



KEVIN LINCOLN FOR STOCKTON MAYOR

PROPOSED HOMELESS POLICY INITIATIVE

Stockton's Homeless crisis continues to grow. While we have received considerable funding to address this issue, our homeless population has grown at a faster rate than other cities in California. We need to make fundamental changes in the way we approach homelessness, while working with regional partners to ensure one city's problem does not become another's, and vice-versa. The only way to solve this crisis is to work collaboratively and reject the autocratic approach we have taken thus far.

Earning fellow councilmembers support for these proposals will be crucial to their success. The mayor accounts for one vote of seven. While Stockton's Mayor is the elected lead, the whole council represents Stockton's residents. Their input and support are essential, as each councilmember represents their own diverse set of constituents and has their own unique perspective.

The following proposals are my vision for solving Stockton's homeless crisis and I will work with my fellow councilmembers to ensure we have a policy that addresses this problem now and does not defer it to future mayors and councils.

BACKGROUND

In 2018, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in *Martin v. City of Boise*, that governments may not enforce ordinances that ban public camping unless shelter capacity, in terms of beds available, can accommodate every homeless individual under their jurisdiction. In other words, the transition of a homeless person to a shelter can only be enforced by ordinance if the municipal oversight power is able to accommodate all who are classified as "homeless".

PROPOSALS

ERECT BRIDGE SHELTERS IN CONCENTRATED HOMELESS AREAS

Providing the homeless population with emergency housing will assist in the transition from temporary to more permanent housing. Bridge shelters will not only provide housing, it will also centralize resources, while enabling the city to evaluate case-specific needs. Shelters will include bunk beds, meals and showers. Resources will include mental health counselors, case managers, domestic violence and drug rehabilitation services.

Benefits to bridge shelters include minimal infrastructure, cost-effectiveness and portability. In this period of COVID-19, bridge shelters will help facilitate proper hygiene and sanitation, while providing access to medical care.

Using a data-driven approach, we can track resource use, while creating a registry to help improve services, modify policy and assist a person's individual needs. Effectively addressing homelessness as a whole will require discovering the catalyst to each person's homeless predicament.

OVERNIGHT SAFE PARKING FOR HOMELESS LIVING IN THEIR CARS

Creating overnight monitored parking lots, will allow those who are living in their cars to park for the night safely and have access to the same resources as those in bridge shelters.

These parking lots will be monitored to protect against vandalism, theft and ensure the safety of those using them. Establishing arrival and departure times will also be important. This investment will help families who have been evicted or had a home foreclosure, find new permanent housing quicker.

SECURE STORAGE FACILITIES FOR PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Our homeless often do not have a safe place to store their belongings. Establishing a storage site for personal possessions will allow people to seek services or apply for jobs without having to carry these items, while feeling secure those possessions will not be stolen.

Proactive steps to ensure mutual benefit with the surrounding community include security presence, staggered arrival times, and drug and alcohol prohibition.

CONCLUSION

To solve this crisis through effective policy implementation, we must work collaboratively with local community stakeholders, businesses, all reputable nonprofits, and other government bodies. It is time to take a proactive approach as opposed to sitting idly by and waiting for the solution to present itself. It is irresponsible to allow future Stockton representatives inherit the crisis we have refused to address.

The time to solve Stockton's homeless crisis is now!

CITYWIDE CLEANUP

Following the sheltering of our homeless, we can then begin the process of cleaning up the encampments around Stockton. We can also use the Secure Storage facilities to ensure all personal belonging are safely stored, while disposing of drug paraphernalia and other hazardous materials. The dismantling of these encampments will also ensure others do not gravitate to and inhabit them.

BUILD NEW HOUSING

We cannot stop the cycle of homelessness unless we have homes. We must reduce the roadblocks that inhibit the construction of new homes. Stockton's permit fees are nearly \$60,000 per home. The State of California already has counter-productive policies when it comes to building new homes, Stockton needs to alleviate some of the burden on home builders.

I will work with the council to streamline the permit process and look to cut fees, especially for those organizations providing solutions for our homeless through transitional housing as well as low income housing.