

From: [Moua, Louansee](#)
To: [DowntownWestD6](#)
Subject: Fw: Letter for Google's Downtown West Development Agreement
Date: Monday, May 24, 2021 12:05:01 PM
Attachments: [LUNA DowntownWestLETTER.docx](#)

From: Mayra Pelagio <mayra@lunalatinosunidos.org>
Sent: Monday, May 24, 2021 11:33 AM
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Cc: Jeffrey Buchanan <jeffrey@wpusa.org>
Subject: Letter for Google's Downtown West Development Agreement

[External Email]

Dear Mayor Liccardo and members of the City Council,

Please find attached a letter from our team regarding Google's Downtown West Development Agreement (item 10.2).

Best,

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LATINOS UNITED FOR A NEW AMERICA

1692 Story Rd., Suite 225 San José, CA 95122 (408) 493-6486

May 24th, 2021

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

Re: Item 10.2, Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan

Dear Mayor Liccardo and Councilmembers:

Google and the City of San Jose have agreed to a Development Agreement for the Downtown West project that could put \$154.8 million into a community fund grounded in racial justice and governed by grassroots leaders. This is the biggest community benefits fund of its kind, and the first to empower communities of color with the authority to direct tens of millions towards preventing displacement and creating economic opportunity for local residents.

This comes in addition to commitments by Google creating a path for thousands of workers to good family-supporting union jobs building and running their proposed Downtown West campus and supporting thousands of affordable homes for San José families between the project and Google's existing Affordable Housing Fund to help offset tech's role in our housing crisis.

This agreement is the result of four years of organizing. It happened because residents came out to town hall meetings back in 2017 and shared their hopes and needs, signed onto our community vision for the project, marched with us through downtown and at Google's headquarters, emailed City leaders and testified at City Council meetings, and so much more. Together, we made clear that the project must not destabilize our communities.

Google's team and City leaders listened. They've worked with our coalition of housing advocates, community organizations, and labor groups to find solutions to the community's greatest concerns and to jointly design this grassroots-governed community fund to tackle the root causes of our displacement crisis and to give the most impacted power over decisions. We collaborated to devise a process to review community benefit funds across the country, to consider best practices, to work with community members to reflect on a governance model that would intentionally address a history of racial, economic and political inequality.

The process of working together, community leaders together with Google and City staff to address the impacts of development on our communities is one that the City and other developers should seek to emulate, ensuring that as the City considers financially valuable land use changes, we develop the necessary processes to capture more of this value for the public to address potential impacts on neighborhoods experiencing the greatest pressures of displacement.

The fund will be governed by a 13-member Community Committee that reflects the diversity of San José and will have the final say on funding solutions:

- At least five members must have personal lived experience with the root causes of displacement, including two from the eastside and one from downtown.
- The other eight will have expertise fighting racial injustice in areas like housing, workers' rights, education, and small business.

The fund will focus on undoing racial inequity in neighborhoods experiencing displacement on the top priorities identified by our community:

- Stable housing: Preserving affordable homes, funding legal aid and tenant organizing, and piloting new ownership models where our homes belong to our community rather than private corporations.
- Economic opportunity: Providing pathways to good jobs for local residents of all ages and backgrounds, from early childhood education to apprenticeships in careers like construction and IT, to help founding small businesses.

When we started on this journey, we said we wanted this project to be a new model for how the tech sector can develop without displacement. This agreement gives the communities most at risk real power over resources and together with the commitments creating a path to thousands of good union jobs and affordable housing, we're creating that new model. By listening to community and labor leaders, working together to design solutions to the community's biggest concerns, and giving power to those most impacted, Google's Downtown West project sets a new standard for future developments.

While it has been a long journey to get where we are, this only shows that when we come together and organize as a community, we win.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MP' or similar initials, enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

Mayra Pelagio
Executive Director,
Latinos United for a New America (LUNA)