

## FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 7:58 AM

To: Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

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**From:** Sydney Small <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 10, 2024 7:25 PM  
**To:** City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>  
**Cc:** District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@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>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

[External Email]

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Dear Mayor Mahan and City Council Members,

I am writing to urge your support for the proposed budget for FY24-25 Animal Services. This includes the addition of crucial positions, making permanent the additional Veterinarian position to increase surgical capacity for animals in our community, and dedicated funding to enhance the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program. These resources are essential for managing the community's needs effectively.

The proposed positions, including a Senior Systems Applications Programmer and an Analyst, are crucial for improving data analysis and identifying operational strategies to address and reduce community demands. Making the additional Veterinarian position permanent to expand the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program to operate five days a week, and the requested funding of \$400,000 for the TNR program, is vital to control the population of stray cats and kittens and reduce the number of animals needing assistance from Animal Services. The reduction of the TNR program has led to a significant and urgent increase in the stray cat population, resulting in an overwhelming number of kittens. It is imperative to strengthen the TNR program to address this issue effectively and immediately. We also seek support for shelter capital improvements to enhance the space and visibility for adoptable cats. These improvements are critical to improve the flow of animals through the system and reduce the length of stay at the shelter. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely, Sydney

**Sydney Small**  
[REDACTED]

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## FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 7:58 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

---

**From:** Michaela Meyer <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Monday, June 10, 2024 7:09 PM

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

**Cc:** The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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:** Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

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Sincerely,

Michaela Meyer

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## FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 7:58 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

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**From:** Karen Masuda [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Monday, June 10, 2024 8:00 AM

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

**Cc:** The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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:** Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

[External Email]

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Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

[Karen Masuda]

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**FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)**

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 7:58 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

---

**From:** Charmaine Smith [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Monday, June 10, 2024 8:22 PM

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

**Subject:** Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

[External Email]

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Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Charmaine Smith-Winslow

Sent from my iPhone

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## FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 7:58 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

---

**From:** Liz Holtz [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Monday, June 10, 2024 7:50 PM

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

**Cc:** The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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:** Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

[External Email]

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The reduction of the TNR program has led to a significant and urgent increase in the stray cat population, resulting in an overwhelming number of kittens. It is imperative to strengthen the TNR program to address this issue effectively and immediately.

**The lack of sufficient TNR access since 2018 has completely destroyed ALL of the progress that was made since Jon Cicarelli first implemented the program in 2009. The TNR program was so successful that a study of SJACS TNR program from March 2010-June 2014, researchers observed cat and kitten impounds decreased 29.1%; euthanasia decreased from over 70% of intakes in 2009, to 23% in 2014. Euthanasia in the shelter for Upper Respiratory Disease decreased 99%; dead cat pick up off the streets declined 20%. This study is still referenced in current medical research studies.**

***"Once we fully implemented our return-to-field program, the only real regret we had was that we didn't start it sooner. It has opened new horizons for us, and helped us see that more is possible. We no longer justify taking a healthy cat's life, we defend saving it." - Jon Cicirelli, Director, San Jose Animal Care and Services***

***"Most of these cats are healthy. They're vibrant. They don't need us. All we really need to do is control their population." - Jon Cicirelli, Deputy Director for San José Animal Care and Services***

**SO... ask yourself, "How did we get to where we are now??" and  
"How do we get back to SJACS being a nationally renowned facility again??"**

We also seek support for shelter capital improvements to enhance the space and visibility for adoptable cats. We also need a Co-ordinator specifically dedicated to the cats and improving their stays, outcomes, and restoring the damaged relationships with cat rescues. Public education and outreach regarding cats and kittens is equally imperative!

These improvements are critical to improve the flow of animals through the system and reduce the length of stay at the shelter. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter and your current and continued support for rectifying this situation.

