

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY HEALING AND
ECONOMIC RECOVERY LISTENING
SESSION

FROM: David Sykes

DATE: January 29, 2021

INFORMATION

On February 5, 2021, the City Administration will facilitate a community healing and economic recovery listening session among the Mayor and Council. The purpose of the listening session is to seek to understand the collective vision of the Council for community healing and economic recovery in the near-term and long-term. Specifically, the Administration aims to hear and capture the outcomes and results the Council aspires for the San José community.

This listening session is a critical step in the City's journey towards racial equity. As has been stated many times, the impacts of COVID-19 have impacted our community hard and exacerbated pre-existing health and economic disparities particularly for communities of color and east San Jose neighborhoods. Economic harm coupled with the loss of life and challenging health effects from COVID, in addition to the overall social-emotional trauma experienced by stay at home orders call for a healing-centered approach. At its core, the journey to address systemic and institutional racism is an uncomfortable and necessary conversation that will require trust and courage to move towards community healing. Community healing is the concept of making the community well again following a traumatic experience. By introducing community healing as a tool, the City Administration seeks to prepare the conditions and climate for courageous, safe, healthy dialogue. This process is being offered to ensure that the City's decision-making process for recovery is inclusive of Council from the start.

Kim Walesh will act as the Session Manager. The goal is to spark conversation about citywide aspirations and needs with a focus on being one team developing a shared, collective vision for community progress and impact. To this end, Council is requested to submit in advance a one-page document to answer the question, *what is your vision for community healing and economic recovery for our City?* Details are below.

BACKGROUND

As part of the City of San José's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), a Community and Economic Recovery Task Force was established in August 2020. The objectives of the Community and Economic Recovery effort have entered on investing in our most vulnerable residents, nonprofits, and small businesses, empowering our residents with resources, and partnering to improve outcomes. The interdepartmental Recovery team (formerly known as

Local Assistance Branch) has been responsible for relief funding for nonprofit, arts and cultural institutions, childcare, and rental relief.

During Item 3.1 of the San Jose City Council meeting on December 8, 2020, the EOC Community and Economic Recovery team presented a plan for assessing community and economic recovery risk and protective factors so we can understand if we become better off over time in the areas of health, economic resiliency and prosperity with an overall racial equity approach. The risk and protective factors indicating the three situational levels – stabilized, holding on, and in crisis – for small businesses, residents, and neighborhoods was shared. Data from our partners at Destination Home underscored the economic hardship for rental relief applicants who on average had monthly income in the amount of \$2,624 before COVID, and now had an average income of \$949 a month.

Initial planning conversations for recovery with the County and stakeholders such as the Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits and others were postponed when the third surge in COVID cases emerged in December, and the County ordered a supplemental Stay at Home order due to shrinking ICU capacity on December 22, 2020, which was lifted on January 25, 2021.

After the City Council meeting on January 12, 2021, the City Administration moved the date of the Community and Economic Recovery Study Session up from February 25, 2021 to February 5, 2021. The proposed design of a listening session was directly related to feedback from Council.

ANALYSIS

To achieve the listening session goals, we are proposing that each Council Member and Mayor complete a one-page document in advance of the Listening Session scheduled for Friday, February 5, 2021.

- Please submit to CMOAgendaServices@sanjoseca.gov a one-page document answering the question, ***What is your vision for community healing and economic recovery for our City?*** Submittal deadline is 12:00 p.m., Wednesday, February 3rd.
- All documents submitted by 12:00 p.m. will be posted by 6 p.m. that same day. The Council is requested to read all the submissions in preparation for the Community Healing and Economic Recovery Listening Session on Friday.
- At the Session, each Councilmember will be given the opportunity to read and share their initial vision for community healing and economic recovery.
- After the initial visions are shared, a second round of commentary by Council will begin. Council will be asked to identify an aspect of another Council colleague's vision that resonates with them, that inspires them, or challenges them.

- If time allows, each Council Member will be given the opportunity to ask a Council colleague a question to better understand their vision, or to make a comment about what should be in the shared vision.
- Public Comment will be open after the second round of commentary by the Mayor and City Council. The beginning of the session will also include short videos of community members sharing their vision based on lived experiences.
- City Staff will capture themes, insights and patterns to develop a collective understanding of the outcomes, results envisioned for the San Jose community. Subsequently, staff will return to Council with a logic model based on the collective vision and the planning process for identifying the strategies and activities that align to meet the vision and outcomes. The outcomes will be folded into the Roadmap process and the Budget process.

OUTCOME

The Mayor and Council will have shared their vision for community healing and economic recovery and the City Administration will have a better understanding of the outcomes and results expected by the Council for near and long-term recovery.

City staff will return to Council with a Community Healing and Economic Recovery logic model and timeline for approval.


DAVID SYKES
City Manager

For questions, please contact Kim Walesh, Deputy City Manager at (408) 535-8177.