



701 Lenzen Ave. San José, CA. 95126 • info@siliconvalleydebug.org • 408.971.4965

March 16, 2020

Re:

Item 3.9 Local Assistance Framework
Item 8.2 & 8.3 Moratorium on Evictions & Income Loss Due to COVID-19, Small Business Assistance

To Mayor and San Jose City Council,

We write in support of the city moving quickly to prevent families from being pushed into homelessness through no fault of their own during this unprecedented worldwide Coronavirus public health crisis. We at Silicon Valley De-Bug write to urge you to go further with the proposed Moratorium on Evictions to relieve the burden and panic we and our neighbors are faced with as shelter in place has been ordered for the Bay Area.

In addition to a moratorium on evictions, **we urge you to enact a moratorium on rental increases and enact a 'rent and mortgage amnesty for tenants' -- residential and small businesses alike -- impacted by the virus in San Jose**, until public health professionals have determined that the COVID-19 outbreak has been contained.

Just a week ago, families came to De-Bug unsure of what to do -- caught between having to work or be at home to take care of their children or elderly parents. Then as the COVID-19 outbreak rapidly evolved and families are ordered to stay home and are faced with a loss of income, the worry has now shifted to would they even have a home when the pandemic has been sufficiently controlled.

Echoing several councilmember memos for the need to designate financial support to both renters and small businesses, we believe securing and distributing financial resources to renters is critical to avoiding long term negative impacts that a loss of income could lead to -- such as the uprooting of families and further housing insecurity this measure aims to prevent. Tenants should be able to receive help equivalent to small business assistance, towards **rent amnesty** that they do not have to be burdened to repay. Currently only 20% of families in need are able to access the current rental assistance programs for help, barriers should be lifted so more residents can benefit, including creating more ease so that regardless of immigration status

families can access this help. Emergency rental or mortgage assistance unburdens families and encourages them to be able to stay home through the crisis.

This is the first opportunity to fulfill homelessness prevention and housing goals with future Measure E funds. Moving quickly on that designation of funds the city can show that the City truly can play a role in alleviating the housing crisis, as the City promoted Measure E would do. We would expect that the housing department can also move quickly to notify landlords of the moratorium and their responsibilities, as well as inform renters

As we are getting messages to care for each other, look out for each other's best interest, and become acutely aware of how our interactions affect another, especially when we may be in a stronger and healthier position than the most vulnerable, we must ask the same of landlords to look to the collective's wellbeing and help make a bad situation more bearable.

Thank you for considering our letter.

Sincerely,

Andrew Bigelow
Cecilia Chavez
Rosie Chavez
Charisse Domingo
Elizabeth Gonzalez
Glen Maxwell
Silicon Valley De-Bug



March 17, 2020

San José City Council
City of San José
200 E. Santa Clara Street
San José, CA 95113

Re: Council Item 3.9 – Local Assistance Framework

Dear Mayor Liccardo and Members of the City Council:

On behalf of the Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits (SVCN), I want to thank the City for its swift action in developing a local assistance framework to help residents, small businesses, and community-based organizations mitigate impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. We applaud the City for working with the Silicon Valley Community Foundation to establish the San José Strong Fund. As the local assistance framework will guide COVID-19 resiliency efforts in the coming weeks, SVCN would like to make a few recommendations on behalf of our 200+ nonprofit members, the vast majority of whom are located in and serve residents of San José:

- Consider adopting [policy guidance](#), similar to the City of San Francisco, to minimize disruptions in payments to its nonprofit providers. Specifically, please allow flexibility in current contracts. The most protective action the City can take is to convert fee for service contracts into cost reimbursement contract. Other actions could include canceling RFPs and extending contracts into next fiscal year; generously allowing changes in deliverables, deadlines, and budget line items; and allowing, without barriers, emergency response to count towards grant deliverables. We also request timely processing of invoices and payment as nonprofits will be experiencing cash flow issues in the coming months.
- Coordinate with SVCN, via the EOC and CADRE, to funnel financial resources, supplies, and volunteers to nonprofits that are on the frontlines providing essential services to our community.
- Continue working with corporate partners and philanthropy to secure support for the technology and equipment needs of nonprofits. Local nonprofits report needing support for software and training in the following areas: teleconferencing/webinars, Internet service, and cloud file sharing. Many organizations shared that there is a need for additional computers and tablets to support teleworking and client engagement.



