
Fw: Request to Consider Climate Action in City Budget, 2/5/26 Session

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 2/2/2026 8:19 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Office of the City Clerk | City of San José

200 E. Santa Clara St., Tower 14th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113
Main: 408-535-1260
Fax: 408-292-6207

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From: Aahaan Jain <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, February 1, 2026 7:57 PM
To: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: SVYCA San José Team <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Request to Consider Climate Action in City Budget, 2/5/26 Session

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Dear San Jose City Council,

My name is Aahaan Jain, and I'm a student [REDACTED] School and District 1 Constituent.

I am writing to urge the Council to consider "Climate Action" as a Budget Priority for the next fiscal year. As a high schooler who suffers from breathing issues exacerbated by impacts of climate change, the choice to focus on climate action not only will help those marginalized but also the greater community.

San Jose also has an ambitious carbon neutrality goal by 2030, allowing it to serve as a model for other cities in the United States. By prioritizing Climate Action in our City's Budget, the Council works to uplift our communities by committing to the biggest issue that we face today.

Best,
Aahaan

Fw: Climate Action in City Budget, 2/5/26 Budget Session

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 2/2/2026 8:23 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

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200 E. Santa Clara St., Tower 14th Floor
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How is our service? Your [feedback](#) is appreciated!

From: Anika K. <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, February 2, 2026 8:00 AM
To: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Climate Action in City Budget, 2/5/26 Budget Session

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Dear San Jose City Councilmembers and Mayor Mahan,

My name is Anika Khanna, and I'm a high school sophomore in District 1. I'm writing to urge you all to prioritize Climate Action in the budget for the 2026-27 fiscal year. San Jose has committed to Carbon Neutrality by 2030, an inspiring goal that I'm so proud we have. Unfortunately, recent updates have shown we are off track. Meeting the set Carbon Neutrality goal, and combating the climate crisis, requires strong leadership and meaningful investment towards climate action, starting with prioritization of climate action in the budget.

Climate change is a pressing issue that needs action now. Its harmful impacts are lengthy and felt by everyone. Residents and the youth of San Jose constantly experience the chronic effects of climate change on our health and daily lives. Some of these effects include extreme heat, wildfire smoke and air pollution, extreme weather disrupting food systems and raising prices. The Bay Area is especially vulnerable to rising sea levels, which increase the risk of flooding. Air pollution continues to harm the health of residents, particularly marginalized communities and student athletes. While competing in

sports, I have seen incredible student athletes, some of which were my friends, have to forfeit due to heatstroke

San Jose has the opportunity to be a leader on the national stage by taking bold steps to fight climate change. Decisions made by you can inspire other cities and policymakers to follow suit, amplifying the positive impact far beyond our city limits.

Thank you for your time and your consideration! I sincerely hope you will make climate a priority in the budget.

Thank you,
Anika Khanna

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Fw: Community public letters for 2.5.26

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
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To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

 1 attachment (2 MB)
Info_20260202_165101 (3) (1).pdf;

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From: Misrayn Mendoza Rivera <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, February 2, 2026 4:16 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Jeremy Barousse <[REDACTED]> Jose Murillo <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Community public letters for 2.5.26

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Hi Toni

My name is Misrayn Mendoza Amigos de Guadalupe Organizer Manager I have a attach letters from our Grupo de Justicia Migratoria Lidrs can you please make this letters available to Mayor and all 10 city CM please this regarding next Thursday 2.5.2026 Study Session - 2026-2027 Preliminary General Fund Forecast and Budget Priorities

In community spirit,
Attachment below

--
Misrayn Mendoza Rivera

Organizing Manager

Amigos De Guadalupe Center for Justice and Empowerment

1897 Alum Rock Ave. Ste. 35, San Jose, CA 95116



Amigos de Guadalupe
Center for Justice & Empowerment

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS
2012 – 2022

[Amigos website](#)

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January 29, 2026

Mayor Matt Mahan
Councilperson Rosemary Kamei
Councilperson Pamela Campos
Councilperson Anthony Tordillos
Councilperson David Cohen
Councilperson Perter Ortiz
Councilperson Michael Mulcahy
Councilperson Bien Doan
Councilperson Domingo Candelas
Councilperson Pam Foley
Councilperson George Casey

Honorable Councilpeople:

I am writing to urge you to prioritize, in your mid-year budget review, funding for legal services for immigrants who are vulnerable to ICE or who have been detained by ICE.

