



August 9, 2021

TO: Mayor Steinberg and Sacramento City Councilmembers  
FROM: Bob Erlenbusch, Executive Director  
RE: SRCEH Position Paper on City's Siting Master Plan

*The Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness supports four key goals, as well as six specific recommendations of the Sacramento City 2021 Master Siting Plan to End Homelessness [Master Plan], including the City Council's resolution, with guarded support on many of the specifics, given our critique of the current Master Plans specifics. We conclude with key operational and programmatic questions and recommendations for moving forward. A side-by-side comparison of the Community Plan and the City's Plan is included.*

**Support for four key goals: SRCEH supports the following elements of Master Plans goals:**

- **Boldness & Scale:** we support the boldness of the Master Plan in laying out a plan to approve 20 sites all at once; invest \$100 M over two years in implementing this plan; and attempting to place nearly 10,000 of our unhoused neighbors into safe dignified emergency shelter and housing options;
- **Sense of Urgency:** we support the sense of urgency in the Master Plan by focusing on sheltering as many as our unhoused neighbors as possible in the first two years of the plan – which we consider *Phase I* of the Plan; while we being in *Phase II* to create affordable and accessible permanent housing options for our unhoused neighbors;
- **First step to a regional approach and regional plan to ending and preventing homelessness:** we support the City laying the groundwork for a truly regional approach to ending and preventing homelessness in our community and SRCEH is dedicated to continue to advocate to the County and surrounding cities to become full partners with Sacramento City in this regional approach and finally creating a regional plan to end and prevent homelessness;
- **Safety – keeping people alive and safe in safe, dignified settings:** SRCEH has produced an Annual Homeless Deaths Report for the past seven years. From 2002 – 2019, we have lost 1,170 of our unhoused neighbors, of which approximately **34% or 400 people experiencing homelessness have died due violence** [gun shots, stabbings, drowning and hangings.] The average age of death of homeless men is 50 and homeless women is 48 – or about 25 years taken off their lives by being homeless. Our hope and goal is to provide safe, dignified shelter and housing options to keep our neighbors alive, safe and be able to pass from natural causes.

**Support for six specific recommendations: SRCEH supports the following four specific recommendations of the Community Master Plan that align with the City's Master Plan:**

- **City County partnership agreement to address behavioral health issues of people experiencing homelessness;**
- **Homeless Employment: workforce training and employment;**
- **Trauma-informed Care; Harm Reduction and Housing First Principles:** Both the City Master Plan and the Community Master Plan embrace the principles of trauma-informed care; harm reductions and housing first principles. SRCEH agrees with the additional principles added by the City Master Plan: low barrier programs; client-centered and culturally competent;
- **Homeless Prevention:** Both plans embrace homeless prevention strategies which are very important as we approach the eviction moratoriums ending;
- **Good Neighbor Policies:** Both plans embrace Good Neighbor policies that contain the elements of respect; dignity; inclusion; health and safety for all – people experiencing homelessness; residents and businesses;
- **Hospice:** SRCEH supports the funding of *Joshua's House*, a hospice program for 30 terminally ill homeless people

### Guarded Support

*The following comments are based on the attached Side-by-Side Comparison of the Community Master Plan to End Homelessness – of which SRCEH was one of the 16 community-based organizations to draft the Community Plan – to the City’s Master Plan. This comparison gives us guarded support for the following elements of the City’s plan given our critique of the Master Plan as it either relates to items that missing; fall short or are based on questionable assumptions.*

- **Failure to address systemic racism and fully embrace equity issues:** As we know, Black and Indigenous people and LGBTQ youth are significantly over-represented in homeless population compared to their numbers in the general population in Sacramento.

While the Master Plan does embrace equity as a Guiding Principle, the statement is very general and the Master Plan does not follow through on “including an equity lens across the community with a process that sets system-related goals to make progress to remedy the identified equity.”

