



Memorandum

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Sylvia Arenas

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: April 7, 2020

Approved

Date

Sylvia Arenas

4/7/20

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY ORDER AND SHELTER CRISIS DECLARATION FOR COVID-19 EMERGENCY

RECOMMENDATION

Either:

- 1) Accept the memorandum from Mayor Liccardo, Vice Mayor Jones, and Councilmembers Peralez and Davis, and:
 - a. Direct the City Manager to dedicate a percentage of the emergency housing created through this reallocation to serve all families, including those with children and survivors of domestic and sexual violence, and;
 - b. Utilize McKinney Vento data as well as other homelessness reports and counts to determine an appropriate ratio for construction, and;
 - c. Ensure that the intake plan includes service providers that serve families with children and the survivors of violence.

OR

- 2) Exclude from the reallocation the HHAP funding dedicated for programs that serve families with children (including Motel Vouchers and Safe Parking programs).

DISCUSSION

Our community is facing unprecedented challenges brought on by a public health emergency that is quickly reshaping our local economy. For our most vulnerable residents, this health crisis also means added barriers to obtaining even the most basic life necessities: food, shelter, and a path to self-sufficiency.

San Jose families are in desperate need of housing solutions that immediately provide stability for vulnerable households on the verge of homelessness. We saw just how urgently our families need this support when the \$11 million fund for rental assistance was quickly exhausted after a few days, and thousands of households more have added their names to the interest list to wait for relief.

As the City moves to adapt and prioritize emergency shelter for our unhoused neighbors in response to this pandemic, I urge Staff to include the needs of families when re-allocating Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) funding, or to exclude current programs that would serve these families from the reallocation.

The Motel Voucher Program currently has \$2 million dedicated from the HHAP funds that are being considered for reallocation. This program provides a critical interim housing solution for families with children and domestic violence survivors. We must ensure that these vulnerable populations remain supported as the City works to quickly address emergency housing needs — this means securing shelter options that would be suitable for a family with children, and housing that can safely house survivors of violence.

This can be accomplished by ensuring that the proposal from my colleagues includes a strong component for emergency housing suitable to families with children and survivors of violence, or it can be accomplished by removing the programs that serve these populations from the reallocations. Either way, we need to specify a specific approach as we move forward today.