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Mayor Kevin Johnson Reaches Agreement with ‘Safe Ground’ Activists

SACRAMENTO, CA – Mayor Kevin Johnson announced today that he has reached an agreement with ‘Safe Ground’ members regarding winter shelter solutions.

The Mayor met with 19 members and representatives of ‘Safe Ground’ at City Hall last Thursday to discuss terms of the agreement prior to today’s announcement.

As part of the agreement, the ‘Safe Ground’ group committed to be part of the region-wide winter shelter solution and the Mayor committed to continue working toward a long-term answer to the need for a ‘Safe Ground’.

“This is very significant. ‘Safe Ground’ members have agreed to come in from the cold this winter,” Johnson said.

“At the same time the policy board is continuing to hold task force meetings on a long-term ‘Safe Ground’ solution. I am committed to working with ‘Safe Ground’ advocates to find comprehensive answers.”

Safe Ground representatives made it clear that they are passionate about their community, about having their voices heard and about caring for the neediest among them.

In order to participate in the winter shelter options, the Safe Grounders wanted assurances they could maintain their community dynamic, continue to advocate on behalf of homeless people, receive help with transportation and stay in a central location.

The agreement comes on the heels of last week’s announcement from Mayor Kevin Johnson that a collaborative plan to provide winter shelter housing for homeless women, children and men in the Sacramento community had been developed.

In September it was announced that county funding for homelessness services had been cut by 84%. At that time, funding for winter shelter had been totally eliminated and the county had zero dollars to shelter people through the winter season.

In addition to creating more beds in local shelters for the winter months, the county is freeing up existing beds by helping families and individuals leave the shelter and move to a permanent home or to transitional housing.

Mayor Johnson is currently chair of the Policy Board to End Homelessness in Sacramento and focused on finding long-term, comprehensive solutions that will end homelessness in our region.

The policy board formed an ad hoc committee that is continuing to work on long-term solutions for 'Safe Ground.'

On Thursday, Mayor Johnson and the Policy Board to End Homelessness will launch 'Sacramento Steps Forward' – a region-wide initiative to end homelessness. This campaign is a call to action for the community to join together to ensure that all Sacramentans have a place to call home. The event will be held on Thursday, November 5th from 10-11 am at the MLK Jr. Village, located at 3900 47th Avenue in Sacramento.

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Mayor Johnson can be followed on:

Official Mayor's Site: www.cityofsacramento.org/mayor/

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/teamkj>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/KJ_MayorJohnson