



# Memorandum

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Ron Gonzales, Mayor  
Del Borgsdorf, City Manager

**SUBJECT:** Hattiesburg Assistance Update **DATE:** December 9, 2005

Approved

*[Handwritten signatures]* Date 12/9/05  
*[Handwritten signature]* Del Borgsdorf

## RECOMMENDATION

1. Approve the deployment of City staff to Hattiesburg, Mississippi to assist in hurricane relief efforts under the USCM "city adoption" relationship approved by the City Council in October.
2. Broaden the use of the previously appropriated funds as follows below to include support for the rebuilding of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, while continuing to support local Santa Clara Valley Red Cross hurricane relief efforts.

Adopt the following 2005-2006 appropriation ordinance amendments in the General Fund:

- a. Reduce the Santa Clara Valley Red Cross Hurricane Katrina Relief appropriation in Citywide by \$500,000.
  - b. Establish an appropriation in Citywide to the City Manager for Hurricane Relief Effort in the amount of \$500,000.
3. Approve travel for the Mayor to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, from December 18-20, to formalize the City-to-City Agreement to assess recovery and rebuilding needs and opportunities, and strengthen the San José partnership with Hattiesburg. (Source of Funds: Mayor's Office).

## BACKGROUND

Our recommendations support previous Council actions to adopt Hattiesburg in the Gulf Coast region and provide assistance to the people and communities following the widespread destruction caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The city adoption program is one more way the people of San José can aid devastated communities.

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We know that if such a major disaster were to occur here, we too would call upon the nation and other cities for help. We are confident that neighboring cities would respond without hesitation to our requests for relief and reconstruction.

Together these steps enable San Jose and the people of our community to further provide meaningful assistance to help our fellow neighbors in their time of greatest need.

On September 13 and September 20, the City Council approved several actions in response to the Hurricane Katrina disaster. These included a donation of up to \$500,000 to the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross to support local services for hurricane evacuees, and the approval of up to thirty days of paid leave for City employees deployed for recovery and rebuilding efforts in the Gulf Coast, based on FEMA needs and requests through appropriate professional associations.

On October 25, the Council approved the Mayor's recommendations to adopt Hattiesburg, Mississippi, through the United States Conference of Mayors "city adoption" program and to continue to work with Hattiesburg to identify ways for the San Jose community to assist with hurricane relief, recovery, and rebuilding efforts. This memo updates the steps we have taken since that time to coordinate resources and opportunities for this relationship.

Since the Council action in October, the Mayor's Office and City Manager's Office have been in contact with government and relief organizations in Hattiesburg and other jurisdictions in the region to identify opportunities for the San Jose community to assist with relief and recovery efforts. As a result of these discussions, we are recommending that the previously established appropriation of \$500,000 for the local Red Cross be redirected and broadened as an appropriation to help with overall hurricane relief efforts.

The Red Cross will still have access to needed funds for local relief efforts. Since September, the Red Cross, the City, and other community organizations and agencies have provided transitional support for families and individuals from the Gulf Coast who have relocated to our city. Currently approximately 15 to 20 people are still living in seven units at San José State University's Spartan Village, and the Red Cross expects to close down the Spartan Village operation by the end of the year. More than 300 people from the Gulf Coast region have found permanent affordable housing, many using Section 8 vouchers. CADRE and the Red Cross also have assisted with job placement opportunities and supplies for these new residents.

The actual costs associated with this effort under the Council's appropriation are less than \$100,000. In order to retain flexibility for the future while addressing immediate needs, staff recommends that up to \$200,000 be available for the City's departments of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement and Transportation so that our employees could be deployed to assist with reconstruction efforts in Hattiesburg and the Gulf Coast, consistent with the Council's previous direction.

Mayor Gonzales, a member of the City Manager's Office, and community stakeholders are planning a trip to Hattiesburg this month meet with officials and organizations discuss their needs and return with critical information about ways San José and our community can help the people of Hattiesburg in their rebuilding efforts. In addition, two lead members from Transportation and PBCE were deployed to Hattiesburg in early December to assess needs in the Hattiesburg area. Based on their findings, additional staff is planned for deployment to Hattiesburg during the week of December 12 to provide services in the field, summarized below.

### **Infrastructure Reconstruction Efforts**

In mid-December, Transportation will send a reconstruction crew with four or five members for a period of five to seven days. This crew is expected to perform repairs and reconstruction work on several different types of public infrastructure, such as sidewalks, street pavement, water supply pipes, and sanitary and storm sewers lines.

### **Construction Inspection Efforts**

One building inspection manager will be in Hattiesburg with the advance team from the Department of Transportation, and the Building Division plans to make two building inspectors available on a rotating basis during the rainy season in San Jose as workload allows. Inspectors will continue work to assess damage, structure usability, structure reconstruction and new construction. These tasks make use of our inspectors' areas of training and expertise and are related to the job duties the inspectors perform in San Jose.

### **Community Contributions**

Since the Council's adoption of Hattiesburg, the Mayor's Office and the City Manager's Office have been establishing a framework to encourage additional involvement and contributions of assistance from our community, residents, and businesses. Local leaders have already expressed interest in assisting rebuilding efforts, and we are confident that the people of San Jose will form good connections with the Hattiesburg community to further develop and strengthen our sister city relationship. The Mayor's Office has been contacting local business and labor leaders, the Silicon Valley San José Chamber of Commerce, housing developers, school districts and community organizations.

### **COORDINATION**

This memorandum was coordinated with the Departments of Planning Building and Code Enforcement, Transportation and the City Attorney's Office.

