



Convention & Visitors Bureau

125 S. Market Street, Suite 300

San Jose, CA 95113-2257

Phone: 408.295.9600

Fax: 408.295.3937

Web: [www.sanjose.org](http://www.sanjose.org)

## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jose Villarreal, 408.792.4119  
[jvillarreal@sanjose.org](mailto:jvillarreal@sanjose.org), or  
Marie Rothhauser, 408.792.4125  
[mrothhauser@sanjose.org](mailto:mrothhauser@sanjose.org)

### CITY OF SAN JOSÉ APPROVES A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE SAN JOSÉ CONVENTION AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

#### Changes Seek Innovation and Creativity with the Center's Operation and Governance

**SAN JOSÉ, CALIF. – November 25, 2003** - The San José City Council unanimously approved the release of a Request For Proposals (RFP) for the operation and governance of the San José McEnery Convention Center (Center), which also includes the Center for Performing Arts, California Fox and Montgomery Theaters and Parkside Hall. The RFP will be publicly released on December 1, 2003, with proposals due to the City of San José on February 23, 2004. Currently, the City of San José manages the Center and the cultural facilities.

The decision to initiate a RFP for the Center was the result of a study released in June 2003, which indicated that there are potential savings in the excess of \$3.2 million that could be achieved with changes in the Center's current operational and governance structure. The criteria included in the RFP encourage models that will make the Center more efficient, competitive and customer focused while balancing the production of economic impact and fiscal management.

"The Convention Center is a valuable public asset that needs to be managed for the benefit of the local community," said Phaedra Ellis-Lamkins, Executive Officer of the South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council. "The Center is a key component of the generation of local business. With this RFP, we're able to enhance business generation and job creation while maintaining standards for civil service employees."

In FY 2002-03, San José Convention and Visitors Bureau efforts attracted an estimated 162,185 delegates to the Center for conventions and/or meetings, which resulted in over \$105 million in economic impact to the City of San José. The Center, if effectively structured and managed, can serve as a tool that will draw people to San José, and induce consumer spending.

“We are interested in the end result of the RFP that will challenge proposers to think outside of the box and bring forward operational and governance models that are creative and innovative,” said Dan Fenton, President and CEO of the San José Convention and Visitors Bureau. “In today’s new economy, convention business is very competitive. A Center that is nimble, customer driven, and efficient in its daily operations will be better positioned to attract conventions, drive consumer spending and enhance economic impact for the City of San José.”

### **Recent Changes at the McEnery San José Convention Center**

The Center has gone through various changes and improvements in recent months that began with the consolidation of the sales and marketing roles performed by the Center and the San José Convention and Visitors Bureau. The merged sales and marketing teams have resulted in a cohesive and streamlined approach to selling and marketing the Center and serving customers more efficiently. Second, a more flexible rate structure, which was introduced in October, now allows the Center to be more competitive and quick to respond to market conditions with its pricing. Finally, recent changes to the Center’s customer contract have resulted in a less cumbersome document for clients.

“The Center is definitely on the road to becoming a new and improved facility that is competitive and effectively operated to attract more conventions to San José,” said Cyril Isnard, General Manager of the Fairmont Hotel. “San Jose’s hotel industry believes that the RFP is the right process for identifying models focused on maximizing the value of the Center by attracting more conventions and increasing hotel room occupancy.”

### **About The San Jose Convention and Visitors Bureau (SJCVB)**

The San José Convention and Visitors Bureau’s (SJCVB) mission is to enhance the image and economic well being of San José by taking the leadership role in marketing San José as a globally recognized destination. The SJCVB offers meeting planners, tour operators, and individual visitors a team of professionals who can assist with their destination planning process from beginning to end. For meeting planners and delegates, the Bureau’s Destination Services department serves as the liaison for all convention facilities and hotels and event planning. For residents and visitors to San José, the Bureau’s Visitor Services department can provide tools for learning about and planning a trip to San José. For a calendar of events or to receive a copy of the Bureau’s Destination Planning Guide, please contact the San José Convention and Visitors Bureau at 1.888.SAN.JOSE (1.888.726.5673) or visit <http://www.sanjose.org>.

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