

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Ortiz

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: 1/10/23

Approved



Date: 1/10/23

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO CITY COUNCIL APPOINTMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEES AND BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES AND ASSIGNMENTS

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the appointments in the Mayor's January 6, 2023, memorandum, with the following modifications:

1. Approve appointment of Councilmember Peter Ortiz to the Community and Economic Development (CED) Committee as a member at large.
2. Consider the appointment of Councilmember Peter Ortiz to the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Board as a member at large.

DISCUSSION

First, I thank Mayor Matt Mahan for his work in ensuring the effectiveness of our council committees, especially considering the two vacancies in Districts 8 and 10.

In any legislative body, committees are essential to the effective operation of such. Through careful consideration and substantive investigation, committees gather information on issues within their jurisdiction in order to recommend thoughtful legislation to the full body. In that understanding, we must ensure that the issues most affecting our communities are both effectively advocated for on the Council and properly represented in our Council committees.

Historically, Council District 5 has had continuous representation on the Valley Transportation Authority board since 2008, with a brief pause between 2017-2018. This representation has been critical to our residents who come from low-income neighborhoods and often don't have access to their own vehicles, thus relying on public transportation. For them, public transportation stands as an efficient way to commute to work, get to school, and move around San José.

For context, I gained valuable experience when I helped former Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco and business leaders such as Jesus Flores support small businesses when the VTA Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project devastated the Alum Rock Corridor. This project displaced multiple locally owned businesses that East San José families frequented. The consequence of BRT includes a corridor with multiple vacant storefronts, which are vulnerable to blight, and the affected livelihood of San José families.

As we look toward future projects like Eastridge to BART, Light rail to Eastridge, the Little Portugal BART station, and Transit Oriented Development, I have proved my ability to provide valuable oversight. Projects like these require experiential knowledge and an understanding of the surrounding community to make the best-informed decisions. It's my hope that the Mayor and this Council would consider my expertise and entertain the idea of allowing me to serve on the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Board as a member at large.

Likewise, East San José has historically served as the unrecognized economic engine for the city of San José. Be it our small businesses, or working-class families, the fruits of our labor have contributed to San José's international status as the "Capital of Silicon Valley." Additionally, a majority of East San José is made up of working-class families who bravely risked their lives as essential workers to keep San José afloat during the COVID-19 pandemic despite them being the most impacted by the virus.

As a recession looms, it is critical that East Side is represented and cared for. Therefore, it's befitting that the Mayor and Council recognize the historical contributions of the East Side with a seat on the Community and Economic Development (CED) Committee.