



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Bien Doan

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: 2/28/2023

Approved

Date 2/28/2023

**SUBJECT: SPECIAL MEETING: FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 CITY COUNCIL
PRIORITY SESSION #2**

RECOMMENDATION

1. Accept and approve the staff memorandum
2. Accept and approve the Councilmember Ortiz memorandum
3. Make prefabricated campus environments, composed of Sprung-like structures, a priority for homelessness immediately
4. Prioritize the hiring of police officers, firefighters, and medics
5. Perform maintenance on fire stations to provide sanitary drinking water and remedy other unsafe living conditions
6. Develop a simplified permitting fee process for “mom and pop” type residents and another for businesses, both of which are easier to understand, simple, and more cost efficient
7. Revitalize downtown with incentives for business to start up and thrive

BACKGROUND

Thank you to Mayor Mahan and your staff, our City Manager’s Office, and other staff members who gave us direction and guidance on this year’s budget process.

According to the surveys, homelessness is the number one concern for residents in San Jose right now. Permanent housing solutions are just too slow to build and cost around \$1 Million per apartment unit. This means too many people are suffering in the streets waiting for help and every day the cost of building their housing continues to skyrocket, meaning the system is unsustainable. Additionally, for every one person we house, three more become homeless. There must be a better solution, and there is.

Proposal #1 – Housing Our Unhoused Immediately

I propose we develop campus-like living environments as recommended in the transitional committee report, but we do so with prefabricated sprung-like structures. The same systems our soldiers use as dormitories overseas have proven to be a huge asset in helping the unhoused in

cities like San Diego, San Francisco, and Hawaii. Our own convention center here in San Jose uses this technology. Sprung-like structures can go from nothing to a complete building ready for habitation in less than a month and they can house up to 200 people per structure, getting our residents in most need out of the elements and into safety. Additional prefabricated structures can be used to create mental health facilities, medical centers, classrooms, and other social services. With just a few of these buildings next to each other, we could easily house 20% of our unhoused population immediately, and with plenty of money left over to keep them out of homelessness for good.

Proposal #2 – Public Safety

Public safety is of paramount importance, and I propose two items for this category. The first is to hire more sworn police and firefighters. We cannot get away from this and the lack of first responders in our city is directly proportional to the increase in crime we have all seen.

Second for public safety is to invest money in repairs to our fire stations. Firefighters in our city live in the stations for 72 hours a week, every week. The current condition of some of our stations is morale killing with water that is undrinkable and unsanitary living conditions. Repairing these facilities will bring an immediate boost to our fire department and keep them healthy so when we need help they can perform.

Proposal # 3 Simplified Permit Fees

My next proposal involves the Department of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement. My office, just like many others, has received numerous complaints involving the fee structure for permits. Some larger companies hire experts in San Jose fees to calculate the costs, while other mom and pop type residents just give up and say the process is too time consuming, demanding, confusing, and expensive. I propose we develop a simplified fee structure, one for mom and pop and the other for dwellings over four units. This way prices are easy to understand, affordable for the client, and quick to turnaround because after-all, time is money.

Proposal #4 – Revitalizing Downtown through Incentives

Lastly, rebuilding our downtown is important for our entire city. We need a destination spot with restaurants, night life, sporting events, and more to attract people to San Jose and make it a fun and safe destination. This will increase our tax base, without raising tax rates, and allow us to earn more money to build up our core services. All of my previous recommendations will help make this a reality, but additionally, we need to provide businesses incentives to not only set up shop downtown, but to thrive. I propose we have staff examine ways to incentive businesses to return to downtown and bring the fun of San Pedro Street to every street in downtown San Jose.

The signer(s) of this memorandum have not had, and will not have, any private conversation with any other member of the City Council, or that member's staff, concerning any action discussed in the memorandum, and that each signer's staff members have not had, and have been instructed not to have, any such conversation with any other member of the City Council or that member's staff.