the city of Santa Clara, please consider the benefits a youth theatre program provides before approving this budget proposal. RJJT is an asset to Santa Clara because, among other things, it teaches kids how to work together and to help each other.

You have the power to save a program that has helped generations of children and families engage in city programming. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre productions

Sincerely,

George Doeltz  
Santa Clara Players  
408-307-6783

May 13, 2021

Dear Mayor Gillmor and City Councilmembers,

It has come to my attention that the City of Santa Clara has proposed to significantly cut the budget for or possibly eliminate the theater arts program, which includes Roberta Jones Junior Theater. I am writing to you to strongly request that the City not cut this program.

All three of my grandchildren have performed and/or participated in many of Santa Clara's Roberta Jones Junior Theater program and it has brought me great joy over the past 6 years. Each one of them have had different assignments (Rowan – ensemble & leading rolls, Finn and Lia – props, ushering and lighting). They have, each, received amazing opportunities to learn and develop incredible skills and leadership along with getting to participate in amazing theater and musicals. They have established new and long-lasting friendships.

But what I love the most about the RJJT program is the community involvement. These theatrical productions bring well known plays and musicals to audience members, young and old, at an affordable price...which is so necessary to build a strong community. Being able to offer programming to a community is a vital part of a city's recreation program. I say this as a person who has experienced the budget cuts put into effect by my City. As a retired Recreation Supervisor, I had several of my programs cut and it was devastating to not only me but to the community at large. Families rely on their cities to provide them with affordable entertainment, and this is what RJJT did for the Santa Clara community and all the others that have taken advantage of it.

Roberta Jones Junior Theater is an excellent, remarkable, and essential program, not only to the Santa Clara community but the surrounding communities.

Best Regards,

Janis Rice, Nana to Rowan, Lia and Finn

Jurupa Valley, CA

909-8512144

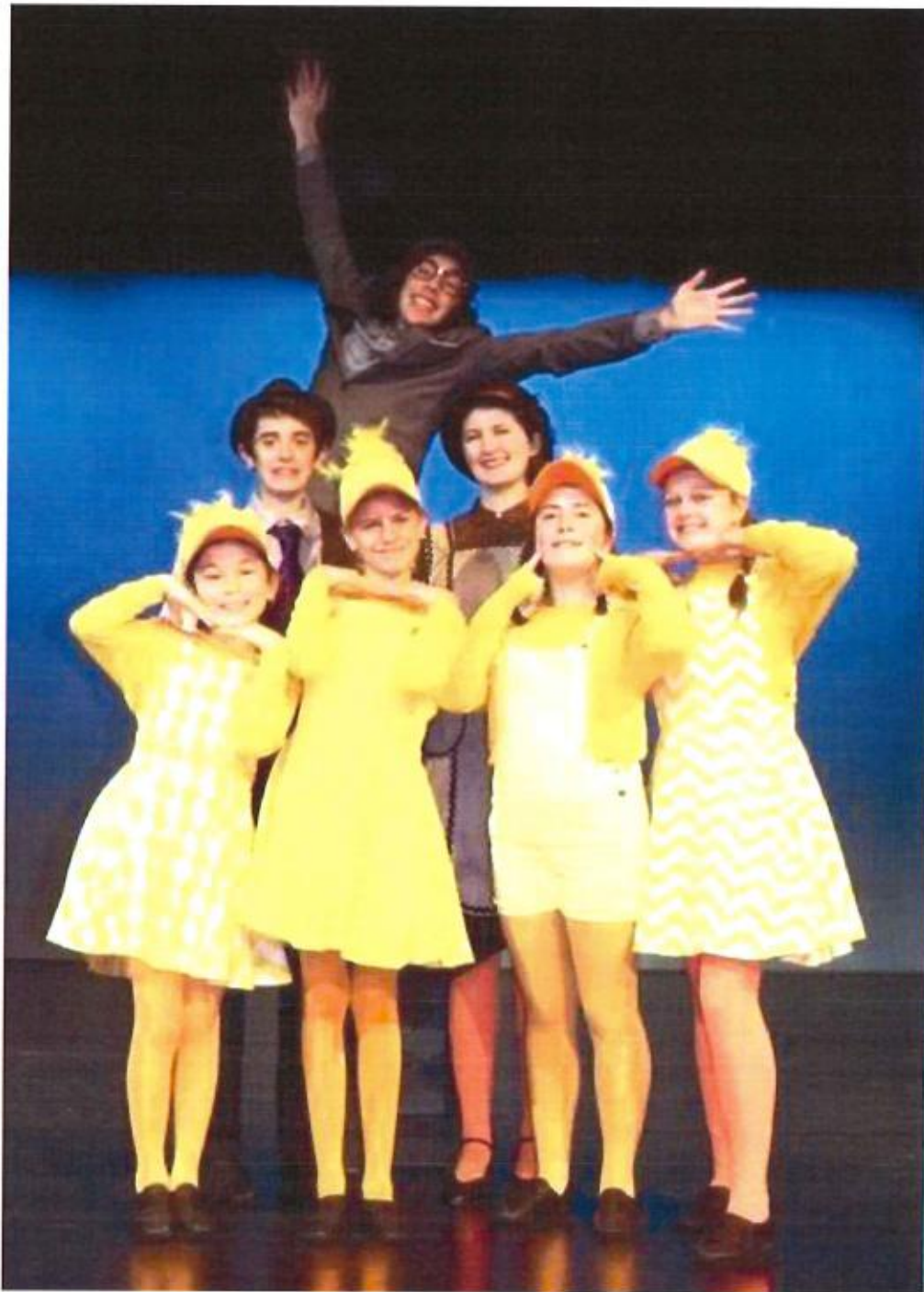
## Julie Minot

---

**From:** jack Lingscheit <jacklingscheit0@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 11:32 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** Roberta Jones Junior Theater