Additionally, the Master Plan fails to address systemic racism and fails to embrace the Community Plan’s recommendation to address systemic racism in the homeless delivery system by intentionally embracing a racial equity lens in program design, implementation, including hiring and tracking outcomes to ensure that the people placed into permanent housing are not disproportionately white.

- **A Program for all?:** *lack of youth, veterans and senior shelter, housing options:* The Community Plan called for a “plan for all – children, youth, including LGBTQ youth, families and adults.” The City Master Plan falls short of this goal by only providing 48 currently providing beds for youth at the Grove and 0 new beds for youth in the Master Plan. Additionally, it is only providing for 15 beds specific to homeless veterans, or just 2% of the 667 veterans identified in the 2019 Point-In-Time Count, and is silent on providing beds for homeless seniors, many of whom have special needs.
- **Assumption of 50% turnover on an average of 6 months:** The City’s Master Plan assumes a 50% turnover in the proposed programs at an average of every six months – thus arriving at providing shelter and housing options to about 5,000 people experiencing homelessness in six months and about 10,000 in a year.

**Questionable assumption:** However, the City’s Master Plan cites Homeless Management Information Systems “flow” data from 1/30/2020 that indicates there were 11,222 people experiencing homelessness “engaged in the 2020 homeless response system, of which 2,761 “achieved permanent housing” – or **a 25% turnover.**

**More realistic assumption:** Using this metric, a more realistic assumption is that there will be a **25% turnover in 6 months**, thus providing shelter and housing options to about 8,000 people experiencing homelessness – which is significantly less than the 10,000 projection.

- **Where is the housing?:** Even assuming a 25% turnover and not an aggressive 50% turnover, the key question is once people exit a Safe Parking Program, SafeGround or tiny home, **where do they go? ... where is the housing?**

It would be a failure of the Master Plan to have our unhoused neighbors cycle through a Safe Parking Program to Safe Ground, to a tiny home and back again.

It is reasonable for SRCEH to assume that we can not achieve an aggressive 50% turnover in 6 months given the Master Plan’s own analysis of the challenges of the currently proposed housing options:

- 6 Motel conversions: “complicated, time consuming”
- Motel vouchers: “challenge of engaging motel owners”
- Housing vouchers: “multiple challenge”

- **Failure to propose “fixing the homeless leadership structure:”** The Community plan’s recommendation is to fix the fragmented homeless leadership structure that the City Plan terms “the homeless response system.” That system is comprised of the following:
  - ✓ Sacramento City
  - ✓ Sacramento County
  - ✓ Sacramento Steps Forward
  - ✓ Continuum of Care Board
  - ✓ Sacramento Housing & Redevelopment Agency

The City Plan refers to this system as “historically the homeless response system has been divided into separate components, with each entity focusing on a specific component... the homeless response system continues to be a work in progress.”

The Community Plan sees this description of a system that has been in place for more than a decade as dysfunctional and broken and in desperate need of new leadership to provide coordinated and integrated planning, policy and programs to end and prevent homelessness in our community.

- **Ombudsperson or Team missing from City Plan:** The Community Plan proposed that there be an independent ombudsperson or team whose role would be to give an avenue for our unhoused neighbors to register their complaints about services and/or issues of discrimination, which would hold the programs accountable for the implementation of the program and as well as evaluate the quality of the program on an ongoing basis.
- **End the Criminalization of People Experiencing Homelessness:** The Community Plan clearly stated that the implementation of the Homeless Master Plan must be grounded in our community’s sense of justice & equity – and not as a way to circumvent the 9<sup>th</sup> Federal Circuit Court ruling [*Martin v Boise* decision].

Below is the City’s Master Plan brief discussion of *Martin v Boise* decision:

*Simply put, the lack of alternatives to sleeping or camping on public property both perpetuates the status quo and limits the City’s ability to ensure such space are returned to their original, intended purposes.*

The question that remains is how will those spaces be returned to their original, intended purposes? By continuing to criminalize our unhoused neighbors or finally create enough shelter in the short term and affordable and accessible housing in the mid to longer term that people are not forced to be unsheltered due to lack of shelter and housing?

