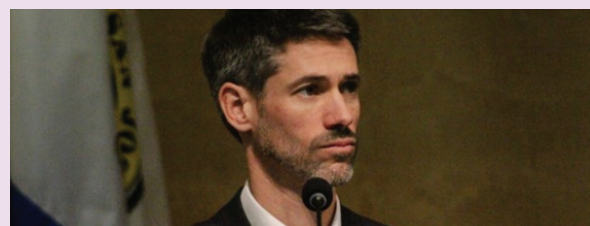


June brings diverse and creative events to San Jose's History Park
SEE PAGE 4



San Jose councilmembers push back on pay tied to performance
SEE PAGE 8



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JUNE 20 - JULY 3, 2025 ■ VOL. 38, NO. 13

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An-Po Chen, Concertmaster of the Philharmonic Orchestra

2025 Bon Voyage Gala Concert & Silent Auction with the Philharmonic Orchestra

The Philharmonic Orchestra performs in a concert featuring violin soloists Saarthak Shankavaram and An-Po Chen

By **William Bellou**
Publisher

The San Jose Youth Symphony's Philharmonic Orchestra, under the artistic leadership of Music Director and Conductor Yair Samet, presents its 2025 Bon Voyage Gala Concert on Friday evening, June 20 at 7:30 p.m. at the Mexican Heritage Plaza Theater, 1700 Alum Rock Avenue in San Jose.

This premier orchestra, made up of the most advanced students in the San Jose Youth Symphony, will open the concert with George Gershwin's *Funny Face Overture*, from his musical, *Funny Face*, which featured Fred Astaire on Broadway, dancing for the first time in top hat and tails.

Featuring orchestra violinists as soloists — Saarthak Shankavaram & An-Po Chen — the orchestra will perform Sarasate's virtuosic *Navarra* for Two Violins and Orchestra, a work inspired by Sarasate's birthplace in the Navarre region of Spain. And then the concert will close with Beethoven's most well-known and dramatic works, his *Fifth Symphony*!

See *BON VOYAGE*, page 9

San Jose's \$5.5B budget tackles controversial plans

By **Vicente Vera**
San José Spotlight

San Jose officials have agreed to green light Mayor Matt Mahan's latest budget plans — but stopped short of tying portions of councilmembers' pay to their perceived performance.

The City Council voted Tuesday to approve a \$5.5 billion proposed operating budget for fiscal year 2025-26. Several of the mayor's proposals moved forward, including reallocating Measure E affordable housing funds for short-term homeless housing and allowing police to arrest homeless people for refusing shelter. But a majority of councilmembers rejected basing pay raises for the city's top leaders to achieving goals.

The city is facing a \$35.6 million shortfall this fiscal year, which is expected to increase to \$52.9 million in 2026-27. Councilmembers restored about \$9 million in previously planned cuts that would've impacted vulnerable residents, including \$300,000 in funding to nonprofits serving older adults after San José Spotlight



San Jose City Hall is pictured in this file photo.

reported on community backlash over initial cuts.

The city will also set aside \$25,000 to help relocate a historic Japanese Farmhouse set to be displaced by an ambitious housing development; \$1 million in one-time funding for undocumented immigrant support organizations like the Rapid Response Network and SIREN; and \$80,000 toward community-led solutions to domestic violence after councilmembers found the most recent domestic violence report lacking.

"This is a fiscally-responsible, service-sustaining and forward-looking budget," Mahan said at the meeting. "This budget also makes critical investments in the opportunity before us in 2026 as we become the first metro in history to host the Super Bowl and World Cup in the same year."

Measure E reallocation

Councilmembers voted 8-3 to reprioritize \$39.2 million in budgeted funds meant for permanent affordable housing under the voter-

See *BUDGET*, page 5

Athenna Crosby finishes in top 20 in Miss World Pageant

By **William Bellou**
Publisher

Miss World 2025 was the 72nd running of the Miss World pageant, held at the HITEX Exhibition Centre in Hyderabad, Telangana, India, on 31 May 2025.

Suchata Chuangsri of Thailand was crowned Miss World 2025 at the end of the event. This is the first time Thailand has won in the history of the pageant.

Athenna Crosby, who grew up in Almaden Valley, was among the top 20 contestants. Crosby, who won the Miss Greater Bay Area Teen



Athenna Crosby, who grew up in Almaden Valley, was among the top 20 contestants in the 72nd Miss World Pageant held in India. Crosby is a graduate of Leland High School. Photo courtesy of Miss World.

