



CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

# Memorandum

**To:** CITY COUNCIL

**From:** Mayor Sam Liccardo

**Subject:** SEE BELOW

**Date:** January 15, 2019

**Approved:**

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1-15-2019

**SUBJECT: ACTIONS RELATED TO FEDERAL WORKERS AT THE NORMAN Y. MINETA SAN JOSÉ INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

## RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager and the Director of Aviation to:

(a) take all actions necessary, including but not limited to entering into an agreement or agreements for loan administration and collections in partnership with one or more financial institutions, to implement a short-term loan program in an amount equal to monthly take-home pay for safety-related, mission-critical federal employees who are currently working without pay at the Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport, including Federal Aviation Administration air traffic controllers, Transportation Security Administration passenger screeners, and Customs inspectors, to be funded by Airport revenues and to be repaid, without interest, upon the participating employees' receipt of back pay from their respective federal agency employers; and

(b) explore options for financial counseling to help connect employees with supplementary resources, utilizing internal and external partners such as Work2Future and SparkPoint.

## BACKGROUND

With the Trump-inspired federal shutdown now entering its fourth week and no solutions in sight, millions of federal employees now scramble to find the money to pay rent or a mortgage without a paycheck. In a region as expensive as ours, that leaves many federal employees with little choice but to take other work to avoid homelessness. While some credit unions and banks are offering assistance for federal employees affected by the shutdown, many of these loan programs have low limits, varying interest rates and are only available to existing members.

Beyond the very painful impact of this shutdown to the many families of federal employees in the Bay Area, the entire community also suffers when Washington D.C.'s dysfunction forces such vital employees as air traffic controllers, TSA security, and Customs inspectors to face the Hobbesian choice of working without pay or driving for Uber. TSA employees have begun calling in sick, forcing Miami International to closing one air terminal early each day during the furlough. Airports throughout the nation are weighing their options as they face threats of unpredictable shutdowns. In San Jose, TSA absence rates have already increased from 3% to 14%.

While we cannot address all impacts of the federal budgetary impasse, we can ensure that they do not adversely harm our City-managed operations at San Jose-Mineta International Airport. We must do so to ensure safety, avoid severe disruptions to travel, and to protect our regional economy.

Cities increasingly find themselves in the too-familiar position of stepping up to solve problems where the federal leadership has abdicated responsibility. In recent years, we have seen this pattern of leadership-shifting across a host of issues, from climate change to transit funding to affordable housing.

So too, we must come to the aid of federal workers. Our reasons for doing are both noble and self-serving. We must keep our airport operating and avoid any cancellation of flights that will adversely affect our residents and local businesses, our local economy, and our airport revenues. We also have a moral obligation ease the financial strain experienced by hundreds of local families – 48% of TSA workers at Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport are San Jose residents. I urge that we move forward with haste.