

PUBLIC COMMENT APRIL 14, 2020

Public Comment on Consent Calendar

Public Comment on 8.1

Public Comment from Anonymous:

Although I am one of the lucky ones to still be working during these times of uncertainty, my hours have been cut more than 50% due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I'm not sure if my apartment is offering any type of understanding but I do know I couldn't chance it and if you weren't for YWCA my girls & I may have not had a roof over our heads after my hours were cut.

Public Comment from Bea

I want to express my gratitude to the YWCA for helping me pay my rent. I had been working part-time at three different jobs before the Corona Virus stopped everything and I lost all three jobs. There is no way that I can pay my rent without help.

Public Comment from Evanna

My name is Evanna and I am writing this letter as a client from the YWCA. In July 2019 I became a Domestic Violence Survivor and sought help from the YWCA. Because of the staff, I have been provided counseling services, legal services and help with Rent and utilities, which allowed me to gain control of my life for not only myself, but also my two young children.

Recently, due to the COVID-19 virus, I have been laid off. With being a single parent with two young children this has brought much stress, anxiety and uncertainty. Without financial help from the YWCA, I am not able to pay rent and utilities. With help from the organization, I am able to secure a home and food for my children and I until COVID-19 passes. Without help, the future for my children and I would be very uncertain as the landlord of the property has expressed all rental payments are due as normal.

Public comment from Ann:

Regarding the rent freeze, my opinion is that Council is taking advantage of the COVID-19 crisis to impose a rent freeze on units where the tenants have NOT been affected by COVID-19.

It should ONLY apply to tenants who are affected by COVID-19, same as the eviction moratorium. Additionally, this only applies to ARO units, making it even more discriminatory. The timeline for rent freeze should be independent of the eviction moratorium, as the eviction moratorium applies to ALL rentals in San Jose, but the rent freeze does not. The timeline for the rent freeze should be a set length of time and extended later if needed.

It should NOT be dependent on another City ordinance. Please reconsider the Staff recommendation and make this a fair Ordinance. Thank You.

Public Comment from Sarah Weng (NOT READ. She called in)

I'm truly saddened to see this another proposal to tear apart the trust in the community just one week after the unlawful "Rent Suspension" proposed by Council members Perez and Carrasco, which caused huge anxiety, despair and division in the community during a most difficult time.

I don't see evidence of rent increase happening at this time. To impose an ordinance to prevent rent increase seems to me an useless waste of energy. Worse than that, this action divides the people of the city rather than bringing us together. It creates the impression that we the small business owners are the enemy, and that if left unchecked, would do untold harm to those we rely upon for our very existence - our customers and tenants. It destroys the trust in the community.

Public Comment from Seigi Tadokoro, Resident and small property owner in San Jose.

Mayor Liccardo and Council members.

I have enacted rent freeze on the rental units under my control well before the proposal now for vote. I think some council member are initiating this for political reasons to impress their majority tenant constituents. My objection is that the council is empowering the city to run our business I am certain that San Jose would resent the county dictating all their policies. Not once have any council members propose relief for mom and pop housing providers. Such relief can come in a small measure such as occupancy permit relief, business license relief, service charges by the city relief or other cost relief associated with our business. Why is this? The 4/10/20 memorandum by Khamis, Davis, and Foley comes close to helping out providers but not financially. Perhaps the council's reluctance to do so is that the city needs the revenue to function. We providers must also have revenue to run our business as indicated by numerous past letters submitted to the council by the mom and pop providers. Rather than bludgeoning only the housing providers with the financial burden what about a proposal for all tenants, all providers and the city to share financial burden. Council mentality to trample the defenseless minority housing provider's constitutional and contractual rights to operate this service business is decreasing availability of affordable housing.

Public Comment from David Eisbach

Dear Council Members

I've managed rental properties since 1971 and I've had to evict over one hundred tenants. Ninety-five percent of those tenants owed the owner money. In all that time only two have repaid their debt. It's important for the owner to regain the property and rent it to someone who will pay rent. Evictions cost money and are not undertaken lightly. San Jose has whittled down evictions through *Just Cause* to the extent that 96% of evictions are for non-payment of rent. The Council passed an eviction moratorium during the epidemic, which they propose to extend it to the end of May. Now they want a rent raise freeze. I think the Council should show good faith by donating their salaries and allowances and they should take City Employees 3% raise for the duration and take that money and loan it to those tenants in need.

