

**Mayor Sam Liccardo February 22, 2021 Lead Witness Testimony for Senate Environmental Quality Committee, in Support of SB7**

I'd like to thank Chairperson Allen and every member of this Committee for taking up Senate Bill 7 early in this session, and to several of you for your past support of SB995 last year. I also thank Pro Tem Atkins for her authorship of this legislation, and her longstanding leadership for affordable housing.

My city of San Jose and several other cities have had certified AB900 projects delayed by the impacts of the pandemic. As an example, San Jose's Downtown West project comprises the most impactful and broadly beneficial private sector investments in California history, confronting California's multiple crises with real solutions:

- Confronting our affordable housing crisis with the production of more than 4,000 high-density homes, at least 25% of which will be rent-restricted and affordable;
- At a time of 9% unemployment statewide, constructing an urban village of more than 7 million square feet of office, retail, hotel, and restaurants that will produce 5,700 prevailing wage construction jobs, and with Google's longer-term employment of tens of thousands of Californians.

- Amid this climate crisis, this urban village will maximize the highest possible densities around San Jose's Downtown central station serving seven major transit systems—BART, CalTrain, ACE, Capitol Corridor, High Speed Rail, VTA light rail, and bus-rapid-transit---constructing at LEED Gold standard, with net zero greenhouse gas emissions, along with the development of 15 acres of parks and green spaces.
- Finally, as this pandemic exacerbates California's stark economic divide, Downtown West will elicit hundreds of millions of dollars in community benefits for anti-displacement efforts, job training, education, and homelessness solutions.

We hope that with this body's approval, and the support of the Assembly and the Governor, we'll be able to bring Downtown West project for my City Council's consideration in May, and we'll have shovels in the ground immediately. There could not be a more needed time for the most transformative investment in the history of Northern California's largest city, and I deeply appreciate to whatever extent to share our sense of urgency. Thank you for your time and leadership in this historic and deeply challenging moment.