I am a member of the Grupo de Justicia Migratoria, a grassroots migrant's rights organization sponsored by Amigos de Guadalupe. I support members with managing stress, anxiety and depression they experience related to being targeted by ICE. As I am sure you know, migrants are living with severe stress which not only affects them and their families but also schools and businesses they've stopped frequenting due to fear of leaving their homes. They are neglecting their health and are afraid to take their children to important health and wellness appointments.

While it may seem that San José is not a big target for ICE at this time, there have been insidious attacks on families. A friend of mine is a pre-school teacher. A student's mother told her of armed men in unmarked military clothing drove up to their home and dragged away the father who was in the driveway working on his car. They took him in front of his children. Two days later the mother got a phone call from the father saying they'd driven him to Tijuana and dumped him there.

I understand there is a serious possible shortfall in the City budget this year but please prioritize the lives and safety of a very large and important sector of San José's population. Immigrants are major users of the parks, the libraries and other public spaces - what would San José look like with empty parks and libraries?

[REDACTED]
Elisa Marina Alvarado, LCSW
[REDACTED]

**Comentario Publico para el Alcalde y Concejales de la
Ciudad de San Jose**

Como es de conocimiento general, la mayoría de pobladores de la Ciudad de San Jose estamos viviendo momentos de sosobra, miedo y terror, no solamente las minorias si no tambien las mayorias.

Por lo que estamos viendo en los medios de comunicacion, toda la poblacion es vulnerable a la inhumana, innecesaria y brutal manera de hacer su trabajo las agencias de migracion, en la aprehension y retencion en prisiones,dando como resultado muchos lamentables casos fatales.

Nuestra comunidad esta afectada de varias formas:

- 1.- Psicologicamente a la gran mayoría
- 2.- Padres no quieren llevar a sus hijos a la escuela
- 3.- Padres no quieren ir al trabajo
- 4.- Estudiantes no quieren asistir a escuelas
- 5.- Negocios locales cerrados
- 6.- Obras de construccion paralizadas por falta de trabajadores.
- 7.- Importante reduccion en los contribuciones fiscales
- 8.- Futuro social y economico incierto

Son por estos motivos que me dirijo a ustedes por estar en sus manos poder orientar fondos para que nuestra comunidad reciba el sublime acto de proteccion legal, como consultoria gratuita, apoyo en los procesos legales, ampliar los servicios de la Red de Respuesta Rapida.

Agradeciendo de antemano su atencion y conociendo su alta sensibilidad, me despido muy atentamente.

LDADG

Dirigida al alcalde y honorables consejales
Soy líder comunitario del grupo de Justicia
migratoria de AMIGOS de GUADALUPE
Y como parte de una comunidad que hoy
vivimos con miedo, angustia y mucha
Incertidumbre por todo lo que está
ocurriendo

quiero expresar que nos sentimos con
pánico en estos momentos en la comunidad
hay familias que viven con terror constante
Padres y madre que no sabemos que pueda
pasar mañana niños que sienten la angustia
de sus hogares la desesperación nos está
afectando profundamente, EMOCIONAL Y
MENTALMENTE.

les pido encarecidamente que tomen como
Prioridad y emergencia a nosotros comunidad
migrante para completar el medio millón
restante ya que no solo es una cifra
ES esperanza, ES Protección, y es la posibilidad
de que una persona no sea separada y que
Tenga acceso a un abogado, de que podamos
enfrentar esta crisis con un poco más
de dignidad y seguridad.

Hoy más que nunca necesitamos que nuestras autoridades locales estén del lado de la comunidad migrante les pedimos con todo respeto, pero también con urgencia, que reconsideren esta decisión y que se busquen las alternativas necesarias para cumplir con el compromiso completo. Nuestra comunidad cuenta con ustedes y necesita sentir que no está sola en estos momentos tan difíciles.

