



Preparing every student to thrive in a global society.

September 30, 2019

Councilmember Sylvia Arenas
City of San Jose, District 8
200 East Santa Clara Street, 18th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113

Re: Displacement & Housing Crisis

Dear Honorable Councilmember Arenas,

As Councilmembers continues to study the issue of displacement and the housing crisis in the City of San Jose, I want to be sure that two specific groups are not overlooked in this complex issue: school age students and public employees who serve these students.

Youth are sometimes forgotten during discussions regarding the homeless population. The greatest challenge to working in public education is that we try our best to serve each and every student who walks through our doors. Students who are considered homeless are some of our most highly vulnerable population in our schools.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 requires State educational agencies to ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines homeless children and youths as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. You might be a family or individual that has been displaced from your home, living in a single room with multiple people, living in a shelter, living in your car, living in a garage, or couch surfing. We need to peel back the onion and dig deeper into the research and collection of data because I believe the homeless count is much higher than what is reported due to the fact that we seem to report information about adults and underreport information about homeless children and youths.

We also know that it is becoming extremely hard for young educators and support staff to be able to live in the communities where they work. Approximately forty percent of our employees live outside

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Councilmember Sylvia Arenas
City of San Jose, District 8,
Re: Displacement & Housing Crisis
September 30, 2019

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of our school district, many commuting forty to sixty minutes one way to work in our schools. Affordable housing is simply out of their reach, making the commitment to stay and work in East Side Union High School District more challenging each year.

We need to streamline the zoning criteria for school districts to build employee housing on district property. The current guidelines are too restrictive and require school districts to increase the cost to build housing by requiring school districts to build to a certain density level that increases the cost to the point it becomes cost prohibitive. As Superintendent of ESUHSD, I am in favor of creating meaningful opportunities for all segments of our city to be part of the housing solution as it will take multifaceted approaches to solving this crisis that we are facing in San Jose.

Sincerely,

Chris D. Funk
Superintendent

From: KL S

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2019 9:53 AM

To: The Office of Mayor Sam Liccardo <TheOfficeofMayorSamLiccardo@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; Morales-Ferrand, Jacky <Jacky.Morales-Ferrand@sanjoseca.gov>; VanderVeen, Rachel <Rachel.VanderVeen@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; Hughey, Rosalynn <Rosalynn.Hughey@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: Displacement study session 10-1-19

October 1, 2019

To the San José City Council,

As has been well publicized in recent days, the housing department will paint a grim picture of the current issues of displacement happening in San José at the City Council meeting today. Almost half the residents in a city of over a million are at risk of being forced into homelessness or out of the city they call home entirely. Since 2017 when the City publicly announced plans to bring Google to San José, homelessness has increased by 40%. Our rents are the 3rd highest in the country. These facts, and the current housing crisis we find ourselves in, are not new issues nor are they without explanation or precedent. The reality is that they are the direct result of decades of policy favoring property owners and landlords. The tangible effects of this history on entire communities show us very clearly what to expect when policy and development are not equitable.

We've heard much about the need to appeal to a global audience with a vibrant downtown, an urban feel, and more jobs. This is all coded language for gentrification, and we need look no further than San Francisco to see the costs of those transformations. And while San Francisco was with good reason already globally recognized, it was not for the things it is equated and identified with today: The housing crisis, displacement, homelessness, gentrification, and cultural erasure; all of which can be attributed to the Tech industry. Historically working class communities of color have been wiped out or are fighting for their existence. Newer residents have homogenized the city's once diverse cultures and have engaged in open hostility towards the unhoused; many of whom are homeless because of the increased rents that arrived with their new neighbors. Today we are led to believe a narrative of inevitable progress and simple oversights on the part of the administrators of one of the most important cities in the world. They simply forgot to build housing for the new wealthy residents, and builders and developers faced too many hurdles to keep up with demand. The latter is a story we are hearing a lot locally. These fictions, as the one that says we need to study how to combat displacement are nothing short of deceptions and distractions.

This is exemplified in the discussion around possible reform to the Ellis Act ordinance here in San José. A discussion about an already weakened policy designed to prevent landlords from using rebuilds to evict tenants with no obligation to them, but that according to your own limited study does not actually prevent developers from building new housing. Additionally, the reforms currently being discussed have been put together to purposely confuse, but have failed to convince anyone that the options are beneficial to tenants and won't further skew an already landlord-friendly piece of policy. Whether it's the Ellis Act, or tax breaks for luxury condo high rises, the conversations are always reduced to simple

economics, supply and demand, as if developers would ever create enough supply to actually stabilize or reduce the price of their properties. It's trickle down economics that, as you already know, do not work.

The proposed Google campus in San José has revealed the direction city planners and policy makers are heading and it is straight towards aggressive gentrification. It is also the starting point if you are serious about protecting the most vulnerable residents of San José. The project must be cancelled and the land be used to house the homeless and improve the lives of people in San José especially those most at risk of displacement. The issues we face require more radical measures than the inadequate market-based profit-driven schemes that brought us here. Strengthening rent control so that rents do not go up to market rate with a new tenant, securing funding for community defined affordable and public housing, and removing properties, neighborhoods and entire communities from the market through community run land trusts are real solutions.

Preventing displacement requires action that isn't motivated by or concerned with profit. It will mean going against the economics and interests that have created the great inequality that brought us here, forces that are donors, and even friends to some of you. Anything else is not innovative, courageous or even notable; it's just the easy way out. A wave of the white flag in the face of an opportunity to put a city's name in lights not for how it props up wealth and greed, but for how it rejects the status quo and centers the needs of all people equitably. We won't hold our breath, but you know we won't stand idly by either.

Serve the People San José



Evergreen School District

From strong roots grow bright futures

September 30, 2019

San Jose City Council
San Jose City Hall
200 E. Santa Clara St.
San Jose, CA 95113

Dear City Council,

It has become increasingly difficult, and at times, even impossible for families in the Evergreen community to afford housing. The Evergreen School District, along with other school districts in Santa Clara County, continue to see a significant decline in student enrollment and much of this enrollment decline can be attributed to escalating home prices and rents. The shortage of affordable housing in San Jose negatively impacts our families and employees, many who are moving away to more affordable neighborhoods. Over the past three years, the Evergreen School District has lost thousands of students. Many families leaving the school district report that they could no longer afford the housing costs in San Jose.

The high cost of housing has also negatively impacted teachers and other district employees who simply cannot afford to live in San Jose. Many of them often have to live two hours from school to find housing that fits their budget. At times, like our families, our teachers and support staff find that the only way they can afford to live in San Jose is by living with relatives or combining two families into one apartment. Unfortunately, we are not only losing many of our talented teacher pool, but also finding it increasingly challenging to attract new employees.

The tech industry's job growth will continue to increase the competition for our already limited housing resources, which will undoubtedly continue to strain budgets and push our households out of their homes and out of our city. Our families, teachers and district support staff desperately need affordable housing. I urge you to address this issue and find strategies to prevent the displacement of our most precious resources, our children and the families and educators who support them.

Respectfully Yours,

Emy Flores, Ed.D.
Superintendent,
Evergreen School District

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