

November 1, 2021

Rosalynn Hughey
Deputy City Manager
City of San Jose

Dear Ms. Hughey,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the COVID-19 Recovery Task Force. We appreciate the City's efforts to include community and workers' voices in the process.

It is critical that the Task Force be structured to provide for real input, proposals, deliberation and recommendations from members; that it center equity by ensuring that members from marginalized communities and people with lived experience can participate and be heard; and that it produce concrete, impactful outcomes. To that end, we propose the following structural supports, and ask that this proposal be agendized for the initial Task Force meeting:

1. Add a third pillar to the Task Force scope to explicitly include **supporting workers** as one of the focus areas.
2. Elect a **Steering Committee** from among Task Force members. The Steering Committee will co-create meeting agendas and help to plan and structure meetings, alongside City staff assigned to these roles.
3. **Allow a second person from each organization** to attend as a non-voting participant (panelist) at each Task Force meetings. Provide flexibility for the second attendee to be the designated alternate, or another member of your organization. This will give greater opportunity for people with lived experience (workers, members, clients) to participate.
4. Ensure **2-way translation** is available for all meetings, so that both Task Force members and members of the public can understand and provide comment.
5. Develop a scheduling poll or other mechanism to **plan meeting dates/times for maximum accessibility and participation**. (The initial meeting, which was set without consultation with Task Force members, is on the first Thursday of the month, which conflicts with several standing meetings important to community stakeholders, such as the VTA Board meeting.)
6. **Provide clarity and transparency on the voting process** for Task Force decisions and recommendations. If a decision or recommendation is being made, ensure it is noticed in advance in the meeting agenda as an action item, and that all Task Force members present have the opportunity to each vote yes or no, or to propose amendments or alternatives for a vote.

7. **Articulate the role of this Task Force** in relationship to the City Council and other decision-making bodies, and to other bodies with a similar scope such as the Silicon Valley Recovery Roundtable.
8. **Consider creating “Solutions Groups”**, similar to those created for the Station Area Advisory Group (SAAG), to focus on developing specific proposals as identified by the Task Force.

Providing these supports will help demonstrate that the City values the resources, time, and knowledge that community members are being asked to contribute through the Task Force, and that the Task Force is intended to offer a real venue for ideas, proposals, and a voice in the City’s recovery agenda. We look forward to working collaboratively to pursue a recovery that moves us towards a more equitable and resilient San José.

Sincerely,

Maria Noel Fernandez
Working Partnerships USA

Jean Cohen
South Bay Labor Council

David Bini
Santa Clara Building Trades Council

Luis Arguello
LIUNA Local 270

Samuel Kehinde
SEIU-USWW

Jim Araby
UFCW Local 5

Enrique Fernandez
UNITE HERE Local 19

Cc: City Manager Jennifer Maguire