Gracias por escuchar nuestra voz por tomarse el tiempo de considerar el sentir y la realidad de quienes solo buscamos vivir y trabajar en paz.

Unidos jamás seremos vencidos
Si se puede si se puede.

Atentamente
Una líder del
grupo de Justicia migratoria
y inmigrantes

Hola Soy líder de Grupo de Justicia Migratoria de Amigos de Guadalupe y este es mi comentario publico para el Alcalde y los consejales de la ciudad de San Jose.

Tengo más de 30 años en este país donde he trabajado honradamente y duramente para sacar adelante a mi familia no a sido fácil salir de madrugada y llegar asta al anochecer a veces he trabajado más de 8 horas para poder sobre vivir para poder pagar la renta y comer he pagado mis impuestos año tras año he sido líder por muchos años. lamentablemente y tristemente ahora vivo con miedo, con temor de salir a la calle y pensar que talvez no regrese a casa o mi esposo que sería de mi si eso llegara a pasar me quedaria sola sin poder que hacer si me llego a enfermar que ba hacer de mi, mi esposo es mi apoyo mi todo no es justo que tengamos miedo de ser golpeados, asesinados por la migra, no pido más que respeto y una vida

digna de merecer y no vivir con el miedo
de y la incertidumbre que me aterra en este
tiempo de aterrorización que estamos
viviendo yo y familia con esta administración
merecemos comunidades sanas y prosperas.
no terror y violencia patrocinadas por el gobierno.
Por eso les pido Señor Alcalde y Consejales
apoyen a la comunidad inmigrante somos
humanos como todos ustedes y merecemos
justicia y respeto apoyen a la comunidad
inmigrante, es muy importante para nosotras
contar con los servicios para que nos puedan
defender cuando seamos detenidas y nos
podamos saber nuestras derechos y
recursos para todas las familias inviertan
en nuestra comunidad ya que somos el 41%
inmigrantes en San Jose muchas gracias...

HOLA SOY LIDER DE JUSTICIA MIGRATORIA POR MAS
DE 6 AÑOS YO VEGE A SAN JOSECA EN 1993 Y ESTAMOS
TRABAJANDO MAS DE 30 AÑOS Y CADA AÑO PAGOS MIS
INPUESTOS Y ESTAMOS COMO VOLUNTARIOS EN LAS ESCUELA
DE MIS HIJOS Y TAMBIEN TUBE QUE TRABAJAR Y CUIDAR
A MIS TRES HIJOS PARA PODER SOBRESALIR CON EL
PAGO DE LA RENTIA Y SIEMPRE HEMOS SIDO BUENOS
VECINOS Y CON ESTA AMINISTRACION ESTA HASIENDO
MUY MAL LAS COSAS Y ESTAMOS MUY EXTRESADO
Y CON MUCHO MIEDO CON Y ESTAMOS CON EL
PENSANDO SI REGRESAMOS ACASA Y YO SOY
EL QUE LLEVA PARA LA RENTIA Y COMINA YA

POR FAVOR APOYENLOS A LAS COMPANJEROS QUE
ESTAMOS SOFRIENDO

Soy líder del Grupo de Justicia Migratoria de "Amigos de Guadalupe" y este es mi comentario público para el Sr Alcalde y sus consejeros, de la ciudad de San José.

Sr Alcalde y Sres Consejeros, ante la situación de inestabilidad que vivimos los migrantes desde la persecución que han iniciado los del ICE, han sido días y noches sin tener paz y tranquilidad nuestras familias y seres queridos.

Es por tal razón que solicitamos a vds. que se ubiquen en nuestra situación y apoyen a "Amigos de Guadalupe", para que podamos contar con los servicios, para nuestras familias, hermanos y amigos que están detenidos y que la comunidad sepa sus derechos, a través de consultas gratuitas, el acompañamiento comunitario y poder también contar con apoyo legal de emergencia lo que se conoce como la red de respuesta rápida.

