

# Community Engagement Plan

## City of San José COVID-19 Recovery Task Force

City of San José COVID-19 Recovery Task Force | Last updated Monday, May 9, 2022

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### Outline

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### 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis has been a painful and traumatic experience for the people of San José than the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis that has laid bare and exacerbated existing inequalities. Families and businesses have endured the loss of income, the resulting accumulation of debt, the loss of housing, the loss of in-person instruction, and related mental health challenges.

At this moment the City’s biggest challenge, and biggest opportunity is to foster an equitable recovery—to “build back better.” Recovery is not for the City to do alone; rather this work must be done with the whole community, for the benefit of those most burdened by the crisis, guided by their wisdom, tapping into their potential, and building on their deep enduring strength.

With many in our community still experiencing the long-lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic today, the City recognizes it must both improve education about existing programs through outreach and implement best practices that facilitate genuine community feedback leading to the identification of new program ideas and solutions. The City has asked Winter Consulting to help coordinate community engagement alongside the COVID-19 Recovery Task Force through the Community Engagement Committee.

This document is the result of a co-creation process that has been informed by one-to-ones with Task Force members (primarily from the Community Engagement Committee), general Task Force meetings, Committee meetings, City staff feedback and the input from the broader general public. The Community Engagement Plan will serve as a guiding document that will chart out the community engagement strategies to be implemented throughout Summer 2022 by the Task Force and members of the Lived Experience Group.

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## 2. Engagement Goals

The goal of this Community Engagement Plan is to gather authentic community input to inform recommended actions for the City of San José to implement as part of its COVID-19 Recovery Task Force initiative. Community engagement will be done in coordination and collaboration with the Community Engagement Committee, the Lived Experience Group, the general COVID-19 Recovery Task Force, and City staff. The approaches and strategies mentioned in this Plan will respond to the many needs and requirements of San José's rich and diverse communities, paying careful attention to cultural sensitivity, disability requirements, language, childcare, technology skill, and other accessibility concerns. It is the aim that this engagement process moves toward a recovery grounded in equity, dignity, empathy, and action.

## 3. Engagement Principles

It is crucial that our engagement approach is inclusive of the community voices that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. For this engagement to be effective, we must gather community voices in an authentic way that is reflective of the diversity and cultural sensitivity required for an equitable engagement process. This type of process should embody the following engagement principles:

1. **Listen Deeply** – Start and end with listening: problem definition, solution ideas, and final recommendations all flow through community partners.
2. **Collaborate on Ideas/Solutions** – Provide opportunities for Task Force members and other members of the community to build trust, share empathy, and collaborate on co-creation of recommendations for COVID-19 recovery.
3. **Recognize and Build from Resident Expertise** – Approach communities where they are and recognize that power already exists within the community. Build off the collective network, experience, and power of the Task Force, leveraging best practices and expertise as appropriate.
4. **Stay Adaptable** - Create space for the community to provide input on our engagement strategies and adapt and iterate future programming as appropriate.
5. **Remain Patient** – Equitable engagement moves at the speed of trust and builds empathy and understanding between agency and community partners, leaders, and residents.
6. **Don't Be Extractive** - Refrain from one-time engagements and create sustainable relationships with the community that move toward building community resilience against future pandemics.
7. **Provide Resources** - Members of the community should receive incentives for actively participating in our engagement efforts, particularly those with limited resources. Provide assistance, direction and/or support to those community members with immediate needs.

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8. **Be Accessible** - Provide public-facing materials that are easily understood, technologically accessible, and translated into appropriate local languages.
9. **Make Space** - Create engagement opportunities where all members of the community can feel safe and comfortable providing input: Provide childcare and mental health resources; offer events at various times of the day and week; provide in-person and virtual options; offer activities that accommodate people with variety of abilities; enable people with various access to and skillset in technology to participate; and meet people where they are at.
10. **Think Long-Term** - Although engagement is currently scoped to occur within the summer of 2022, results from this process will inform future programming and require further engagement. Build long-lasting relationships.

#### 4. Engagement Partners

The COVID-19 Recovery Task Force incorporates many different entities and this plan acknowledges the many different stakeholders involved. This plan will leverage the networks and experience that already exists within the Task Force while acknowledging more effort is required to engage those communities and voices that are currently not represented at the table.

