



Memorandum

TO: Honorable Mayor &
City Council

FROM: Toni J. Taber, MMC
City Clerk

SUBJECT: The Public Record
November 6, 2025 – November 13, 2025

DATE: November 19, 2025

ITEMS FILED FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD

Letters from Boards, Commissions, and Committees

Letters from the Public

1. Letter from Jean Cohen (South Bay Labor Council), dated November 7, 2025, regarding: San José Living Wage.
2. Letter from Deborah Aguirre, dated November 12, 2025, regarding: Urban Village Plan: Princeton Plaza (Kooser & Meridian).

Toni J. Taber, MMC
City Clerk

TJT/tt



Fw: San Jose Living Wage Ordinance

From Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Date Fri 11/7/2025 3:23 PM

To Rules and Open Government Committee Agendas <rulescommitteeagenda@sanjoseca.gov>

 1 attachment (141 KB)

SBLC November 2025 San Jose Living Wage Letter.pdf;

From: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Sent: Friday, November 7, 2025 3:02 PM

To: Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: FW: San Jose Living Wage Ordinance

From: Jean Cohen [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, November 7, 2025 2:45 PM

To: Jean Cohen [REDACTED]

Subject: San Jose Living Wage Ordinance

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Dear Mayor and City Council:

Please see the attached letter from the South Bay Labor Council regarding the San Jose Living Wage Ordinance.

Sincerely,
Jean

Jean F. Cohen
Executive Officer
South Bay Labor Council

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Jean Cohen, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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November 7, 2025

Honorable Mayor and City Council
City of San José
200 E. Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

RE: San José Living Wage

Dear Mayor Mahan and Honorable Councilmembers:

On behalf of the South Bay Labor Council representing over 100,000 workers and their families, I am writing to bring to your attention a serious challenge to affordability in our city for people working under the San José Living Wage, and to request your support in resolving it.

The San José City Council established the Living Wage Policy in 1998, finding (in part) that:

“It is beneficial to the health and welfare of all citizens of San José that all workers are paid a wage which enables them to not live in poverty...

The payment of such inadequate compensation tends to negatively affect the quality of services to the City and the public by fostering high turnover and instability in the workplace...

The use of City funds to promote the creation of a livable wage will increase the ability of these employees to attain sustenance, decrease the amount of poverty and reduce the amount of taxpayer funded social services in San José.”

Annual cost-of-living increases were a critical element of the policy originally passed by City Council. Without those, the “living wage” would quickly cease to live up to its name. Council therefore included in the policy a process for annual cost-of-living adjustments and a methodology and data source to calculate them.

It was recently disclosed that the original source used to annually set San José Living Wage COLA increases was discontinued in 2019. Although the Living Wage Policy stated that in such event, the annual adjustment should be made using the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers in the San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose area, this was not done. Instead, an un-replicable “recalibration” methodology was used.

As a result, the value of the San Jose Living Wage has eroded over time, leaving workers who provide vital City-funded contract services struggling to make ends meet. Since 2020, the regional cost of living for wage earners (Bay Area CPI-W) has increases by 20.3%, yet the San José Living Wage has only gained 14.7%.



November 7, 2025

page two

In July of this year, matters got even worse. The City determined that the Living Wage COLA for 2025-2036 would be \$0.

The memo accompanying this determination states that according to the new methodology, "the living wage recalibration resulted in a rate lower than the current 2024 rate", and therefore the Living Wage would not be raised.

No credible data source bears out this claim that the average cost of living in our city *decreased* last year. Nor does the experience of any working person in this city. This is an egregious error with real-world consequences for San José residents and their families.

Most other cities in our region now use the publicly available Consumer Price Index (CPI) for their annual minimum wage or living wage adjustments, most commonly the Bay Area regional CPI for Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). San Jose itself uses the Bay Area CPI-W for annual adjustments to its Minimum Wage and to the San José Airport Living Wage.