Lo que queremos y solicitamos a vds que inviertan en nuestra comunidad migrante y prioricen fondos para esta situación urgente, ya que en esta ciudad, somos el 41% emigrantes las que la formamos, en donde tenemos hombres, mujeres, jóvenes y niños que necesitan de su ayuda.

Esperando el Señor del universo, les ilumine y toque sus corazones en favor de nuestra comunidad migrante.

Las Saluda en Líder del Grupo de Justicia Migratoria "Amigos de Guadalupe"

Soy líder de grupo de justicia migratoria de amigos de Guadalupe. Y este es mi comentario público, para el alcalde y los consejales de San Jose.

Me siento con bastante miedo, preocupación y con mucha tensión por lo que está pasando con las políticas migratorias y racistas del presidente actual de Estados Unidos.

Me preocupa la situación ~~de~~ de tantas acciones en contra de los inmigrantes. Que desconozco el futuro de mi vida, si podré permanecer en la ciudad de San Jose Ca.

Después de vivir por 16 años, ~~sin~~ sin antecedentes, porque he trabajado por tener una buena conducta que no afecte mi récord como migrante en este país.

Que se sigan destinando fondos para los servicios ~~para~~ para la defensa de detenidos, asesoramiento legal, consultas gratuitas, el acompañamiento comunitario. Y también el apoyo legal ~~de~~ de emergencia que se conoce como red de respuesta rápida.

Es necesario que prioricen fondos para ayudar a los inmigrantes de la ciudad

de San Jose, ya que somos el 41%
de la poblacion.

Esperamos que con el apoyo del alcalde
y los consejales, logremos la aprovasion
de tales recursos para la comunidad
migrante de la ciudad de San Jose
y sus alrededores.

Fw: Climate Action in City Budget, 2/5/26 Budget Session

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 2/3/2026 8:33 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

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200 E. Santa Clara St., Tower 14th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113
Main: 408-535-1260
Fax: 408-292-6207

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From: Kanika Rawat <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 8:00 AM
To: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Climate Action in City Budget, 2/5/26 Budget Session

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Dear Mayor and City Council,

My name is Kanika Rawat, and I'm a senior at [REDACTED] School in Downtown San Jose and a D4 constituent.

I urge you to consider Climate Action as a Budget priority for the 2026-27 fiscal year. As a young person looking to the years ahead, I hope to breathe cleaner air and know that we are taking every action we can to reduce our negative impact on the environment, and ultimately our future.

Climate change is not an isolated issue. Many of the initiatives that tackle climate change will also help other City problems, so they are well worth their cost and time. Working towards carbon neutrality by 2030 involves not only protecting the environment but also improving air quality, expanding public transport and walkability, and making San Jose greener and cleaner for its residents. If we want to see better public health, public cleanliness, and fewer people at risk from climate-related disasters, we need to pursue sustainable solutions, and we need solid funding.

Thank you for your consideration,
Kanika Rawat

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Fw: Prioritize Climate in 26-27 City Budget: 2/5/26 Budget Session

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Wed 2/4/2026 11:05 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

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From: Mani Bekele [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 10:41 AM
To: District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Prioritize Climate in 26-27 City Budget: 2/5/26 Budget Session

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Dear San Jose City Councilmembers and Mayor Mahan,

My name is Mani Bekele, and I am a high school junior from District 3. I serve on our city's CLimate Advisory Commission and am Policy Officer and San Jose team co-lead for the youth-led nonprofit Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action (SVYCA).

I am reaching out to request your support for climate action to be prioritized in Thursday's budget study session. **Specifically, I would like to make sure that – now that Climate Smart is housed in the Energy Department – sufficient funds are allocated to continue and expand climate efforts in sectors other than electrification: food, waste, transportation, and community engagement with climate action.**

As recent updates to City Council make clear, we are not on track to meeting our climate goals. These are not goals we can afford to miss.

The climate crisis is a clear and present danger to the people of San Jose. As we saw in the tragic LA fires last year, even urban areas are becoming more and more vulnerable to devastating wildfires that destroy homes

and communities and take lives. Meanwhile, we constantly experience the chronic effects of climate chaos on our health and daily lives: extreme heat, wildfire smoke and air pollution, and extreme weather disrupting food systems and raising prices.