- **Citywide?:** The City Plan states that “the plan shall be city-wide but not one size fits all. The Plan will reflect a city-wide commitment to solving the crisis with a shared responsibility.” Below is a comparison of the Community Plan to the City’s Plan in terms of the distribution by percentage of homeless people served in each city council district. As is obvious from the table below, each of the plans are “city-wide,” but the Community Plan calls for a much more equitable distribution of homeless people served across all eight city council districts, while the current City Plan has a very uneven distribution of programs with 75% of the homeless people served being in just 4 city council districts: CM Valenzuela: 26%; CM Lololee: 22%; CM Schenirer: 16%; and CM Vang: 11%. Adding CM Guerra with 10% means that 85% of the homeless population is served being in 5 city council districts.

**SIDE BY SIDE COMPARISON OF COMMUNITY & CITY PLAN:  
% OF TOTAL NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE SERVED PER CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT**

City Council District	Community Plan	City Plan
CD 1: Ashby	11%	0%
CD 2: Lololee	13%	22%
CD 3: Harris	11%	10%
CD 4: Valenzuela	19%	26%
CD 5: Schenirer	9%	16%
CD 6: Guerra	13%	10%
CD 7: Jennings	11%	5%
CD 8: Vang	13%	11%

***Key Operational & Programmatic Questions:***  
***In addition to the question of the City responding to the above missing items, SRCEH has the following 7 operational/programmatic questions based on the recommendations in the Community Plan that are not addressed by the City Plan.***

- Is the City going to hold focus groups with currently unhoused neighbors to solicit their input into the design of these programs being proposed? If not, why not? Is the City going to employ Peer Advocates [people with lived experience] to help design and implement these programs? If not, why not?
- Will all or some of the programs proposed by the City Plan be accessible to people with physical, mental and developmental disabilities? Will all or some of the programs by ADA compliant?
- Will the City fully fund the City’s Office of Community Response so that it is fully staffed to be able to implement the Master Plan? Currently this Office is woefully under-funded.
- Will the City fully fund our recommendation for an Ombudsperson or Team? If not, why not?
- Will the Tiny Homes be fully equipped with “amenities” – cooking facility; bathroom; air and heat?
- Will the Master Plan include respite centers that will be 24/7 to keep people cool/warm depending on the season? This will still be needed since some of our unhoused neighbors will not be able to access the proposed programs for many months.
- Safe Parking Program: will the Safe Parking Program accommodate RV’s that are operational and those that are not? And for those that are not have a program to rebuild the engine; transmission etc.? Will this program have showers, restroom facilities and provide food, as well as a full array of health and behavioral health services?

**Recommendations for Moving Forward:**

- 1. The City pass what we consider to be Phase I – these proposed programs that can be, in the Mayor’s words “deployed quickly and relatively inexpensively”;**
- 2. When the City and County enter into a formal City – County Partnership – the draft be shared with the public for comment prior to each jurisdiction making it formal;**
- 3. The City embrace and implement the recommendations of the Community Plan in Phase I and moving into Phase IIA & B;**
- 4. The City – Phase IIA- immediately being vetting the 19 additional sites presented in Appendix A**
- 5. The City immediately begin creating an affordable housing plan – Phase IIB - to the scale of the homeless and housing crisis - that is equitable distributed across all eight city council districts so it is clear that the City has a robust answer to our question: Where will people go? Where is the housing?**

**SIDE BY SIDE COMPARISON OF  
COMMUNITY HOMELESS MASTER PLAN AND CITY DRAFT HOMELESS MASTER PLAN**

**OVERVIEW**

In early 2021 the Mayor challenged the City Council to develop a *Master Homeless Siting, Operations, Program and Financing Plan* that would be voted on [now set for 8/10/2021] in an up/down vote to approve sites for short [SafeGround; Safe Parking; tiny homes]; mid [motel conversions; housing vouchers; motel vouchers] and long term [affordable housing] programs.

