

**Juan Pablo Cervantes**

**Candidate for Humboldt County Clerk, Recorder & Registrar of Voters**

**<https://voteforjuanpablo.com/>**

**1. How will you advocate for local businesses to help them navigate the current economic climate?**

I recognize that supporting our local businesses and fostering a prosperous business climate is essential to maintaining and improving the quality of our communities. As I see it, the county government needs to actively support local businesses through the economic booms and the slumps. And advocating for you is not limited to the services offered by our Economic Development Division, GoHumCo, or to direct actions by our Board of Supervisors. Instead, each County office that regularly interfaces with businesses must play its part in fostering a business-friendly environment.

As the Clerk-Recorder, reducing unnecessary burdens on your time is one of my top priorities. We must program efficiencies into our administrative process that reduce the time and energy required in one area to provide more meaningful services elsewhere. I will utilize online and digital resources to communicate better step-by-step filing processes and FAQs to online users, freeing up more energy for in-person interactions. I will leverage my Public Administration education and experience to ensure that we implement up-to-date best practices within the department.

I am interested in working with the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations to co-host educational seminars and secure expert speakers. For instance, many businesses, particularly sole proprietor upstarts, could benefit from a more robust understanding of fictitious business name statements. And as new modern government tools are adopted in Humboldt, the Clerk-Recorder, and other departments, should take steps to educate businesses on how these tools may be best utilized.

Finally, whenever there is a means that we can meet locally, I will carry forward our office's long-time practice of buying locally. Both Carolyn Crnich and Kelly Sanders employed this practice of directly supporting local businesses. When we find our office facing a staffing shortage, Express Employment Professionals takes care of that problem. Advanced Security Systems provide our security systems. And after the polls close, Paul's Live from New York provides the pizza that keeps the elections staff processing ballots late into the night (along with the help of Jitter Bean Coffee).

**2. How will you evaluate and leverage State and Federal initiatives to better support our local businesses?**

Evaluating Proposed Legislation. I will bring my advocacy experience to bear in evaluating proposed initiatives to determine the impact on local businesses and on the services the Clerk-Recorder provides. As part of my evaluation process, I will stay in communication with stakeholders and other professionals to reach an informed position on the impacts on local businesses.

And because Humboldt County faces the financial constraints common among rural governments, I will maintain a policy of advocating for state support to cover the costs incurred from mandates, which diminish current levels of service the County provides.

Where legislation stands to either benefit or harm our local businesses, I will communicate my findings

to the County Counsel and the Board of Supervisors, and where appropriate, I will ask the Board to take an official stance.

Evaluating legislation is a time-sensitive matter. It is essential to address issues as early in the process as possible when authors are still ironing out the language and are more amenable to amendments. I will identify these proposals in a timely manner by maintaining strong relationships with my peers from other counties, closely following the bulletins put out by California's Clerk and Recorder associations, and by personally employing digital systems that track legislation.

Leveraging Legislative Initiatives. To best leverage Federal/State programs for the benefit of our local businesses, I will engage with the Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholder groups to determine how business needs can be best met. Moreover, I hope we can act in partnership to improve our leverage, especially where grant money is available to enhance and modernize systems for the benefit of local businesses.

**3. How can we better work together and improve two-way communication between local businesses and City and County government to ensure that area businesses are adequately engaged and their needs considered when City and County-wide decisions are being made?**

Expanding stakeholder engagement is incredibly important to me. Addressing stakeholders late in the decision-making process increases the risk of implementing poorly informed policies or programs. It upsets stakeholders and further deteriorates two-way communication.

A core component of my campaign platform is meeting you where you are. To properly gauge the range of issues facing our business community, attending Chamber events and meeting with other professional organizations is essential. I intend for the Clerk-Recorder to serve as a partner to our business community.