

PRESS RELEASE
Contact: Erica Jaramillo,
SIWD
Ericajaramillo11@gmail.com
February 22, 2021

PRESS RELEASE

In an unprecedented move, The City of Sacramento has made clear position to fight against the needs and wants of Sacramento residents by seeking approval from Sacramento Superior Court to become a party in the lawsuit Sacramento Investment Without Displacement (SIWD) filed against UC Davis' Aggie Square Project. SIWD is focused on preventing displacement of Sacramento residents while The City of Sacramento is focused on development at the expense of Sacramento's lowest-income and most vulnerable community members which will have long term impacts.

The Aggie Square project must meet the minimum requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act. It's the law. The Aggie Square project may also be the single largest gentrification effort our city has seen. Thus far, UC Davis has not committed to mitigating health impacts for the residents in the surrounding community- which has been historically excluded by race and discriminating practices. The City of Sacramento should not use taxpayer dollars to protect UC Davis from their mitigating responsibilities, by bullying the community to back down from their rightful demands.

"I am in disbelief that City Council would vote to voluntarily join a lawsuit against an institution that has not addressed the Displacement their project will bring to residents of color." Gabby Trejo, SIWD

The motion to intervene in the Aggie Square lawsuit by The City of Sacramento is unnecessary and counterproductive. For a City to join a lawsuit to fight the interests of any of its residents but it's most vulnerable community is just unheard of. Due to a tight timeline and left with no choice, SIWD filed a lawsuit to fight for provisions that the Aggie Square Environmental Impact Report (EIR) did not adequately address. SIWD demands that UC Davis assure the community that the project will prioritize the health of the local residents by adhering to legal environmental requirements, ensure affordable housing options for residents, and equitably redistribute the economic gains from the development to the numerous low-income families that reside in the area. The City's "intervention" further demonstrates The City's true intention of maintaining the status quo and further exacerbating health, environmental and economic inequities, against the backdrop of a worldwide pandemic, increasing unemployment, and a housing crisis that has cost far too many unhoused community members their lives.

To be clear, SIWD is strongly in favor of equitable and community-centered development in the area slated for Aggie Square; however, the coalition strongly opposes any entity seeking to benefit off of systems and structures that fail to meet the demands of the existing community members and residents. SIWD strongly opposes the City of Sacramento's unnecessary engagement in this lawsuit and condemns The City's attempts to discredit a community group that is committed to holding UC Davis accountable to safe, healthy, and economically equitable development project. Protections must be in place to mitigate environmental, and displacement impacts now to ensure the health of our community for years to come.

####