



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Zulma Maciel

**SUBJECT:** Welcoming San José Plan  
2025-2030

**DATE:** April 1, 2025

Approved

Date:

4/9/2025

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt a resolution approving the Welcoming San José Plan 2025-2030.

## **SUMMARY AND OUTCOME**

This memorandum and attached Welcoming San José (WSJ) Plan 2025-2030 will inform the Mayor and City Council of the priority strategies that will direct the work of the Inclusion and Belonging Team within the City Manager's Office of Racial and Social Equity (ORSE) for the next five years.

## **BACKGROUND**

The WSJ Plan outlines the City of San José's commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for its diverse immigrant communities.

Building upon the successes and lessons learned from previous WSJ Plans, the third iteration since 2015, is guided by the [Welcoming America Standard](https://welcomingamerica.org/the-welcoming-standard/)<sup>1</sup> and aligns with the formal assessment and designation process to maintain the City's Certified Welcoming status. The initial WSJ Plan was far-reaching and aspirational; the 2.0 Plan was guided by the work and strategies that immigrant community partners wanted the City to prioritize; the 3.0 Plan will build upon the foundation of structural shifts that were outlined in previous plans, while clarifying a new set of strategic imperatives to ensure marked progress toward shared goals.

Since the inception of the first formal WSJ Plan in 2015, ORSE has sought to engage community leaders and internal partners to develop a WSJ Plan that has since resulted

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<sup>1</sup> The Welcoming Standard: <https://welcomingamerica.org/the-welcoming-standard/>

in significant strides towards widening language accessibility and integrating the lens of justice across initiatives.

The WSJ Plan includes:

- An executive summary;
- A reflection of the last five years and the WSJ Plan 2.0;
- A set of seven Focus Areas with specific goals for 2025-2030;
- Plans for implementation and governance; and
- An invitation to unite the City toward a set of shared goals.

Current progress, recent initiatives, and planning for future action steps were reviewed through the lens of Welcoming America's updated standards for certification to ensure comprehensive thinking and continue momentum of initiatives from previous years. The key focus areas in this framework, along with San José's 2025-2030 Goals, are as follows:

**1. Government and Community Leadership**

Build clarity, confidence, and trust in City Leadership's commitment to prioritizing and implementing strategies that actively create spaces where all people, regardless of origin, feel welcome, valued, and able to participate fully.

**2. Equitable Access**

Ensure immigrant communities can easily navigate and access City services, helping new arrivals find resources in all aspects of daily life—such as housing, transportation, and legal aid—for a smooth transition to becoming securely rooted in San José.

**3. Economic Development**

Support immigrant workers and businesses by simplifying business startup processes, improving access to City contracts and resources, and creating inclusive, fair work environments.

**4. Connected Communities**

Reduce prejudice and strengthen relationships among communities by creating opportunities for all residents, including immigrants, to connect across various backgrounds and identities, enhancing San José's reputation as a "Crossroads of the World."

**5. Education**

Immigrant communities have the support for children, youth, and adult learners to thrive in and out of school and feel connected to the larger San José community.

**6. Civic Engagement**

Enhance opportunities for effective and accessible community engagement, so that all residents, including immigrants, are able to fully participate in civic life.

**7. Safe Communities**

Increase the sense of physical and psychological safety resulting from strong, trusting relationships between immigrant residents and local safety services.

The WSJ Plan is not just a vision—it is an actionable roadmap that calls upon City leaders, community organizations, and residents to work together across sectors and silos in building a City where everyone, regardless of background, can thrive. Through this strategic plan, San José reaffirms its role as both the "Capital of Silicon Valley" and as a growing, vibrant, and diverse place to live for almost a million residents.

## **ANALYSIS**

ORSE partnered with ReadySet, a people-centered organizational consultancy, to review current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the City's Welcoming approach, prepare the City for continued Welcoming America certification, and design the strategy for deepening the experience of welcoming with the City. This analysis outlines the methodology used in the WSJ Plan development, including the data collection methods, collaborative working sessions, and organizing framework.

