



Memorandum

TO: Honorable Mayor &
City Council

FROM: Toni J. Taber, CMC
City Clerk

SUBJECT: The Public Record
May 10 – May 15

DATE: May 22, 2019

ITEMS FILED FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD

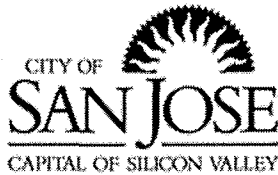
Letters from Boards, Commissions, and Committees

1. Letter from San José Youth Commission, dated May 10, 2019, Youth Commission City Budget Priorities.

Letters from the Public

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Toni J. Taber, CMC
City Clerk



Memorandum

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: San José Youth Commission

SUBJECT: YOUTH COMMISSION

DATE: May 10, 2019

CITY BUDGET PRIORITIES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Honorable Mayor and City Council consider the 2019 budget priorities of San José's youth when making Council decisions on the final budget for the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

OVERVIEW

The city government has the responsibility to allocate a \$3 billion budget to maintain the stability and functionality of the largest city within Silicon Valley and the tenth largest city in the country. Facing an uncertain fiscal future, the city has to define its key priorities and focus areas to maximize savings and quality of life.

Through surveys, an online "balancing act" interactive website, and more, the budget office strives to identify resident priorities. The youth of San José are a significant portion of those residents, comprising a quarter of San José's population. These youths are also the leaders of the next generation and the future of our city. Today's problems will be inherited by us in a few years, which is why the San José Youth Commission considers it critically important that youth voices are considered while defining the city budget.

In January of 2019, the youth commission held a six (6)-hour long youth summit aimed at identifying youth budget priorities. Through a budget simulation exercise and an extended discussion, the youth were asked to rank the following eight departments with

respect to importance in developing the City's budget: The Environmental Department, the Housing Department, the Police Department, the Transportation Department, the Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services Department, the Economic Development Department, the Libraries Department, and the Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement Department.

San José's youth ranked these department in two groups. The first group of departments focuses on critically important areas that require substantially more effort and progress to meet goals. The second group focuses on departments that are also vitally important, but that youth view with less urgency than the top four departments.

GROUP A: CRITICALLY IMPORTANT AND URGENT

These departments are implementing initiatives that are facing huge challenges and need to make significantly more progress to attain their goals, and yet failure is not an option. These departments are tasked with solving key problems facing San José's youth and all of our communities.

I. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

A. Implement Climate Smart San José

Of all eight departments discussed, youth ranked the environmental services department as their top priority. Youth recognize with pride San José's leadership in environmental sustainability but also recognize the numerous environmental issues still facing our city that threaten all, regardless of age. From global issues, such as global warming and climate change, to local issues, such as California wildfires and flooding, youth are aware of the impact that environmental crises have on their present lives, as well as the intensified impact that they will have in the face of worsening environmental conditions. Therefore, San José's youth urge the city to effectively implement its Climate Smart San José plan while maintaining the aspirations of the Green Vision goals.

- B.** Climate Smart San José is a progressive and practical approach towards growing the city in a sustainable and cost-effective way. The youth support its focus on engaging the public and transforming the city into one that is climate and water savvy, connected, and economically inclusive. We believe that the nine strategies of the three pillars of the plan align well with the youth's other priorities. For instance, Zero Net Energy homes and densification of the city will aid housing development and support youths' second priority: housing.

II. HOUSING DEPARTMENT

- A.** America as a whole is facing a housing affordability crisis, and few places feel it more than San José. As youth and adults alike are aware, San José's median home value is far too high at \$1,225,000 as reported in the Costar report for Second Quarter 2018. This is an issue felt acutely by thousands of youth in the city, from those whose families struggle to pay rent or mortgages, to those whose families have not even managed to acquire a home and are chronically unsheltered. Light has also recently been shed on the rising levels of college students being affected by this crisis, as disturbing statistics show that over 4,000 students at San José State found themselves homeless over the past year. San José's youth stress the prioritization of helping their homeless peers, for, without stable foundations and sufficient resources, growth into productive members of society is made extremely difficult. Youth deeply support action taken by the city to explore partnerships with San José State University and Evergreen Valley community colleges to help college students find safe and secure places to live and learn. Youth also encourage partnerships with local school districts and local community nonprofits to support homeless students in grades K-12.