Roberta Jones Junior Theater

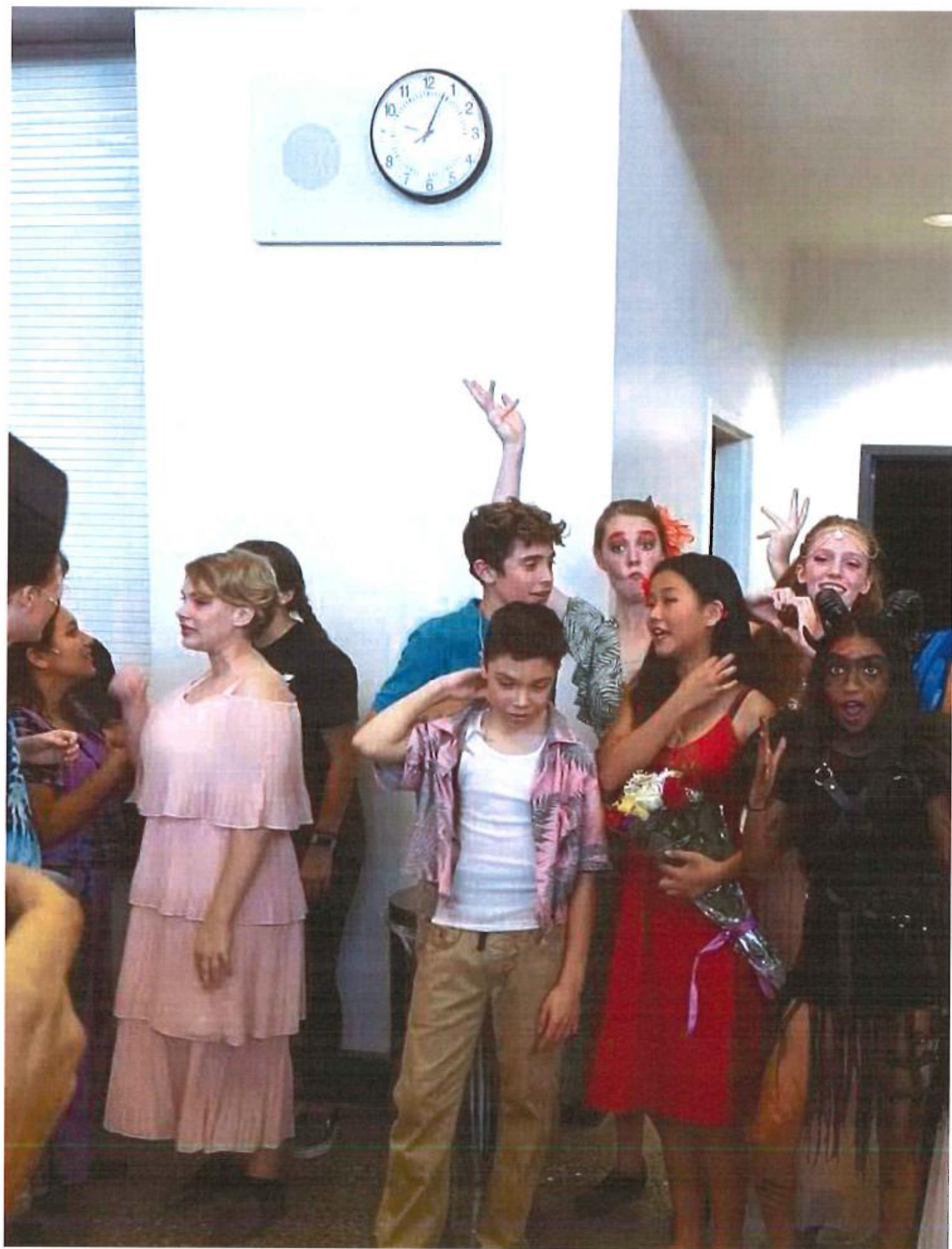
Hello, my name is Jack Lingscheit and I have spent a large part of my life performing with Roberta Jones Junior Theater and they have been the best years of my life. I did not have many friends before joining this program and I have met so many of my best friends who have helped me out of the worst times of my life. I have met so many amazing people through this program such as the staff that I have made great friendships with and they help bring out the best in me. This program cannot be left behind because so many people, young and old alike, have been greatly impacted by it. I and so many others love watching and performing with this program. I strongly urge you to keep RJJT going so that it can greatly impact the lives of many others like it did mine. Thank you.



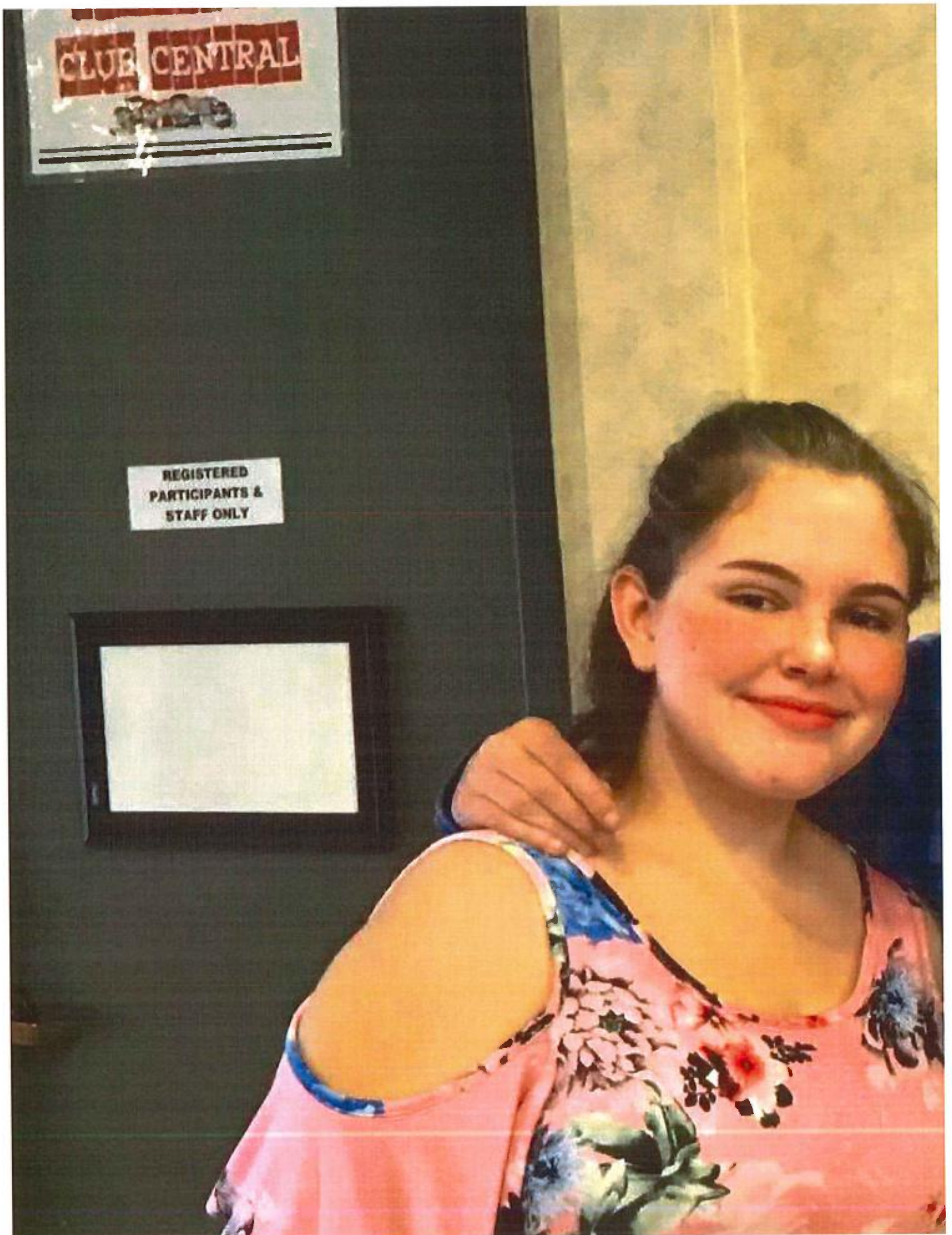












## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Ayumi G <akgothberg@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 10:48 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** In opposition to funding cuts for RJJT

To the council members of Santa Clara,

My name is Ayumi Gothberg, and I was born and raised in Santa Clara. I am writing to urge you to **not** approve the proposed budget that *eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT)*.

RJJT was such a cherished part of my childhood in Santa Clara as it has been for many children over the course of its 50 year legacy. As a former participant of Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, I can speak firsthand to the positive effects the program has on children. RJJT was my most looked-forward-to event growing up, whether I was in the play myself or whether I was going to watch my friends perform in productions. Some of my most fundamental memories and periods of growth were a direct result of RJJT. I made friends, I built self-confidence, and I challenged myself with every play I was in. I would not be the same person I am today without RJJT and the space it provided for me in which to grow.

