



# Memorandum

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Mayor Ron Gonzales  
Vice Mayor Cindy Chavez,  
Councilmember Nora Campos

**SUBJECT:** Hurricane Katrina Relief and  
Recovery Actions

**DATE:** September 9, 2005

**APPROVED**

*Ron Gonzales* *Cindy Chavez*  
*Nora Campos*

**DATE**

9/9/05

**RECOMMENDATION**

In response to the Hurricane Katrina disaster, we recommend that the City Council approve the following actions:

1. Donate up to \$500,000 (approximately \$0.50 per San Jose resident) to the Santa Clara Valley Red Cross to support relief and recovery assistance locally. This funding commitment should be connected to the opening of a local evacuee assistance and recovery center, or in meeting the needs of registered FEMA evacuees arriving in San Jose. This contribution should be held in a designated fund for the local Red Cross to be used when their local funds for this purpose have been exhausted. We also recommend that the Santa Clara Valley Red Cross track how these funds are used to benefit evacuees of the Gulf Coast hurricane disaster and report regularly to the City.
2. Encourage our neighboring communities throughout Santa Clara County along with the County of Santa Clara to join us in contributing to the relief effort by donating a similar amount per resident to the Santa Clara Valley Red Cross local Hurricane Katrina relief effort.
3. Direct the City Manager to expand the City's Military Leave Program to include City employees who are called up and deployed through the National Guard or Reserve to assist with Hurricane Katrina recovery and relief efforts.
4. Direct the City Manager to send additional public safety personnel as requested by FEMA to assist with rescue and recovery efforts in the Gulf Coast region. Resources deployed should be based on specific requests from FEMA, through the State of California or the activation of mutual aid plans.
5. Delegate authority to the City Manager to approve leave time for City employees skilled to respond and assist with recovery and rebuilding efforts in the Gulf Coast,

based on FEMA emergency response needs and requests through appropriate professional associations. The City Manager should work with the Agency Director and the City Attorney to identify employees with skills who might be available for such services.

6. Direct the City Manager to report back to the City Council in one week with an initial cost assessment for carrying out items 4 and 5, with a recommendation for funding for the City Council to consider.

### **BACKGROUND**

Hurricane Katrina devastated communities beyond our comprehension. This disaster has affected hundreds of thousands of people who have suffered the loss of their homes, their communities, and their loved ones. The immense damage toll of injury, death, and displacement is only beginning to be counted, but we know that it will touch all Americans for months and years.

Every community in our nation has the responsibility to respond with generous support and resources to help relief, recovery, and rebuilding. If such a disaster were to occur here, we too would call upon the nation and other cities for help, and we are confident Americans would respond without hesitation to our pleas for relief and reconstruction. Our recommendations, therefore, are a first step in our obligations to aid our neighbors who may be thousands of miles from us, but whose hearts and needs are really only next door. San Jose should not hesitate to assist the people of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast.

State and federal governments have already asked the nation's cities to prepare for receiving evacuees, and San José and Santa Clara County are prepared to respond. We have committed to welcome 100 evacuees initially, and the City is working with the County, Red Cross, and San Jose State University to organize housing and support services for individuals and families who might be arriving in the South Bay (see attachment). The university announced this week that it would make former student housing available for interim shelter for evacuees. Details about when people might arrive in San Jose and California are still not known. FEMA has asked states and communities to stand by if and when local assistance for evacuees might be needed. If requested, we will welcome additional evacuees into our community.

In addition, we have City employees with valuable skills that will be needed for relief, recovery, and rebuilding. The intent of our recommendations is to treat our employees involved in post-hurricane efforts in a similar way to those who are called up to active military duty under our Military Leave Program. San José has already sent fire department specialists to assist with search and rescue in the Gulf Coast area through the California Urban Search and Rescue program sponsored by FEMA. Other city employees have also been deployed through FEMA. As we identify opportunities for city personnel and resources to assist with FEMA requests, we will be ready to respond and support our employees.

Finally, we recognize and thank the County of Santa Clara and the local Red Cross for their immediate leadership in this regional relief effort. In particular, we would like to thank Board Chair Liz Kniss, County Executive Pete Kutras, Red Cross CEO Lorraine Zippiroli, San Jose State University President Don Kassing, and Volunteer Center of Silicon Valley Executive Director Stephen T. Quigley, Jr. for their partnership and commitment. We have also called on the mayors of other cities in the county to join us. This is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate how well our region can work together to respond in a time of disaster and to prepare for emergencies that may come.

Attachment

## Recovery Center Services

### Community Organizations

#### Santa Clara Valley Red Cross

- Leading recovery efforts on behalf San José and Santa Clara County
- Coordinating the Recovery Center
- [www.santaclaravalley.redcross.org](http://www.santaclaravalley.redcross.org) or call (408) 577-1000.

#### **Volunteer Center of Silicon Valley**

##### **Community Agencies Disaster Response Effort (CADRE)**

- 22 local community based organizations working as a network to provide services to victims.
- Organizing welcome packets for victims when they arrive that provide initial needed necessities.
- Coordinating community offers of supplies, shelter, and volunteers
- [www.vcsv.us](http://www.vcsv.us) or call (408) 247-1126

#### **Federal Emergency Management Agency**

- “Tele-registration” for victims – (800) 621-3362

### City of San José

#### Customer Service Call Center

- Prepared with agency referral information for persons that have arrived in San Jose independently
- Call (408) 535-3500

#### **Mineta San Jose International Airport**

- One of three “points of entry” for evacuees coming to California (other two are San Francisco and San Diego)
- Prepared to welcome evacuees in coordination with the Red Cross.

#### **Housing Department**

- Coordinating available affordable housing in San José for long-term housing needs in partnership with County of Santa Clara.
- Pursuing federal rental assistance funding and clarification of eligibility.

**Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services**

- Offering animal services to victims with pets.
- Coordinating family services including child care, youth services opportunities and after school services.

**Police, Fire and Emergency Services**

- San José Police Department in partnership with San José State University Police Department will provide security services at Recovery Center.
- San José Fire Department will respond to fire and medical emergencies as needed.
- San Jose Office of Emergency Services is working in partnership with the County Office of Emergency Services to assist the Red Cross in planning and coordinating with state and federal agencies.

**County of Santa Clara**

- Offering Social Services, Mental Health, Housing, Public Health, and Emergency Services to victims.
- Provide expedited eligibility for public benefits.
- Mental health screening and counseling.
- Public health screening for disease and Valley Medical Center will provide medical services and treatment.
- Office of Affordable Housing partnering with San Jose Housing Dept. to find permanent housing for evacuees.

**San José State University**

- Providing interim housing for disaster victims at former student housing.
- 53 two-bedroom units with kitchen available for initial placement until long-term housing is assigned.

**Santa Clara County Office of Education**

- Coordinating school registration throughout the County and all school districts in the region.
- Offering children packets with games, coloring books and other activities.
- Santa Clara County Office of Education Head Start Program will provide many services as well, including child care
- [www.sccoe.k12.ca.us](http://www.sccoe.k12.ca.us) or call (408) 453-6500.

**Santa Clara Valley Transportation Agency**

- Providing free bus and light rail passes to victims.
- Coordinating free transportation from the San José Mineta International Airport to San José State University.