

April 3, 2021



To: San Jose City Clerk Toni Taber and Members of the San Jose Charter Review Commission

Via: electronic mail

Re: community engagement process and budget

Thank you for your serious consideration of doing extensive outreach to ensure people are aware of your critical work and are able to share their vision of a San Jose with true “representation, accountability and inclusion.”

I want to second the sentiments offered by SJSU Professor Terry Christensen in his letter to you March 19 on the need to do localized community engagement. And I want to stress that this outreach must be done by people with expertise and in a way that offers maximum accessibility to people of all cultures and backgrounds.

We must offer people a chance to shape proposals before you make decisions. Below I offer concrete ways to do that, based in our experience and the experience of community partners. I also offer some budget ideas. I think it’s important that organizations (especially smaller ones) and community members get paid. To avoid any appearance of conflict of interest in this recommendation, I offer to waive any fee paid to Sacred Heart.

A community engagement process must include these steps

- Meet people on their turf
 - Focus groups held in languages spoken by community members
 - Materials provided in languages spoken by community members
 - Focus groups hosted by trusted community organizations
- Value people’s time and expertise
 - Pay organizations and community members who participate
 - Present a concrete and transparent plan for how input will be used and how community members will be kept up to date on the process and stick to it
 - Produce a report over how community input was gathered and considered, and a detailed explanation of why different elements were accepted or rejected
- Be open and welcoming to the unexpected
 - Don’t bring a set of either/or choices
 - Share enough context to stoke imagination and organic conversation
 - Work to next community ideas to function and scope of the charter

Budget

- \$10,000 per organization
 - \$2500-\$3000 per organization per session for 2-3 sessions through CRC process
 - \$50 stipend per attendee per session
- \$???? Per city guidelines on interpretation and translation

Organizations with a proven track record of effective community engagement and deep community relationships

- African American Community Services Agency
- Amigos De Guadalupe
- Asian Americans for Community Involvement
- Asian Law Alliance
- Bill Wilson Center
- CAIR
- Latinas Contra Cancer
- LGBT Youth Space
- Sacred Heart Community Service
- San Jose Peace & Justice Center
- Silicon Valley De-Bug
- SOMOS Mayfair
- Veggielution
- VietUnity
- West Valley Community Services

Thank you for your consideration

Matt King (via email)

Political Director

Sacred Heart Community Service

April 5, 2021

To: San Jose Charter Review Commission

From: Terry Christensen, Professor Emeritus, SJSU Political Science

Re: Further to My Previous Comments on Outreach

In a previous memo I noted that the current Charter Review Commission is already doing more community outreach than any prior commission. You are to be commended for that and for what I expect you will do as members of the commission in future. That said, more can be done and you are also to be commended for your request to the City Council for funding for outreach through community organizations. Many local organizations such as Somos Mayfair, CommUniverCity (with which I am affiliated), the School of Arts and Culture at Mexican Heritage Plaza, American Leadership Forum, the NAACP, the Asian Law Alliance and the League of Women Voters have extensive experience at such outreach. They don't have the bandwidth or focus to do so without support, however, so I hope your request to the City Council for funding will be successful.