



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Esparza

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: 9/27/2021

Approved *Maya Esparza*

Date: 9/27/21

SUBJECT: EVICTION MORATORIUM

RECOMMENDATION

1. Direct Staff to explore opening a third permanent Rental Assistance/Eviction Help Center office on the East Side, including partnering with the East Side Union High School District, Alum Rock Union School District, and other school districts serving the ZIP Codes and communities that have been hardest hit by both the public health and economic effects of the pandemic, such as 95122, 95127, 95116, and 95111.
2. Direct staff to coordinate with Councilmembers on outreach and planning for Rental Assistance/Eviction Help Center pop-ups throughout our City in communities of high need.

BACKGROUND

With the expiration of the State's eviction moratorium later this week, and the constraints on local jurisdictions to extend their own moratoria, we have arrived at the long-feared eviction cliff that threatens so many of our families that have struggled through this pandemic. With only \$1.2 billion of the \$5.2 billion in total statewide rent relief currently paid out or allocated, we still have significant resources and opportunities to keep our most vulnerable residents housed, but challenges remain in connecting tenants and landlords to these funds.¹ In addition to connecting tenants and landlords to the financial assistance available through the State, our Rental Assistance/Eviction Help Center sites provide crucial services connecting residents at risk of eviction to legal services offered through the Law Foundation and Bay Area Legal Aid.

That is why I propose that our Housing staff explore options to open a third permanent Rental Assistance/Eviction Help Center located in East San José that will serve many of the ZIP codes and communities that have been hardest hit by the pandemic, such as 95122, 95127, 95116, and

¹ <https://www.mercurynews.com/2021/09/24/california-rental-relief-fund-still-has-billions-to-spend/>

95111. This effort should involve partnering with the school districts serving these communities, including the East Side Union High School District and the Alum Rock Union School District.

Over the summer, I worked with Housing to establish the second permanent Rental Assistance/Eviction Help Center at the Franklin-McKinley School District office. We have seen steady usage by community members at this site. I also worked with Housing, the Evergreen School District, and the West Evergreen Neighborhood Association to bring a pop-up Rental Assistance/Eviction Help Center to O.B. Whaley Elementary School in the West Evergreen neighborhood, where we saw a lot of interest and participation from the community. I know that Councilmember Carrasco and Councilmember Arenas have also worked with Housing to hold pop-up sites in their communities, and I understand that Councilmember Cohen has been coordinating with Housing on an upcoming pop-up site in North San José to serve vulnerable residents in those communities. These are the kinds of efforts we need to see for our vulnerable communities throughout the city.

Based on these experiences, we have seen the importance of getting out in the community, and meeting people where they are. That is the only way we are going to get the available aid distributed to those who need it the most. A trip to City Hall is not realistic for many of our residents, especially our most vulnerable who are often juggling childcare with transit and work challenges. With Councilmembers best positioned to know where the greatest need is in their communities and to connect with residents, it is imperative that Housing work closely with Councilmembers to coordinate and outreach for further Rental Assistance/Eviction Help Center pop-up sites, in addition to opening another permanent location on the East Side. I urge my colleagues to support these actions to ensure that our highest need communities are receiving the support they need during the very difficult months ahead.

The signers of this memorandum have not had, and will not have, any private conversation with any other member of the City Council, or that member's staff, concerning any action discussed in the memorandum, and that each signer's staff members have not had, and have been instructed not to have, any such conversation with any other member of the City Council or that member's staff.