June 24, 2017

Mayor and City Council
City of San Jose
200 E. Santa Clara St.
San Jose, CA 95113

RE: June 27, 2017 City Council Agenda Item 4.4 – Incidental Shelter Ordinance

Village House – An Interfaith Shelter of Hope is a coalition of religious organizations providing overnight and day-time shelter for up to 15 medically and emotionally fragile women who live on the streets of San Jose. The Village House program rotates the overnight and day-time shelter locations on a monthly basis.

We appreciate the efforts of the City of San Jose to establish permanent regulations that accommodate and support the provision of temporary homeless shelters. There is, however, one aspect of the proposed Incidental Shelter Ordinance with which most Village House locations would conflict.

Section 20.80.1640 – 6. requires that the portion of a building containing the incidental shelter use be located a minimum of one hundred fifty (150) feet from the nearest residences. Village House religious organizations are located predominantly in residential neighborhoods where the separation between church facilities and nearby residences is usually significantly less than 150 feet. As such, this provision would prohibit the operation of a shelter at most, if not all of our locations.

At a meeting with representatives of Planning, Housing and the City Attorney’s Office the following proposed solution was identified:

- Retain the proposed ordinance to accommodate larger homeless shelters (up to 50 persons in a year-round shelter)
- Incorporate the provisions of the current temporary ordinance into the permanent ordinance. This would allow shelters for up to 30 individuals for up to 90 days annually at any one location without a permit and would not require the 150 foot separation.

**Village House hereby requests that the City Council postpone action on the Incidental Shelter Ordinance and direct the administration to revise the ordinance as described above.**

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Michael Ferrero, Director, Village House – An Interfaith Shelter of Hope
Holy Spirit Catholic Church 1200 Redmond Ave, San Jose 95120
June 26, 2017  
Item #4.4

To Mayor and City Council,

The Winter Faith Collaborative is an interfaith movement began in Fall of 2015 amid reports of El Nino threatening the unhoused populations living in San Jose’s creeks and waterways. The Collaborative engaged 40 faith communities to form a group of 16 sites committed to keeping individuals safe and warm in indoor shelters, daytime warming centers and safecar parks for those living in their cars. Other communities could not provide space, but were able to bring meals, blankets, clothing and volunteer hours. In the first winter we provided shelter to 258 people. The El Nino rains didn’t materialize until this past winter and our Collaborative group stepped up - providing services to more than double the guests over the previous year while enrolling 8 new faith communities. Some families and individuals fleeing from the San Jose Flood this past winter, sought a warm, dry place in several Winter Faith communities. Many more were able to donate time, talent and other resources to ease the suffering. Some of the Collaborative communities spun off 2 rotating shelter collectives and more recently a year-round Safeparking program.

In the last two years, the Collaborative has served a total of 700 individuals at 24 faith communities. Some creative methods to make this effort work employed online volunteer signups, use of college interns, daily meal rotation and a general caring and connection between those served and the volunteers serving them. Collaborative is part of our name and it’s also a principle we uphold. Collaborative shelter staff volunteers, church leaders and the guests themselves work within each community space to form relationships, empower and respect each other, creating strong bonds of friendship and support.

Most communities were concerned about having to deal with an onerous planning and permit process. Fortunately, we were able to work closely with both Housing and Planning to find ways to ease that burden. We worked to support a public engagement process led by Housing /Planning staffs over the past year, with the aim of passing a permanent shelter ordinance maximizing flexibility around numbers of guests served and permission to operate year-round if desired.

We support the proposed new permanent ordinance of a year-round shelter for 50 people with a recommendation for an additional option of allowing shelter for up to three months for up to 30 guests. If passed it will mark a historic vote that has the potential to be a game changer in how San Jose deals with its housing crisis. It will ease the suffering of thousands and save countless lives- all while raising awareness and breaking down misconceptions of, who the unhoused are. We are proud to partner with the city and so many caring faith communities in ensuring its passage.
Dear Mayor Liccardo and Esteemed City Councilors,
As a member of several groups working on affordable housing and homelessness, I plead with you to allow this small change so that people who are willing to extend themselves to get homeless people off the street are allowed to do so.