Especially with an anti-climate leadership in the federal government, San Jose has the opportunity and duty to be a leader in the fight against climate change. As one of the most forward-thinking large cities in this nation, we can influence decisionmaking far beyond our borders and amplify our positive impact. Please use every opportunity to prioritize climate action, including in this year's budget. Our future depends on it.

Thank you very much,

Mani Bekele, District 3

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Fw: FY 27 Budget Prioritization Letter from REAL Coalition

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Thu 2/5/2026 7:52 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

 1 attachment (171 KB)
STAY in San José A Racial Equity Affordability Framework for FY 2026-27.pdf;

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200 E. Santa Clara St., Tower 14th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113
Main: 408-535-1260
Fax: 408-292-6207

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From: Shannon Zhang <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 5:26 PM
To: Flores Shelton, Andrea <Andrea.FloresShelton@sanjoseca.gov>; Bailey, Aurelia <Aurelia.Bailey@sanjoseca.gov>; Maciel, Zulma <zulma.maciell@sanjoseca.gov>; Jensen, Erik <Erik.Jensen@sanjoseca.gov>; Zarate, Sarah <Sarah.Zarate@sanjoseca.gov>; jon.cicirelli@sanjoseca.gov <jon.cicirelli@sanjoseca.gov>; Riguero, Petra <Petra.Riguero@sanjoseca.gov>; Wilcox, Leland <Leland.Wilcox@sanjoseca.gov>; Rios, Angel <Angel.Rios@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; Maguire, Jennifer <jennifer.maguire@sanjoseca.gov>; Solivan, Erik <Erik.Solivan@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; Kamei, Rosemary <Rosemary.Kamei@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; Campos, Pamela <Pamela.Campos@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; Tordillos, Anthony <Anthony.Tordillos@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; Cohen, David <David.Cohen@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; Ortiz, Peter <Peter.Ortiz@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; Mulcahy, Michael <Michael.Mulcahy@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; Doan, Bien <Bien.Doan@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; Candelas, Domingo <Domingo.Candelas@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; Casey, George <George.Casey@sanjoseca.gov>; Fruen, Joseph <Joseph.Fruen@sanjoseca.gov>; Yamamoto, KiyomiH <Kiyomi.Yamamoto@sanjoseca.gov>; Gvatua, Alexander <Alexander.Gvatua@sanjoseca.gov>; Nguyen, Lam <Lam.Nguyen@sanjoseca.gov>; Moreno, Brisa <Brisa.Moreno@sanjoseca.gov>; lynn.lee@sanjoseca.gov <lynn.lee@sanjoseca.gov>; Fleming, Jonathan <Jonathan.Fleming@sanjoseca.gov>; Adera, Teddy <Teddy.Adera@sanjoseca.gov>; Hughes, Scott <scott.hughes@sanjoseca.gov>; Gomez, David A <David.A.Gomez@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Kyra Kazantzis <[REDACTED]>; Kylie Clark <[REDACTED]>; Gianella Ordonez <[REDACTED]>; Brooke Tran <[REDACTED]>; Poncho Guevara <[REDACTED]>; Vaughn Villaverde <[REDACTED]>; Kathy Cordova <[REDACTED]>
Subject: FY 27 Budget Prioritization Letter from REAL Coalition

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Dear Mayor Mahan, Vice Mayor Foley, Councilmembers, and City Staff,

On behalf of the nonprofit Race Equity Action Leadership (REAL) Coalition, we are sharing **STAY in San José: A Racial Equity Affordability Framework for FY 2026–27**, attached.

We appreciate City staff’s proposed updates to the City’s Budget Principles, particularly the addition of language to “promote transparency through clear, accessible budget information and meaningful public engagement, including service level tradeoffs and long-term impacts of budget decisions.” We strongly support this direction. Meaningful engagement and accessible information are essential to understanding how budget choices affect racial equity, affordability, displacement, and household stability—especially for communities most impacted by rising costs.

