



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Sylvia Arenas

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: June 23, 2020

Approved *Sylvia Arenas*

Date 6/23/20

SUBJECT: COVID-19 DIGITAL INCLUSION EXPENDITURE PLAN

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) Accept the Mayor's memo
- 2) Accept staff report and funding strategy as reflected in staff memo and attachments
- 3) Include in the next report on Digital Inclusion to the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee the following:
 - a. An update on how we can expand outdoor Wi-Fi to reuse centers and other city facilities in the most high needs areas (based on the Digital Access Priority Index)
 - b. Provide an update on East Side Access and provide information necessary for a thorough discussion on how we can accelerate the timeline for Phase 2 and Phase 3 school service areas
 - c. Provide an update on how we are going to ensure that we effectively get the 3,000 hotspots (those not set aside for schools) into our community to high needs residents
- 4) Allocate \$11,000 from the funding for Outdoor WiFi at Libraries, Community Centers, and Parks to add Welch Park Community Center to the plan approved today

BACKGROUND

When the coronavirus shut down San Jose schools in March, schools began a rush to figure out how to provide schooling to all students remotely. Almost immediately it became clear that the digital divide was going to create huge new discrepancies in our community – exacerbating discrepancies and inequities that go back generations.

Members of school boards in high needs areas came together, and brought this to the attention of our council, to the county board of education, to the state government – and truly anyone who was willing to listen. They have stood with us as partners, they have joined each call to provide public comment, and they have worked diligently to support the partnerships that are allowing for the funding strategy we are approving today. I thank them, the administration at East Side Union High School District, and the Santa Clara County Office of Education for their committed partnership.

And I thank the City Administration, my council colleagues, and all the staff members of these offices that have put in so much time and effort to get us to where we are today. Our families will benefit tremendously from your hard work. Thank you.

This memo asks for full acceptance of the staff report, a few items be included in the NSE update (expected in September), and a very small tweak to the Outdoor WiFi program to include a small community center in one of the most high needs zip codes in our county.

My office worked closely with PRNS last year to bring fiber to Welch Park and Community Center, so the cost of including it in the program is as minimal as it comes. The estimated cost is only \$11,000. It is in much higher need area than at least one third of the sites proposed, and serves many community members that will not be able to benefit from the East Side Access program.

I again thank all of our staff and community partners for all their hard work, and ask my colleagues to adopt the full staff report and funding strategy, the one tweak I request, the mayors memo, and the request for more information and discussion at NSE in the fall.