USA pageant, is a graduate of Leland High School.

"I will never forget the feeling of hearing 'United States of America' called on the Miss World 2025 stage. To represent my country, the land I was raised in and a place that gave my family hope, freedom, and a future, was the honor of a lifetime," said Crosby. "I am so proud to be an American. Proud to be the daughter of an immigrant. Proud to be proof that anything is possible if you dream big, with a lot of hard work and a little bit of luck and destiny."

Athenna is involved with philanthropy and she's an active supporter of disability rights and volunteer with Best Buddies www.Best-Buddies.org for more than 10 years. Athenna's brother, Adrian, has autism.

Contestants from 108 countries and territories competed in the pageant. The pageant was co-hosted by Miss World 2016, Stephanie Del Valle and Sachin Kumbhar.

"As I stood among more than 100 nations, I carried every American girl with me... the dreamers, the changemakers, the advocates, the believers. Making it into the Top 20 overall and continental Top 5 was more than a

See *PAGEANT*, page 5

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Times News

June brings diverse events to History Park

By Bill Schroh, Jr.

President & CEO, History San Jose

I hope you are enjoying the beginning of the summer season. June brings a wonderfully diverse and creative event month at History Park.

We will be hosting the annual Dia de Portugal Festival, an HSJ-led Time Travelers Summer Camp, the Silicon Valley Shakespeare Summer Camp, a Vajrayogini Buddhist Retreat, and a Geocachers Mega event. I call your attention to all of these amazing events to highlight the importance of History San José as an organization that celebrates our cultural and diverse historical heritage.

June is also known for two important events in American History. On June 19, 1865, U.S. troops arrived in Galveston, Texas to inform the enslaved people that they were declared free two and a half years after the 1862 Emancipation Proclamation and two months after the Union victory. Secondly, on June 28, 1969, following a police raid on the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New

York City, a series of protests began by the LGBTQ+ demanding equal rights under the law.

The celebration and commemoration of these two events is under attack by the Federal Government.

On May 20th, U.S. Interior Secretary Doug Burgum directed all National Park units to update signs to comply with President Donald Trump's Executive Order Executive Order 14253. The order claims that U.S. history has been distorted by ideology and seeks to counter so-called revisionist narratives that portray the U.S. in a negative light.

I bring this information to you as a warning that the telling of American History is in danger of being completely distorted to fit into someone's agenda. I want to assure you that the mission of History San José will not change with the whims of the government, and we will continue to tell the rich, diverse, history of San Jose, both the good and the bad!

In much happier news, I would like to officially introduce you all to a new member of the History San José Team. David Tharp joined us in May as our new Curator of

Library & Archives. This of course comes with the bittersweet announcement of the departure of Cate Mills. Cate has been an integral part of the Collections Team for a long time, and she will be missed. I wish her great success in her next endeavor.

Finally, I am excited to announce the hon-



**History
San José**
Bill Schroh, Jr.
President & CEO



orees at HSJ's annual Valley of Heart's Delight Fundraiser. We will be honoring San Jose Jazz Executive Director, Brendan Rawson with our History Maker Award, and leaders of community engagement Marianne and Carl Salas with our Valley Legends Award. I hope you will join us on Thursday, October 9th as we celebrate the legacies of these San Jose luminaries under the lights at History Park.

Please check out our website to see the many other celebrations taking place at History Park this month. There is so much to look forward to at History Park this year!

Upcoming events

July 4 - Red, White, and Blue Members Picnic

July 20 - Shiny Side Up Bike Show

August 16 - The Spirit of '45 & Swing Dance

September 13 - Cars in the Park

October 9 - Valley of Hearts Delight Annual Fundraiser

October 24 - Slash n' Sip

October 25 - Children's Halloween Haunt

November 1 - San José Roots

December 6 - Heritage Holiday Tea (Members only)

December 13 - Children's Heritage Holiday

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Times **Local News****Budget***Continued from page 1*

approved Measure E to instead fund the construction of temporary shelter to address homelessness in the short term. Councilmembers Bien Doan, Pamela Campos and Peter Ortiz voted no.

A proposal to use \$2.6 million of the reprioritized Measure E funds for homeless prevention failed in a 6-5 vote, thus solidifying Mahan's proposal to use 90% of this year's fund for emergency interim housing. Councilmember Carl Salas said they should allow \$2.6 million to be reserved for homelessness prevention because the move sends a message to residents that the city can focus on multiple solutions.