As the City updates its Budget Principles, we also encourage the City Council to explicitly incorporate the City of San José’s Racial and Social Equity Ordinance and Equity Values and Standards Policy into the principles themselves. Budget decisions are among the most consequential ways the City can operationalize its equity commitments, and the Budget Principles should clearly reflect that responsibility.

The attached framework is offered as a constructive contribution to the City’s upcoming budget deliberations, identifying affordability-focused priorities grounded in racial equity, fiscal responsibility, and household stability. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to continued dialogue.

Sincerely,

Vaughn Villaverde, AACL, Co-chair

Kathy Cordova, Co-chair

Poncho Guevara, Sacred Heart Community Service, Co-convenor

Kyra Kazantzis, Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits, Co-convenor

On behalf of the Race Equity Action Leadership (REAL) Coalition

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STAY in San José: A Racial Equity Affordability Framework for FY 2026-27*

The Race Equity Action Leadership (REAL) Coalition** offers the **STAY in San José** framework to guide the City's FY 2026-27 budget decisions.

Why Affordability Must Be Central

San José residents have been consistent and clear: the cost of living—and housing affordability in particular—is the top challenge facing people who live here. Year after year, the City's own resident surveys rank housing costs, rent, and overall affordability above nearly every other concern.

These pressures are not evenly distributed. Rising housing costs, childcare expenses, and basic living costs are deepening income inequality, widening class divides, and reinforcing racial and economic segregation. Black, Latino, immigrant, and low-income households are more likely to be rent-burdened, overcrowded, displaced, or pushed out of the city altogether. Affordability challenges also fall disproportionately on people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ residents, older adults, and people with chronic health or behavioral health needs, many of whom face fixed or limited incomes, discrimination in housing and employment, and higher costs to access basic services. For these communities, affordability is inseparable from dignity, safety, and stability.

Affordability policy is therefore not race-neutral. It is one of the most powerful tools the City has to advance—or undermine—racial equity. The idea of advancing racial equity through affordability policy is consistent with the City of San José's Racial and Social Equity Ordinance and Equity Values and Standards Policy, which require the City to proactively eliminate disparities, center impacted communities, and embed equity into decision-making. Advancing the priorities below would move the City closer to fulfilling the spirit and intent of these laws.

At its core, this framework is about ensuring that San José remains a place where people can afford to live and work—and where they belong. Policies framed as “compassionate” or “results-driven” must ultimately be evaluated by their real-world impacts on housing stability, dignity, and equity—not by rhetoric alone. These impacts should be measured and reported transparently, with a clear focus

on whether policies are reducing racial and economic disparities and improving outcomes for the communities most affected by affordability challenges.

PART I: Affordability Framework (Housing, Childcare, Household Stability)

1. Resolve the Homelessness Crisis by Prioritizing Deeply Affordable Permanent Housing

Shift City policy toward permanent solutions for residents with the greatest need by:

- Prioritizing housing affordable to Extremely Low-Income and Very Low-Income households
- Treating interim shelter and encampment responses as short-term bridges—not substitutes for permanent housing

Affordability impact: Without deeply affordable permanent housing, residents cycle through costly emergency systems while remaining unhoused. Permanent housing stabilizes households and reduces long-term public expenditures. Strategies that prioritize temporary shelter or enforcement over permanent housing increase long-term costs and instability when the permanent housing supply does not keep pace with need.

2. Prevent Displacement Through Housing Stabilization

Invest in upstream strategies that keep people housed and prevent entry into crisis systems by:

- Fully funding homelessness prevention and housing stabilization services
- Prioritizing flexible assistance and stabilization supports that help households remain safely housed

Affordability impact: Preventing homelessness and displacement is far less costly than responding after crises and preserves housing stability for households most at risk of displacement.

