



Board of Directors
Rainbow Chamber of Commerce, Silicon Valley
1070 Stewart Drive, Suite 1
Sunnyvale, CA 94085

January 22, 2019

Vice-Mayor Magdalena Carrasco
200 East Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

Re: Small Business Anti-Displacement Research

Dear Vice Mayor Carrasco:

I am writing to you today to express the strong support of the Rainbow Chamber of Commerce Silicon Valley for the Small Business Anti-Displacement Research appropriation to the Office of Economic Development by the City of San Jose.

The displacement of small businesses caused by commercial gentrification in the Bay Area is a well-known problem in our communities. Residents and businesses are being priced out of their communities by skyrocketing rent increases and massive re-development plans that leave little opportunity for displaced tenants to return. LGBTQ small businesses owners are especially at risk of displacement. As local communities are pushed out by gentrification, LGBTQ businesses lose the loyal customer base and supportive communities that they rely upon, and discriminatory practices in leasing make LGBTQ business owners particularly vulnerable to eviction.

However, redevelopment and gentrification are not always a bad thing for small businesses. Research and experience in places such as New York, Boston, San Francisco, and London provides examples, strategies, and policies that can be employed to help small businesses survive and thrive during times of urban renewal and redevelopment. Profitable businesses that are able to make it through the transition of redevelopment gain access and provide important services to new and more customers and clients.

With Google and other tech companies pursuing large development projects in San Jose, it is essential that the City of San Jose commit the resources to identifying and pursuing strategies to protect local small businesses. We hope that the City of San Jose will continue to implement policies that help preserve the rich history and culture of our small businesses as we move together into this time of growth and expansion.

Sincerely,

Ron Gardner, President
Rainbow Chamber of Commerce Silicon Valley