Best regards,

Liz Holtz  
TNR Cat Trapper & Feline Foster for Rescue



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**FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)**

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 7:58 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Jane Zhong [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, June 10, 2024 5:33 PM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

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Dear Mayor Mahan and City Council Members,

I am writing to urge your support for the proposed budget for FY24-25 Animal Services. This includes the addition of crucial positions, making permanent the additional Veterinarian position to increase surgical capacity for animals in our community, and dedicated funding to enhance the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program. These resources are essential for managing the community's needs effectively.

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Thank you for your attention to this critical matter!

Sincerely,

Jane Zhong

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**FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)**

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 7:58 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

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**From:** Soozee Shireman <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Monday, June 10, 2024 5:21 PM

**To:** City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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:** Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

[External Email]

Dear Mayor Mahan and City Council Members,

I am writing to urge your support for the proposed budget for FY24-25 Animal Services.

Our street has had a huge stray cat issue, which we solved as neighbors by using the TNR program.

Now, with the reduction of the TNR program we have an increase in the stray cat population, resulting in an overwhelming number of kittens.

Please strengthen the TNR program to address this issue effectively and immediately.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Soozee Shireman

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**FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)**

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 7:58 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Danielle Klinger [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, June 10, 2024 5:19 PM

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

Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

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Sincerely,

Danielle Klinger

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City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 7:58 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Suean Shank [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, June 10, 2024 6:15 PM

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

Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

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Sincerely,

Suean Shank

Sent from my iPhone

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**FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)**

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 7:58 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Lani Sachdeva <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Tuesday, June 11, 2024 5:34 AM

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

Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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>

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Sincerely,

Lani Sachdeva

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## FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 7:58 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

---

**From:** Tracēy [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Monday, June 10, 2024 5:25 PM

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

**Cc:** The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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>

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Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

~ Tracēy Ledda

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**FW: Item 3.1 (June 10, 2024) 2024-2025 Proposed Operating & Capital Budgets, Proposed Fees, Charges & Measure E Allocations**

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 7:58 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

---

**From:** Serena Alvarez <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Monday, June 10, 2024 5:55 PM

**To:** City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; Kamei, Rosemary <Rosemary.Kamei@sanjoseca.gov>; Jimenez, Sergio <sergio.jimenez@sanjoseca.gov>; Torres, Omar <Omar.Torres@sanjoseca.gov>; Cohen, David <David.Cohen@sanjoseca.gov>; Ortiz, Peter <Peter.Ortiz@sanjoseca.gov>; Davis, Dev <dev.davis@sanjoseca.gov>; Doan, Bien <Bien.Doan@sanjoseca.gov>; Candelas, Domingo <Domingo.Candelas@sanjoseca.gov>; Foley, Pam <Pam.Foley@sanjoseca.gov>; Batra, Arjun <arjun.batra@sanjoseca.gov>  
**Cc:** Maguire, Jennifer <jennifer.maguire@sanjoseca.gov>; Wilcox, Leland <Leland.Wilcox@sanjoseca.gov>; Zarate, Sarah <Sarah.Zarate@sanjoseca.gov>; Hughey, Rosalynn <Rosalynn.Hughey@sanjoseca.gov>; Rios, Angel <Angel.Rios@sanjoseca.gov>; Maciel, Zulma <zulma.maciel@sanjoseca.gov>; Quevedo, Matthew <Matthew.Quevedo@sanjoseca.gov>; Jacob Sandoval <[REDACTED]>; Jose Barrera <[REDACTED]>; Sylvia Alvarez <[REDACTED]>; Ann McEntee <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** Item 3.1 (June 10, 2024) 2024-2025 Proposed Operating & Capital Budgets, Proposed Fees, Charges & Measure E Allocations

[External Email]

