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To the Honorable Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, Mayor and City Council of San Jose

Re: SJDA Supports County-City Cooperation to Help the Most Vulnerable and Supports Measure A to Ensure Progress Must Continue

My name is "Gumby" Marques, Interim CEO of the San Jose Downtown Association. I am writing in proud and hopeful support for the continued collaboration and partnership between the County of Santa Clara and the City of San Jose to work together to solve the challenges of the homelessness and mental health crisis for our community. This is something our 2,000 strong business owner and landlord organizations, and indeed every resident of San Jose sees on a regular basis and is at the very top of their concerns. Far from being desensitized to the situation on our streets, parks and neighborhoods, most would agree that new normal is neither acceptable to the citizens nor compassionate to those directly affected.

While we recognize that the City of San Jose and the County of Santa Clara each have their own responsibilities, it's clear that both must work together to serve the community. At the end of the day, residents care more about results than about which agency gets the credit.

In that spirit, our requests are being made without the thought of whether the City or County takes which action, just an acknowledgement that there is a very serious problem to be solved by all levels of government.

- We support the notion that care is provided and meets people where they are. County doctors and behavioral health specialists should be coming to City run shelters and temporary housing to serve our residents.
- We support the County adding hundreds of new inpatient treatment beds, and we will make sure the City of San Jose supports those efforts including backing applications for Prop 1 funding and potentially providing capital funding at select sites.
- We support the integration of the City's temporary housing network with the County's coordinated entry system to create an efficient system for both organizations.

We acknowledge that these issues are found at the city, county and state level. However, as the twelfth largest city in the United States, San Jose requires special attention due to its unique circumstances.

The SJDA is proud to be working with both the City of San Jose and the County of Santa Clara towards servicing our must vulnerable residents downtown, a list of up to 40 individuals who are so deep in the throes of mental health and drug addiction that they cannot help themselves. We are grateful for the commitment by both Mayor Matt Mahan and Supervisor Betty Duong as discussed during our Town Hall on August 8 and their ongoing efforts.

With a concentrated and sustained effort with strong case management provided to the people who need it the most that can affect will have the best outcomes. This focus on the most visible cases in Downtown San Jose will clear out the process bottleneck and give hope that no one is beyond salvation. While the issues facing us are daunting, we intend to show that through cooperation and trust between all parties that these issues are solvable.

The SJDA also recognizes that because of reductions from the Federal Government, most notably H.R. 1, this crisis might deteriorate further into a catastrophe. For that reason we are also announcing our support for the Measure A ballot proposal as we realize that our requests are made exponentially more difficult without available funding, and even with Measure A passage, we acknowledge that there will be difficult choices to be made.

We are proud residents of the City of San Jose and this County of Santa Clara. United we stand, divided we fall may have more meaning than ever right now and our ask is for our City of San Jose, County of Santa Clara and all of our local leadership to set the example for all. Whatever the headlines at the national level, having had the opportunity to personally speak to most of our elected officials, I know each of you are here because you care, and that care along with action will guide us through this.

Onwards and Upwards,



Alan “Gumby” Marques
Interim CEO of the San Jose Downtown Association