### ***Data Collection Methods***

#### **Materials Review**

ReadySet reviewed documentation related to City services and processes to understand current practices and potential challenges. Documents reviewed included:

- 2021-2024 Welcoming San José Plan
- 2016-2019 Welcoming San José Plan
- Welcoming America's Welcoming Standard (version 2.0)
- ORSE Work Plan
- Department Racial and Social Equity Action Plans
- San José Welcoming Audit Report
- Certified Welcoming Guide 2023
- City of San José Community Engagement Framework
- Customer Service Analysis Presentation
- Children and Youth Services Master Plan
- Youth Empowerment Alliance Strategic Plan
- City of San José's 2025 Legislative Program
- 2024-2025 City Council Focus Areas
- Report of the Reimagining Public Safety Community Advisory Committee
- Equity Values and Standards Policy
- Racial and Social Equity Ordinance and Resolution
- Resolution Reaffirming the City's Commitment to Protecting the Rights and Safety of Immigrant Communities

## ***Collaborative Working Sessions***

### ***Community Leader Focus Groups and Survey***

ReadySet conducted four focus groups with a diverse set of leaders among community partners to explore strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to San José being perceived as a Welcoming community. Two of the community focus groups were conducted in mid to late November 2024, just after the United States election. The other two community focus groups were conducted in the mid to late January 2025, after the new President and Administration were inaugurated. The results indicated a growing sense of urgency and desire to develop cross-sector partnerships.

Questions focused on what is working, which communities will be most impacted going forward, and suggestions for improvement. An online survey with similar questions was shared with focus group participants and select community leaders who were not able to attend due to scheduling. City staff from the ORSE also met individually with several community leaders to integrate their guidance and input.

Approximately 65% of participants identify as foreign-born; of those who were born in the United States, over 60% were born to foreign-born parents. Community groups represented in these conversations include:

- Amigos de Guadalupe Center for Justice and Empowerment
- Asian Americans for Community Involvement - Center for Survivors of Torture and New Refugees
- Asian Law Alliance
- Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County
- Center for Employment Training
- Chopsticks Alley Art
- Escuela Popular
- Healthier Kids Foundation
- International Rescue Committee
- Latino Business Foundation of Silicon Valley
- Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana
- Pangea Legal Services
- Rotary Club of San Jose, Refugee Support Center
- Refugee Immigrant Forum of Santa Clara County
- Sacred Heart Community Service
- Santa Clara Valley Healthcare
- Santa Clara County Social Services Agency
- Santa Clara County Office of Immigrant Relations
- Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network
- Silicon Valley African Film Festival
- Tahirih Justice Center
- Working Partnerships, USA

## ***Organizing Framework***

### **City Department Engagement**

ORSE had a distinct goal in the development of the WSJ Plan 2025-2030 to engage and activate greater participation across all City departments to support information sharing, coordination, and greater cumulative impact. City employees were engaged through focus groups, corresponding surveys, direct consultation with ORSE personnel, and indirect contributions through adjacent work plans such as the departmental Racial and Social Equity Action Plans.

Of survey respondents and focus group participants, approximately 10% of City employee participants identified as foreign-born; of those who self-identified as US-born, about 48% were born to foreign-born parents. Departments represented include:

- Airport
- City Manager's Office of Administration, Policy, and Intergovernmental Relations
- City Manager's Office of Communications
- City Manager's Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs
- Energy
- Environmental Services
- Fire
- Housing
- Library
- Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services
- Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement
- Police
- Transportation

ORSE appreciates the community and departmental leaders who shared their time, insight, and perspective so generously throughout this process.

## **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

A status report on the ORSE's work plan will occur annually at the Public Safety, Finance and Strategic Support Committee and cross-referenced to the City Council thereafter.

## **COORDINATION**

This memorandum was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.

**PUBLIC OUTREACH**

This memorandum will be posted on the City's Council Agenda website for the April 22, 2025 City Council meeting.

**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION AND INPUT**

No commission recommendation or input is associated with this action.

**CEQA**

Not a Project, File No. PP17-009, Staff Reports, Assessments, Annual Reports, and Informational Memos that involve no approvals of any City action.

**PUBLIC SUBSIDY REPORTING**

This item does not include a public subsidy as defined in section 53083 or 53083.1 of the California Government Code or the City's Open Government Resolution.

/s/  
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Director  
City Manager's Office of Racial  
and Social Equity

For questions, please contact Lydia Bustamante, Assistant to the City Manager, in the City Manager's Office of Racial and Social Equity, at [lydia.bustamante@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:lydia.bustamante@sanjoseca.gov).

**ATTACHMENT**

Welcoming San José Plan 2025-2030