- Partner with SVCN on your survey of City grantees and San José-based nonprofits to amplify the call for feedback to inform local funders of nonprofit needs.

To support our nonprofit community, SVCN has stepped up its efforts and:

- We are regularly communicating and coordinating with the **Santa Clara County Office of the Executive, elected offices, City staff, and local and regional foundations** to be a conduit of information to and nonprofits and to advocate on behalf of nonprofits.
- We are supporting the emergency response by the County/City Emergency Operations Center to assist with mapping **nonprofit volunteer and supplies** needs, and coordinating with the **CADRE** network.
- On Friday, March 13, together with our San Mateo County partner Thrive Alliance—we hosted a **virtual two-county nonprofit briefing** about the nonprofit response to COVID-19.
- Together with Thrive and CADRE, today we launched a **nonprofit email list** for rapid resource and information sharing.
- We're launching a **webinar program** so we can continue to bring important learning opportunities to the nonprofit community.

At this point in the pandemic, nonprofits should be able to attend to the critical work of fulfilling their organizational missions and serving the community without worrying about the loss of philanthropic, corporate, governmental, and individual support. We look forward to our continued partnership with the City of San José in mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic locally.

Sincerely,



Wendy L. Ho
Chief Strategy and Policy Officer



Advancing Justice
Housing | Health | Children & Youth

March 17, 2020

San José City Council
200 East Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Councilmembers,

The Law Foundation of Silicon Valley is writing to urge City Council to approve the Paid Sick Leave Ordinance that will be considered at the Rules Committee on March 18, 2020. At the March 10, 2020 meeting of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, the County's Health Officer, Dr. Sara Cody informed the Board that since the novel Coronavirus has spread to the community, containment is no longer an option and that focus must shift to slowing the spread of the virus. Aside from frequent hand washing and avoiding large gatherings of people, the Public Health Department's message to the public on how to slow the spread of the virus has been clear: if you are sick, stay home and do not come to work.

Extended work absences threaten economic disaster for many working families in San José. Furthermore, we know this crisis is disproportionately impacting low-income people and communities of color who won't be able to work from home and rely on every paycheck to make it through the month. The disruption these families are experiencing could continue for some time due to the characteristics of the virus.

The most current research has shown that the virus has an incubation period that can last as long as 14 days for some patients. The County Public Health Department has also found that infected persons on average pass the virus on to 2 to 3 people if nothing is done to prevent it. Workers who begin to feel symptoms must have the ability to stay home and self-quarantine, while having enough sick time left over in case their condition worsens, requiring treatment and/or quarantine. During a public health emergency such as the one we're experiencing now, it is also critical that all workers have access to paid sick leave, regardless of how much they have accrued, in order to protect our communities.

Having access to adequate paid sick leave is not only good for workers – it's a critical component to protecting public health. Many of those who don't have access to paid sick leave work in service jobs that commonly interact with the public. The CDC reports that 1 in 5 food service workers have gone to work while sick with vomiting or diarrhea. Another study conducted by the Institute for Women's Policy research found that 30 percent of sick workers continued to go to work during the H1N1 swine flu outbreak, which may have infected up to 7 million more people as a result.

Cities across California—from Oakland and San Francisco to Los Angeles and San Diego—have passed common sense paid sick leave protections for all workers with minimal disruptions for businesses. As recent events have taught us, it is essential that everyone has access to robust paid sick leave benefits before the next public health emergency strikes. Doing so limits interruptions to essential services and infrastructure during a critical time.

We applaud the City Council initiative on this issue and urge councilmembers to pass this Paid Sick Leave Ordinance. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Alison Brunner, CEO
Nadia Aziz, Directing Attorney, Housing Program

CC: San José City Manager
San José City Attorney