



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Lee Wilcox

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: January 20, 2021

Approved 

Date

1/21/2021

**SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO 2021 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM – VACCINE
ACCESS AND PRIORITIZATION**

RECOMMENDATION

Amend the City of San José's 2021 Legislative Program to add the COVID-19 Vaccine Access, Outreach, and Prioritization Policy to the Legislative Program.

OUTCOME

The 2021 Legislative Program guides the advocacy work in the State and Federal 2021-2022 legislative session. The amendment will guide the City's 2021 pandemic advocacy.

BACKGROUND

The Legislative Program directs the City's work around legislation and regulations throughout the year. The 2021 Legislative Program contains general policy direction that will allow the Administration to take advantage of policy windows and advance the Council's legislative and regulatory agenda. The 2021 Legislative Program was approved by City Council on November 17, 2020. Per Councilmember Jimenez's memo on vaccination priorities on December 4, 2020 and Council discussion on January 12, 2021 about vaccinations, the Administration recommends adding a policy directing advocacy efforts for the hardest hit San José communities to the 2021 Legislative Program.

ANALYSIS

In Santa Clara County, the Latinx population accounts for most of the county's COVID-19 cases with 51% positive cases countywide while making up 25.8% of the total population. Statewide data show that communities with high poverty rates are experiencing COVID-19 infection rates

two to three times higher than rates in wealthier areas. The risk is shouldered by low-wage workers who live in underserved communities and who perform front-line, essential work. Five ZIP codes in East San José account for nearly 30% of Santa Clara County's total COVID-19 cases.

It is critical that the City's legislative advocacy ensure that the communities that were first in line to suffer the effects of the pandemic are not last in line for the vaccine. As the vaccination roll-out enters Phase 1B with a rapidly evolving federal mandate to reach an increasingly broad population, the Administration recommends adding the following policy to the legislative program:

***COVID-19 Vaccine Access, Outreach, and Prioritization:** Advocate for resources and policies that ensure that the San José communities that were first in line to suffer the effects of the pandemic are not last in line for the vaccine. Vaccine access, distribution, and outreach should prioritize the communities that have the highest rates of infections, death, and residents who perform essential, in-person work.*

Advocacy Priorities for COVID-19 Vaccine Access, Outreach, and Prioritization

Specifically, the Administration will advocate to incorporate the following community engagement measures to serve the at-risk community in ways that best suit their needs. We recognize that the availability of an adequate supply of vaccines will determine how quickly and broadly vaccinations are administered. The Administration will continue to monitor community needs and adapt the advocacy priorities as the vaccine roll-out evolves:

- Locate vaccination centers in the neighborhoods and near the populations that have the highest rate of infections, death, and residents who perform essential, in-person work;
- Request that vaccination centers offer weekend and off-work evening hours;
- Ensure that vaccine distribution measures are designed and funded to serve populations with access and functional needs, including:
 - Communication: Culturally competent messaging delivered in the primary languages spoken by residents with limited English proficiency;
 - Transportation: Collaboration with public transportation agencies and community partners to provide transport to vaccination centers;
 - Medical Care: Provide vaccinations free of charge, regardless of immigration status. Ensure that health care providers and health educators staffing vaccination centers or resource hotlines are fluent in the primary languages spoken by residents with limited English proficiency;

- Technology: Simple, easy to use, self-serve digital services and convenient alternatives for those without digital access;
- Expand community resource navigators to target services in heavily impacted areas to connect vulnerable residents to social and economic resources beyond COVID-19 vaccinations;
- Conduct both general and focused communications to the communities about the benefits of vaccination, including door-to-door services outreach;
- Implement Misinformation Management strategies to address common causes of vaccine hesitancy among communities, including fears related to immigration status; and
- Refine data analysis to provide census tract level data for the local population.

Immediate asks in support of the City’s vaccine activities include funding for:

- 1) Communications;
- 2) On-the-ground community engagement campaign;
- 3) Transportation to vaccination centers; and
- 4) Operation costs for mass vaccination sites and smaller clinics.

CONCLUSION

The Administration is bringing forward the COVID-19 Vaccine Access, Outreach, and Prioritization Policy amendment for the 2021 Legislative Program for Council adoption.

The Administration will continue to actively engage legislators in support of the Vaccine Policy as the vaccine roll-out evolves.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The Administration will provide regular updates to Council on actions taken on legislation.

CLIMATE SMART SAN JOSE

The recommendation in this memo has no effect on Climate Smart San José energy, water, or mobility goals.

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

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PUBLIC OUTREACH

This memorandum will be posted on the City's Council Agenda website for the January 26, 2020 Council Meeting.

COORDINATION

The Administration coordinated this memo with the City's state and federal legislative advocates, the Emergency Operations Center, and the City Attorney's Office.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT

The recommended actions do not have a Commission Recommendation.

CEQA

Not a Project, File No. PP17 009, Staff Reports, Assessments, Annual Reports, and Informational Memos that involve no approvals of any City action.

/s/

LEE WILCOX

Chief of Staff, City Manager's Office

For questions, please contact Bena Chang, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, (408) 975-3240.