



OFFICE OF RACIAL & SOCIAL EQUITY - BRIEFING

UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS | POLICY UPDATES | TOOLS & RESOURCES



Our team is growing! Welcome Raania Mohsen, the City of San José's Disability Affairs Officer, to the Office of Racial and Social Equity! Raania has worked for nearly 20 years as a public policy, community engagement, and government relations professional in local and state agencies throughout the Bay Area. Through her various roles, including with the California State Senate, the Cities Association of Santa Clara County, and the City of San José, she has been instrumental in advancing policies addressing accessibility, affordable housing, disability inclusion and equity, economic development, and transportation. Raania has worked with the City of San José for over five years and as a Disability Affairs Officer since December 2022.

Office of Racial and Social Equity's Efforts on Equity and Inclusion

The Office of Racial and Social Equity (ORSE) partnered with San José's Parks and Recreation Department, the County of Santa Clara's Office of Immigrant Relations, Amigos de Guadalupe, and Tahirih Justice Center to host a legal service consultation clinic for new arrivals seeking asylum. The event was staffed by local pro bono attorneys and various community based organizations hosted tables with additional resources and services available.

For the first time, San José celebrated Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD) with the world on May 16 through a social media campaign, City Council proclamation, and a Lunch and Learn employee event - *Access for All: Navigating Digital Accessibility* - as an effort to promote awareness about digital inclusion and access for individuals with disabilities and 1 billion people worldwide.



LOCAL UPCOMING EVENTS

June 7 - Aug 11: From Where I Stand: Explore the fusion of art and politics in **MACLA's latest exhibition**, where artists address key election issues. Visitors can contribute their own photos to the gallery, fostering dialogue and reflection. Witness how art influences public conscience during this pivotal time and join for a thought-provoking experience!

July 6-7: Experience the vibrant flavors and rich cultural heritage of India right here in the Bay Area at the **Taste of India Festival!** For the first time ever, this grand celebration of Indian cuisine and entertainment is coming to Plaza de Cesar Chavez on July 6th and 7th. Admission is free.

July 24: ORSE is hosting the next Candidly Speaking Session, Conversations Across Cultures - Building community belonging, in partnership with Tully Library at 5pm! Join us for light refreshments and inspiring conversations. **Register here.**

July 27: SIREN is hosting a new round of DACA clinics occurring on July 27, August 24 and September 27. RSVPs are required for each applicant renewing DACA. Please visit SIREN's **website** to register and learn more about eligibility and requirements.

August 24-25: Save the date for this year's **Silicon Valley PRIDE Parade and Festival!** Embrace pride and celebrate the resilience and beauty of San José's LGBTQIA+ community.

September 8: Don't miss out on the final **Viva Calle SJ** this year! From 10am - 3pm Viva Calle takes over the streets. Come bike, skate, or walk the path and explore!

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New Tools and Resources

Accessibility

- Digital accessibility is the practice of making websites and content usable by people with disabilities. Often, people with disabilities utilize assistive technology such as screen reading, magnification, captioning, and speech to text software to experience digital content. Making sure a digital experience is accessible enables efficient use of these technologies, removes barriers, ensures compliance with federal and state regulations, and makes our society more welcoming and inclusive for all. For more information about digital accessibility, visit [Microsoft's resource webpage on accessibility](#)

Immigration

- President Biden announced [Parole in Place for Noncitizen Spouses and a new opportunity for DACA recipients](#), and other undocumented college graduates. This is the largest executive action on immigration since DACA was created 12 years ago, with an estimated 550,000 immigrants and their families who could potentially benefit. The new policies will help keep families together and will also provide Dreamers new avenues to access employment-based visas. More details about how to apply for the programs under these policies are forthcoming, but in the meantime here is a [brief explainer](#) to provide context to the announcements and resources to learn more.

Racial Equity

- [City of San José by the numbers: The San José Equity Atlas](#) is an interactive map that displays data on various aspects of life in San José to highlight areas where equity can be improved. It is designed to help city officials, community leaders, and residents understand and address disparities in areas like housing, health, and education.



CITY OF SAN JOSÉ'S EFFORTS ON EQUITY AND INCLUSION

- On June 13, 2023, City Council formalized its commitment to disability access through adoption of the Disability Inclusion Equity Pledge and approval of a Disability Affairs Officer position. Committed to further advancing disability inclusion and embedding it into the City organizational structure, the City Council approved the recommendation to make permanent the Disability Affairs Officer position and transition it to the Office of Racial and Social Equity (ORSE). Integration of the disability affairs portfolio within ORSE aligns with the Office's current strategy to normalize, operationalize, and embed equity practices across the City of San José. Disability intersects with race and other structural forms of marginalized identities, often compounding each other and exacerbating the stigma and discrimination experienced by people with disabilities. The integration will facilitate an intersectional approach to disability that considers the complexities of people's situations rather than just one aspect of their lives.
- In 2022, San José's Charter Review Commission proposed changes to the City Charter that would include a statement of values regarding equity. At that time, the Mayor and City Council approved to place a measure on the ballot. In Nov 2022, San José voters approved the measure, and subsequently, ORSE began working with City and community stakeholders to draft the ordinance and policy. The San José Mayor and City Council Members took a stand in May this year in support of equity! They unanimously adopted a Racial and Social Equity [ORDINANCE](#) and Equity Values and Standards [POLICY](#) which codifies the promise of a just and equitable San José and officially establishes the Office of Racial and Social Equity (enshrined in the Muni Code) and delineates a set of values and standards that apply to members of the City Council, City Boards, Commissions, decision-making bodies, and City employees.

**This Briefing is not intended to be comprehensive. Please contact the Office of Racial Equity, with comments and suggestions of additional items to be included or any questions on the topics listed above. The Office can be reached at OfficeofRacialEquity@sanjoseca.gov. Thank you.*