



August 10, 2021

Mayor & City Council
915 I Street, 5th floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Item #1 – 2021 Master Siting Plan to Address Homelessness

Honorable Mayor Steinberg and Councilmembers,

On behalf of the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce (Metro Chamber), I am writing to express our strong support for the Master Siting Plan to address homelessness.

By approving this plan tonight, you are embracing your roles as leaders to address this crisis head on, provide critical support to our most vulnerable populations and taking a major and necessary step towards advancing the economic recovery that we desperately need to keep our businesses open, our neighbors employed, and demonstrate what a world-class city is capable of when we work together to solve the most challenging problems.

The timing of this momentous decision could not be more urgent. Homelessness in the Sacramento region has grown exponentially causing devastating effects on our unhoused population as well as our neighborhoods and business districts. Additionally - funding for this work is available now; if we do not act decisively and with intention this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity will be squandered.

While our business community is struggling to navigate the impacts of the pandemic, the lack of available space and adequate support services for the homeless population has created an environment in which business and our workforce have been left to navigate the reality of physical violence and intimidation due to untreated mental illness, theft, property damage, rampant drug use and paraphernalia including discarded hypodermic needles, and human waste outside of their storefronts on a daily basis.

The economic impacts of this reality are enormous – but even more important is the fact that our unhoused neighbors are also experiencing this reality. It is simply unacceptable that in our state’s capital city, a city capable of unlimited greatness, we would stand by and watch those in need suffer inhumane conditions that serve to only increase the trauma they are experiencing. It is wrong in every way and the time is now to stand together and start the healing process for us all.

But this is only the first step. A comprehensive, regional solution is needed to address these challenges in a sustainable and equitable way. Now that sites have been identified we must swiftly move into getting those sites fully operational with the necessary support services needed to meet the needs of the population while fully embracing “Good Neighbor” policies to mitigate the impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods.



metrochamber

SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Accountability for all parties is paramount and regulation of behaviors will be essential to keep everyone safe and if done right, create pathways for our homeless to live happy, healthy and productive lives.

It won't be easy but nothing worth doing ever is. The moment is now to decide who we are as a community. Inaction is not an option.

We applaud the City's efforts to resolve the homelessness crisis and work towards creating a safe, clean, and vibrant community for all. As the leading voice of business, we are committed to standing in partnership to advance this comprehensive solution and thank you for making the right decision this evening.

Sincerely,

Amanda Blackwood
CEO & President