Now, as an adult and occupational therapy student, I recognize the vital importance of arts to a thriving community and individual well-being. In case you aren't familiar with occupational therapy, it is a field that combines physical and mental health to enable the doing of occupations, or personally meaningful activities, so that people can thrive, not just survive. RJJT represents an invaluable form of occupational engagement for the entire community, and the elimination of it would result in devastating occupational deprivation to those who most need it in their lives. Through RJJT, children can engage in many occupations, including social participation, instrumental activities of daily living, social and emotional health promotion and maintenance, physical activity, education, play, and leisure. As many of you are surely aware, childhood and adolescence are some of the most critical periods of development for an individual. It is our civic and community responsibility to support their development in every possible way, and RJJT is a sweeping way to do so.

Theater provides a form of self-expression. By taking on a role and trying out a different persona, an individual can exercise their abilities and learn more about themselves. Acting and singing in front of a crowd of your fellow community members is a thrill and challenge. It can be terrifying, especially as a young person who has never performed before, but you persevere and get through it, transformed. It builds confidence, resilience, and character, and it demands hard work, dedication, and focus. There are few other ways a young person in Santa Clara can have this same opportunity without the safe and welcoming environment of RJJT.

As a representative of the city of Santa Clara, please consider the benefits a youth theatre program provides before approving this budget proposal. RJJT is an asset to Santa Clara. I know that Councilwoman Karen Hardy would understand the incalculable benefit of RJJT to the community, seeing as though her own daughter participated in RJJT for over a decade, even writing her Master's thesis on this exact program, and citing it as "the only thing that gave purpose and meaning to [her] young life" (Lauritzen, 2009, p. 3).

You have the power to save a program that has helped generations of children and families engage in city programming. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre productions.

Sincerely,  
Ayumi Gothberg  
Wilcox High School c/o 2013  
B.S. Biological Sciences, UC Davis, c/o 2017  
M.S. Occupational Therapy student, SJSU, c/o 2022



(Reverend Sprague in the 2007 performance of "Tom Sawyer" and Martha in the 2008 performance of "Disney's High School Musical")

**Reference:**

Lauritzen, Chareen Hardy, "The Roberta Jones Junior Theatre: A model children's theater" (2009). *Theses and Dissertations*. 1734. <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd/1734>

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** samantha kinley <kinleysamantha@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 10:41 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** RJJT proposed Budget

To whom it may concern.

I am writing to you with a strong will to urge you NOT to approve your proposed 2021-2022 budget cuts that eliminate MULTIPLE opportunities within Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.

I have read through the entire proposal, and I walked away with sadness and disappointment on my face. As a previous performer myself, along with my mother back when it first started, I can't even begin to describe the amazing attributes it has given me as a person, and the positivity it has instilled throughout my whole life.

I began the program in my first show ever, and continued until I aged out. This program pushed me to be more dedicated, and taught me countless life skills I still hold true to myself today.

Through RJJT, I was inspired to become a theatre educator myself, working for companies such as Theatreworks, and dedicate myself on a daily basis to the betterment of our next generation.

Eliminating such important pieces of this program I believe will be detrimental.

In times like these, there is nothing I miss more than theatre. The people I met, and the skills I learned through PERFORMING and working with such amazing educators such as Kevin Cornelius has shaped me to who I am today, and by making this decision you will be ripping that opportunity away from some young child, just as I was.

I urge you to reconsider.  
Best Wishes,  
Sami Kinley

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Garrett Davis <iloveidaho11@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 10:35 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Cc:** iloveldaho11@icloud.com  
**Subject:** RJJT

My name is Garrett Davis Barnes, and I am a resident of Santa Clara. I am writing to urge you to not approve the proposed budget that eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT). RJJT has been around for over 50 years by providing programming for the youth of our community as well as the families and residents who attend performances right here in the City of Santa Clara. As a current participant of RJJT, I am a firm supporter of this program because RJJT helped me. It helped me find people who loved and accepted me. It taught me who I was and it finally felt like I had people that loved me. The environment was very welcoming from day one. I remember my first show I was casted as a pretty good role. And I would go to rehearsals and know no one there. But everyone talked to me like I had known them for years. And after the pandemic causing the cancellation of Mary Poppins, we still rehearsed. We still had hope to perform. Even though we had tears in our eyes, we rehearsed like it wasn't our last rehearsal before the show that we spent a lot of time on was canceled. And I couldn't imagine my last show ever with RJJT being the show that we never got to perform. Here are some pictures of memories I made all because of RJJT.