Honorable Mayor and Members of the San Jose City Council,

Since 2015, Latino Fellows of the Institute for Non-Violence and LULAC members have engaged in service of unsheltered neighbors, many of whom are Latino families with young children. Over the years, we've worked closely with devoted advocates and service providers, e.g. Winter Faith Collaborative, Amigos de Guadalupe Center for Justice and Empowerment, former Grace Baptist Church and Hope Village, among others. Our collaborative efforts contributed to the first (and for years the only) rotating safe parking programs, learning and realizing quick build sheltering like Pallet homes (e.g. [Casitas de Esperanza for families and children](#)), and best practices for designing a holistic pathway from street and creek to permanent supportive housing. Respectfully, please consider the following as you consider and deliberate June 11th on Items 3.3 and 3.4:

**Support McKinney Vento Students & Families**

Our teams instituted a years-long effort across jurisdictions, supported by Phil Mastrocola, the SCCOE McKinney Vento team and Amigos de Guadalupe, to raise awareness and educate on [McKinney Vento unhoused students and families](#) in our city and county. See CA LULAC Resolution Championing McKinney Vento Services to Homeless Students and Families, adopted by CA LULAC State Assembly (Anaheim, 2019). Until our efforts, housing and other staff of multiple jurisdictions were not working with [McKinney Vento School District Liaisons](#) (often unaware of their existence) -- and some jurisdictions and organizations continue to require education and pressure to do so. We very sincerely urge you to think of these Latino and other families as you deliberate about Measure E budget allocations. District Liaisons are able to refer unhoused families to services and we urge that you budget to scale for Emergency Interim Housing family placements in partnership with the County and other providers. Our collaborative efforts have demonstrated a family-supportive pathway that doesn't leave children and families languishing in shelters -- instead building family-supportive communities with incredible success rates in moving families with children into permanent supportive housing within

boundaries of our city, county and beyond. BUT, availability of EIH is the family-stabilizing key and more is needed to match the dire need and emergency state in our city. Substantial realignment of Measure E to scale Emergency Interim Housing is encouraged if you assure that McKinney Vento families are prioritized. Please don't leave children and families behind, as they often are.

### Reimagine Public Safety

We trust you recognize the formative role that being unsheltered has in diminishing opportunities for health and educational success. Instability of family and home life resulting from external system causation (insufficient family EIH) leaves youth and families vulnerable to detrimental health and educational outcomes, including disparate justice systems contact. Provision of appropriate funding for these emergency measures is the type of social support that reimagines public safety and community empowerment. Please fund protective factors and build upon family assets. In addition, for unsheltered adults lacking behavioral health supports, carceral response is vastly more costly and likely. County studies have shown it costs \$85K/year per individual using carceral system response, while EIH and behavioral health services instead cost \$35K/year per individual. Realignment of Measure E reimagines public safety. This is a tremendous opportunity to shift from carceral strategies that wound our neighbors, often irreparably, to restorative, rehabilitative, empowering strategies.

Finally, substantial realignment of Measure E is consistent with affordable housing policy formulation advanced by [leading affordable housing advocates](#):

[All Home CA Blog: Strengthening Interim Housing as a Housing First Approach \(March 2023\)](#) (blog pasted below in full for ease of reference).

Please consider these matters as you deliberate Items 3.3 and 3.4. Thank you for your time and attention.

Respectfully,  
Serena Alvarez, Esq.  
Executive Director, The Salvador E. Alvarez Institute for Non-Violence  
Co-Chair, CA LULAC Legislative & Health Committees  
Advisor to LULAC National Vice President Farwest  
President, LULAC Council 3090

Sylvia Alvarez, J.D.  
Senior Latina Fellow, The Salvador E. Alvarez Institute for Non-Violence  
Trustee Emeritus, Evergreen Elementary School District  
Retired Public Educator, Evergreen Elementary School District (26 years in classrooms, often Title 1)  
Former President, Evergreen Teachers Association  
Former Member, CTA/ABC Committee  
Former Member, CA LULAC Executive Board  
Member, LULAC Council 3090

# Strengthening Interim Housing as a Housing First Approach

Posted March 20, 2023 & filed under [Blog](#).

By Gail Gilman

*This is the second in a three-part series to help demystify interim housing and align the public and local decision-makers behind models that can work around the Bay Area.*

- The first part, ***The Role of Interim Housing as a Homelessness Response***, provides historical context, a definition of interim housing, and examples of how it appears in the Bay Area.