3. Stabilize Tenants by Protecting and Enforcing Their Legal Rights

Ensure renters can meaningfully exercise their legal rights and remain safely housed by:

- Fully funding universal eviction defense and tenant education. An important next step would be to bring the right to counsel back and consider piloting an eviction defense approach.
- Expanding legal assistance for habitability enforcement, including unsafe or poorly maintained properties
- Acknowledging that legal rights are meaningless without access to attorneys

Affordability impact: Unsafe housing, deferred maintenance, and illegal landlord practices impose hidden costs on low-income tenants and accelerate displacement. Enforcing tenant protections stabilizes households, preserves affordable housing, and reduces reliance on emergency systems.

4. Keep Rents Affordable by Strengthening Rent Stabilization and Preserving Existing Housing

Reduce excessive rent increases while maintaining housing quality by:

- Maintaining the City’s prohibition on utility cost pass-throughs for unmetered rental units, and ensuring that tenants are not charged for utilities through allocation formulas that obscure actual usage and increase housing cost burdens
- Lowering the annual allowable rent increase under the City’s rent stabilization ordinance, which currently permits increases of up to 5% regardless of the local Consumer Price Index (CPI), which tracks inflation
- Relying on the capital fair return process—not blanket rent hikes—to address legitimate capital improvement needs
- Exploring preservation incentives that reward owners who keep rents affordable

Affordability impact: Keeping rents aligned with actual cost growth prevents displacement and preserves naturally occurring affordable housing at a fraction of the cost of new construction. Affordability strategies that rely solely on deregulation or market acceleration—without tenant protections—risk increasing displacement rather than reducing housing cost burdens.

5. Reduce Family Cost Burdens by Prioritizing Affordable Childcare

Expand and stabilize childcare by:

- Increasing affordable childcare slots
- Stabilizing nonprofit childcare providers serving low-income families

Affordability impact: Childcare is one of the largest household expenses, as acknowledged in the City’s Child and Family Master Plan. Without affordable options, families—especially women of color and immigrant parents—are pushed out of the workforce or into economic crisis. Addressing childcare affordability is not solely a county or state responsibility; the City of San José has an obligation to work with the county to step in with meaningful investments, policy leadership, and coordination to ensure families can afford to live and work here.

6. Protect Household Stability by Responding to Harmful Federal Actions

Mitigate local impacts of federal policies that threaten affordability, safety, and civil rights by:

- Planning for millions of dollars in lost or threatened federal funding
- Coordinating with Santa Clara County to close gaps in protections for those targeted by the federal administration, including immigrant families, LGBTQ+ residents, people seeking reproductive health care, climate advocates, and organizations advancing racial justice
- Defending nonprofits and community members targeted for their advocacy or service.
- Evaluating how City data systems and surveillance or enforcement technologies—including speed cameras—are used, accessed, or shared, and developing safeguards to ensure they are not repurposed for immigration enforcement

Affordability impact: When households experience fear of detention, family separation, or surveillance, people avoid work, school, healthcare, and public spaces—thereby directly reducing household income and quality of life and increasing housing instability. These disruptions compound affordability challenges and increase reliance on emergency systems. Protecting immigrant families is also a fiscally responsible strategy: immigrants contribute billions of dollars annually in local, state, and federal taxes, and policies that destabilize

immigrant households reduce economic participation while shifting costs to local governments.

City leadership must take a sustained and courageous public stand in defense of immigrant communities and other targeted groups, clearly condemning federal actions that undermine safety, dignity, and economic stability.

7. Center Affordability and Equity When Evaluating Potential Cuts to Community Services

In the context of a projected budget shortfall, the City must carefully evaluate any proposed reductions to community and nonprofit-delivered services through an affordability and racial equity lens. Services that prevent displacement, support older adults, provide nutrition, offer eviction advice and defense, reduce isolation, and stabilize household income are core components of the City's affordability and stability infrastructure and should be prioritized accordingly.

Affordability impact: Cuts to the safety net would directly deepen the City's affordability crisis and disproportionately harm communities already experiencing the greatest economic strain. When these services are reduced or eliminated, costs do not disappear; they are shifted onto families and communities least able to absorb them and often reappear later in more expensive emergency systems.

The City should prioritize maintaining services that stabilize households and prevent harm over reductions to discretionary or deferrable expenditures that do not directly affect residents' ability to remain housed, healthy, and economically secure.