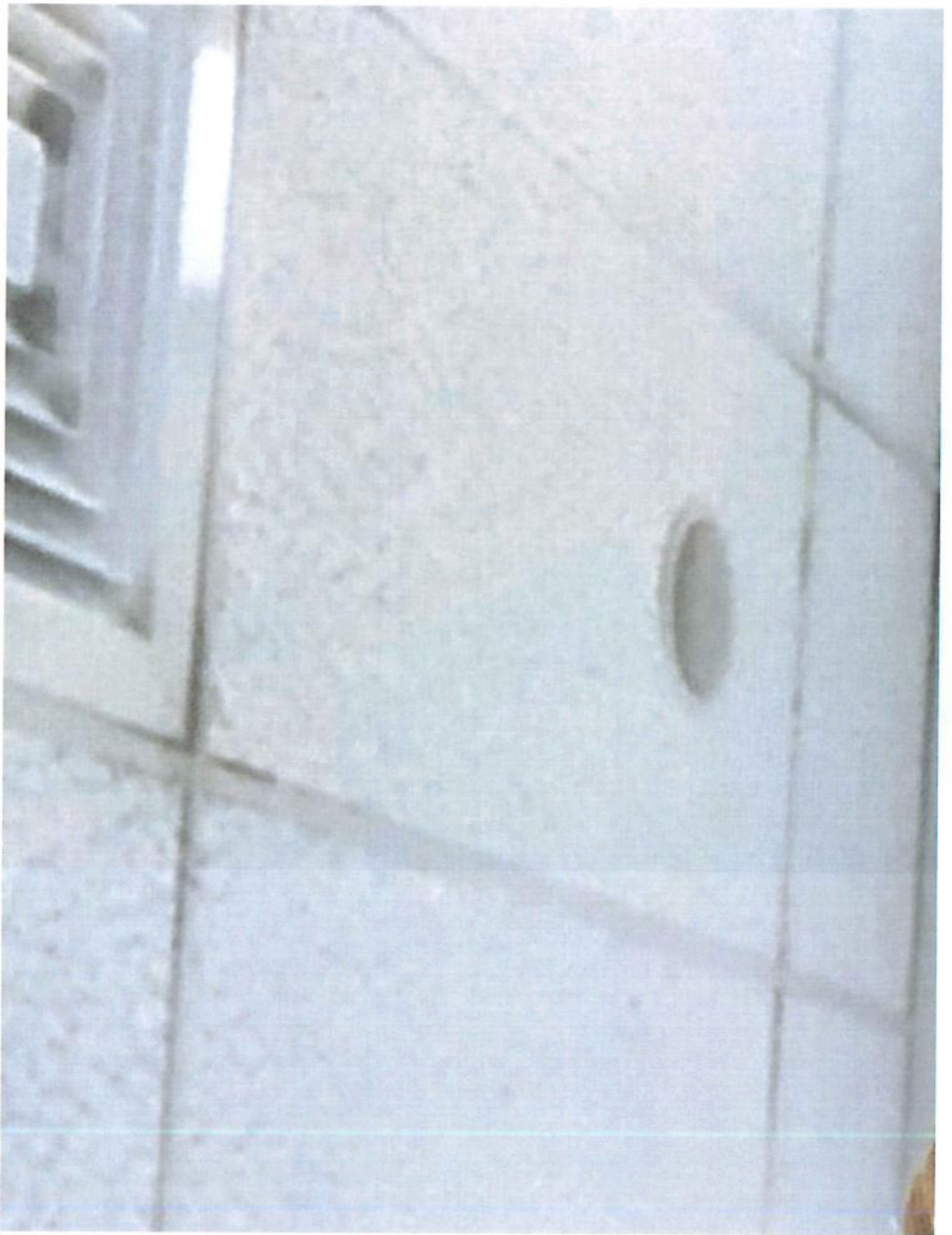








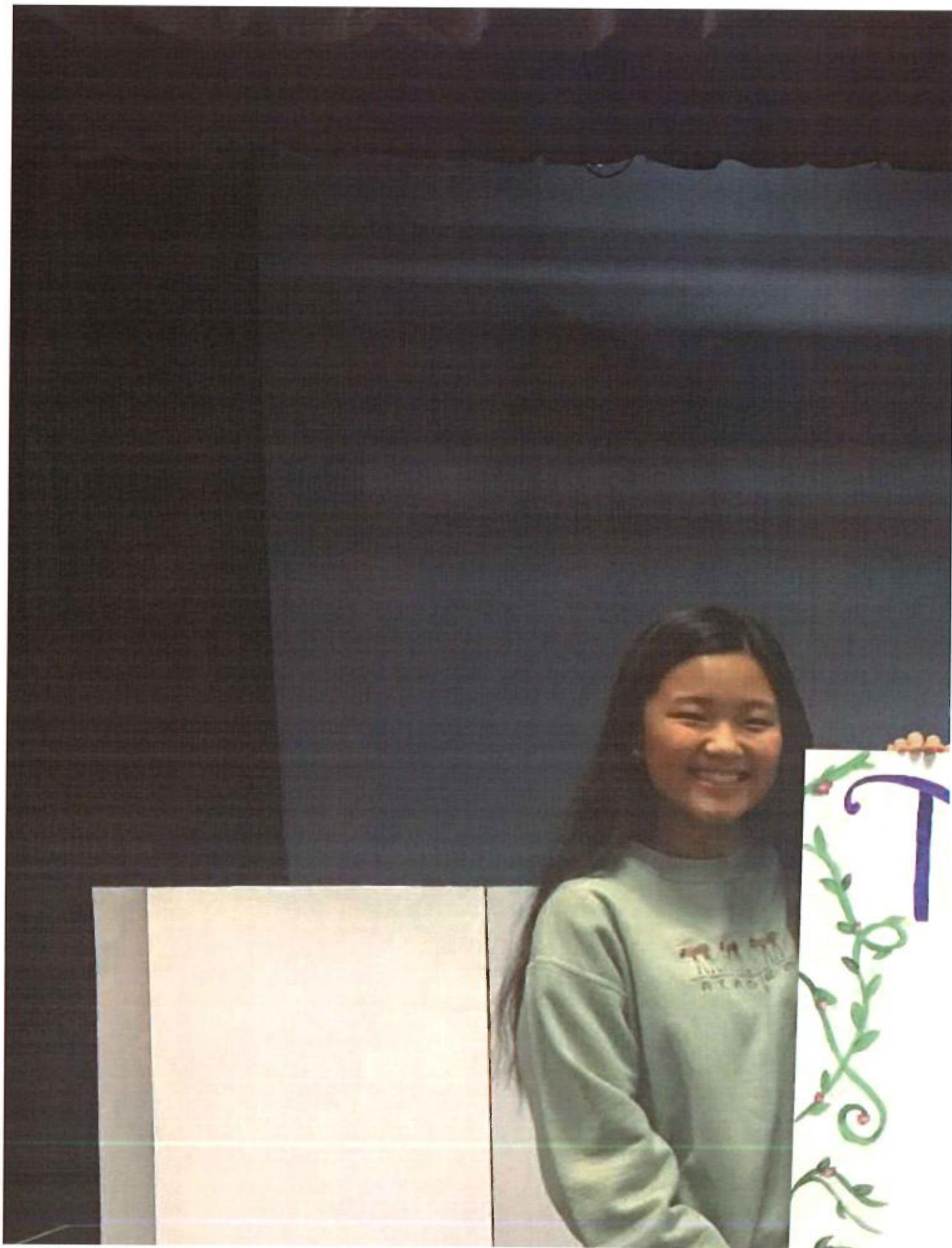






















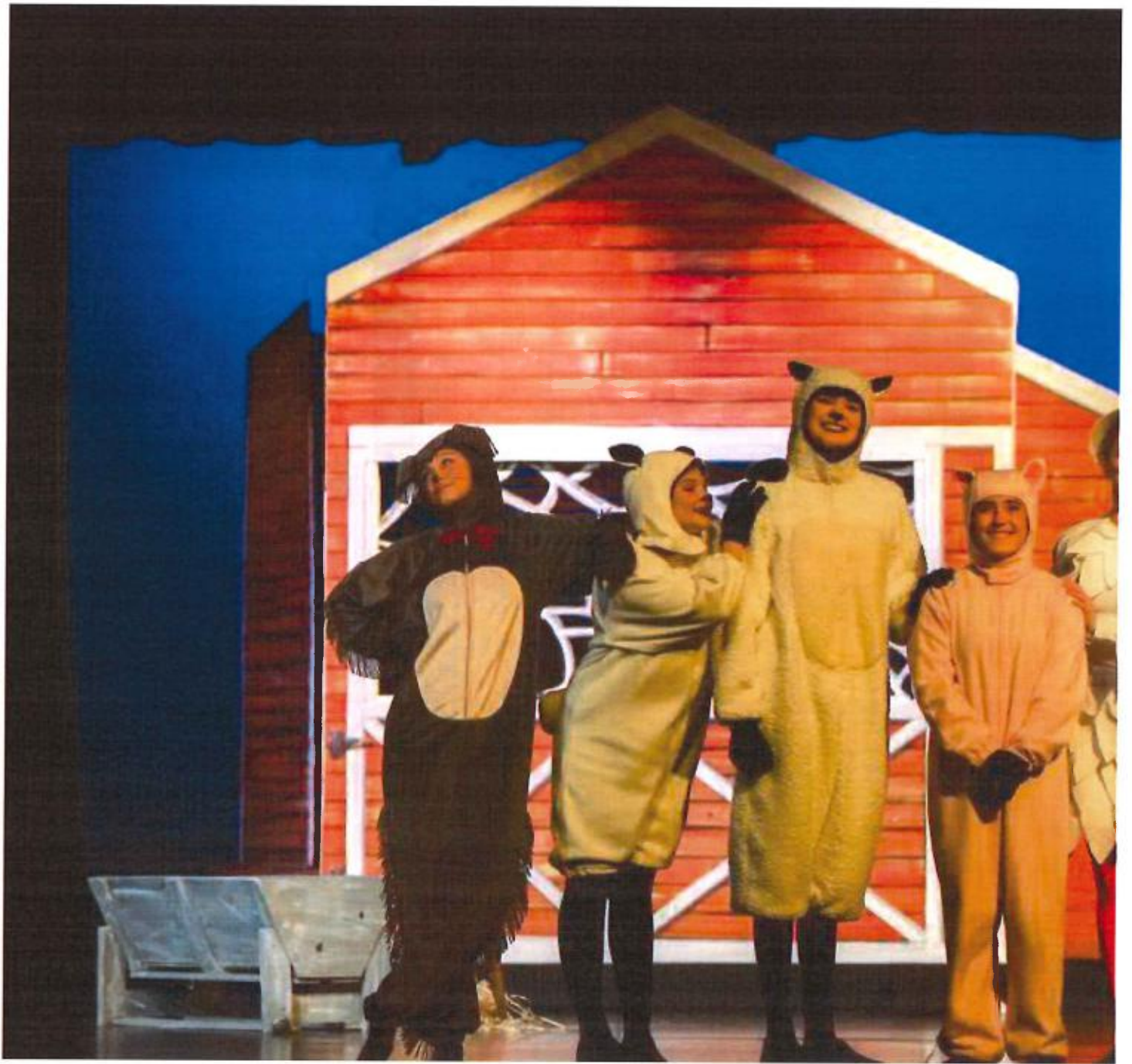






















As an actor of RJJT, please don't get rid of the program that I love. RJJT is where I go to be myself, see my friends, put on shows for people in the community, and learn how to put on shows. RJJT is the only place in Santa Clara where I can work together with my friends for months and see my hard work pay off on stage on opening night.

You have the power to save our program. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre productions.

Sincerely,

Garrett Davis Barnes, 14,  
garrettclinton@gmail.com





## Julie Minot

---

**From:** addie oz <adeline.oswald@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 9:55 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** Use Your Power to Stop Roberta Jones Junior Theatre From Getting De-Funded

Hello there.

My name is Adeline Oswald, and I am a resident of Santa Clara County. I am writing to urge you to not approve the proposed budget that eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT). RJJT has been around for over 50 years by providing programming for the youth of our community as well as the families and residents who attend performances right here in the City of Santa Clara.

As a current participant in RJJT, I am a firm supporter of this program because of all the amazing memories I have made as a result of being a member of this community. I remember walking into my very first audition scared. Scared that no one would talk to me, scared that I would fail, scared of everything. But as soon as I stepped in that room, the energy was nothing short of amazing. Everyone there was extremely supportive of me as a newcomer, and welcomed me like one of their own that had been there for years. And that's just the tip of the iceberg. I have shared so many laughs, tears, jokes, and memories with the RJJT community and the people within it. It became a safe space for me to express myself and have a place to do what I love most. Although I have not been able to participate in the past few productions put on by this program, I have had just as much fun watching everyone perform as I have had performing myself. I know firsthand that so much goes into a performance at RJJT, and it truly shows. Everyone puts their best foot forward because they care and love to do theatre. And to take away the art of theatre from the children of Santa Clara County, or any child at all, is a tragedy. Attached are photos of me and my fellow castmates throughout the years performing in different RJJT productions. The smiles on our faces are real—something real only the joy of theatre could ever bring.

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Eric McDaniel <mcdan333@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 25, 2021 11:31 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** Save the Junior Theater program

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

My name is Eric McDaniel. I have been a resident of the city for nearly 30 years. My wife and I have raised three children here, the last one still in progress. All three have been long-time participants in the Roberta Jones Junior Theater program, collectively participating as cast or crew in over 30 shows. The youngest was rehearsing for the production of "Mary Poppins" when it was cancelled due to COVID-19. We were enjoying RJJT productions even before my kids were old enough to participate. I can't imagine our lives without it over the last 20 years.