- *This post digs into the challenges and barriers to scaling interim housing, and expands on how it can be consistent with a Housing First approach.*
  - *The last part puts forward **7 Principles for Interim Housing**, to help jurisdictions and service providers design, develop, and improve interim housing sites across the region.*
- 

Interim housing is a critical component of our strategy to make homelessness rare and brief, along with permanent housing and homelessness prevention. But in order for interim housing to scale and achieve its potential, there are structural barriers to overcome. We'll get into some of these challenges in this post, including how we fund homelessness and housing, finding viable locations to build interim housing, the bureaucratic processes potential developers have to navigate, and workforce issues.

But before getting into all that, we want to be very clear about one thing and call out an elephant in the room: interim housing is absolutely consistent with a "Housing First" approach. It's actually *because* of our belief in Housing First that we believe so strongly in interim housing.

## Interim Housing and Housing First

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) [defines "Housing First"](#) as prioritizing a permanent home above other needs when assisting people experiencing homelessness. The approach is "guided by the belief that people need basic necessities like food and a place to live before attending to anything less critical, such as getting a job, budgeting properly, or attending to substance use issues." We couldn't agree more, and it's great that most of the homelessness response field is now aligned with this approach.

**Every human being needs a decent home—possibilities are endless when you have that foundation, and little is possible when you don't.** That's exactly why interim housing is so important, and why it's consistent with Housing First. **Permanent housing is always the goal**, but interim housing can address immediate safety and health concerns for people getting connected to permanent housing. In a region where more than 25,000 people sleep outside on any given night, and where deeply affordable housing is scarce and building more is costly and slow, **the streets should not be the waiting room for a permanent home.**

**We define *interim housing*** as a short-term dwelling in which to stabilize and heal after living on the streets, on the way to a permanent home. Interim housing features non-congregate sleeping arrangements (i.e. individual rooms with doors that close), and offers a basic level of supportive services, individual privacy, security, and space to keep belongings.

- **While more research is needed, interim housing with wraparound on-site supportive services appears to have a higher success rate exiting residents to permanent housing than traditional congregate shelter.** One [investigation of interim housing in Santa Clara and Alameda counties](#) indicated that residents of tiny homes with substantial supportive services on site were far more likely to exit to permanent housing than were residents of traditional "dorm-style homeless shelters."
- **People living outdoors are more likely to accept an interim housing placement than traditional congregate shelters.** The independence, privacy, and security that these sites provide is incredibly important, as we discussed in our [first post on this topic](#). During the historic rain storms of January 2023, [news outlets reported](#) that people who were unsheltered [still refused to shelter in congregate settings](#). In Des Moines, Iowa, even with snow on the ground, a comprehensive survey found people rejected traditional shelter because of safety concerns and "problems with other people."





### **Why do some Des Moines homeless people avoid shelter? A new study finds ...**

Using firsthand interviews, the study provides a platform for people who are homeless and unsheltered to tell th...

Interim housing alone cannot solve homelessness, and people staying at such a site should still be considered homeless and in need of a permanent home as soon as possible. Still, it is widely seen as a significant improvement over traditional congregate shelter. NAEH has recognized this and laid out extensive guidance for [Reimagining Interim Housing](#) that is largely aligned with our thinking and elaborates on many issues raised in these posts.

Another concern about interim housing is the sense that it competes for funding with permanent housing. This problem is related to some of the funding challenges explained below. Unfortunately, we are operating in an environment with serious resource scarcity, and that inevitably breeds competition. **The bigger problem is the resource scarcity that pits one solution against another.**

As we explain in the [1-2-4 Framework for Homelessness Solutions](#), we need to invest simultaneously in multiple solutions *at scale* in order to significantly reduce unsheltered homelessness and make homelessness in the Bay Area rare, brief and non-recurring. We need a “yes, and” approach, and the funding to effectively do more than one thing at a time. When all three legs of the stool are working as intended, the whole system will work better.