PART II: Budget-Conscious Strategies That Advance Racial Equity

1. Stabilize Communities and Improve Safety by Expanding Community-Based Alternatives to Policing and Incarceration

Invest in responses that prevent harm, stabilize households, and reduce reliance on emergency and carceral systems by:

- Expanding and sustaining the popular and effective TRUST program citywide and exploring how the City’s crisis call response can best direct calls to community-based care responses
- Establishing a Community-Based Violence Prevention and Intervention Office grounded in public health, trauma-informed care, and neighborhood-led strategies, beginning with an evaluation of successful models
- Implementing community-designed, non-punitive outreach models—co-designed with people who have lived experience of homelessness and behavioral health crises—to build trust, encourage voluntary engagement, and connect people to housing and care, including approaches similar to the HEART model proposed by REAL in the last budget cycle
- Investing in planning phases for community-designed approaches to interpersonal violence (IPV), designed by the neighborhoods or community groups that will benefit from them. These could include restorative justice, peer mentoring, and circulo practices, for example.

Fiscal efficiency and equity impact: Police, jail, emergency room, and inpatient responses are among the most expensive and least effective ways to address mental health crises and substance use. Community-based responses reduce public costs while preventing job loss, fines, incarceration, and housing instability. Opioid settlement funds are a critical source for this work and should not be used for policing under any circumstances.

PART III: Revenue

1. Secure Long-Term Affordability Through Community-Aligned Revenue Strategies

Enable proactive, transparent exploration of revenue options that reflect community priorities by:

- Allowing City staff to explore combinations of public investments—such as infrastructure, housing, open space, childcare, and resident health and human services—that residents value
- Re-examining Measure E formulations, including potential adjustments at the highest tiers of the property transfer tax

- Authorizing polling and analysis of additional revenue concepts without repeated Council approvals, while maintaining transparency and accountability

Fiscal sustainability and equity impact: Sustainable revenue strategies must be grounded in an honest assessment of the extreme income and wealth disparities that characterize Silicon Valley. In a region where a small number of households hold extraordinary levels of wealth alongside widespread housing and cost burdens, revenue approaches should be evaluated for their ability to raise resources in a progressive manner that does not exacerbate affordability pressures for low- and moderate-income residents.

Centering progressivity in revenue exploration—including options tied to high-value transactions, concentrations of wealth, or corporate activity, while remaining mindful of legal constraints—allows the City to fund critical affordability and stability investments.

Long-term fiscal stability cannot be achieved through austerity or by balancing the budget primarily through cuts to community services; avoiding difficult fiscal conversations only deepens inequality and increases future costs borne by residents and local governments alike.

Bottom Line

In a deficit year, budget choices are equity choices. These priorities advance affordability as a racial justice strategy—grounded in evidence, lived experience, and the City’s own equity laws.

San José can be more affordable—and must also be more humane, more equitable, and more courageous in confronting the intertwined crises of housing, health, community safety, and democracy. Meeting these expectations will require bold choices, sustained public investment, and a willingness to be judged not only by economic indicators, but by whether the people most at risk of displacement and harm are healthier, safer, and able to stay in the communities they call home.

San José must prioritize stability over symbolic or headline-driven actions, permanent solutions over temporary fixes, and dignity over coercion. The REAL Coalition calls on City leadership to advance policies that allow residents to stay in San José—not just survive here, but belong here.

* We call this framework **STAY in San José** to reflect the core outcomes it advances: household stability, tenant protections, affordability, and a city where people can remain in the communities they call home. **STAY** is an acronym for Stability, Tenants' rights, Affordability, and You belong here!

**The Race Equity Action Leadership (REAL) Coalition is a cross-sector alliance of more than 50 nonprofit organizations, along with many additional nonprofit partners, community advocates, and individuals with lived experience. REAL is committed to dismantling white supremacy culture and systemic racism, using our positional power to advance movement goals, and facilitating the voice of community in government decision-making. We are also committed to learning, advocacy, and organizing while building power in authentic community solidarity.