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April 21, 2022

Mayor & City Council
City of San Jose
200 East Santa Clara Street, 18th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113

Re: Proposed Expenditure Plan for HHAP (Item 8.1 on the April 26th agenda)

Honorable Mayor & City Councilmembers,

I write in support of the staff's proposed HHAP spending plan. This plan represents a thoughtful approach for how we can best leverage this one-time State funding and, when combined with the recently-adopted Measure E spending plan, will accelerate our efforts to end homelessness in San Jose and throughout Santa Clara County.

We are particularly pleased to see the inclusion of funding to support continued engagement between the City and people with lived experience of homelessness.

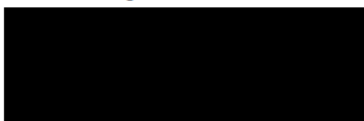
No one knows more about the needs of homeless individuals than those with lived experience, and it is critical that the City take intentional steps to leverage the input and guidance of people with lived experience across all of its homelessness initiatives.

It's also important to remember that successfully centering lived experience requires concerted effort. For one, significant outreach is often required in order to secure a diversity of input that is reflective of the broader community of homeless and formerly-homeless individuals. In addition, people with lived experience often face higher barriers (i.e. the need to take time off work) to participate in advisory committees and other projects with significant time commitments.

That's why setting aside this small amount of funding is so critical to helping the City meaningfully expand its engagement with people with lived experience. Last year, Destination: Home invested over \$370,000 in private funding into the Lived Experience Advisory Board to create the type of infrastructure (including stipends, staff support, technology needs, etc) needed to support deeper engagement between the community and people with lived experience. And adding this new City funding will help facilitate even deeper engagement that will allow people with lived experience to provide valuable insight and input across a greater number of City initiatives in the years ahead.

Expanding lived experience engagement is a key strategy of our 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness, and we are very pleased to see the City lean into this critically-important endeavor.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Loving
CEO