##### COVID-19 Recovery Task Force Members

With 55 member organizations, the Task Force will be a critical force in gathering input and disseminating information. We will provide the Task Force a digital toolkit that includes a variety of different ways for them to gather insights from their organizations and communities. There is no expectation for Task Force organizations to conduct engagement activities, but for those that would like to assist with the City's efforts, it will provide a simple way for the City to collect a large amount of community input with distributed effort. Questions and input mechanisms will be standardized for seamless analysis by the City, consultants and Task Force members. The Task Force will also have inside knowledge of large internal and public-facing events where the City could do pop-ups for further engagement. A shared calendar of community events will be created for possible engagement opportunities throughout the summer.

##### Community Engagement Committee

This Committee will serve as a mediator between the Task Force and the community, reviewing community input and sharing key insights from the community engagement process at the general Task Force meetings. The Community Engagement Committee will provide recommendations and be a sounding board for Winter Consulting and the City as engagement activities are planned through the summer. This Committee's feedback, ideas, and insights on engagement approach and strategies will be critical for the success of the engagement efforts. It is expected that aspects of this Plan may change as

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we go out into the community, and we intend to approach the Committee regarding any changes. The Committee may be asked to assist with connecting the City and Winter Consulting to key groups and people as well as assist with planning for large-scale engagement events as necessary. This Committee will also provide input on Lived-Experience group criteria and organizations that will be reached out to gather candidates.

## 5. Engagement Strategies

This plan outlines a wide variety of engagement strategies to connect with and gather input from the individuals, families, and business owners in San José still experiencing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic today. Below is a listing of the various key strategies that will be implemented as part of this plan with the understanding that certain aspects may need to evolve due to our commitment to adaptability.

### A Standardized Approach

Whether in a community workshop, focus group, house meeting, community conversation, pop-up, or one-to-one, the vision is that the same set of accessible, concise, and easy to understand conversations are implemented. By doing so, this allows for more seamless consolidation of both quantitative and qualitative data. Certain questions may be tailored or added to respond to specific needs or requirements of specific communities as appropriate.

### Community Survey

After gathering input from each of the Task Force committees and with support and guidance from City staff and the Community Engagement Committee, Winter Consulting will co-create a comprehensive community survey with a committee of interested Task Force members that builds on the focus group questions. The survey will be offered in both digital and physical formats. The survey will be translated and open for a period of two months, giving the community ample time to submit the survey. Respondents to the survey will have their names put into a drawing to win one of many gift cards. Surveys will be translated into different languages and disseminated to Task Force members and the broader community via the Lived Experience Group. The survey will be substantive enough to provide the City with ample input to make informed decisions about future programming and recovery solutions, while concise enough for respondents to feel comfortable completing in a timely fashion.

### COVID-19 Storytelling Project

Stories can be powerful tools. In response to the Task Force recommendation to incorporate storytelling into our engagement process, a qualitative element to our community engagement is critical. We hope to gather key quotations and photos of individuals to paint a more vivid picture of the reality of

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COVID-19's impacts. Stories can be collected via pop-ups, forums, online, and via 1:1's. Stories may emerge in response to a series of general questions, with some ideas for Task Force refinement listed below:

- How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted you and your family?
- What support do you need now?/What do you need to be resilient?
- How have you built resiliency?/How have you grown during the pandemic?

Community members may stay anonymous if they prefer. The questions aim at determining the current situation of individuals while providing opportunities for individuals to weigh in on what support they need and share how they've grown throughout the pandemic. These stories will be shared with the City, posted online or on social media or presented before the City Council. Consent agreements will be distributed if stories are to be used for public consumption.

#### **COVID-19 Recovery Story and Survey Consolidation**

There exists a number of past and ongoing community surveys, reports and dialogues related to COVID-19 Recovery. One of our goals is to consolidate those survey results and highlights into a cohesive package that tells a comprehensive story of COVID-19 and gives more dimension to a pandemic and reality that is in constant flux. This also acknowledges the hard work and dedication of CBOs and other entities that have put effort into collecting stories, data, and community sentiments.

#### **Lived Experience Group**

Key to this overall strategy is the involvement of community members with lived-experience via the Lived Experience Group, who will be our trusted ambassadors on the ground gathering key insights from their neighborhoods and communities, particularly those communities not represented in the Task Force. The Lived Experience Group is a group of ten grassroots community leaders with lived experiences relevant to the impact of COVID-19. They will work collaboratively with the Community Engagement Committee of the Task Force to co-create a plan and implement outreach activities throughout the summer of 2022. Each will receive a stipend of \$3,000 for their work and be expected to coordinate up to three engagement activities. Funding for stipends is provided entirely by a grant to Winter Consulting from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation.

