



Press Release

Office of Mayor Sam T. Liccardo

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San José Independent Police Auditor LaDoris H. Cordell to Retire in July

San Jose, CA – Judge LaDoris H. Cordell, San Jose’s Independent Police Auditor (IPA) informed the Mayor and City Council that she will be retiring. Her last day will be July 3, 2015.

“I thank Judge Cordell for her tremendous service to the residents of San José. In her time as Independent Police Auditor she has increased outreach to all of San Jose’s communities and encouraged thoughtful discussion of policy issues at a time of national debate over public safety,” said Mayor Liccardo.

“It has been my great honor to serve the people of San Jose as your Independent Police Auditor,” said Judge Cordell. “Over the last five years, I have strived to increase the trust between the residents of San José and their police department by advocating for policy changes that increased the transparency of the police force.

"After five years of City service, it is time for me to pursue projects I have had on the back burner for a long time---writing a memoir about my 20 years on the bench, pursuing my art work and my music with the African American Composer Initiative of which I am a co-founder," said Judge Cordell.

Mayor Liccardo will shortly bring forth a memo outlining a broad-based selection process for the next Independent Police Auditor that provides ample opportunity for community input. There will be multiple opportunities for community groups and members of the public to comment on and influence the search process. In the past, the City of San José has retained the services of a search firm, published recruiting materials, and convened a community panel to interview prospective candidates, prior to the Mayor and City Council making an appointment.

Judge Cordell was appointed by the San José City Council to be the Independent Police Auditor on April 13, 2010. Public outreach and education has been a hallmark of her tenure, as has been a focus on equity and fairness in policing. Judge Cordell responded to community concerns about traffic stops and the potential for people of color to be unfairly targeted by leading a push for the Police Department to document all pedestrian and vehicle detentions that did not result in arrests or the issuance of citations. By collecting this data, the Department can determine if additional changes in policy and practice are needed.

Prior to her appointment as San Jose’s IPA, Judge Cordell was appointed to the Santa Clara County Municipal Court and became the first African American woman to serve as a judge in Northern California. Six years later, Judge Cordell won a seat on the Superior Court of Santa Clara County.

She retired from the Superior Court after 19 years, and then served eight years as the Vice Provost and Special Counselor to the President of Stanford University.

Throughout her career, Judge Cordell won numerous awards including the W.E.B. DuBois Award from the Silicon Valley NAACP, the Rose Bird Memorial Award California Women Lawyers Association and the Don Edwards Civil Liberties Award from the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California.

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