



Audit of the Bill of Rights for Children and Youth: Incorporating the Bill of Rights into Planning Can Enhance Services

Office of the City Auditor
<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/auditor>



Background – Bill of Rights for Children and Youth

- The Bill of Rights provides a set of guidelines to foster the needs and healthy development of the City’s children and youth.
- Original adoption in 2010, revisions adopted by the City Council in 2021.
- June 2021 Budget Message directed the Administration to develop Children and Youth Master Plan.

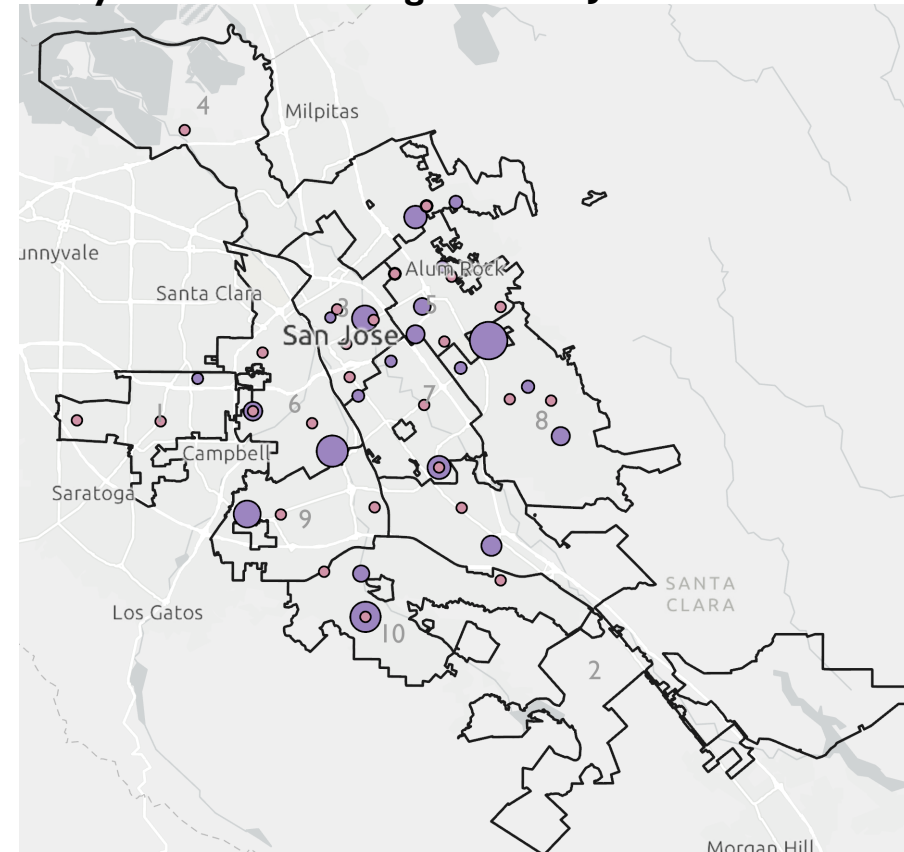
All children and youth have a right to be safe, healthy, successful in learning, and successful in life regardless of their language, culture, race, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, citizenship, or developmental abilities. San José is enriched by the diversity of its children and youth. To benefit from this diversity, we must ensure all children and youth realize the same rights.

Article 1	They have a healthy mind, body, and soul that enables them to maximize their potential.	Article 6	They are safe from mistreatment, abuse, and neglect.
Article 2	They have training in life skills that will prepare them to live independently, be self-sufficient, and contribute to their community.	Article 7	Their essential needs are met including access to basic amenities—nutritious food, housing, clothing, health care, technology, and transportation accessibility.
Article 3	They have access to up-to-date educational resources that promote success in life, in future careers, and a love of life-long learning.	Article 8	They have a safe and healthy environment, including homes, schools, neighborhoods, and communities.
Article 4	They have employment opportunities with protections from unfair labor practices with guides on how to find jobs that will be beneficial to them.	Article 9	They develop ongoing relationships with caring, trusting, and supportive adults.
Article 5	They have a voice in their local government to advocate for the issues that matter to them.	Article 10	They have knowledge of, are educated about, and actively include people of diverse cultural, racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and religious backgrounds as well as all genders/gender identities, sexual orientations, citizenship, and developmental abilities, and are aware of the importance of inclusivity and identity.

Finding I: Current City Programs Address Many of the Elements of the Bill of Rights

- The City spent at least \$36 million on direct programs directly for children and youth in FY 2020-21.
- The City provides more programs to address some elements of the Bill of Rights than others.
- In some instances, an outside partner or agency provides relevant services.

Exhibit: PRNS and the Library Hosted Programs at Many Locations Throughout San José in 2021



- Library Locations.
- PRNS centers and parks, circle size represents the number of activities at that location.
- 2021 Council District boundaries.

Source: Auditor summary of current library locations and 2021 PRNS program locations (obtained from the PRNS reservation system).



Finding 2: The Bill of Rights Framework Should be Used to Inform the Children and Youth Services Master Plan

- The City does not have a centralized inventory of children and youth programs.
- The Bill of Rights can help identify desired outcomes in the Children and Youth Master Plan.
- The City has used different tools to measure progress toward defined outcomes.

Program	Description and Department	Program Evaluation Tools
SJ Learns	Expanded learning program focused on kindergarten through third grade students of low-income backgrounds (Library)	Logic models, pre- and post-assessments, interviews with stakeholders, Communities of Practice
R.O.C.K. and A.S.E.S. After School Programs	Afterschool recreation programs (PRNS)	Site assessments ¹¹
San José Recreation Preschool	Recreational preschool programs for kids ages 3 to 5 (PRNS)	Pre- and post-assessments
SJ Works	Workforce development program that provides training and job opportunities for at-risk youth between ages 14-29, particularly those in gang-impacted neighborhoods (OEDCA)	Participant and employer surveys

Finding 2: The Bill of Rights Framework Should be Used to Inform the Children and Youth Services Master Plan

Recommendations: In developing the Children and Youth Services Master Plan, the City Administration should:

- Identify a process and resources to develop and maintain an inventory of children and youth programs. This can help document gaps in services and enhance equity and accessibility in services across San José.
- Define and report on metrics to assess overall progress toward outcomes identified in the Bill of Rights.

These may require coordination with outside partners such as the local school districts and the Santa Clara County Office of Education.



Conclusion

We would like to thank the San José Public Library; the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services; the City Manager's Office; and the Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs for their time, insight, and cooperation during the audit process.

The audit report is available at www.sanjoseca.gov/auditor

Audit staff: Brittney Harvey, Marisa Lin