"It's to stem the inflow (of homelessness) — not only after building all these sites," Salas said. "It sends a strong message to our constituents and to Santa Clara County that we're willing to be judged by our success, and two years is time enough for us to be able to rethink and revote."

About \$42.6 million of Measure E funds will be used for temporary housing in the fiscal year

2026-27 as a result of Tuesday's vote. Councilmembers will revisit how Measure E funds are allocated in the 2027-28 budget.

Responsibility to Shelter

Councilmembers voted 9-2 to approve Mahan's plan to form a new police unit to enforce his "Responsibility to Shelter" policy, which would allow police to arrest homeless residents for refusing offers of shelter. Campos and Ortiz voted no.

While Mahan's plan originally tied arrests to three consecutive refusals of shelter, he's since said a new in-house outreach team will have discretion over which homeless residents will be investigated and detained by police. He said the goal is to refer people for county-run health treatment center — but county officials disagree with Mahan's approach.

Opponents to the plan said homeless residents experiencing distress from lifelong trauma would be less trusting of the city if they're threatened with arrest for refusing resources.

"I want to caution the approach that we are choosing to take where we are placing a huge amount of burden on an individual and framing it as a choice,

when the real culprit is a system that pushes people experiencing poverty into homelessness," Campos said.

Council pay raises

Councilmembers voted 7-4 to reject Mahan's "Pay for Performance" plan that would have withheld up to 5% of their salaries if they failed to meet city-wide goals, as defined by the four City Council Focus Areas. Mahan, Vice Mayor Pam Foley and Councilmembers George Casey and Michael Mulcahy voted against rejecting the plan.

The plan would've seen city leaders being judged annually on focus area scorecards and dashboards using the same performance-based compensation model used for city department heads. Councilmember David Cohen raised concerns about the plan's negative impact on underserved communities and how city leaders might be incentivized to chase popular priorities over communities with specific needs.

"Dividing the council over what kind of metrics we use to measure our own performance, and talk about what our own pay should be, is a distraction," Cohen said Tuesday. "We all come in with our own local priorities."



Suchata Chuangsri of Thailand is crowned Miss World 2025 at the end of the event. This is the first time Thailand has won in the history of the pageant. Photo credit: Negara Gopal

Pageant

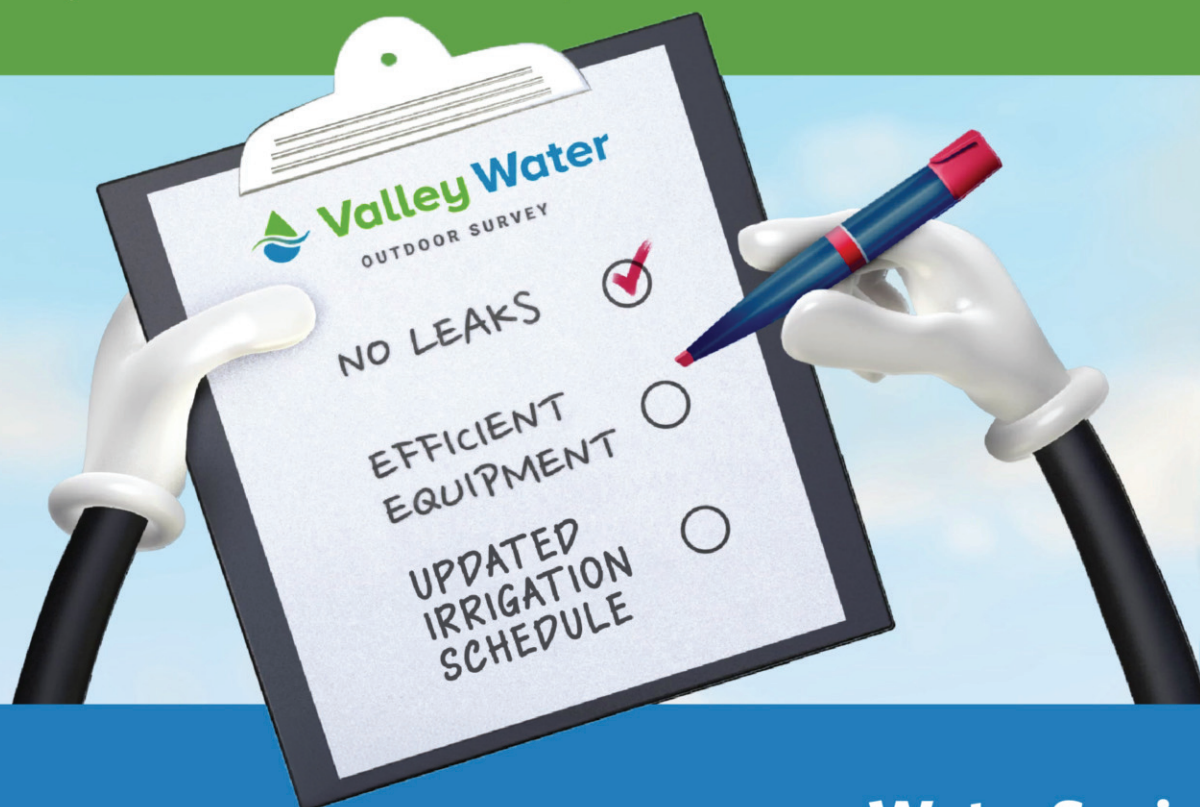
Continued from page 1
placement — it was a moment I'll carry forever in my heart!" said Crosby.

