



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Councilmember Jimenez

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** December 4, 2020

Approved

Date: 12.04.2020

**SUBJECT: Report of the City Manager, David Sykes-City Manager's COVID 19 Update**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Direct the City Manager and the Emergency Operations Center to:

1. Report to the City Council on December 8, 2020, information regarding efforts and strategies for distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine in San José;
2. Work with the Santa Clara County Health Department to create a plan for the equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in San José. The plan should include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - a. Prioritize people of color living in the City's zip codes most impacted by Covid-19;
  - b. Give special consideration to low-income residents, residents living in multi-family homes, unhoused residents, and other vulnerable populations such as seniors;
  - c. Develop a robust community outreach campaign intended to reduce and eliminate barriers to vaccine access such as misinformation, language access, health insurance requirements, costs, and immigration status;
3. Provide vaccines free of cost whenever possible.

## **BACKGROUND**

It has been said that viruses do not discriminate, but in San José this is unfortunately not the case. The COVID-19 virus has disproportionately infected Latinos and people of color across the County. In Santa Clara County, Latinos make up 57.1% of COVID-19 cases despite representing only 25.8% of the County's population. Latinos and people of color are becoming severely ill from the virus and enduring the most collateral damage from the pandemic.

I am fully aware that the County of Santa Clara is primarily responsible for public health directives in our region. Additionally, I appreciate that the State of California and the CDC are currently working on distribution plans for the first round of COVID-19 vaccines. These preliminary efforts rightfully focus on distributing scarce vaccines to health care workers, nursing home patients, and others on the frontlines of this unprecedented global pandemic. However, as we prepare for vaccines to become more readily

available, we need a plan in place that prioritizes our City's most vulnerable populations. It is imperative that San José has a seat at the table as these plans are created. My recommendations focus on getting vaccines to the areas of the City that have been most devastated by the virus. Per county data, San José zip codes 95122, 95113, and 95116 have the highest rates of infections. We know that residents in these parts of the City are diverse, essential workers, often living in overcrowded homes and underserved communities. These are the people in most need of vaccinations. It is the responsibility of local government to ensure that those that are hurting the most are first in line for this much needed relief.

Furthermore, we know that vaccine availability is just one obstacle. Educating residents about the importance and safety of vaccines is equally important. We can start now by developing a robust community outreach plan that focuses on correcting misinformation and educating residents about the safety of vaccines. We have learned a lot from testing availability and can use best practices from this effort to make sure residents know how and where to get vaccinated. People must not be deterred from vaccination by unfounded fears, unnecessary requirements, or language barriers. Vaccines should be readily available to vulnerable populations regardless of health insurance, immigration status, or income.