RJJT is more than just a kid's activity program. It is a community treasure, a point of civic pride, an investment in the arts and the youth and future of our city. I know of several past participants, my older daughter among them, who have gone on to performing arts programs in college, and even professionally. Others, again including my daughter, have become city employees after graduation from RJJT. Lifelong friends have been made through the program.

I understand that the last year has been hard on city budgets, and difficult choices must be made. But RJJT is a revenue-generating program! I hope you can be creative, find a way to narrow the gap between the expense and the revenue, and consider the value of investing in this program beyond the bottom line.

Sincerely,

Eric McDaniel

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Manager  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 25, 2021 10:26 AM  
**To:** Deanna Santana; Nadine Nader; Cynthia Bojorquez; Kenn Lee; James Teixeira  
**Cc:** Nora Pimentel; Simrat Dhadli; Julie Minot; Genevieve Yip  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed compromise to save my Mother's Theater - RJJT

Forwarding from the CM inbox.

**Kathi McGraw** | Executive Assistant to the City Manager  
City Manager's Office  
1500 Warburton Avenue | Santa Clara, CA 95050  
O: 408.615.2214 [www.SantaClaraCA.gov](http://www.SantaClaraCA.gov)



**From:** Jolene Jones <jolenerjones1@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 25, 2021 12:08 AM  
**To:** Anthony Becker <ABecker@SantaClaraCA.gov>; Sudhanshu Jain <SJain@SantaClaraCA.gov>; Karen Hardy <KHardy@SantaClaraCA.gov>; Raj Chahal <RChahal@SantaClaraCA.gov>; Kathy Watanabe <KWatanabe@SantaClaraCA.gov>; Igillmor@santaclaraca.go; Kevin Park <KPark@Santaclaraca.gov>; Manager <Manager@santaclaraca.gov>; Finance <FINANCE@santaclaraca.gov>  
**Subject:** Proposed compromise to save my Mother's Theater - RJJT

Dear Council Members, City Manager and Director of Finance,

My name is Jolene Roberta Jones. I am the youngest of 4 daughters of Royce and Roberta Jones. I was dismayed to hear that your proposed budget for FY 2021-2023 would essentially remove all funding of the Roberta Jones Junior Theater (formerly Santa Clara Jr. Theater.)

**My Mom would be deeply saddened and shocked to hear that the legacy she sacrificed her entire life to, could vanish.**

While theater classes give a small taste of the mechanics of acting, only putting on a live production with an audience, scenery, lighting and costumes, can teach the craft and artistry of what theater is. **And most importantly, classes alone do not teach the sense of personal responsibility, hard work, teamwork and sense of community and family that was the vision of my Mother and hallmark of the theater.**

*I understand all departments are in consideration to be cut while the economy recovers. So I would like to propose a compromise of offering 2 productions a year instead of 4, a reduction of income by 1/3 of the salaried employee and for this to be only a temporary remedy for FT 2021-2022.*

In honor of my Mother, please consider a compromise so that her legacy and the gift that the theater gives to so many in the community, can continue and make it through the other side of our economic downturn. **Without this, I fear her memory will be lost forever.**

Sincerely,  
Jolene R. Jones



## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Claire Stone <c.stone700@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 24, 2021 6:38 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council; Lisa Gillmor; Kathy Watanabe; Raj Chahal; Karen Hardy; Sudhanshu Jain; Anthony Becker; Manager; Finance  
**Subject:** Please help save the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre!