City and Winter Consulting staff will meet regularly with Lived Experience Group members to establish a cohesive strategy for community engagement throughout the span of this project.

Exact community engagement activities will be co-created with the selected community leaders, but would be anticipated to include the following tactics:

- Kick Off Event

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- Pop Ins
- Pop Ups
- House Meetings/Focus Groups
- Community Forums (Digital and In Person)

#### **Promotora Program**

This is a strategy that is not a formal part of this Community Engagement Plan, but as a key outreach component of the Task Force's overall work, it is included here.

In November 2021, the City Council approved the allocation of funds to pilot and implement a Promotores model as a tool for community engagement through the Recovery Task Force. The goal is to identify the recovery needs of the hardest-to-reach community members by hearing and understanding their stories and to connect them with the programs and services that are already funded in the City's Recovery Initiatives as well as services provided by other government agencies and community partners.

Promotores are uniquely qualified to address the needs of under-resourced communities because they reach community members where they are. They speak the same language, share a common culture, and connect with people in their homes, at markets, in restaurants, at parks, at work, at places of worship, and other neighborhood locations.

Working in conjunction with the COVID-19 Recovery Task Community Engagement Committee, the City will provide grants to non-profit organizations with existing Promotores programs, to recruit and train individuals to engage with and provide outreach on existing Recovery resources offered by the City and community partners.

As of May 2022, City staff is currently reaching out to nonprofit organizations with existing Promotores programs to seek their interest and capacity. Contracts will be created and executed in June 2022, nonprofit organizations are expected to start delivery of work in July 2022.

## **6. Engagement Tactics**

#### **Kick Off Event**

There will be our launch event that kicks off all our engagement efforts occurring early in the summer. Details are to be determined by the Community Engagement Committee, but one idea is to plug into an existing large scale public event that draws in a crowd. At this event, members of City staff, Task Force members or Lived Experience Group members can speak on COVID-19 recovery and our engagement efforts. We envision the event to be highly visible to the general public and propel our efforts throughout the summer.

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#### **Pop-Ins**

Organizations that are interested in providing input to the City of San José's COVID-19 recovery effort but have limited capacity may elect to hold pop-in conversations during a pre-existing regular meeting with their membership or interested stakeholders. An organization may expect to spend 20-30 minutes answering pre-determined questions similar to those asked in focus groups and in the community survey.

#### **Pop-Ups**

These tabling events can occur at City Council district events, large festivals, farmers' markets and in areas with high foot-traffic. These can serve the dual-purpose of 1) being a resource hub for engagement staff/volunteers to share resources pertaining to COVID-19 recovery, and 2) a place to gather input on COVID-19 recovery solutions.

#### **House Meetings/Focus Groups**

These meetings are meant to be more intimate in nature, offering a safer space for people to congregate and be more vulnerable and open. Here, a facilitator can welcome their group and allow a space for people to answer pre-determined questions and bounce responses and ideas off of one another. These can be facilitated by Task Force members or Lived Experience Group Members, with engagement team staff support.

#### **Community Forums**

These can be done virtually or in-person, and will aim to be accessible to the broader community. These community events will serve as effective platforms for sharing resources and gathering important community feedback. These meetings can be open to the public, and Task Force members may be asked to reach out to their community members to encourage public participation in these meetings. Task Force member organizations and other CBOs/organizations may also co-host or co-sponsor their own versions of these events in collaboration with the City with content tailored to the needs of their constituents.

By leveraging both our expertise in executing comprehensive, organized, and culturally sensitive community workshops and in digital remote engagement, we aim to create both in-person and digital community engagement experiences that elicit representative and insightful responses from the community members who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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#### **Toolkit**

With input from the Lived Engagement Group and the Community Engagement Committee, City staff and the consulting team will generate a comprehensive and accessible toolkit for Task Force member organizations to refer to if they would like to organize and implement one of their engagement activities. This toolkit will include one-page ‘how to’ sheets giving organizations guidance on how to message and distribute the community survey, how to gather community stories for the storytelling project, how to organize a focus group or community workshop, and will provide necessary slide deck and marketing templates for organizations to customize as appropriate. Workshop materials, discussion points, and focus group questions will be standardized so community input can be easily analyzed after the engagement activities are completed. However, organizations may add on to the initial question set as they see fit.