Public Comment from Kathryn Hedges (NOT READ. She called in)

Dear Mayor Liccardo and Council Members:

I am representing the Housing Team of PACT today and have been following the meeting on Zoom. However, I have another Zoom meeting and may not be able to make my comments via video. I am glad to hear so much concern about the plight of our renters and particularly those who are undocumented.

Please vote today to support extending the eviction moratorium to May 31, 2020.

Please issue a rent freeze extending 120 days past the moratorium is lifted, for tenants under rent control in ARO units and mobile homes.

Please create a process that convenes stakeholders to develop policy to address the needs of tenants who are unable to pay rent. This process must include translation services and a virtual meeting design that is accessible to renters, including those who do not have access to Zoom technology.

Thank you for your consideration.

Stay safe

Thu 4/16/2020 8:31 AM

Shawn Barreras

Rents

No rent suspensions. Landlords are going to suffer

Wed 4/15/2020 7:36 PM

Protect San Jose families: Pause rent during COVID-19

Dear Mayor Sam Liccardo and Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco,

As a resident of District 5, I am writing to ask for your support for Councilmembers Magdalena Carrasco and Raul Perez's proposal for a rent pause, which will be heard at the April 7th City Council meeting.

Quanta comp electroics. I lost my job and hours because of the cuarentin.i stop working about month ago.i have my daughter and my mother and I really need help to pay my rent and my bills.

Tenants need the City Council to hit "pause" on rent – existing measures are not enough.

Saving lives by preventing increased exposure to COVID-19 should be City Council's top priority during this emergency. Even with the moratorium on evictions, families out of work, especially among undocumented immigrant workers who cannot access the safety net, know that once the moratorium is lifted they will have no way to ever repay rent. This threat will force more workers who should be sheltering in place with their families to leave their homes and seek work in violation of the shelter order. Tenants who are relying on the eviction moratorium will fall into huge debt and face displacement once the COVID-19 crisis is over unless City Council also suspends their obligation to pay rent.

Three months of back rent for the average 2-bedroom apartment in San José would be \$8,250 — the equivalent of 14 weeks of work for someone making minimum wage. This means that without a rent pause, most landlords will still be faced with the question of whether to forgive rents or to file evictions in mass in the months after the rent moratorium is lifted.

San Joseans and this Council came together to raise \$11 million for tenants to help people pay rent. Those dollars were completely used in just three days and now the fund has a waiting list filled with thousands of families. Charity alone won't solve this issue. We need a rent pause.

Sincerely,

Noritza Cortes

Wed 4/15/2020 11:32 PM

Johnson Yen

Opposing rent freeze which is UNFAIR to small mom&pop landlords

Hi,

I am a small landlord with the only income from the rent. I am barely survived during this COVID-19 pandemic crisis since my rental business is losing money as I am receiving fewer rent payments due to rent moratorium while I still need to pay many bills, such as mortgage, utilities, insurance, property taxes, several San Jose city charges, repairs, improvements, etc. Since I already suffer from rental income decrease, now the City even wants to add more restrictions to small landlords by adding the rent freeze ordinance.

It is UNFAIR to put the burden on small landlords who own the rent controlled properties, while the large rental companies who own the properties that are not under rent control, such as the apartments that are newer than year 1979.

I strongly suggest the City to come up with a fair measures to cope with the COVID19 crisis, for example, provide grant/loan to tenants, subside the rent, reduce the tax and charges to landlords. It is the job of San Jose City to come up with solutions, not the small landlords.

Also I would strongly suggest that the City council and staff can support the needed tenants by freezing the salary increase and donating the planed salary increase/allowance to tenants.

I think the City should also propose the measures to help and support the struggling landlords to cope with COVID-19 crisis. They are helping the City on providing residences and minimizing housing problem. For example, reducing the utility bills, business tax, code enforce charges, registration fee, etc.

Best regards,

Johnson

From: Liwang Chiang
Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2020 9:00 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Oppose rent freeze

Hello,

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Best regards,
Johnson