Hello,

My name is Claire Stone and I was born and raised in Santa Clara. I am now 22 years old and have just graduated college from UC San Diego. I am writing this email because I was shocked to see that the proposed 2021/22 and 2022/23 city budget includes drastic funding cuts to the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, a program which I grew up participating in. I acted in 1-3 shows every year from ages 8-18, and I believe that RJJT was the most influential program I participated in as a child. It would be a disservice to the Santa Clara community to take away the funding for this amazing program.

Looking back now, I can see the immense positive impact RJJT had on my life. I was shy as a child, and performing in shows really helped me gain confidence. It helped me feel comfortable with public speaking, a skill which helped me in high school and college, and will continue to help me throughout my professional career. Memorizing countless lines and song lyrics improved my studying abilities for school. It also taught me responsibility, because every actor, no matter how small the part they play, can ruin a scene if they do not take the responsibility to memorize their part and perform at their highest level. Acting in a show is a huge commitment, and I think it was very beneficial for me to take on that high level of responsibility during my childhood.

Acting in shows with RJJT was also, above all, so much fun for me as a kid. I loved the rush of performing, and I loved doing it with my friends who loved it as much as I did. I built a strong community of friends throughout the years, and to this day my theater friends are the ones I've kept in touch with the longest after going on to college. I believe the arts are extremely important for children to have access to, because of the numerous benefits and because of how fun and creative they are.

As a representative of Santa Clara, I urge you to consider all of the benefits a youth theatre program provides before approving this budget proposal. RJJT is an asset to Santa Clara, and I really want children to continue to have access to this program so that it can enrich their lives as it did mine. Please revise the budget to save the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.

Best,  
Claire Stone

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Katie Ratermann <katieratermann@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 24, 2021 2:31 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** 2021-2022 Proposed Budget Concerns

Lisa Gillmor, Kathy Watanabe, Raj Chahal, Karen Hardy, Suds Jain, and Anthony Becker:

My name is Katie Ratermann and I have loved the city of Santa Clara for my entire life. I am writing to you today with concerns regarding the proposed 2021-2022 budget that eliminates the performance arm of the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT), along with other valuable youth programs. RJJT has been a determining factor in my service to Santa Clara and it has been cherished by thousands of children over the course of RJJT's 50-year legacy.

I have been an active participant in Roberta Jones Junior Theatre since I auditioned for my first production at 8 years old. My first job ever (starting on the day I turned 16) was as an at-will employee of the City of Santa Clara. I remained an employee of the City of Santa Clara for over a decade, right up until the CRC temporarily closed due to COVID-19 in March of 2020.

I list my personal involvement with RJJT now, not because I think my personal experience matters more than others, but because it is reflective of the experience of many young residents of Santa Clara.

- I fondly remember watching theatrical productions as a very small child because RJJT provides accessible theater productions to families with children of all ages in Santa Clara.
- I never got into trouble and felt included and cared for as a child because RJJT provides a safe, inclusive place for children to go after school and in the summer.
- I've spent hundreds of hours volunteering at the Community Recreation Center because RJJT teaches children discipline and encourages teens to engage in the community.
- I have worked many city events unrelated to RJJT in both the Community Recreation Center and the Mission City Center for Performing Arts because RJJT trains young employees to respectfully work for the city and teaches them the technical skills to safely manage an event in a theater building.

When I am not working with RJJT, I am a full-time public school teacher, who recognizes the important role that youth programming plays in making a great city for families to live and thrive. In my time working with RJJT, I have watched children grow up from shy, withdrawn 8-year-olds to self-assured, civically engaged 18-year-olds. Many of those young adults have become my coworkers as we have labored together in service to this city that we love. I have dragged sound equipment all over Central Park. I have painted the stage on my hands and knees at the MCCPA. I have mopped the floor of the Mary Lou Mello Auditorium more times than I can count. So have my friends from RJJT and so have so many other children who have grown up loving Santa Clara because their involvement started at RJJT. The children of Santa Clara should be our most important investment because no one serves their city more than people who love and care about it. Cutting youth programming like RJJT would be a disservice to the hundreds of young participants currently in the program and it would be a disservice to Santa Clara.

I understand that the budget is limited. This last year has been difficult for everyone. I implore you to brainstorm ways we can cut costs without cutting youth programs. At the very least, please consider allowing the programs themselves to brainstorm how to cut costs before they are eliminated completely without the opportunity to work together first.

I know you care about this city; that's why I'm writing to you. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre productions and invest in the future generations that will grow up to love Santa Clara just like we do.

Sincerely,  
Katie Ratermann  
[Katieratermann@gmail.com](mailto:Katieratermann@gmail.com)  
(408) 605-5002



## Julie Minot

---

**From:** misskarenl@yahoo.com  
**Sent:** Monday, May 24, 2021 1:54 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** Roberta Jones Junior Theatre

Hello,

I'm writing to share my concerns of the getting rid of Roberta Jones Junior Theatre.

I am a parent of four children who participated in Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. It all began years ago, when Roberta Jones was directing the plays. I'd bring my two year old to the plays, and sit on carpet squares with her. My daughter enjoyed the plays, and we continued to go see them all. During that time, I'd bring my other children to see the plays, as well. All my children went to the Imagine Me classes, with Judi Thomas as the instructor. It was wonderful! My oldest child, began Jr. Theatre the moment she was old enough. She was in all the plays until she aged out! She was fortunate enough to have Roberta Jones teach her. Next my son started Roberta Jones Junior theatre as soon as he was old enough, followed by my next child, and then my next child. All my children were in all the plays until they aged out at 18 years old. They took dance classes, as well. Junior Theatre was a HUGE part of their lives, as well as our entire family's. We spent more than twenty five years as participants. I can not tell you how many trips I made to theatre, how many costumes I paid seamstresses to make, how many dance shoes, make up kits, etc.. I bought. To this day, i still have the costumes, the photos, the programs, the videos, trophies, etc. To this day, i still sing some of the songs from the plays. My children and I talk of the plays they were in, the friends, directors, music teachers, acting teachers, etc. I went to every single play, even after breaking my leg, went the same day in a wheel chair. I wouldn't miss a show! It is such an amazing process, many participants show up, try out, all are cast in the play. It is amazing to watch a play come together in such a short time! The children learn so much, they have a place to open up, have fun, create friendships, and succeed!

My children and I have such great memories of the plays they did, the wonderful staff who taught them, the friends, and families they met, the children and adults who enjoyed the plays. I never knew my children could sing, memorize so much, dance, and act, until they were in Roberta Jones Junior Theatre! My children did not miss plays from the time they signed up at age 7 or 8, until they aged out at age 18. Junior theater was a very important activity in their lives. After they aged out, they all worked for Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. The experiences they had were incredible! The enjoyment, and excitement I felt watching and listening to the productions was wonderful! Nothing's better than seeing a child on stage performing! The self esteems that were built, the confidence, the ability to perform in front of strangers, let alone your family and friends, was just amazing! The responsibilities that were learned, the joy, the creativity, it will never be forgotten!