So let’s focus on that resource scarcity—the real elephant in the room. But first, it’s important to understand the cost of the quality, well-supported interim housing we are talking about.

## **Cost Considerations**

While the costs for developing and operating effective interim housing vary considerably even across the Bay Area, two local examples can provide guidance for the on-site services required for successful programs and the annual funding required to provide them.

The [LifeMoves Mountain View site](#), developed in approximately six months using a modular construction process funded in part through [Homekey](#), opened in 2021. The facility contains 100 units (88 for single adults and 12 for families) and provides an array of on-site supportive services. **Eighty-six percent of families and 67 percent of single adults who reside at the facility successfully move to permanent housing thereafter.** The start-up capital costs for LifeMoves Mountain View amounted to approximately \$174,000 per unit, and ongoing operating costs have come to approximately \$27,000 per bed (or about \$34,000 per unit annually).

San Jose’s Maybury [“Bridge housing community”](#) consists of forty small (approximately 80 square feet) tiny cabins for single adults. According to analysis reported in [one press account](#), approximately **57% of exits from this site are to permanent housing destinations.** Capital costs for this site amounted to approximately \$2.5 million (\$62,500 per unit), and ongoing operating costs have amounted to just over \$48,000 per unit annually.

While more evidence is needed, the costs listed above are notably higher than those of traditional congregate shelter. Recent nation-wide research estimates that nonprofit organizations operating traditional shelters receive an average of about \$28,000 in revenue per shelter bed annually. Average start-up costs to develop new congregate facilities in the Bay Area have been estimated at just over \$43,000 per bed, while the approximate operating cost to operate congregate sites in Alameda County was pegged at just over \$18,000 per bed annually.

The higher operating costs for more successful interim housing are because of the supportive services they provide, which are crucial to create the outcome (placements to permanent homes) that we all want to see from such facilities. In a well-functioning homelessness response system that is not overburdened, there is still a role for traditional shelter, but right now the system asks much more from those facilities than they are designed to provide.

**Although the per capita cost of non-congregate interim housing is higher than traditional large-scale shelters, the benefits to residents and the larger community are well worth the additional investment.**

## Clearing Hurdles to Scale Interim Housing

To be able to build and operate interim housing at the scale of the need in the Bay Area (and elsewhere in California), we see four categories where innovative solutions are needed.

**More Flexible Funding Sources:** Interim housing is not eligible for many of the traditional funding sources for both operations and capital that permanent supportive and other transitional housing can rely on. Housing providers have noted that funding sources such as housing vouchers, tax credits, and debt financing often have eligibility requirements, staff certification requirements, performance targets and reporting procedures, and bed rates designed for permanent homes or short-term emergency shelter, but unavailable for interim.

The lack of sufficient access to capital and funding is a huge barrier for would-be developers and leaves private and nonprofit sources to fill the gap. This also limits the scalability of project expansions. Importantly, the operating dollars needed to tailor appropriate support services at interim housing sites require flexibility due to the uncertain duration and variable needs of the population being served.

**Streamlining and Technical Assistance for Interim Housing Production:** Given those capital financing and funding challenges, very few for-profit or nonprofit developers are willing to build interim housing. Development of capital projects, and the approval and permitting processes, are extremely challenging to navigate, even for traditional affordable or permanent supportive housing. It gets even more complicated for this new form of housing that may not fall under traditional planning and building code regulations. Navigating these challenges requires an unusually high level of expertise, coordination, and political savvy. In order to build the amount of interim housing our region needs, the system needs to be much simpler and easier to navigate. Even then, developers and service providers will likely still need significant technical assistance to do it well.