**Top 20 Contestants
Miss World 2025**

- Thailand – Suchata Chuangsri
- 1st Runner-Up**
 - Ethiopia – Hasset Dereje Admassu
- 2nd Runner-Up**
 - Poland – Maja Klajda
- 3rd Runner-Up**
 - Martinique – Aurélie Joachim
- Top 8**

- Brazil – Jéssica Pedroso
- Namibia – Selma Kamanya
- Philippines – Krishnah Gravidez
- Ukraine – Maria Melnychenko
- Top 20**
 - Argentina – Guadalupe Alomar
 - Australia – Jasmine Stringer
 - Cameroon – Issie Princesse
 - India – Nandini Gupta
 - Ireland – Jasmine Gerhardt
 - Italy – Chiara Esposito
 - Lebanon – Nada Koussa
 - Nigeria – Joy Mojisola Raimi
 - Puerto Rico – Valeria Pérez
 - Tunisia – Lamis Redissi
 - United States – Athenna Crosby
 - Wales – Millie-Mae Adams

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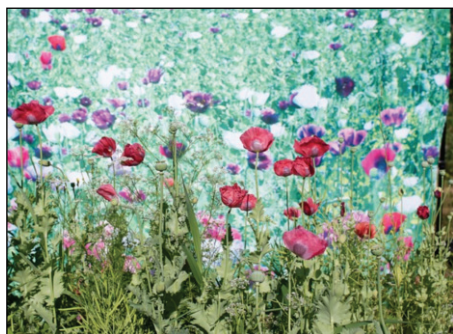
Times Local News

Two exhibitions planned for July 11 opening at San José Museum of Art

By Sean Eastwood
Times staff writer

Two interesting exhibitions are opening July 11 at the San José Museum of Art.

Pao Houa Her's practice engages with the legacies, potentials, and aesthetics of landscape and portrait photography traditions through works that examine the complex intertwining of desire, homeland, and artifice.



Pao Houa Her: The Imaginative Landscape (detail, above) is the first survey of Her's practice. Spanning nearly 20 years of work, it connects California agricultural landscapes to the jungles of Laos, poppy fields in Minnesota, and beyond.

Though specific to her own Hmong American experience, The Imaginative Landscape explores constructions of homeland

that resonate across diasporas.

Young bay mud (detail, below) — a scientific term for ecologically rich and water-saturated deposits that are less than ten thousand years old — underlies much of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Inspired by the ways young bay mud shapes our experience of and interaction



with the region, this exhibition highlights artists with local ties who are using mud to explore ecological entanglement and belonging in the Bay Area. These artists invoke indigenous, ancestral, sensorial, and multispecies knowledge to propose alternative ways of relating to our immediate environment.

Editor's note: San José Museum of Art is located at: 110 South Market St, San José CA 95113 msamay@sjmusart.org | cell 415.722.0555. Free admission for youth, students, and teachers with ID. SJMA's new hours Thu 4–9pm, Fri 11am–9pm, and Sat–Sun 11am–6pm.



Kathy Kleinsteinber designed a native pollinator garden at Cahalan Park in San Jose. She said more volunteers are needed to help with park maintenance. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

San Jose parks face budget cuts amid ongoing work backlog

By Lorraine Gabbert
San José Spotlight

San Jose Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services continues to wrestle with budget cuts and backlogs, and the upcoming year isn't going to be easy.

