

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Capitola Mayor Yvette Brooks Announces Departure from City Council to Lead United Way of Santa Cruz County

CAPITOLA, CA – January 3, 2025 – Mayor Yvette Brooks has announced her decision to step down from the Capitola City Council effective January 13, 2025, to accept the position of Chief Executive Officer at United Way of Santa Cruz County. Mayor Brooks' final City Council meeting will take place on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at 6:00 PM. During this meeting, the Council will decide whether the vacancy will be filled by appointment or go to a special election.

"It has truly been an honor serving on the City Council for the past six years," said Brooks. "I ran on a platform of supporting our community, focusing on the well-being of all residents and the youth living here. Now, I have the opportunity to serve the entire County of Santa Cruz, embracing United Way's mission to ignite our community to give, advocate, and volunteer so that our youth succeed in school and life, our residents are healthy, and our families are financially independent. While it is an extremely difficult decision to step down from the Council, I recognize the best way to continue to contribute to Capitola and this county I love, is to dedicate all of my time and efforts to the United Way role."

During her tenure, Mayor Brooks achieved significant milestones as the first Latina Mayor of Capitola and now will break new ground as the first Latina CEO of United Way of Santa Cruz County. Highlights of her accomplishments include:

- **Infrastructure Development:** Collaborating with state and federal officials to secure funding for rebuilding Capitola's iconic wharf and community center, while helping complete the construction of the City's state-of-the-art library. Mayor Brooks also supported numerous roadway improvements throughout the community, including the long-awaited improvements to Clares and Brommer Streets.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Spearheading the Measure Y campaign to stabilize Capitola's budget, ensuring raises for city employees and the Capitola Police Department.
- **Community:** Partnering with County Park Friends to raise \$1 million for the new Treasure Cove playground at Jade Street Park, transforming it into an inclusive playground where families and children of all abilities can play together.

- **Equity and Inclusivity:** Developing strong policies with a focus on equity, including creating a Code of Conduct, allocating funding for Anti-Bias training for Council Members and Staff, and supporting the passing of Capitola's first Flag Policy to fly the LGBTQIA+ flag during Pride Month.
- **Public Health Advocacy:** Leading the charge to ban flavored tobacco in Capitola, prioritizing the health of residents.
- **Youth Advocacy:** Spearheading a successful ballot initiative in 2018 to increase the city's TOT tax to create a dedicated children's fund, collaborating with Soquel Union School District to expand after-school and middle school programs and establishing Capitola's Youth Liaison program

"It has been wonderful working alongside our tremendous City staff who work tirelessly, our outstanding Police Department, and my fellow Councilmembers," Brooks reflected. "I could not have achieved these milestones without the support of my colleagues and the collaboration of the countywide boards and commissions I've been privileged to serve on."

As she transitions to her new role, Brooks emphasized her enduring commitment to Capitola and Santa Cruz County. "Capitola will forever be my home," she affirmed. "Although my time as your Councilmember has ended, my work throughout the County has just begun. Thank you, Capitola, for believing in me and allowing me to serve you."

"Mayor Brooks' leadership has left a lasting impact on the Capitola community, and her dedication to service will undoubtedly benefit the broader Santa Cruz County in her new capacity, said Jamie Goldstein, Capitola's City Manager

Hajime Arnold, Board Chair for United Way of Santa Cruz County added, "As Board Chair, I am delighted to announce Yvette Brooks as the next Chief Executive Officer of United Way of Santa Cruz County. Her proven leadership abilities and deep roots in our community make her the ideal choice to lead our organization forward. We are confident that under her guidance, United Way will continue to strengthen its impact in Santa Cruz County, helping individuals and families thrive through our focus on education, health, and financial stability. The Board and I look forward to working closely with Yvette to serve our community's evolving needs."

For more information, please contact: Yvette Brooks, ybrooks916@gmail.com

About United Way of Santa Cruz County United Way of Santa Cruz County works to ignite community engagement by advocating, volunteering, and giving to improve the lives of local residents. Focused on education, health, and financial stability, United

Way's mission is to create opportunities for all, particularly the youth, to thrive in school and life.

About Capitola City Council The Capitola City Council serves the residents of Capitola, focusing on sustainable development, public safety, and enhancing the quality of life for all community members.