The homeless advocacy community felt that some city council members would engage their constituents to meet this challenge and other would not. Thus, 16 community based organizations came together to create the *Community Homeless Master Plan*, which consisted of three key principles and systemic issues; 10 recommendations; and how many people would be served by short, mid and long term solutions in each city council district. We presented this plan to City Council on May 18, 2021.

On August 4, 2021 Mayor Steinberg released the *City of Sacramento 2021 Master Siting Plan to Address Homelessness*.

Below is a side by side comparison of the Community Plan and the City draft plan. It is divided into 3 parts:

- **Part I:** side by side comparison of basic principle and 10 community recommendations. Note: **green** denotes alignment between the community plan and the city plan; **yellow** denotes that the city plan does not align with the community plan [basically the city plan was silent on the community recommendation];
- **Part II:** side by side comparison of the number of people experiencing homelessness served by short; mid and long term solutions per city council district; and a side by side comparison of the total number of people experiencing homelessness served;
- **Part III:** comparison of the community and city plan % of total homeless programs per city council district

<b>PART I: SIDE BY SIDE COMPARISON OF COMMUNITY PLAN AND CITY PLAN: KEY PRINCIPLES AND 10 COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS</b>			
Recommendations	Community Plan	City Draft Plan	
		Details in Plan	Programmatic Strategies
<b>Key Principles &amp; Systemic Issues</b>			
Address systemic racism – in program design; hiring & outcomes	X		
A plan for all	X		
Program equity across city council districts	X	X	
<b>Specific recommendations</b>			
City-County Partnership Agreement	X		Note: added in the City Council resolution
Fix fragmented homeless leadership structure	X		
Homeless Prevention	X	X	
Trauma-Informed Care; harm reduction & housing 1 <sup>st</sup> principles	X	X	
Accessibility	X		
Ombudsperson	X		
End criminalization of people experiencing homelessness	X		
Good Neighbor policies: respect; dignity; diversity; inclusion; health & safety	X	X	
Range of income-based, affordable housing recommendations	X		X
Citywide Homeless Employment program	X		Note: added in the City Council resolution

**PART II: SIDE BY SIDE COMPARISON OF COMMUNITY AND CITY PLAN:  
NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE SERVED BY SHORT; MID; LONG TERM SOLUTIONS PER CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT**

<b>City Council Districts</b>			
<b>CD 1- Ashby</b>			<b>Note: in process of negotiations for scattered site housing and motel conversions</b>
Short term:	355		
Medium term:	145		
Income-based housing	750		
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>CD 2- Lololee</b>			
Short term:	375	870	
Medium term:	195		
Income-based housing	750	115	
New/existing program		48	
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b>1,520</b>	<b>1,033</b>	
<b>CD 3- Harris</b>			
Short term:	355	440	
Medium term:	145	30	
Income-based housing:	750		
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>470</b>	
<b>CD 4- Valenzuela</b>			
Short term:	705	800	
Medium term:	645		
Income-based housing	750		
New/existing program		420	
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>1,220</b>	
<b>CD 5- Schenirer</b>			
Short term:	355	532	
Medium term:	145		
Income based housing	500		
New/existing program		200	
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>732</b>	
<b>CD 6- Guerra</b>			
Short term:	525		
Medium term:	635	90	
Income-based housing	300	330	
New/existing program		55	
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b>1,460</b>	<b>475</b>	
<b>CD 7- Jennings</b>			
Short term:	355	240	
Medium term	140		
Income-based housing	750		
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b>1,245</b>	<b>240</b>	
<b>CD 8 - Vang</b>			
Short term:	355		
Medium term:	290		
Income-based housing	825	200	
New/existing program		325	
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b>1,470</b>	<b>525</b>	