The city is facing a projected 2025-26 budget deficit of \$35.6 million — and the parks department won't go unscathed. The budget is expected to decrease park funding by \$2.8 million next year, according to Sheena Talosig, spokesperson for the department.

"We do everything we can to stretch our resources — grants, partnerships, volunteers and contractors all help us maintain parks," she told San José Spotlight. "We're also always looking for ways to be more efficient, but the bottom line is that we just don't have enough staff to meet the need. With a \$550 million maintenance backlog, it's clear that sustainable funding for park staffing is critical to keeping our parks safe, clean and accessible."

Maintenance and preserving parks is at the department's core, Avi Yotam, deputy parks director, said at a May 12 Almaden Valley Community Association meeting. He said the \$2.5 million in budget cuts includes the loss of \$100,000 for community forestry.

Other cost savings will come from the city's closure of Yosemite Family Camp due to wildfire damage this summer, with a one-time savings of \$240,000 while being repaired, Yotam said. The City Council is also considering the privatization of Lake Cunningham Action Sports Camp, a skateboard and bike park, which could save the city \$879,000 annually.

To ensure equity in park upkeep, the department uses the Healthy Places Index to guide its decisions and in prioritizing maintenance in neighborhoods with the greatest need, Talosig said.

She added the department is looking at how park funding can be restructured, after the city cut developer fees that took funding away from parks. This summer, the department will begin community outreach to better understand what people want and need from city parks. The feedback will help shape a potential ballot measure to secure sustainable maintenance funding and a new park master plan focused on how to make the system more flexible and equitable citywide, she said.

The existing maintenance backlog has impacted community centers, park grounds, playgrounds, restrooms, picnic areas, sports facilities and trails.

City parks receive funding from construction, property transfer taxes, development impact fees, general fund allocations, gifts, grants and partnerships. Although the department receives \$40 million annually from the

construction taxes, council members — in an effort to accelerate housing construction — have reduced funding allocations.

Yotam said the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will balance immediate maintenance needs with long-term aspirations.

"Using our California Park and Recreation Society's standards for park maintenance, we assessed how many staff we ought to have as a park and rec department for the city," he said. "We found we're about 100 people short."

Kathy Kleinsteinber has volunteered with planting pollinator gardens at local parks for years. The city asked her to choose plants and design a pollinator garden at Cahalan Park, which she maintains with other neighborhood volunteers.

"It would be nice to give money to parks because they don't have enough money to maintain them," Kleinsteinber told San José Spotlight. "Most of our parks look like heck. The budget cuts are making it even worse."

Parks Manager Veronica Schulte said the park service depends on volunteers and is pursuing additional grants. In fiscal year 2002–03, they had about 227 full-time staff in park maintenance covering 1,475 acres, she said. This dropped to 183 full-time staff responsible for 1,801 acres of park land during this past fiscal year.

"Fast forward to this year, we have more acreage but less staff. We're stretched very thin over the additional parks," she said. "Having more parks means less services over time for each of the parks on a day-to-day basis, because they have more to do on their routes than they did before with less people."

California drivers will pay new 65-cent gas tax starting July 1

By William Bellou
Publisher

California drivers are facing higher gas prices beginning July 1.

The 65 cent per gallon increase is a combination of new climate regulations and a fuel tax hike.

The rate hike comes at a time when fuel affordability remains a persistent concern for many working families across the state.

A last-ditch attempt to stall the expected increase failed in the state Senate last week. Senate Bill 2, sponsored by Republican State Senator Brian Jones of San Diego, sought to reverse CARB's changes. The bill was defeated in a 10-23 floor vote.

Jones said the legislation is necessary for California families struggling under the weight of inflation and high energy costs.

Democratic lawmakers, led by Senate Majority Leader Lena Gonzalez, defended the climate rules as essential to California's long-term environmental strategy.

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Times Feature

Op Ed
Tie San Jose council salaries in part to their performance

By George Casey

You don't get a raise for failing at work. Why should politicians?

No, really.

Why should we allow politicians to take the position that we can't hold them accountable for progress on basic issues such as lowering crime rates, reducing street homelessness, creating the new housing we need and cleaning up our blighted streets?

Right now, San Jose's elected officials receive essentially automatic raises set by an independent body. Independence is good. Automatic raises — much less so.