#### **Collateral**

With support from the City and the Task Force, marketing collateral for City-sponsored engagement activities will be created and shared widely across key community hubs throughout the city (recreation centers, transit hubs, grocery stores, etc.), inviting community members to various events. They will also have a QR code and link for them to complete community surveys.

#### **Website**

The City’s existing COVID-19 Recovery Task Force webpage, [www.sanjoseca.gov/COVID19recovery](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/COVID19recovery) will be the landing page for both the community survey and a listing of future engagement activities, both digital and in-person.

## **7. Deliverable**

#### **Community Engagement Report**

After all community engagement activities have been completed by the Lived Experience Group, Task Force members, and Community Engagement Committee, including the Storytelling Project and Community Survey, the Community Engagement Committee will gather the findings and, with the assistance of Winter Consulting, compile a comprehensive Community Engagement Report highlighting the major themes and community needs that surfaced via engagement. The report will then be presented to other Committees and the general Task Force by the September Task Force meeting for review. The intention of the Community Engagement Report is to inform the Committees as they draft and finalize the candidate strategies to be presented to City Council.



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### 8. Timeline

| PLANNING<br>CO-CREATE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN  |   | OUTREACH<br>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  |   | ANALYSIS<br>REVIEW CE INPUT & COMPILE RECS  |  |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| APRIL  | MAY   | JUNE  | JULY  | AUGUST  | SEPT.  |
| <p><b>April 14</b><br/><b>COVID-19 Recovery Task Force Meeting</b><br/>Community Engagement<br/>Updates: LE Group Process; Community Engagement Plan; Kick-Off Event</p> <p><b>April 27</b><br/><b>Steering Committee Meeting</b><br/>Review and approve final LE Group list</p> <p><b>Late April</b><br/><b>Committee Meetings</b><br/>Determine types of input and questions that will be gathered and asked to community</p> <p>Share with Community Engagement Committee</p> | <p><b>May 5</b><br/><b>Community Engagement Committee Meeting</b><br/>Review and approve Community Engagement Plan + Kick Off Event Planning</p> <p><b>May 12</b><br/><b>COVID-19 Recovery Task Force Meeting</b><br/>Review and approve final Community Engagement Plan</p> <p><b>Mid May</b><br/><b>First LE Group Meeting</b><br/>Plan engagement activities for summer</p> <p><b>May 25</b><br/><b>Steering Committee Meeting</b></p> | <p><b>Early June</b><br/><b>Community Engagement Begins</b></p> <p><b>June 9</b><br/><b>Task Force Meeting</b><br/>Receive updates from LE Group and CEC on Engagement Activities</p> <p>Review, Adopt, and Launch Community Survey</p> | <p><b>July</b><br/><b>Community Engagement</b><br/>Continue engagement activities</p> | <p><b>August 11</b><br/><b>COVID-19 Recovery Task Force Meeting</b><br/>Receive update from CEC and Lived Experience Group on community engagement process; Share initial findings</p> <p><b>Mid August</b><br/><b>End Community Engagement Activities</b></p> <p><b>End of August</b><br/>WC Team gathers survey results, engagement notes, and activity reports from all engagement efforts; Compiles initial draft of Community Engagement Report and shares with all Committees</p> | <p><b>September 1</b><br/><b>CEC Meeting</b><br/>Review and provide input on CE Report draft</p> <p><b>September 8</b><br/><b>Task Force Meeting</b><br/>CEC/LEG presents Community Engagement Report, major themes that surfaced from summer engagement</p> <p><b>Mid September</b><br/><b>All Committees</b><br/>Review Community Engagement Report and add/edit priority strategies as appropriate.</p> <p><b>October</b><br/><b>Task Force Meeting</b><br/>Approve final strategies to send to Council</p> |

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#### **9. Budget**

The Silicon Valley Community Foundation is supporting the COVID-19 Recovery Task Force with \$10,000 allocated for engagement efforts and incentives. These funds are to be expended by the Lived Experience Group to incentivize participation in community engagement activities. This may include the distribution of gift cards for attendance at an event, completion of the community survey, or provision of food and refreshments at meetings.

The City has some additional funding earmarked for childcare, translation of materials, and interpretation services for the Lived Experience Group activities and additional Task Force engagement activities as necessary.