
FW: Urgent Constituent Concern: Animal Safety & Community Access at SJACS

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

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To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Saniya Patel [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, July 27, 2026 2:31 PM

To: District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; kerrie.loesch@sanjoseca.gov; Wylie, Monica <Monica.Wylie@sanjoseca.gov>; Maguire, Jennifer <jennifer.maguire@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: Urgent Constituent Concern: Animal Safety & Community Access at SJACS

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Dear Councilmember Candelas,

I am writing as a District 8 constituent to express my serious concern about the current direction of San José Animal Care & Services (SJACS) and to request your leadership in restoring transparency, accountability, and community partnership.

Since 2024, the City has nearly doubled the shelter's operating budget from approximately \$9 million to \$17.5 million. Despite this investment, the [2026 Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury](#) has documented rising animal deaths, rescue transfers declining from more than 4,700 animals to 1,159, longer shelter stays, and ongoing concerns regarding the reliability and transparency of shelter data.

Instead of embracing community support, recent policy decisions have actively shut helpers out. Experienced volunteer leaders have been dismissed, essential volunteer photography for at-risk animals has been restricted, and over 120 volunteers signed an open letter warning that these choices directly harm animal care.

San José does not lack compassionate residents ready to foster, adopt, and rescue—it lacks shelter leadership willing to let them.

I respectfully ask that you advocate for the following reforms:

- **Demand Transparency:** Require accurate, timely, and publicly accessible reporting on shelter data, intake, and euthanasia decisions.

- **Restore Community Partnerships:** Reinstate policies that allow volunteers and rescue partners to actively promote and pull at-risk animals.
- **Reinstate Public Forums:** Hold regular public hearings where taxpayers, volunteers, and rescue partners can engage directly with shelter leadership.
- **Ensure Operational Oversight:** Audit shelter management practices to ensure our \$17.5M taxpayer investment produces measurable improvements in animal welfare.

Our tax dollars nearly doubled to save lives, not to build higher walls around a failing system. The animals at SJACS cannot advocate for themselves, and the community fighting for them is being silenced.

Thank you for your leadership and service to District 8. I look forward to hearing how your office plans to address this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Saniya Patel

District 8 Resident (95138)

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