The "No Raises Without Results" plan now before the City Council says that a small percentage of any future raises for politicians and top staff will be based on quantifiable and verified results on core issues. Opponents argue that it would be difficult to do. The fact that they feel empowered to make that very argument proves the need to adopt the measure.

Leaders are elected to do difficult things, not say "that's too hard" when the going gets tough.

This reform plan has been nearly two years in the making, in part because we have taken the time to get it right by establishing clear benchmarks and creating the data dashboards that will show progress, or the lack of it.

The data is in place. Now we need a basic level of ongoing accountability.

The first benchmarks we will use to hold ourselves accountable will be based on inde-



Casey

pently verifiable public data — tracking priorities like fewer shootings, more housing units, lower 311 call volumes for abandoned vehicles or illegal dumping, and more jobs in underserved areas. Our pay-for-performance model will use this independent data to set reasonable annual targets and reward collaboration

and problem-solving, not short-term politics.

The opponents make the false claim that tying raises to results doesn't work in government. But that argument ignores a basic truth: When there's no connection between rewards and results, accountability erodes.

San Jose residents are paying the price for a local government that too often underperforms with no consequences for the politicians in charge.

Importantly, accountability in government has worked.

In New York, data-driven programs like CompStat contributed to dramatic reductions in crime. And, in fact, since Califor-

nia voters approved a law that prevented state elected officials from being paid when they couldn't pass a budget, our state budgets have always been on time. Opponents argue that the politicians used "tricks" to pass the budget, ignoring the fact that disruptions to government services due to budget gridlock are no longer the norm.

The politicians seeking to avoid ongoing accountability say they are held accountable at the ballot box. That is sometimes true. But with this proposal we don't have to wait four years to hold leaders accountable for dirty streets, homeless encampments, high housing costs and preventable crimes.

The opponents also say they don't want to "politicize" the process of pay. But that is exactly the opposite of what the "No Raises Without Results" plan does. We are working to reduce the highly political sys-

tem of pressure and rewards that cause too many politicians to respond to special interests, donors and other political incentives — rather than prioritizing the needs of residents.

Under this proposal we require elected officials to think every day about how to actually address our issues, not just about their donors, the special interests, the next headline and their social media followers. San Jose's residents aren't asking for miracles.

They're asking for competence and results. A modest performance incentive — just 5% — won't bankrupt anyone. But it will remind our public servants that the people who pay their salaries want better performance, not more political excuses.

Councilmember George Casey represents District 10 on the San Jose City Council.

TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK

Tool calling

By Shubhi Asthana

Have you ever stumbled into a conversation where everyone is speaking around this "techie" word — and even after you've broken in, it is difficult to understand the unfamiliar jargon and acronyms? Well, there's no need to sweat it. Let me teach you the meaning of some commonly used tech words:

Tool calling

Two months ago, I started working on tool-calling functions as part of the debug team in my organization. When I began looking into tool calling, I observed that we know what tool calling entails—the trick is how to get an LLM to actually "call a tool." The only way I could think of was to watch the LLM's output for keywords. Then you must constantly command the LLM that if certain types of questions come in, it should spit out a



keyword to run a tool. And you must keep repeating that command over and over because of the context window. Almost every prompt, we must remind the LLM how to use tools.

Contrary to the term, in tool calling, LLMs do not call the tool/function in the literal sense. So, what do they do? Let me explain with a simple example:

Imagine you ask your phone's voice assistant, "What's the weather like?" Within seconds, it tells you the forecast. But how does it know? The assistant doesn't predict the weather—it simply knows how to ask a weather service for information. This is an example of tool calling, a way for AI models to interact with external systems to get real-world data or perform tasks.

Modern AI models, like ChatGPT, don't always have up-to-date information or built-in calculators. Instead, they use a method called tool calling to fetch information from the right source. Instead of guessing, the AI checks a list of available tools and decides which one to use. If you ask for today's stock prices, the AI identifies a financial data tool and requests the latest numbers. If you need

See TECH JARGON, page 10



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Senior Safari is back this summer.

Visitors ages 50 and up are invited to visit San Jose's iconic Happy Hollow Park & Zoo for free on the 4th Thursday of each month from May to October. The next date is Thursday, June 26th. Get some fresh air and exercise as you enjoy free admission, free parking, early entry to the park, the zoo, animal meet and greets and much more. To get in free, you must arrive between 9 and 10 am.