If Google can have the law tweaked in their favor, cannot communities of faith wanting to help the homeless get equal consideration?
Cordially,
Lita Kurth Willow Glen

Agenda Item 4.3 Shelter Ordinance: The new ordinance will include the changes approved at 6-28 council meeting that WFC supports- allowing ALL places of assembly who wish to shelter to do so, whether in residential neighborhoods or industrial, commercial or multi-family. Link to new ordinance: http://sanjose.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=&event_id=2696&meta_id=646215
August 6, 2017

Mayor and City Council
City of San Jose
200 E. Santa Clara St.
San Jose, CA 95113

RE: August 8, 2017 City Council Agenda Item 4.3 Temporary and Incidental Shelter Ordinance

Village House – An Interfaith Shelter of Hope would like to express our sincere appreciation to City Staff and the City Council for incorporating the new provisions for temporary shelters into the proposed ordinance. As explained in our June 24, 2017 letter included in the packet, these provisions are critical to the ability of our 15 religious organizations to continue to provide overnight and day-time shelter for up to 15 medically and emotionally fragile women who live on the streets of San Jose. **We wholeheartedly support the revised ordinance.**

We would also like to call your attention to the third recommendation contained in Councilmember Rocha’s June 26, 2017 memo, also contained in the August 8 meeting packet. This recommendation reads as follows:

Direct the City Manager to research and present to Council options for additional support the City may provide within current budget funding levels for Incidental Use Shelters in places of assembly. Some of these options may include:

- a. Subsidizing start-up costs for temporary shelters, such as cots or inspection costs.
- b. Providing case management support or other services to guests of incidental use shelters.
- c. Dedicated staff support for temporary shelter operations.

Raising the necessary funding for the Village House program has been extremely challenging. The annual cost of the overnight shelter mobile shower unit alone is approximately $65,000. We were blessed by the receipt of grants from the Housing Trust of Silicon Valley and the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real to cover this cost in this, our first year. We are currently beginning fund raising for next year.

Our guests are participants in the Valley Homeless Healthcare Program which provides excellent overall guidance and support services. However, our experience to-date has clearly shown the need for supplemental case management assistance to give our guests the greatest opportunity to achieve their (and our) ultimate goal – transition into permanent housing, employment and becoming a productive member of our community.

We strongly support Councilmember Rocha’s recommendations and respectfully request the City Council direct the Administration to proceed forward with them in order to enhance the ability of organizations such as Village House to be successful in establishing, sustaining and expanding these crucial homeless support services.

Sincerely,

Michael Ferrero, Director, Village House – An Interfaith Shelter of Hope
Holy Spirit Catholic Church 1200 Redmond Ave, San Jose 95120
From: Bruce Roberts < >
Sent: Tuesday, August 8, 2017 2:35 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Support for Ordinance for Expanding Shelter for Homeless at Places of Assembly

I am unable to come to today’s hearing to speak on behalf of

AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 20 OF THE SAN JOSE MUNICIPAL CODE (THE ZONING CODE) FOR INCIDENTAL SHELTER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE: • AMEND SECTIONS 20.80.1600, 20.80.1610 AND

The vote of the Planning Commission plus the continued plight of our unhoused population demonstrates how important this issue is.

Being homeless is a struggle every day, night and every hour. There should be no set times to tell houses of worship when it is permissible to open their doors to shelter the unhoused. It is their mission. God doesn’t tell us to act to help the less fortunate during certain days, nights or seasons.

I have gone with my friend Robert Aguirre to visit encampments to deliver food and water. But beyond the limited nourishment we bring is the caring, compassion and love and acceptance that only a human being can bring to another. That is unlimited less. And we have seen this countless times.

This is a problem you cannot close your eyes to or wish away. Many of us in Silicon Valley, especially me, are one step away from becoming unhoused ourselves. Not only do you lose your footing but your roots to the community. Being accepted into houses of worship at least keeps you rooted to the community.

I urge you to support the Planning Commission’s recommendation.