



## **Social Media**

### *Using Technology to Connect & Better Serve You*

The creation and growth of the World Wide Web has unequivocally changed the way that we seek, access and gather information. Gone are the days where most of us gather data and research from books and encyclopedias. Now information and knowledge is sought from the Internet. With the increase in technology and automation and the rise of the virtual world, many feared that these factors would further isolate us from each other and eliminate the need for social contact. For example, instead of driving to the bank and working with a teller, we could simply bank from the convenience of our own homes. Although we may find this to be true in many situations, where we rely less on human interaction, ironically enough, the virtual world has morphed and transitioned to a new phase where it is actually being used to bring us closer together.

The popularity of Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr and wikis proves that the information age has paved the way for the advent of social media. These tools actually help to bring us closer to each other and keep us connected 24/7. As opposed to being isolated and disconnected, we now know where people are, what they are doing, how they are feeling, and what they are thinking instantly and constantly.

I know this technology can be scary. If it is abused and taken to extremes, it can be intrusive and all-consuming. But if used properly and effectively, I think social media can enhance the way we live and work. Instead of avoiding this technology, I think that it is important that we try to embrace it and learn to take advantage of it.

As many of you know, I am an avid Facebook blogger and a big fan of cell phone texting. In fact, the Mercury News has enjoyed reporting on this. I appreciate the fact that they enable me to conveniently communicate to a large audience instantly. I use these tools to try to keep you, my constituents, informed and up-to-date on the latest news. I am constantly posting updates on Facebook, and every Tuesday morning I try to share the main points for the day's council session.

If you are interested, and haven't done so already, I invite you to "friend" me on Facebook. I am also on LinkedIn. I am not yet using Twitter, but hope to start tweeting sometime in the near future. The District 1 Web site: <http://www.sjdistrict1.com/> has links to my Facebook and LinkedIn pages. We also make all of our photos available via Flickr so that you can easily download any pictures that you want.

As a constituent and concerned citizen you have a right to expect open communication and transparency in government. Social media can help us connect and communicate more efficiently and effectively. I believe that these tools help me serve you better -- they improve accessibility and increase accountability.