

## SUPPLEMENTAL COMMUNICATION

Meeting Date: 11-04-2019

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Subject: Support for Jamboree Project

Dear Mayor Peterson and Fellow Council Members,

Thank you for your recent efforts to study with the hope of complying with the requirements to become eligible to receive SB2 funding. At this time Homeless United of Huntington Beach urges you to vote yes on November 4 for the construction of the Jamboree senior housing project behind Denny's in Huntington Beach. Part of our reasoning is **economic**. The 42 senior units comprised of both affordable housing units and permanent supportive housing units would help us to meet our RHNA requirements so that SB2 funds could be used for other housing projects. It costs much less to house low-income senior citizens rather than to fund the emergency medical services and police responses that would occur if they were homeless. Building a few hundred housing units could lead to our receiving millions of dollars we already pay to our state. Purchasing the land and partnering with Jamboree Housing to construct the facility also will be efficient. Using an experienced builder with strong private management skills, controlled access, and a solid facility, the senior housing center will be less contentious than other housing projects we have considered.

The arguments for supporting the Jamboree project go beyond economics and **quality of life**. Shouldn't we view homeless and low-income senior citizens with compassion? We must consider **moral and demographic factors**. According to the Orange County Healthy Aging Initiative, the number of people over age 65 is projected to nearly double by 2040, when almost one in four residents will be 65 or older. The waiting list for senior citizens at Bowen Court is approximately five years. Thirteen years have passed since HB City built more affordable housing for senior citizens. Almost everyone would prefer to avoid the homelessness of elderly residents, many of whom have mental and physical problems which have forced them to stop working. Some of the needy seniors have lost their spouse and are unable to support themselves when their social security funds are reduced. The majority of homeless senior citizens seek safe shelter and affordable housing. While neighbors to affordable housing sites may complain about new construction, the alternative is inaction. As Chief Handy and interim City Manager Dave Kiff aptly wrote, "Not being able to enforce our anti-camping laws, continuing to give up our public spaces for something other than their intended use, and seeing our fellow human beings destitute and ill in front of us is no alternative at all."

While there is no perfect place to build affordable senior housing, we all need to do our part to address this issue. If we choose inaction instead of building the Jamboree development, it will be more difficult to face **legal challenges**, and the city will have fewer resources to file its own

suits and pursue its own legal strategy. Homeless United urges each of you to educate the public on the housing emergency crisis we face in Huntington Beach, in Orange County, and throughout the state. Please vote with collective courage for the proposed Jamboree housing development when it comes before you on November 4. In the long run we will all be glad we considered the quality of life along with economic, moral, demographic, and legal factors supporting this decision.

Sincerely,

Homeless United of Huntington Beach Volunteers

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Jenny Braithwaite

Galen Pickett

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