



**Institute for  
Nonprofit News**

Office of the Mayor Sam Liccardo  
200 East Santa Clara Street  
San Jose, CA 95113

7/29/2019

Dear Mayor Liccardo:

I'm the executive director of the Institute for Nonprofit News, a network of nearly 250 nonprofit newsrooms across the country, including San José Spotlight. INN members are committed to providing original reporting by professional journalists, following editorial independence and financial transparency standards. Nonprofit news is the fastest growing model in journalism, and these publications are increasingly important in covering civic life.

I was surprised to hear from Spotlight that you have a policy to exclude "publications and networks that only have an online presence unless they are a nationally recognized outlet of record" from the city's daily distribution of news clips pertaining to San Jose City Hall, which is produced using taxpayer resources. This policy is outdated and harmful to the public.

Today, more than 60 percent of news consumers read news on their mobile phones. Online publications are the publications of record. Your policy of excluding online outlets reduces public access to reputable reporting and the ability of local officials to be informed by it. Whether a publication is distributed online, in print or by on-air broadcast is not a measure of editorial quality. As we see traditional legacy newspapers shrink in cities across the U.S., including Silicon Valley, it is digital-only outlets such as San José Spotlight that are filling the void and covering stories that would otherwise go untold.

It is my understanding that this email roundup of news clips is distributed to city leaders across your City Hall. If you are excluding news outlets just because they're not in print, you're withholding valuable information from policy leaders, decision-makers and influencers who need it to serve the public.

I strongly urge you to reconsider this policy.

Sincerely,

Sue Cross  
Executive Director  
Institute for Nonprofit News (INN)