



1275 Fourth St., #179  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

(707) 900-4364  
info@generationhousing.org

28 October 2021

Via E-mail only

citycouncil@srcity.org

Mayor Chris Rogers  
Vice Mayor Natalie Rogers  
Santa Rosa City Councilmembers

**Re: City Manager Hire**

Dear Mr. Mayor, Ms. Vice Mayor, and Santa Rosa City Councilmembers:

As you undertake to make one of your most impactful decisions, Generation Housing wishes to provide our perspective on the qualities of a City Manager most important to helping you shape the future of Santa Rosa, and by extension, our county.

This Council has put housing and homelessness at or near the top of its priority lists for several years. And for good reason — making progress on our housing goals is pivotal to improving Santa Rosa's economic prosperity and carbon footprint, and to improving our residents' quality of life, economic stability, and health and education outcomes.

The City's bold housing policy responses to the 2017 wildfires were effective in speeding the rebuild of homes lost to fire and portended greater opportunity for development of the multi-family infill development we sorely need. But David Guhin's departure seems to have significantly slowed momentum on development and left a leadership and visionary vacuum. This has shaken the confidence of the development community, and their interest and investment are critical to meeting our housing goals.

In choosing the next City Manager, we think the following qualities and experience are key to ensuring that City staff is inspired and able to transform your housing vision and goals into action and results:



- + **A bold and visionary leader.** We need more than a competent administrator, we need a visionary leader who is solution-minded, a creative problem-solver, and determined to break through historical barriers to housing development.

We need a leader who understands that Santa Rosa's challenges require something different from, and more than, business-as-usual and can build and nurture a staff with that same understanding. City staff and community leaders have been worn-down by repeated disasters. Wildfires (and power shutoffs and smoke days), drought, and the impact of ongoing challenges created by the housing crisis, income inequality, and geographical segregation are predictable. We need a leader who embraces these challenges, brings a personal sense of urgency to create solutions and can inspire staff to do the same.

- + **A leader with a commitment to housing.** The new City Manager should share this Council's understanding of the strength of housing as a lever for progress and be willing to prioritize housing solutions.
- + **A leader with a commitment to equity and climate action.** The new City Manager should share and be guided by the Council's equity and climate action values.
- + **A leader committed to progress in Santa Rosa.** We need a leader with personal ownership in the future of Santa Rosa, someone either with a history in or strong connection to the City, or who is specifically interested in making this his or her community in an authentic way and for enough time to create the change and impact we need.
- + **A proven inter-governmental collaborator.** We need a leader that can create a true culture of collaboration between the City and County.

We appreciate your consideration of these points and your thoughtfulness, with an eye towards progress and the future, in making this decision. And as always, we thank you for your service.

Respectfully,



Jen Klose  
Executive Director