Summer Concert Series 2025:

ACC's staff is again presenting music in the park on Thursdays in July. Each Thursday, enjoy the sounds of local bands at Greystone Park at Camden Ave and Mount Carmel Dr, from 6:30 to 8pm. Here are each week's bands...

July 10th — Misspent Youth

July 17th — Identity Problem

July 24th — House Rockers

July 31st — The Iconics

Bring your blanket, chairs, food and experience a wonderful evening of music and fun. The Almaden Senior Association is sponsoring the band The Iconics on July 31st. Reminder: alcohol is not allowed in the park.

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San Jose councilmembers push back on pay tied to performance

By Vicente Vera
San José Spotlight

San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan wants to withhold up to 5% of his colleagues' salaries if they fail to meet citywide goals — a policy numerous councilmembers said would come at the expense of already underserved residents.

The "Pay for Performance" policy was introduced as part of Mahan's March budget message after he said City Hall needed to show more accountability in addressing issues such as homelessness and public safety. Councilmembers including Pamela Campos, Domingo Candelas, David Cohen, Rosemary Kamei and Peter Ortiz responded by raising concerns during last month's budget discussions on how the policy could have city leaders chasing popular priorities over communities with specific needs.

The proposal is set for a final City Council discussion on June 10 as part of the 2025-26 budget approval process.

"It's straight out of the toolkit of authoritarian governments where they're trying to quell dissent," Cohen told San José Spotlight. "In a representative democracy where we have 11 elected officials trying to make decisions, every vote shouldn't be unanimous. We should accept the fact that people have different ideas on how to get to the solution."

Cohen said he worries next week's budget discussion will focus mainly on another Mahan policy proposing the city arrest homeless people for refusing offers of shelter — potentially rendering the discussion on Pay for Performance as an afterthought.

"When I was raising what I thought were legitimate questions about whether this really had to come now, or whether we could delay it and have a more thorough discussion, the mayor was very dismissive of that," Cohen said.

Vice Mayor Pam Foley, who co-sponsored Pay for Performance, said it will benefit underserved residents rather than hurt them. She said the city manager will return to councilmembers in September with an analysis of the policy, and potential implementation in the next fiscal year. The most recent proposal disregards Mahan's originally-drafted policy to avoid needing San Jose voter approval.

"In some ways, it heightens the voice of the minority, because it elevates what you're saying to the group of the whole," Foley said at the May 14 Rules Committee meeting. "It's important to know I'm being held to a standard, and to be perfectly honest, this isn't going to affect me because I term out. I'm gone before this affects me at all, but it doesn't mean I don't have a role in the decision."



San Jose Mayor **Matt Mahan** wants to withhold up to 5% of San Jose elected officials' salaries if they fail to meet citywide goals. File photo.

At the meeting, Mahan said city leaders will be judged annually on focus area scorecards and dashboards using the same performance-based compensation model used for city department heads. His policy is similar to Silicon Valley's tech culture, where workers are judged based on merit.

Mahan did not return a request for comment.

If the mayor and councilmembers' collective performance falls below 100% of the adopted targets, 5% of their salaries will be proportionately reduced based on the actual achievement of the prioritized targets.

Pay is currently decided by the four-member Salary Setting Commission, which independently sets salaries for the mayor and councilmembers. The commission sets salaries that are revisited every five years, with the council and mayor receiving annual raises based on cost of living increases

— but no more than 5% a year. Councilmembers previously approved their own salaries, but that changed in 2018 when voters approved Measure U. Commissioners are appointed by the city's Civil Service Commission.

The Pay for Performance proposal would supersede the commission's authority. Instead, the commission would receive a yearly report on councilmembers' goals and performances after the report is first reviewed and approved by the council.

"As my colleague Councilmember Cohen recently wrote, 'accountability comes through elections, public hearings, audits and media scrutiny,'" Campos told San José Spotlight. "More exploration is needed to ensure that how we measure success in public service is reflective of the collaboration and leadership needed to bring long-term solutions to the communities we are elected to serve."

Councilmembers George Casey and Michael Mulcahy support the proposal. Casey said many of the performance measures already exist in both the public and private sector.

"There's a level of malaise and apathy folks have towards our political process, and the disconnect they believe exists between local politicians and actual issues that are important to them," Casey said at the meeting. "Demonstrating to them that we have skin in the game hopefully will engender some sort of revitalization or reinvigorate them and let them know that we are serious about the issues that are important to them."

