



March 30, 2017

The Honorable Spencer J. Cox
Utah Lieutenant Governor
Utah State Capitol Complex
Suite 220
P.O. Box 142325
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-2325

Ben McAdams
Salt Lake County Mayor

Erin Litvack
Deputy Mayor, County Services

Rick Graham
Deputy Mayor, Operations

Karen Hale
Deputy Mayor, Community
& External Affairs

Darrin Casper
Deputy Mayor, Finance
& Administration

Dear Lt. Governor Cox:

I am writing to provide my response to the requirement in H.B. 441, Section 2, subsection 5. I, as the Salt Lake County Executive, must recommend a site location in a city outside of Salt Lake City for a homeless resource center to provide temporary shelter year-round to homeless individuals and to provide that recommendation on or before March 30, 2017.

In the weeks since the end of February, when this requirement emerged, I have inspected possible sites in numerous locations throughout the county. The county's real estate team negotiated possible acquisition of over 20 locations in cities across the Salt Lake valley and obtained contracts or purchase options on a total of nine locations and those were approved by the Salt Lake County Council and are assignable to an appropriate third party who will ultimately acquire and hold the property. I also created an informational website, scheduled and attended five public open houses, established a site evaluation committee (which held a three-and a half hour public hearing and a three-hour public deliberation), reviewed hundreds of comments via email and comment cards and met individually with elected officials in the cities of Draper, South Salt Lake and West Valley City. Although not required by the legislation, such robust and direct engagement with hundreds of residents, community leaders and business owners has better informed my recommendation and has given me a deep appreciation of how invested residents are in the future of their communities.

Salt Lake County's work over the last three years to reform homeless services is based on our determination that we simply cannot just react to problems any longer. We seek sustainable solutions that will work to improve the services system as a whole. We looked at the entire system, with the understanding that what we have now, although very costly, is flawed, ineffective and needs to change. The State of Utah and many public and private stakeholders have been strong partners in the county's effort. Our collaboration has resulted in what I believe is an action plan that, once fully implemented, will prevent and minimize homelessness, keep communities welcoming and safe, and assist vulnerable individuals and families in getting onto a path of stability and self-reliance. The siting and construction of new

homeless resource centers, with both public and private financial assistance, is a critical next step.

After careful consideration of each location, criteria met, potential mitigation options, community feedback and the evaluation by a 16-member volunteer committee, I recommend the State Homeless Coordinating Committee proceed with a resource center in the area of our proposed Location E, at 3380 South 1000 West. There are additional privately-held and county-held parcels of land on 1000 West the state should consider acquiring for the purpose of adequately accommodating the resource center facility and desired amenities.

During our public process, the City of South Salt Lake raised compelling concerns about the burden of numerous non-taxable public holdings in the city that constrains the tax base that supports community services. These impacts must be mitigated. The recommended site is not currently taxable land because it is held by a non-profit entity and therefore will not further contribute to removing land from the tax rolls. Nevertheless, I recommend several additional steps be taken to offset any financial impacts to this city. First, legislation proposed during the 2017 legislative session by Representative Steve Eliason would have pooled tax revenues from across the state to compensate a city that hosts a homeless resource center for potential increased costs of services associated with the facility. Unfortunately, this legislation was not successful. I recommend that groundbreaking and construction of a new homeless resource center at this location **not proceed** unless and until similar legislation is adopted in the 2018 session.

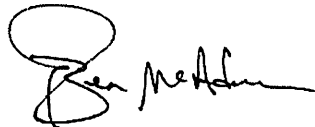
Secondly, I believe there are both responsibilities and opportunities that arise from being a densely populated urban area like South Salt Lake. That city currently shoulders many of these responsibilities including the metro jail, a major freeway interchange, an 84-bed supported housing facility for chronically homeless individuals, a county emergency operations center, other state and county facilities and now, presumably, a new homeless resource center. However, many of the opportunities that come to cities that are part of the urban core should receive new investments. I commit to advocating with the Salt Lake County Council for a new county library in South Salt Lake and to further identify other significant investments in open space and transportation infrastructure that will support a continued strong sense of community identity and a stronger tax base in South Salt Lake.

The public raised additional concerns about the potential impacts of a homeless resource center near the Jordan River Parkway on what is treasured green space. We must ensure this parkway is not only not negatively affected, but that the presence of this new facility results in major improvements to the quality and safety of the Jordan River trail. I am confident we can achieve this outcome through a

design of the facility and property that ensures the trail cannot be accessed directly from the site, through significant additional investments in the trail between 2100 South and 3900 South and through outreach services offered by providers working in the facility and across our new coordinated homeless services system.

Homelessness is a complex, statewide issue. I would like to express my appreciation to state officials, including Jon Pierpont, Director of the Department of Workforce Services and his incredible staff, and Utah legislative leadership, including Speaker Greg Hughes and Rep. Francis Gibson, for their commitment to reforming and improving the homeless services system in Utah. The collaboration is another example of how Utah is a leader in approaching challenges in a thoughtful and bipartisan manner that serves the citizens of our state well. I believe that our work will result in safe and welcoming communities for residents throughout Salt Lake County, as well as measurably better lives for those in need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben McAdams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "M".

Ben McAdams
Salt Lake County Mayor

Cc: Jon Pierpont