**Identifying sites and building neighborhood support:** Finding suitable locations for interim housing sites is difficult, and earning the support of neighbors and local stakeholders makes it even more challenging. There is a lot of stigma surrounding people experiencing homelessness, much of which is unfair and inaccurate. Most residents of interim housing sites would not stick out in a crowd or be identifiable as such, but unfortunately many people associate homelessness with personal failure, extreme mental distress or debilitating substance use. Folks in those acute states are very visible, but not representative. LifeMoves had to abandon plans for an interim housing site in Santa Clara in 2021 because of neighborhood opposition. As we discuss in our interim housing principles, neighborhood relations are an important factor for site location choice and ongoing site management standards.

**Invest in the Homelessness Response Workforce:** Operating quality Interim Housing is difficult interpersonal work that requires trained and qualified staff. The people who provide the support services in Interim Housing sites are the key to success, and the current state of this workforce is a bottleneck in our system. The homelessness response workforce is notoriously underpaid, undersupported, and burned out. There is a shortage of trained, qualified case managers, and insufficient career development pathways for people to move into more skilled positions. This is not the fault of the workers or even their employers in many cases—this vital work is ultimately funded by governments that contract with nonprofit service providers. Those contracts, and the government programs (often state and federal) that fund them, must do a better job at accounting and paying for the true cost of this work.

We hope that explaining these challenges can help local governments, policymakers, service providers, and developers begin to chart a path to addressing them. Don't miss the third and final post in this series, **7 Principles for Interim Housing**.

<Resolution Championing Services to McKinney Vento Homeless Students and Their Families.pdf>

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**FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)**

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Tue 6/11/2024 4:42 PM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Clair Pereida [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, June 11, 2024 4:14 PM

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

Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

[External Email]

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Dear Mayor Mahan and City Council Members,

I am writing to urge your support for the proposed budget for FY24-25 Animal Services. This includes the addition of crucial positions, making permanent the additional Veterinarian position to increase surgical capacity for animals in our community, and dedicated funding to enhance the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program. These resources are essential for managing the community's needs effectively.

The proposed positions, including a Senior Systems Applications Programmer and an Analyst, are crucial for improving data analysis and identifying operational strategies to address and reduce community demands. Making the additional Veterinarian position permanent to expand the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program to operate five days a week, and the requested funding of \$400,000 for the TNR program, is vital to control the population of stray cats and kittens and reduce the number of animals needing assistance from Animal Services.

The reduction of the TNR program has led to a significant and urgent increase in the stray cat population, resulting in an overwhelming number of kittens. It is imperative to strengthen the TNR program to address this issue effectively and immediately.

We also seek support for shelter capital improvements to enhance the space and visibility for adoptable cats. These improvements are critical to improve the flow of animals through the system and reduce the length of stay at the shelter.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Clair Pereida

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## FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Wed 6/12/2024 7:46 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

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**From:** Elaine Wong <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 11, 2024 6:21 PM

**To:** City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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:** Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

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Sincerely,

Elaine Wong (Cupertino resident since 2007)

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## FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Wed 6/12/2024 9:59 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

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**From:** Tabitha Altamirano <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 12, 2024 9:48 AM

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

**Cc:** District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@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>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>

**Subject:** Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

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## FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Wed 6/12/2024 11:00 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

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**From:** Tina Briones <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 12, 2024 10:41 AM

**To:** City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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:** Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

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Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Tina Briones

San Jose Resident



## FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Thu 6/13/2024 2:02 PM

To: Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

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**From:** Jennifer Owen [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday, June 13, 2024 11:26 AM

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

**Cc:** The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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:** Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

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Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Owen

Sent from my T-Mobile 5G Device  
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## FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Thu 6/13/2024 2:06 PM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

---

**From:** Good Grief Pet Care - Daniela G [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday, June 13, 2024 1:59 PM

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

**Cc:** The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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:** Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

[External Email]

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Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Daniela Grief  
Good Grief Pet Care  
[REDACTED]

Please consider supporting my feral cat feeding project of 40 cats I've TNR'ed . Food support is the highest need and so appreciated!