We are all sickened by the thought of The City of Santa Clara taking Roberta Jones Junior Theatre away from the youth in our city, as well as children from other cities. Not only are you taking it from the youth, but from the families in our city as well. As a parent for over 25 years straight, I'd go to every play, I'd wait in line for a couple hours to get tickets, before ticket sales came about. I saw that most shows sold out. People look forward to attending the plays! My children all aged out of Theatre, as of 2018. I still went to see the plays to support the youth. I dont know how the City of Santa Clara could take such a wonderful program away!! It is so disrespectful to all the children. I volunteered many many hours at Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. It was so wonderful to see the excitement, hear the crowds cheering, see the happy faces on stage. I loved working the cast parties, the kids were so excited, and it was an honor being present to help, and share their joy! As a parent who experienced this for many years, it saddens me to know you're taking these joyful experiences away from other families! I know there's kids from theatre, who's parents are on the Santa Clara City Council. I sincerely hope these members are fighting to keep theatre!

I would cry when each of my children performed their last show at Roberta Jones Junior Theatre! Roberta started this theatre many years ago, her daughter Judi Thomas also had a large part in this theatre! I find it so disrespectful to erase everything they believed in, for our cities children, as well as surrounding cities children! I have been a Santa Clara

Resident for close to sixty years, I see so many changes to this city. It's plain old sickening! I urge you to have a heart, and keep Roberta Jones Junior Theatre for everyone in our city to continue to enjoy!

Karen LaPlaca

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Edie P <edielp@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 23, 2021 11:25 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** RJJT

Please don't cut the budget for Roberta Jones Junior Theater. For many years it has provided wonderful theater experiences for children, both on and off stage. My granddaughter started going to their productions when she was about 3 years old. These productions were her introduction to theater and she loved them. She eventually went to a Technical Camp session that was one week long. At the beginning of the week, she was very quiet and shy, but was very eager to go back again every day. During the week, she excitedly showed me a brick she had made during the session on scenery building. By then she was interacting with other children. By the end of the week, she volunteered to narrate the "show" the children performed. She went on to play in her school band and sing in her school chorus. Her experiences with RJJT have given her so much confidence which has helped her in school and in life. If she did not now live in Santa Cruz County and the pandemic hadn't occurred, she would still be going to RJJT productions and participating in their classes and camps.

Please keep making these opportunities available to children. It is vitally important and can be life-changing for them.

Very Sincerely,  
Edith Kerr

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)



## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Andrew Ratermann <aratermann@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 23, 2021 7:56 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** Preserving theater, arts , culture, sports

Dear Mayor and Council,

The City of Santa Clara's brand is "The Center of What's Possible." Unique and vibrant programs define our city's character and are often envied and emulated by our neighboring cities. That legacy, and for some, "the soul" of Santa Clara, is now in jeopardy.

The city faces a huge budget deficit. How we react, the steps we take to address this problem will have far-reaching consequences. Will we abandon the arts, culture, youth activities, and sports. Should we forsake programs that have taken generations to develop and refine? Or should we live up to our brand and truly be "The Center of What's Possible."

Let's employ some of the creativity and grit that made Santa Clara a sparkling success in a sea of mundanity. We must find the means to preserve and continue programs that have benefited generations of Santa Clarans.

I first became aware that the city is considering shutting down Roberta Jones Theater (RJJT), possibly permanently. Since then, I have heard that the Nutcracker, the Miss Santa Clara Pageant, and Jr. Giant's Baseball may also be on the chopping block. I am sure there are other community programs at risk.

We can do better. Let's find alternative solutions that preserve these precious programs. Let's truly be the "Center of What's Possible."

Thank you

Andrew Ratermann  
Resident  
1013 Lewis Street  
Santa Clara, CA 95050-4211

This email expresses a personal view. It is not to be construed as the position of any of the organizations for which I hold office, volunteer, or participate.

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Bronislaw Andrus <bronislaw.andrus@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 23, 2021 8:19 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Council; Lisa Gillmor; Kathy Watanabe; Raj Chahal; Karen Hardy; Sudhanshu Jain; Anthony Becker  
**Subject:** Save RJJT

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

My name is Bronislaw Andrus, and I am a resident of Santa Clara. I am writing to urge you to not approve the proposed budget that eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT). RJJT has been around for over 50 years providing programming for the youth of our community and to the families and residents who attend performances right here in the City of Santa Clara.

I have friends and siblings that participate in and love RJJT, and I am a firm supporter of the program. I have seen many shows here, and I always think it's fun to watch a production your friends are putting on and seeing that they're enjoying themselves doing it.

RJJT is a great way for my friends and siblings to express their creativity and learn more about the arts, which benefits all of us. One of my friends has been doing theater for his whole life, and has performed in many shows at RJJT. Cutting the budget of this program will destroy a community and program he and many others have participated in for years that will impact their future life in many ways. I hope that my younger siblings will be able to be a part of RJJT when they become old enough, and to do that I am urging you to not approve the current proposed budget.

You have the power to save our program. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre productions.

Sincerely,

Bronislaw Andrus  
[bronislaw.andrus@gmail.com](mailto:bronislaw.andrus@gmail.com)

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** mindidawn@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 22, 2021 8:23 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** Save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre

To whom it may concern:

My name is Mindi Tyler and I was born and raised in Santa Clara. I am writing to urge you to not approve the proposed budget that eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre. RJJT was such a cherished and important part of my childhood, as it has been for so many.

As a former participant, I can speak firsthand to the positive effects the program has on its participants. I auditioned for my first show when I was 8 and participated in every production, except for one, until I aged out of the program at 18. During my time at RJJT, I learned so much about theatre and myself. I found a place that I fit in. I was not a sports minded kid and there were no performing arts programs at my school. I was lucky enough to have been taught by Roberta Jones. In addition to teaching us about all aspects of theatre, she taught us about inclusion, about working hard, making a commitment, that kids can do anything, and about service to our community.

Now as an adult, I recognize the importance of arts to a thriving community. Please consider the benefits a youth theatre program provides before approving this budget proposal. RJJT is an asset to Santa Clara and the current participants can not afford to lose all the theatre has to offer, especially now. This past year has been so hard on so many. I know for me, the isolation and loss of all normalcy was so difficult but knowing eventually we would get back to something resembling normal, made it seem better. These kids need RJJT, it is a home away from home for so many and for some, one of the few places they feel safe. RJJT is a staple in the community and so many make it a regular part of their lives by attending performances.

You have the power to save a program that has helped generations of children and families engage in city programming. Please revise the budget and save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre productions.

Sincerely,  
Mindi Tyler  
mindidawn@comcast.net  
(253)228-0118  
Sent from my iPad



## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Dori SHIMER <dmshimer43@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 22, 2021 9:54 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** RJJT Budget Cut

Good Morning.

I just learned of the Santa Clara budget that proposes cutting funding for Roberta Jones Junior Theater (RJJT). To say I'm stunned and flabbergasted are gross understatements.

I've participated with this theater group as a musician for over 15 years and there are few words to describe the positive impact this group has had on the kids and adults. I've watched young people who didn't know upstage from downstage, right foot from left foot, go from "me first" to TEAM first - something they will take into adulthood.

I read the synopsis of the budget cut: "no supervisor" , and that is just not correct. Robin Shaddle was placed in that position (with a different title) since Kevin Cornelius left. Someone failed miserably when assuming there was no supervisor.

