



SB 802 – Sacramento Area Housing and Homelessness Agency

Creating a coordinated, regional approach to addressing housing and homelessness.

SUMMARY

SB 802 establishes the Sacramento Area Housing and Homelessness Agency, a new Joint Powers Authority (JPA), which will coordinate, fund, and implement housing and homelessness programs across Sacramento County.

The new agency will replace the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency (SHRA), and require the eight government funded entities that are currently tasked with addressing homelessness in Sacramento County to unify their programming. By creating a regional structure with representation from participating jurisdictions, SB 802 offers a centralized, coordinated approach to addressing homelessness and housing insecurity in Sacramento County.

This bill additionally requires the Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD) to consider individuals who have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking when allocating funding to homeless shelters and housing assistance programs, improving access to secure housing options for our most vulnerable populations, including women.

BACKGROUND

In 2019, the Sacramento County Grand Jury Final Report warned of the dysfunction caused by the lack of a coherent organizational structure. The report concluded, “in the absence of a working organizational structure, it becomes virtually impossible to make the most effective use of the valuable resources they [Sacramento] offers.”¹

Despite this early warning, a subsequent 2023 Grand Jury report revealed little systemic progress. The report described Sacramento’s response as, “disjointed, lacking accountability, and is often reactive rather than proactive.”¹ Additionally, the report specifically cited the lack of a regional authority as a major barrier to progress, noting that efforts are often duplicative, data systems are siloed, and strategic planning is not consistent across jurisdictions.²

While both grand jury reports have different metrics, the eight organizations that administer homelessness services are:

1. Sacramento County
2. City of Sacramento
3. City of Elk Grove
4. City of Citrus Heights
5. City of Folsom
6. City of Rancho Cordova
7. Sacramento Housing & Redevelopment Agency
8. Sacramento Steps Forward (SSF, which operates Sacramento’s Continuum of Care)

The sheer number of staff involved, over 400 people, who operate across the eight entities, has not translated into a cohesive or effective response. This disconnect points to deeper issues beyond staffing levels, including the need for stronger leadership, accountability, clearer roles, and improved collaboration to truly address the complexity of homelessness.

Creating a regionalized agency is not a new idea. In December 2010, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and the Sacramento City Council each passed a resolution to form a JPA to reduce homelessness. However, after many months of well-intentioned effort, a JPA was never established and 15 years later, it still does not exist.

THE PROBLEM

Over the past four and a half years, the City, County, and SSF have collectively received **more than \$417 million** in state homelessness funding.³ However, due to a lack of coordination among these entities, the funds have been allocated to disparate – and sometimes conflicting – goals and projects, resulting in little overall progress in addressing homelessness, which is the #1 issue for Sacramento constituents.

The current fragmented system leads to redundant efforts, wasted taxpayer dollars, and a patchwork of inconsistent services that fail to provide meaningful support to vulnerable populations. Government

¹ 2018-2019 Sacramento County Grand Jury Final Report

² 2022-2023 Sacramento County Grand Jury Report

³ HHAP Dashboard

agencies and independent planning bodies each work individually with little to no oversight and coordination, often work with conflicting purposes, and miss opportunities to secure and leverage additional state and federal resources. The severe lack of organization not only erodes efficiency and accountability, but also exacerbates the ongoing crisis across the Sacramento region.

THE SOLUTION

SB 802 creates a groundbreaking regional Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to address housing and homelessness across Sacramento County. This agency will be the first in California to serve as a single, federally recognized, and government-funded lead provider for housing and homelessness services at a regional level, serving all major cities and lead county in one jurisdiction. A board of elected officials from participating cities and the County, will govern the JPA ensuring representation and collaboration across the region.

This new agency will:

- Unify decision-making on housing and homelessness under one accountable public agency;
- Create a public Advisory Committee that includes individuals with lived experience and technical experts to meet state and federal stakeholder participation requirements;
- Be governed by a board of elected officials from Sacramento County and all cities with populations over 50,000 (Sacramento, Elk Grove, Rancho Cordova, Folsom, Citrus Heights), ensuring broad regional collaboration and providing transparency to a single elected oversight board for public access and accountability;
- Build on the agency with 200 housing experts currently administering a more than \$200 million Federal housing voucher program and overseeing all public housing in Sacramento;
- Be designated as the official HUD Continuum of Care for the region, streamlining federal oversight and funding coordination;

- Enable jurisdictions to operate under a shared strategic plan to build housing and shelters more efficiently and cost-effectively; and
- Strengthen Sacramento's ability to implement CARE Court, which requires coordinated housing and services for individuals with serious mental illnesses.

Land-use and all area specific funding decisions remain fully under the control of each participating jurisdiction and remain dedicated to the region of origin, calling only for coordination of efforts to avoid counter efforts. The intent of this bill is to align resources and foster regional coordination, not override local authority or funding.

SB 802 establishes a historic, collaborative model for Sacramento County to more effectively address homelessness and affordable housing through a unified, regional approach.

SUPPORT

- Council Member Caity Maple, City of Sacramento
- Council Member Lisa Kaplan, City of Sacramento
- Council Member Karina Talamantes, City of Sacramento
- Council Member Mai Vang, City of Sacramento
- Council Member Rick Jennings, City of Sacramento
- City of Sacramento, District 3 Planning and Design Committee
- Emmanuel Amanfor, Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency Commissioner Immediate Past Chair
- Darrell Steinberg, Former Sacramento Mayor and Senate Pro Tempore Emeritus
- Allen Warren, Former Sacramento City Councilmember and Affordable Housing Developer – New Faze Development Inc.
- Josh Pane, Former Sacramento City Councilmember
- CA YIMBY
- CA Apartment Association
- SF Safe House

- Downtown Women's Center
- SF Domestic Violence Consortium
- Mary Elizabeth Inn
- La Casa de Las Madres
- The Women's Building
- National Council of Jewish Women SF
- People Working Together
- Race and Equity in all Planning Coalition
- Youth Forward
- Freedom Forward
- Community Forward SF
- Black Women Revolt Against Domestic Violence
- Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice
- Gardenland Northgate Neighborhood Association
- Hamptons Community Foundation
- The Tower District, Sacramento

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Bhawan Cheema, *Policy Analyst*

Email: Bhawan.Cheema@sen.ca.gov

Phone: (916) 651-4008

Lesley Brizuela, *Legislative Director*

Email: Lesley.Brizuela@sen.ca.gov

Phone: (916) 651-4008