



# Memorandum

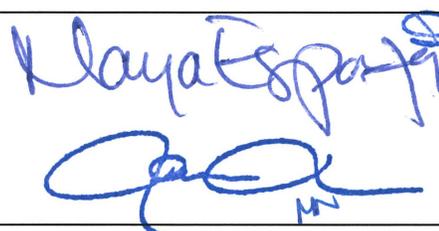
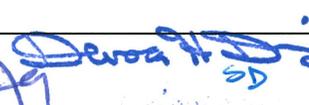
**TO:** CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Mayor Sam Liccardo  
Councilmember Raul Peralez  
Councilmember Lan Diep  
Councilmember Dev Davis  
Councilmember Maya Esparza

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** February 7, 2020

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**APPROVED:**  NH  ME  DD  LD ZG **DATE:** 2/7/2020

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**SUBJECT: PROPOSED EXPENDITURE PLAN FOR THE HOMELESS HOUSING, ASSISTANCE, AND PREVENTION PROGRAM**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Accept staff's recommendation to adopt a resolution accepting the proposed expenditure plan for the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Program (HHAP) that will allow the Director of Housing to apply to the State of California's (State) HHAP for a one-time award of approximately \$23.8 million.
2. Direct the City Manager and City staff to:
  - a. Explore including "safe storage" solutions for items that unsheltered residents keep with them on the streets as part of the future navigation center and/or onsite at a bridge housing community insofar as it complies with existing agreements with Caltrans or VTA.
  - b. Report back monthly on capacity and utilization rates of shelters within Santa Clara County and the future navigation center.
  - c. Come back to Council for input on a proposed framework creating "enhanced service areas" and "invitation zones" before implementing.
  - d. Explore Recreational Vehicle (RV) parking and housing solutions under Innovation Solutions.

- e. For when allocations based on the expenditure plan come back for Council consideration, allocate the youth set-aside (\$2 million) to the Bill Wilson Center, our region's longtime nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting youth and their families through housing, education, and counseling services.

### **Background**

Our community continues to endure a homelessness crisis – both for the unsheltered residents experiencing homelessness and our neighborhoods bearing the effects of people living in uninhabitable situations. We have collectively done a worthwhile job in addressing the crisis head-on, but are far from solving it.

We are grateful for the partnership with the State these past couple of years to address homelessness in the City – first HEAP funding last year (\$11.4 million) and now HHAP funding this year (\$23.8 million) as direct result of advocacy efforts of the Big City Mayors to seek additional funds for local jurisdictions to combat homelessness. HEAP funding was successful in launching or extending prevention programs including a robust system to ensure residents do not fall into homelessness, two bridge housing “tiny home” communities, Safe Parking, motel vouchers for families, and extending Overnight Warming Locations (OWLs) every night during the winter.

### *Safe Storage Solutions*

A number of cities have successfully launched safe storage solutions related to homelessness to address the challenges of items that unsheltered residents keep with them on the streets. These programs are unrelated to abatements and the storage of items after an encampment area has been abated.

These accumulated items in the extreme cases create issues of public health and safety that hinder not only present-day quality of life, but also cause a neighborhood to not want to support longer-term housing solutions such as permanent supportive housing for fear that it will attract what appears to passers-by to be trash.

In the same spirit of the enhanced service areas and invitation zones around the future navigation center, Safe Parking sites, and OWLs, a storage solution could provide the opportunity to address the most visible signs of homelessness on our streets and allow for unsheltered residents to safely and securely store their possessions.

We are aware that City staff is already in the process of exploring storage solutions and have been in discussions with other cities. The City of San Diego piloted their storage locker program in a Point-In-Time (PIT) district that had high concentrations of unsheltered residents and we recommend staff explore this model for San José.

### *Utilization Rates of Shelters and Future Navigation Center*

We believe our response to homelessness must be driven by the best available data, including up to date information on the utilization rates and capacity of our shelters, including the future

navigation center. In order to align with Santa Clara County's monthly Supportive Housing System Report, we request a monthly informational memorandum to Council with the capacity and utilization rates of all of the shelters within Santa Clara County including any the city operates.

*Enhanced Service Areas & Invitation Zones*

As discussed above in safe storage solutions, the unfortunate and visible signs of homelessness in our community are creating environments in which neighbors are opposing housing solutions in their neighborhoods out of fear that these solutions will attract even more perceived public health and safety challenges.

We support staff's creation of "enhanced service areas" to ensure that these neighborhoods have the sufficient, proactive City services to address issues around illegal dumping, parking compliance, and existing encampments in the defined service areas, as required by individual neighborhood conditions.

Additionally, we support staff's creation of invitation zones around the future navigation center and OWLs, specifically addressing existing encampments around those program areas by prioritizing homeless individuals living in the neighborhoods hosting the future navigation center and OWLs as the first participants in these programs.

For example, residents near Bascom advocated to establish a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to the Overnight Warming Location program at Bascom. The purpose of the CAC has been to be the platform for regular communication among the community, Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services (PRNS), Library, Housing department, HomeFirst, and the Council office. It has proven to be a vital resource to ensure that there is a forum for the community and department representatives to raise comments and concerns for resolution. CACs can therefore be modeled in enhanced service areas Citywide and to other interim housing solutions.

As implementation of a new concept like this will undoubtedly be complex, Council input will be important before implementation of the enhanced service areas and invitation zones.

*Recreational Vehicles Parking*

In the most recent years, San Jose has worked on bringing interim solutions for individuals who live in their vehicles by providing the space and security for those residents until permanent housing can be secured. However, those who live in RVs still face many barriers at safe parking sites, as they are more difficult to maintain and often results in them being turned away.

Currently only two sites, operated by the City at Roosevelt and Southside Community Centers, accept RVs. Under the Innovative Solutions bucket, staff should use this opportunity to creatively explore solutions that reduce those barriers for individuals who live in their RVs and find a path to put them into housing.

*Youth Set-Aside*

The Bill Wilson Center (BWC) has been serving homeless youth in our region since 1973. BWC programs focus on housing, education, counseling, and advocacy with the goal of placing youth in permanent housing with access to the range of services needed to grow to be healthy and self-sufficient adults.

This past fall, BWC began a partnership with San José State University and Airbnb to place homeless students with Airbnb hosts as bridge housing until permanent housing can be resolved. We are pleased that BWC is partnering directly with SJSU to address student homelessness.

Last year's HEAP youth set-aside was allocated to BWC and direct allocation of HHAP youth set-aside funding is both efficient and effective in immediately serving homeless youth.

*BROWN ACT: The signers of this memorandum have not had, and will not have, any private conversation with any other member of the City Council, or that member's staff, concerning any action discussed in the memorandum, and that each signer's staff members have not had, and have been instructed not to have, any such conversation with any other member of the City Council or that member's staff.*