



Memorandum

TO: RULES AND OPEN
GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: Councilmember Raul Perez

SUBJECT: Hope Village Encampment

DATE: September 18, 2018

Approved

Date

9/18/18

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the Housing Department to pursue the following actions:

1. Author a letter to Santa Clara County's Office of the County Executive to cooperatively explore all City and County sites for potential use of a sanction encampment.
2. Explore expansion of AB 932 to include the City of San José alongside 7 jurisdictions, the Cities of Berkeley, Emeryville, Los Angeles, Oakland, and San Diego, the County of Santa Clara, and the City and County of San Francisco, to allow the ability to streamline the process of providing temporary shelter under the declaration of a housing crisis.

BACKGROUND

As we have repeatedly tackled the issue of determining the best interim housing solutions, the situation for many of our residents grows dire. Seventy-four percent of our homeless residents are unsheltered every night, and it is a glaring fact that our city cannot build the housing quick enough to accommodate to this growing number. On September 8th, our community could no longer wait for our leadership, and has forced us to confront this truth directly.

I thank Councilmember Rocha for his memo and agree that we have reached a point where we must reconsider lawful sanction encampments in San José. However, we must also effectively utilize all of the resources that are currently present to us, such as AB 932 which became State legislation on October 14, 2017.

Under AB 932, 7 jurisdictions, including the County of Santa Clara, can adopt by ordinance, reasonable local standards for housing habitability, zoning and construction approval to streamline the deployment of temporary shelter housing on publicly owned or leased lands. This allows the flexibility to relieve housing, habitability, planning and zoning, and safety constraints upon the declaration of a shelter crisis. This is a critical tool that was welcomed by our County leaders and it is a solution that can be enacted right now.

Coming into office, I have been a vocal champion of preventing and ending homelessness in San José. I remain steadfast in my support and have welcomed solutions such as permanent supportive housing, bridge housing communities, and safe parking in my district. Sanctioned encampments are no different. Since the dismantling of the Jungle, I have repeatedly come to Council in support of encouraging our City to prioritize and create sanctioned encampments as a tangible short term solution until permanent supportive housing becomes available. I support the decision to relocate Hope Village to its new proposed site and a discussion to reconsider sanctioned encampments on City property. However, we have an opportunity that is AB 932, that recognizes the possibility of sanction encampments at this very moment. It would be negligent to not explore the potential relief AB 932 was intended to provide.