I could go on ad nauseum about the benefits of this group but will just end with a plea: PLEASE keep this group in your budget. Do not turn your backs on kids who need this life experience and opportunity.

Regards,  
Dori Shimer  
Sunnyvale, CA  
Santa Clara County

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Briana Smith <BrianaJSmith@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 22, 2021 9:49 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** Save RJJT

To Mayor and City Council

My name is Briana Smith, and I was born and raised in Santa Clara. I am writing to urge you to not approve the proposed budget that eliminates the Roberta Jones Junior Theatre (RJJT). RJJT was such a cherished part of my childhood in Santa Clara as it has been for children over the course of RJJT's 50 year legacy.

As a former participant of Roberta Jones Junior Theatre, I can speak firsthand to the positive effects the program has on children. I was homeschooled in elementary school through middle school and RJJT was my connection to other children in the community. During my time at RJJT, I built strong and lasting friendships that continued into my adulthood.

Now, as an adult, I recognize the importance of arts to a thriving community. As a representative of the city of Santa Clara, please consider the benefits a youth theatre program provides before approving this budget proposal. RJJT is an asset to Santa Clara and is a crucial part of the community.

You have the power to save a program that has helped generations of children and families engage in city programming. Please revise the budget to save Roberta Jones Junior Theatre productions

Sincerely,

Briana Smith

## Julie Minot

---

**From:** Chris La Placa <chris.laplaca1@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 21, 2021 3:19 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Council  
**Subject:** How much is a childhood worth to you?

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Santa Clara City Council:

How much is a childhood worth to you?

The proposed City of Santa Clara Operating Budget for FY2021/22 and FY2022/23 tells me that an average of 192 children participate in Roberta Jones Junior Theater performance programs each year, and that a reduction in funding of \$205,427 is proposed in the area of theater programming.

If this budget passes, a childhood is worth less than \$1,069.93 in the City of Santa Clara.

When funding is siphoned from performing arts programs under the guise of hyper-corporate "Strategic Pillars" such as "Deliver and Enhance High Quality Efficient Services and Infrastructure," support is indirectly stripped from:

- Children with unstable/unsafe living conditions
- Diversification of Santa Clara's youth and families
- A vested community interest in areas outside of technology

How much is a childhood worth to you?

I am not asking for myself. I am asking for the children in Santa Clara who are teased and taunted at school and yearn for a safe outlet to fully live as themselves. I am asking for the teenagers whose first job was working as a City of Santa Clara Recreation Leader, or who received an RJJT scholarship to pursue their passions in college. I am asking for the parents, whose rigid visions for their children's futures are reimagined when their children gain the courage to express themselves without inhibitions. Finally, I am asking for the community, which begs you to treat the performing arts with a sense of criticality equal to that placed upon academics and youth sports.

Funding RJJT is suicide prevention.  
Funding RJJT is building community.  
Funding RJJT is diversifying Santa Clara.

I certainly believe that \$205,427 can be recouped elsewhere in the operating budget. For an average of 192 annual participants in a city whose wealth exceeds most others in the country, this is not a large sum.

Best regards,

Chris La Placa  
RJJT Participant 2003-2013  
City of Santa Clara Employee 2012-2013



May 13, 2021

Dear Santa Clara Mayor and City Council,

I am writing this letter in regards to the Roberta Jones Junior Theater program and how dreadful it is to hear that it's on the budgetary chopping block. It's likely that those making this decision might not understand the deep social, physical, technical, and emotional impacts of this program. That being said, I would like to stand up and say, "Please don't cancel RJJT because the community needs it and so many children would be devastated without it!"

When we first moved to Santa Clara County in 2016, I joined a homeschool playgroup and a mom there told me about RJJT. Emily had never tried musical theater because she had always performed in non-musical productions, so when I asked her if she wanted to try it, she was a little terrified. Since we had nothing else going on, she said, "Ok, why not, let's do it!" After the production experience of *Alice in Wonderland*, a whole new exciting world opened up for her. She blossomed on stage and grew confident, becoming more comfortable singing and dancing in front of people. Some of these shows have become the absolute best memories of her childhood and she's built friend bonds that will absolutely last a lifetime.

Beyond just performing, she learned teamwork, endurance, and grit. In fact, once she was so intent on not letting the production down, performed after a car accident during *Cinderella*. The staff said she could stay home and rest but she said, "No, I can do this, I need to do this!" The staff and cast helped re-choreograph some of the dances to help her since she was in pain from the accident. They gathered around her and supported her and she could have given up but decided to carry on with her theater family by her side. That's a powerful testament to what the staff and team will do for these kids and how much pride the kids feel in these shows.

Emily basically did every show since 2016 and RJJT has become such an integral part of her life. We don't even live in Santa Clara but since she loved it so much had absolutely no problem commuting there for as long as she wanted to do the program. Not only has she made

friends through this program but I've made friends too. I imagine the heartbreak the staff must be feeling who've dedicated their hearts to the children and those who have been involved since childhood.

RJJT gives kids the opportunity to develop in so many ways that are not limited to the ones that stand out to me which are emotional, physical, technical, and social. I hope that you will really dig deep and consider how important this program is and maybe consider alternatives to cancellation. The staff is thrifty and smart plus the parents are always willing to give their time to help so maybe there's a way to save it that might just take a bit more time to sort out. RJJT is the heart and soul of children's theater in this community and I do believe losing it would be a great loss to absolutely everyone involved.

Sincerely,

Christy

Emily's mom

05-25-21

ITEM#4  
RTC# 21-524

**Melissa Meslo**

---

**From:** Public Comment  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 25, 2021 9:24 PM  
**To:** Melissa Meslo  
**Subject:** FW: Saving the RJJT!!

PMM

**From:** Pam Treder <pamtreder@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 25, 2021 5:22 PM  
**To:** Public Comment <PublicComment@santaclaraca.gov>  
**Subject:** Saving the RJJT!!

Hello,

I am a lifetime resident of Santa Clara and wanted to share a few thoughts with you regarding the possible defunding of the Roberta Jones Junior Theater, RJJT. I am out of town at the moment and just heard of this possibility. I believe it would not be in the City's interest to cut the budget for this program. It has served the community in so many ways over the years and is vital for helping keep our arts alive.

Four of my sisters and I participated in this program when we were young, starting in 1968 and continuing on until each of us aged out at 18 years old. We learned so many life lessons by participating and made many friends whom we still are in touch with.

Not every child is an athlete or has the resources to participate in other theater groups that are out there. At RJJT, everyone is included and everyone comes together to make the shows happen. Many hours were spent helping to build and paint the sets. We were given the chance to learn lighting and sound, makeup and costuming. One thing, that I have carried with me since I was 9 is how to stand in front of a group of people and project my voice and make the audience understand what I am trying to say.

So many young people came to this group and found lifelong friends that are more like family. The RJJT allows youth to find a place in the world and we should be working to keep it and not let it go.

I talked today to one of my sister's, Amy Kolb Tucker and my daughter, Jennifer Treder Durfey (who participated in one of the offshoot programs, Let's Pretend). We all strongly feel this is a program worth saving. The above sentiments are shared by the three of us, please do not let the Roberta Jones Junior Theater go.

Sincerely,  
Pamela Kolb Treder (Santa Clara) (408-839-9559)  
Jennifer Treder Durfey  
Amy Kolb Tucker

**POST MEETING MATERIAL**