

Fw: Agenda Item 3.3 - Annual Report on City Services

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From: Michele Mashburn [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 26, 2026 4:47 PM
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Cc: Maciel, Zulma <zulma.maciel@sanjoseca.gov>; Sanchez, Sheila <Sheila.Sanchez@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Agenda Item 3.3 - Annual Report on City Services

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Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

I am submitting this public comment on the Annual Report on City Services (Item 3.3) scheduled for discussion at tomorrow's City Council meeting on January 27, 2026.

The report raises serious concerns about how racial and social equity—particularly disability—is being framed and applied across City services.

- In the Public Safety section, the use of the term “mentally handicapped” is outdated, stigmatizing, and inconsistent with the City’s equity commitments, especially given the documented harm disabled people—particularly disabled people of color and unhoused residents—experience in police and emergency responses.
- The report also categorizes drug and narcotic offenses as “crimes against society.” When law-enforcement classification frameworks are used uncritically in a City service report, they reinforce a carceral perspective that frames poverty, disability, and trauma as criminal issues rather than examining the structural conditions that produce harm.

- Additionally, while the Office of Equality Assurance is listed as the City's ADA liaison, the report provides no data on ADA complaints or access barriers—key indicators of service quality, equity, and public trust. This omission makes disability-related harm and access failures invisible within a report that claims to assess City services.
- The Community Opinion Survey includes the statement “I am able to live independently,” which reflects an ableist assumption that independence is a universal measure of well-being. Many disabled people live interdependently by necessity or choice and exercise autonomy through support, not in its absence. This framing risks misrepresenting disabled residents' experiences and obscuring the role of City policies in shaping access and safety.

While some of this language and categorization may be standard within law-enforcement or administrative reporting, the City's stated commitment to racial and social equity requires a higher level of scrutiny across core service and performance reports. Unexamined use of these frameworks undermines those commitments.

The City's Racial and Social Equity framework and Ordinance No. 31076 establish that equity standards apply to City conduct and reporting broadly, not only to reports explicitly labeled as equity analyses.

Taken together, these framings and omissions suggest that disability is still not being treated as an equity variable within the City's racial and social equity work. I urge Council to request corrections to this report and to ensure future City reporting, including core services and performance reports, meaningfully integrates disability as an equity variable.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Michele Mashburn
Founder, All Things Disability Equity
District 4 Resident, San José

Michele Mashburn

[All Things Disability Equity](#)

To schedule a meeting, go to: <https://zcal.co/micheleatd/>

To advance equity for individuals with disabilities through education on ableism, disability-informed inclusive practices, and leadership development

Note: As a disabled professional, my work hours may differ from traditional schedules. I do not expect responses outside of your normal working schedule.

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