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Times **Feature**

Bon voyage

Continued from page 1

Join us at our pre-concert Wine Reception, starting at 6:30 pm, to browse and bid on amazing items on display at our Silent Auction, an important SJYS fundraiser event, with all proceeds going to cover expenses related to the Tour. A fun event for everyone!

Saarthak Shankavaram, Associate Concertmaster of the Philharmonic Orchestra, is a junior at Prospect High School and has been playing violin since the age of 9. He has served as Concertmaster of String and Chamber Orchestras at his high school since his freshman year and has been a member of the San Jose Youth Symphony for the past four years. He has also won first prize in both the Chamber Orchestra's Concerto Competition in 2021 and the Philharmonic Orchestra's Young Artist Competition in 2022.

An-Po Chen, Concertmaster of the Philharmonic Orchestra, has been with the San Jose Youth Symphony since 2022. Now a senior at Archbishop Mitty High School, An-Po is currently studying violin, conducting and chamber music



Saarthak Shankavaram, Associate Concertmaster

at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music's Pre-College Academy. An avid chamber musician, his octet, which he led as 1st violinist, was named Ensemble Winner at Indiana University's 2024 Final Gala Concert. He has also performed as a soloist with the Phil-

harmonic Orchestra as a winner of that orchestra's Young Artist Competition in 2022.

The San Jose Youth Symphony (SJYS) is one of the oldest and finest youth orchestras on the West Coast of the U.S. Founded over seven decades ago as part of the former San Jose Symphony, SJYS has a rich tradition of musical performance and education.

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Sacred Heart Community Services hosts its annual Summer Academy

Sacred Heart Community Service is hosting its annual Summer Academy now through July 17.

The program serves 100 students entering 3rd–6th grade, primarily from San Jose Unified School District.

The academy program operates Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., at 1381 S. First Street in San Jose.

As part of the USDA Summer Food Service Program, free breakfast (8:00–9:00 a.m.) and lunch (12:00–1:00 p.m.) will be served in the agency courtyard to all children 18 and under, regardless of enrollment or eligibility documentation.

The mission of Sacred Heart builds a community free from poverty through hope, opportunity, and action. Its vision; a community united to ensure that every child and adult is free from poverty.

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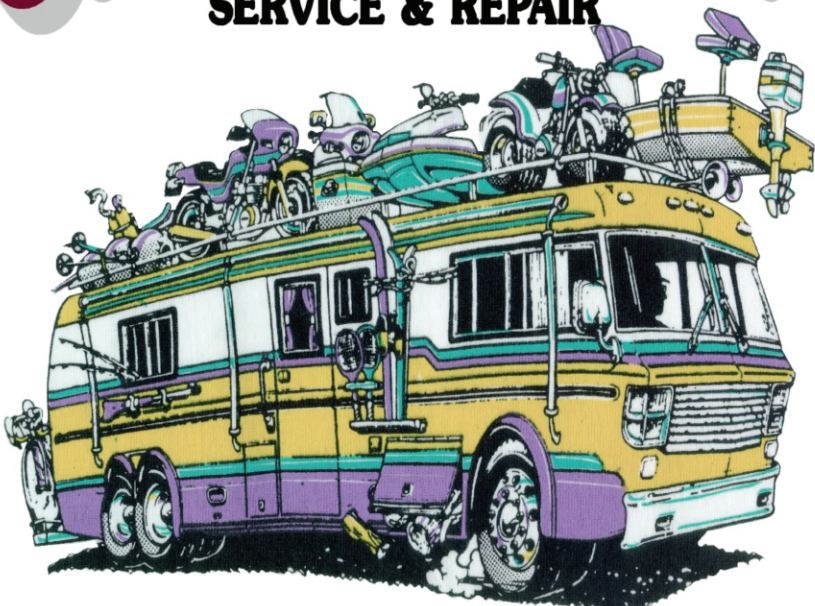
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Tech Jargon

Continued from page 7

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Next time AI answers a tricky question, remember—it might not know the answer, but it knows where to find it!

About the Author

Do you enjoy reading this column? Send in your comments or feedback to the author at shubh.saxen@gmail.com. Shubhi Asthana works as a Research Senior Software Engineer at the IBM Almaden Research Center, San Jose.

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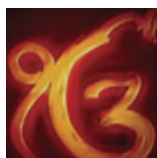
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