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/9DVCE54DY86C?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/9DVCE54DY86C?ref_=wl_share)

<https://www.walmart.com/lists/shared/WL/39ddaf88-537a-4531-b64b-a75bd704b426>

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City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Thu 6/13/2024 2:06 PM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Daniela G [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, June 13, 2024 1:59 PM

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

Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

[External Email]

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Dear Mayor Mahan and City Council Members,

I am writing to urge your support for the proposed budget for FY24-25 Animal Services. This includes the addition of crucial positions, making permanent the additional Veterinarian position to increase surgical capacity for animals in our community, and dedicated funding to enhance the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program. These resources are essential for managing the community's needs effectively.

The proposed positions, including a Senior Systems Applications Programmer and an Analyst, are crucial for improving data analysis and identifying operational strategies to address and reduce community demands. Making the additional Veterinarian position permanent to expand the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program to operate five days a week, and the requested funding of \$400,000 for the TNR program, is vital to control the population of stray cats and kittens and reduce the number of animals needing assistance from Animal Services.

The reduction of the TNR program has led to a significant and urgent increase in the stray cat population, resulting in an overwhelming number of kittens. It is imperative to strengthen the TNR program to address this issue effectively and immediately.

We also seek support for shelter capital improvements to enhance the space and visibility for adoptable cats. These improvements are critical to improve the flow of animals through the system and reduce the length of stay at the shelter.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

D.

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**FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)**

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Fri 6/14/2024 9:10 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Susana Fotu [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, June 13, 2024 9:01 PM

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

Cc: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

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Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Susana Fotu  
95128

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## FW: Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Mon 6/17/2024 7:55 AM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

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**From:** Sofia [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Monday, June 17, 2024 1:11 AM

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

**Cc:** The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@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:** Agenda Item 3.1 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets FY2024 - 2025 (re: Animal Services)

[External Email]

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Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Sofia Vasquez

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## POST 6/18 Letters from Public

Espejo, Gina <Gina.Espejo@sanjoseca.gov>

Mon 6/17/2024 4:36 PM

To:Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc:CMOAgendaServices <cmoagendaservices@sanjoseca.gov>;Blattman, Rachelle <Rachelle.Blattman@sanjoseca.gov>

 2 attachments (85 KB)

FW: Gym closure at Camden Community Center?; FW: webmaster.manager@sanjoseca.gov Please stop Closure of City Gyms;

Hello Agenda Desk,

Please post the attached Letters from Public for item 3.1 6/10 council meeting.

Thank you,

Gina

**Gina Espejo**

Executive Analyst II, Agenda Services

Office of the City Manager - Administration, Policy and Intergovernmental Relations

  
[gina.espejo@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:gina.espejo@sanjoseca.gov)

[CMOAgendaServices@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:CMOAgendaServices@sanjoseca.gov)

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City of San José | 200 E. Santa Clara St. | San José, CA 95113

[www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov)

**FW: webmaster.manager@sanjoseca.gov Please stop Closure of City Gyms**

**Webmaster Manager** <webmaster.manager@sanjoseca.gov>

Mon 6/17/2024 2:35 PM

To:CMOAgendaServices <cmoagendaservices@sanjoseca.gov>

 1 attachments (17 KB)

Stop Closure of City Gyms 6.10.24.docx;

Hi CMO Agenda Services,

Please find public comment below and attached related to last week's City Council budget item.

Thank you,

-matt

**Matt Opsal**

Senior Executive Analyst

City Manager's Office of Communications

City of San José

200 East Santa Clara Street, San José, CA 95113

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**From:** Adriana Vega <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Monday, June 10, 2024 6:11 PM

**To:** Webmaster Manager <webmaster.manager@sanjoseca.gov>

**Subject:** webmaster.manager@sanjoseca.gov Please stop Closure of City Gyms

[External Email]

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Please share at tonight's meeting!

Thank you!

Adriana Vega

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June 10, 2024

City Council

200 E. Santa Clara Street

San Jose, CA 95113

Dear Mayor Mahan & City Council Members:

My name is Adriana Vega and I am a resident of San Jose for 7 years and a Santa Clara County for over 20 years. I am also employed with the county for over 16 years.

