CITY OF
SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Memorandum

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Mayor Sam Liccardo
Vice Mayor Chappie Jones
Councilmember Raul Peralez
Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: August 21, 2020

Approved

Date: **8/21/20**

SUBJECT: PROPOSITION 16 - CREATING A MORE JUST CALIFORNIA

RECOMMENDATION

Accept staff recommendation to adopt a support position for Proposition 16 on the November 3, 2020 California General Election ballot.

BACKGROUND

San José was born of diversity: the Muwekma Ohlone who lived here prior to the de Anza expedition saw mestizo, mulatto, and even members of the Apache tribe comprise the first "Spanish" settlers along the banks of the Guadalupe, almost none of whom were born in Spain. Today, nearly 40 percent of our community is born in a different country, and nearly 70 percent of our community has Asian or Latino roots.

Nonetheless, throughout its history, our own San José has also suffered the scourge of racism. In the last century, legally-mandated segregation, redlining in the mortgage industry, and housing discrimination left a pattern of racial inequity that reinforced wide disparities in access to educational and economic opportunity.

The "experiment" that was California's Proposition 209—purporting to offer color-blind, race-blind, and gender-blind government decision-making—has failed. Its failure appears most palpable in light of the widespread protests and civil unrest since the murder of George Floyd, exposing the peril of avoidance of centuries of overt discrimination, xenophobia, and racism. Proposition 209 hinders our ability to directly address the systemic inequities in our communities.

It's time for a more intentional approach to enabling more just outcomes demanded by our increasingly diverse community, and to right the wrongs of decades of legally-enforced racial disparities. Proposition 16 removes a legal barrier for the City to begin that process.