We respectfully ask the City of San José to adopt the Bay Area CPI-W for annual adjustments to the Living Wage, as follows:

- 1) Annual CPI adjustments:** The Living Wage shall be adjusted annually, on the same schedule as currently, using the Bay Area regional Consumer Price Index for Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W).
- 2) Catch-up adjustment:** The Living Wage for FY 25-26 shall be adjusted using the new methodology, with an effective date of Jan 1, 2026.
- 3) Contingency plan:** In the event that the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics ceases to publish the Bay Area CPI-W, staff will return to City Council with a proposed substitute, including analysis of the likely impact of that substitute on annual wage adjustment amounts.

As you are no doubt aware, working families and their communities in San José are struggling on multiple fronts. This is one item on which the City can take immediate action. We hope to continue working with the City Council on additional actions that can be taken to support our working families and communities in this challenging environment, including those working at San José Mineta International Airport.

Sincerely,


Jean Cohen
Executive Officer, South Bay Labor Council

cc: Office of Equality Assurance, Office of the City Manager



Fw: Urban Village Plan: Princeton Plaza (Kooser & Meridian)

From Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Date Wed 11/12/2025 4:57 PM

To Rules and Open Government Committee Agendas <rulescommitteeagenda@sanjoseca.gov>

From: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, November 12, 2025 4:53 PM

To: Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: FW: Urban Village Plan: Princeton Plaza (Kooser & Meridian)

From: Deborah Aguirre [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, November 12, 2025 4:42 PM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Urban Village Plan: Princeton Plaza (Kooser & Meridian)

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Deborah Aguirre <[REDACTED]>

Date: Wed, Nov 12, 2025, 11:20 AM

Subject: Urban Village Plan: Princeton Plaza (Kooser & Meridian)

To: <sanhita.ghosal@sanjoseca.gov>, <ruth.cueto@sanjoseca.gov>, <jerad.ferguson@sanjoseca.gov>

<jerad.ferguson@sanjoseca.gov>

**Urban villages are areas that include residential & job-based developments. This might work in an area of apts or undeveloped areas with potential growth. But when the majority of a specified area is already residential, with established single-family homes, it doesn't make sense. The population here already has jobs. While walking & bus usage are great, most of the established population travels to shopping, jobs & activities by car.

**Revitalizing under-utilized properties--

There are multiple shopping centers, schools & parks in the Kooser-Blossom Hill-Meridian area. While stores & restaurants come & go, most of the current ones have been around for many years. There is no major area that is "under-utilized."

Princeton Plaza, where you are currently focused on, is a small shopping center, with minimal parking. Adding to it would make it more difficult for anyone using a car (either residents or

visitors). This would also add to general traffic congestion in the area.

****Transit use--**

This has been available, in the form of buses, in this area for many years, but has been reduced in the last 10+ years due to funding & lack of use. While there is a light rail near Oakridge Mall, there is no place to put a transit system in this area. The roads surrounding Princeton Plaza are 2-lanes, with multiple pilings (to prevent road games) at most corners.

****High-quality urban design--**

Why? This is a long-established, single-family community that doesn't want or need "urban design" brought in. We love our quiet neighborhoods, low traffic, & safe areas for families & children.

The apartments you are proposing would probably be small & expensive. Young people want to get out of apartments & buy their own homes. As homes in our neighborhood sell, young couples have moved in, continuing the close quiet neighborhood life style that this area is known for. There are already apartments along Kooser, including both senior-living & low-income (one near Oakridge Mall, one on Kooser across from Princeton Plaza, and one (proposed) at Kooser & Camden.

We have lived in the Kooser Woods neighborhood for 45 years (3 generations); most of our current neighbors have been here a minimum of 15-20 years.

Urban villages sound like an interesting concept, but not for here!! If there are any under-utilized spots left around this part of San Jose, they should be turned into parks for families, children & animals.

Question: Looking at the map of planned & proposed building, it seems that South San Jose has more than it's share. Why not look toward North & East San Jose, where there are large open areas? Stop crowding one more thing into an area that is already heavily developed.

Thank you for listening,
Deborah & Gerald Aguirre

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