**I implore you to not close the city gyms due to budget cuts!!**

As a community member these are some of the benefits of the gyms are:

- ✚ Building and maintain a higher quality of life across a person's lifespan
- ✚ Stress relief
- ✚ Maintaining good mental health wellness and mood.
- ✚ Keeping cardiovascular, endocrine system and other systems healthy.
- ✚ Maintaining and building muscle mass which is important as you get older.
- ✚ Long term lasts for quality of life
- ✚ Maintaining of community connections and networking with other members.
- ✚ Affordable option in a very expensive county to live

I acknowledge that the community has numerous needs for a plethora of services and that money needs to be directed to the big issues such as homelessness, clean water and crime, but please do not forget about its regular constituents. Even though I have a degree and a great job serving the community, meeting basic needs and the cost of living are astronomical. I joined the gym last year with surprise and delight as I had never heard of them and found the gym to be a wonderful source for our diverse community and places that aren't overcrowded, overwhelming and overly noisy.

Please don't take away these important community resources that needed, that are affordable and make our community great!

Adriana Vega

## FW: Gym closure at Camden Community Center?

Webmaster Manager <webmaster.manager@sanjoseca.gov>

Mon 6/17/2024 2:32 PM

To:CMOAgendaServices <cmoagendaservices@sanjoseca.gov>

Hi CMO Agenda Services,

Please find public comment below related to last week's City Council budget item.

Thank you,

-matt

### **Matt Opsal**

Senior Executive Analyst

City Manager's Office of Communications

City of San José

200 East Santa Clara Street, San José, CA 95113

---

**From:** ramona turner [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday, June 6, 2024 12:36 AM

**To:** The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; Webmaster Manager <webmaster.manager@sanjoseca.gov>

**Subject:** Gym closure at Camden Community Center?

[External Email]

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello there everyone,

My name is Ramona Turner and I have been a member of the gym at Camden Community Center since January of this year.

I joined because it was a inexpensive way to try to get fit, become and stay healthy, and improve mobility.

I also I joined with my mother who was 74; I am 51. We also joined as a way to get my mom out of the house and keep social. She lost her husband 2 years ago to cancer and long illness, and she had kind of become a shut-in.

We joined Camden Community Center's gym because the staff was so nice and helpful, the facilities are clean and well taken care of, the fellow users are friendly, and the gym is a decent size with ample equipment to fit our needs. Specially, the equipment is accessible to my mom, who has mobility challenges. That is what ultimate sold us. (The \$100/year membership fee was a bonus!)

Let me tell you, mom is loving it. She calls VTA to arrange her ride to and from the center bewtween three and four days weekly when we cannot go at the same time. She works out for about an hour and comes back home. She LOVES it! She can use just about every machine and station in there. She cannot say that about mainstream commercial gyms.

And her dedication shows. Her mobility is improving, she is getting stronger, able to walk farther and she has made some friends -- both the staff as well as fellow members.

For me, I am stronger than ever thanks to having access to the diverse and state of the art equipment. I have been to my fair share of gyms in the past and, well, Camden is fun. I don't get bored. I am motivated to go. Work and family keep me busy but when I go to the gym at Camden, I make the most of it, and it shows. I am lifting heavier weight than ever and I am rehabilitating old injuries.

So, to hear that the city is thinking about closing some of the gyms... it took the wind out of us. Mom is worried what will happen to her if she loses access to this community center's gym. Where will she go? The closest gym to us actually is Almaden, but it pales in comparison to Camden, which is why we chose to stop at Starbucks each morning for a grande-sized pick me up as we make our way to our favorite gym.

We understand the dollars and cents sense. Budgets must be balanced. Money spent should be for the greater good.

But we still must ask that you, please, don't close the gym at Camden Community Center. We have made a little community there for my mom and we would like to keep it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

~Ramona Turner and Edith Draper

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