

# City of Salinas

Office of City Councilmember Andrew Sandoval

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## **Community of Salinas**

Mayor Dennis Donohue

Councilmembers: Jose Luis Barajas, Margret D'Arigo, Aurelio Salazar, Gloria DeLa Rosa, Tony Barrera

City Manager René Mendez

City Attorney Chris Callahan

200 Lincoln Ave

Salinas, CA 93901

I am honored to serve the residents of District 5 and the broader Salinas community. Every day, I am inspired by what we accomplish together with our residents, city staff, and dedicated volunteers. My commitment to you all has always been to provide truth, transparency, and meaningful engagement, and that will not change.

I was elected by my constituents to provide firsthand information and honest communication and to lead with integrity, which means doing what is right even when no one is watching. Not everyone can attend City Council meetings—our own attendance demonstrates that. Our community expects updates, context, and transparency, and social media is by far one of the most effective tools available to ensure they receive it. The reach of my platforms shows exactly what my residents prefer: access to information directly from their elected representative in a venue that meets them where they are.

A community member recently reminded me that truth can sometimes be uncomfortable. Keeping our community informed and involved is what responsible government looks like—and it's a responsibility I take seriously.

Which is the greater concern: Calling out a falsehood, or allowing the public to be misled on an issue that affects their daily lives? The residents of Salinas deserve honesty delivered with integrity, not lip service.

When I step out, it is often because I want to ensure that constituents who speak, many for the first time, receive the follow-up, support, or information they need. I do this because doing right by people requires more than listening; it requires action. I take the time to encourage public participation, reassure residents that their voices matter, and explain how their involvement can and does shape our city's future. I hope my colleagues will also embrace a more responsive and engaged approach to the community we serve.

And yes — as a husband and father of four — there are moments when I need to step away briefly to check on my family or simply use the restroom. These are normal human responsibilities, not acts of misconduct.

The concern raised about residents cheering or chanting when I step outside after a community victory is misplaced. Our residents have every right to celebrate civic engagement and to take pride in participating in their local government. To frame their enthusiasm as grounds for censure minimizes the very community involvement we should be encouraging. It suggests that the issue is not decorum, but discomfort—perhaps even envy—with the level of trust, support, and engagement that grows when elected officials communicate openly and stand with their constituents. Community celebration is not a threat; it is a sign that people are being seen, heard, and empowered. That is something to honor, not condemn.

This is the first time anyone has raised concerns about me wearing a city-logo on my attire. If new guidance is necessary, then the Council should collectively develop it. I will gladly comply with any clear rules. The fact that no one communicated this concern for a year reflects a broader problem — not with my conduct, but with the lack of open, direct communication from my colleagues.

At no point during their first year in office did Councilmembers Barajas or D'Arrigo send an email, request a meeting, or communicate any of these concerns. In a recent meeting, both members present stated that the real issue was my social media activity. Councilmember D'Arrigo explicitly said, "I just need your social media to stop. I can't sleep." When I told her I could not commit to stop posting, her response was, "Then we need to proceed with the censure."

Councilmember Barajas expressed frustration that when he travels to conferences, the number one question he hears is: How is it working with Councilmember Sandoval? Again, this does not constitute misconduct — it simply demonstrates how my colleagues undervalue using social media as a tool for constituent engagement.

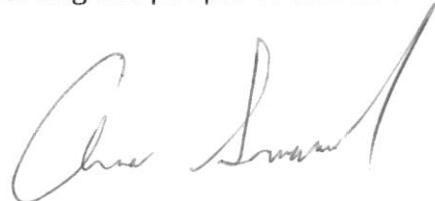
Meanwhile, neither disclosed their positions or intentions on rent stabilization and tenant protections, even as they received substantial contributions from agriculture, property managers, and developers — the very groups benefiting from the decisions they are now making. When elected officials make decisions that align so neatly with donor interests, the public has a right to raise concerns. Transparency is not an attack; it is accountability.

**My commitment remains unchanged.**

I will continue to provide truthful information to the public, encourage civic engagement, and amplify the voices of residents who cannot always be present in this room. My First Amendment rights do not disappear because my transparency makes some people uncomfortable. I represent the residents, and their support has been overwhelming and I will continue to serve them with honesty, accessibility, and the respect they deserve.

Salinas deserves a government that is open, transparent, and accountable. I will always stand with the community.

I remain committed to good-faith collaboration with my fellow Councilmembers, to doing my part in our shared responsibilities, and to working together when the focus is truly on serving the people of Salinas.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Sandoval".

Andrew Sandoval