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## Council members chime in with proposals for San Jose's redevelopment budget

By Denis C. Theriault  
Mercury News  
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Days after debating the San Jose Redevelopment Agency's latest budget proposal, a handful of City Council members requested millions more in funding for additional projects, ranging from \$1.5 million to spruce up outdated Municipal Stadium to \$1.5 million to help hire 25 more police officers.

The special requests, which were submitted to Mayor Chuck Reed's office late Wednesday, amount to just more than \$4.7 million— a small fraction of the \$1.1 billion in capital improvements the agency is proposing over the next five years. The biggest piece of that plan remains a \$300 million expansion of the McEnery San Jose Convention Center, with tens of millions more allocated for community centers, parks and street improvements, among other projects.

Those requests will now be placed under consideration for a redevelopment budget directive — due Tuesday — that Reed's budget advisers will craft in consultation with redevelopment officials. The city council will then weigh a draft budget proposal Dec. 9.

As part of that process, which involves closely vetting every piece of the proposed redevelopment spending plan amid a challenging economy, some requests may be dismissed or trimmed. And some, if accepted, could require cutbacks elsewhere.

"Those are the kind of decisions we'll be looking at," said Harry Mavrogenes, the agency's executive director.

Councilwoman Nora Campos submitted the largest overall requests for

additional funds. In addition to seeking to hire more police, she also wants to spend nearly \$190,000 to hire blight enforcement inspectors and \$1 million to help community groups curb gang activity.

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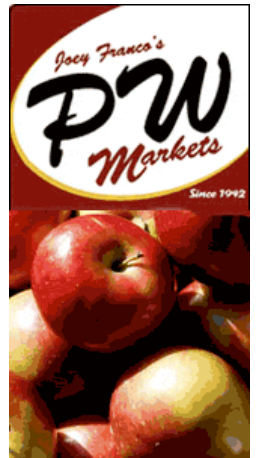
The other sizable request comes from Councilwoman Madison Nguyen, who has proposed an extensive upgrade of Municipal Stadium, home of the minor-league San Jose Giants. New dugouts, locker rooms and computer lines are among the proposals for the 66-year-old stadium.

Also requested is a \$500,000 infusion for the Coyote Creek Trail System in North San Jose, sought by Councilman Kansen Chu, and \$50,000 requested by Councilman Pierluigi Oliverio for new landscaping along the Taylor Street underpass.

Overall, though, council members were far more restrained in their requests for extra funding than last year, when they submitted a collective \$65.5 million in big-ticket add-ons. "Were in tough economic times, and the requests that came in reflect that," said mayoral spokeswoman Michelle McGurk.

While the redevelopment agency is overseen by the City Council and works closely with city officials to maintain San Jose's economic health, it is a separate legal entity. It raises money by selling bonds and by collecting property taxes in areas it has declared blighted. Its budget — a proposed \$463 million for the next fiscal year — is not commingled with San Jose's general fund.

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