III. POLICE DEPARTMENT

- A. Third on San José youths' list of priorities is the police department — the department central to public safety — because youth need to feel safe to be able to thrive. This priority aligns with those of San José's other residents, who consistently rank public safety as their highest priority. San José has been recovering and strengthening their understaffed police force through much hard work, but still suffers from having the most thinly staffed police department of any major city in the country. This seriously inhibits their ability to respond to the rising crime rates of the city — most specifically and most disturbingly, rising youth crime rates. Youth are further concerned about the overtime required by the police department to respond to calls, and therefore prioritize adequate staffing and retention of staff in the Police Department.

IV. TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

- A. Youth commute every day through a variety of mediums, such as VTA, Dash, bus, and bikes. Transportation is essential, and it is essential that transportation is efficient and safe, with an emphasis on the latter. Youth are aware that attention will finally be given to the hundreds of miles of street in need of repair with funds from Measure T, and that this will come with simultaneous installment of bike lanes; ensuring safe and accessible bike lanes is extremely important to everyone, especially youth who may have limited options for transportation. Providing safe and accessible biking opportunities may also be an integral part of the Climate Smart San José plan and will help build the sense of community that San José strives for.

GROUP B: VITALLY IMPORTANT BUT LESS URGENT

These departments in this group are necessary to sustain the City's sense of community, enrich the minds of our youth, stimulate businesses and economic growth, and ensure

codes and regulations are enforced. While recognizing the importance of the work accomplished by these departments, Youth believe that these departments have been providing adequate services relative to the departments in Group A.

I. PARKS, RECREATION, AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

- A. Youth view the Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services department as the heart of the community and appreciate the programs and services it provides to make the community one that is happy and connected, such as the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force, Anti-Litter Programs, community center classes, and the San José Youth Commission. These programs play a key role in promoting civic engagement and provide disadvantaged youth with resources and life skills. These are key skills all youth should have for a productive and thriving future of our city as a whole. Therefore, sustaining these programs are important and should remain fully funded.

II. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- A. By providing services such as the Arts and Cultural Services Development, the Business Development & Economic Strategy and the Regional Workforce Development, this department helps advance the economic prosperity and greater quality of life for its citizens, both young and old, citywide. Its facilitation of business development includes small businesses at which many youth work, while the Work2Future Foundation helps youth get acquainted with the workforce. Work2Future has demonstrated much success in its mission, meeting or exceeding state goals in placing adults, dislocated workers, and youth in jobs.

III. LIBRARIES

- A. Libraries are places of enrichment. They provide services that benefit all youth regardless of age. Youth deeply appreciate Mayor Liccardo's constant support for innovative new library programs and his success in

- B. restoring library hours to six days a week. The San José Public Library system provides vast resources to youth job seekers, and programs such as SJ Engage offer multitudes of opportunities to empower and help young people throughout the city. Youth support providing libraries with the necessary funding in order to help maintain quality and these services.

IV. PLANNING, BUILDING, AND CODE ENFORCEMENT

- A. The Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement Department guides the physical development of our city and plays a role in the creation of buildings and neighborhoods that align with the city's vision for a friendly and sustainable community, particularly through its focus on the Urban Villages plan. Its Code Enforcement Division affects youth through its enforcement of building safety and cannabis regulation. However, the youth do not feel its impact on their daily lives as much as the preceding departments.

This concludes the Youth's Priority list of departments based on importance of funding for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. The Youth Commission is dedicated in supporting the voice of their peers through active civic engagement.

COORDINATION

This memorandum has been coordinated with 2018-2019 Youth Commissioners.

Works consulted:

- a) The Mayor's March Budget Message 2019
- b) Youth Commission Budget Recommendation 2018-2019
- c) San José Green Vision
- d) City of San José Annual Report on City Services 2017-18
- e) Climate Smart San José Plan
- f) Envision San José 2040 General Plan

Jacqueline Paredes-Kao
San José Citywide Youth Commissioner

cc: Council Offices
City Manager