



Fremont City Council

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UPDATE ON STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS: To Provide an Overall Update on the City's Homeless Efforts and Present and Establish Criteria To Evaluate Possible Locations For a Housing Navigation Center.

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Executive Summary: On April 17, 2018, City Council held a study session to discuss the scope and urgency of homelessness in Fremont. Four City Departments, Police, Community Services, Human Services and Community Development contributed to the discussion, sharing the impacts, financial and human, as well as the cost, this growing problem was having on city staff time and resources. Staff presented to Council a list of potential options for addressing homelessness and Council directed staff to study the options further and return at a future City Council meeting with the results. Staff returned on July 17, 2018 with the results and Council provided staff additional direction, which staff has continued to pursue.

This report updates City Council on the City's homeless mitigation and prevention efforts including updated information on service level enhancements in Fremont, available state funding, updated homeless population count, and draft goals and criteria to evaluate potential options and sites for a temporary housing navigation center. Staff seeks additional Council direction based on the information provided in this report.

Background: At City Council direction in 2018, staff facilitated a Council Work Session on [April 17, 2018](#) focused on the scope and urgency of homelessness in Fremont and outlined potential strategies for consideration. These potential strategies included:

- Additional staffing directed at addressing the homeless challenges
- Adoption of an Emergency Shelter Ordinance
- Exploration of sites for a drop-in day center for the homeless
- Exploration of sites for a temporary year-round navigation center/shelter
- Establishment of a fund to incentivize landlords to accept individuals who have housing subsidies available to pay rent
- Revise City ordinances and procedures to allow faith-based organizations to provide temporary shelter for homeless participants
- Consideration of options for alternative temporary housing models including one or more of the following strategies:
 - A sanctioned encampment
 - A temporary tuff shed or tent location in Fremont with on-site management, security, sanitary amenities, support and housing navigation services

- Sanctioned safe parking area(s) for cars and RVs with oversight and public amenities.

City Council unanimously supported increasing staffing as part of the FY 2018/19 Budget and requested that staff continue to develop the other concepts for future Council consideration. Staff updated Council detailing its continued efforts to address homelessness at the [July 17, 2018](#) City Council Meeting. Council has since approved a majority of the originally recommended strategies with the exception of a temporary navigation center and alternative shelter options including safe parking options.

Homelessness has continued to increase and draw attention at the state and local level since staff last spoke to City Council in July 2018. Historically, the delivery of services to the homeless population in California was the responsibility of county government's social services departments and partnering non-profit service providers; local municipal governments had limited involvement in providing homeless services. Given the magnitude of the issue, this has changed in recent years. Many cities, like Fremont, are now actively trying to address homelessness by expanding direct service delivery options to homeless residents, and by developing innovative approaches like the Police Department's Mobile Evaluation Team, which not only serves citizens' mental health needs in our population at large, but also interacts with and serves the homeless population. The Police Department acknowledges that almost one-half of their calls are related to concerns about homeless persons, often taking them away from more serious criminal matters.

In July 2018, the City had identified 133 encampment sites, as of June 2019 that number has increased to 178 encampment sites with 30 active ones. Since January 2019, vehicle habitation has increased significantly and by City ordinance, vehicles must move every 72 hours. For purposes of tracking homeless camps/encampments, the definition staff is using in Fremont includes a camp that has provisions set up for cooking, living, and sleeping such as a tent or other makeshift living quarters. This can include one or more individuals at the same location.

In the current 2019-20 Fiscal Year, the City has conducted 25 clean-ups removing 50 tons of debris using approximately 900 contractor work hours. The abatement of an encampment site generally involves multiple departments working as a team including Environmental Services' Debris Abatement Coordinator, Community Preservation, Code Enforcement Officers, a Police Officer from the MET team for support, and a Human Services social work team if the abatement is large and involves relocating a significant number of persons. It is frustrating for staff to continue to displace homeless persons when there is no alternative shelter or parking options. Some Fremont residents living in cars have been able to avail themselves of Union City's CAREavan program, which allows those sleeping in cars to rotate to several agreed upon sites. However, the program is now over-subscribed and it does not take those sleeping in RV's.

There is a misconception that alcohol and drug abuse are the root causes of homelessness; however, that is rarely the case with multiple factors at play. Economic issues are among the most critical factors contributing to homelessness. These include a lack of affordable housing, poverty, lack of employment opportunity, and low wages. Often one financial setback such as a job loss, car troubles, illness, divorce, or any unexpected expense can lead to the loss of housing. Non-economic factors that play a role in homelessness include psychological or physical disabilities, learning disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder,

medical conditions, substance dependence, or a history of abuse and trauma. For women, domestic abuse is the leading cause of homelessness with 89% of homeless women having experiences severe physical or sexual abuse at some point in their lives.

Similarly, there is the misconception that homeless people do not want to be housed and that they enjoy the "freedom and non-conformity" that homelessness brings to those actively seeking this lifestyle. The 2017 Point-in-Time Count of homeless in Fremont and subsequent survey data clearly indicates that only 6% of survey respondents said they were not interested in independent, affordable rental housing or housing with supportive services.

Many of the homeless in Fremont consider themselves city residents because they grew up here, attended school here, work here, or have family members in the area. The increased cost of rental housing has affected many of those who now find themselves on the streets or living in RVs or vehicles. Residents who were evicted from apartments due to rent increases and chose to move into an RV are often considered transient rather than a resident.

In a recent abatement of an encampment at the end of Niles Blvd, staff surveyed 12 households living in vehicles. Seven households identified as Fremont Residents, three others specifically from Niles. All had compelling stories of how they ended up unhoused. Some were disabled while others worked sporadic low-wage jobs, eight lost housing due to increasing rents, some had pets, and all were seeking greater stability for themselves and their families. As part of the survey, interviewees were asked if the City provided a safe parking space would they use it and what amenities would be helpful. All responded that they would use a safe parking program and requested amenities included portable toilets, a mobile shower, electrical hook-ups and access to garbage dumpsters, and a barbeque pit for cooking.

Community Perception of Homelessness

Previous legislative actions by City Council to address homelessness were approved based on compassion and an understanding that the homeless population is rapidly growing in the region. In the City's most recent [2018 City of Fremont Community Survey](#), new questions were added to gather information regarding Fremont resident's attitudes towards homelessness. In general, the residents of Fremont indicated compassion and concern towards those experiencing homelessness with a motivation to resolve the issue based on the health and well-being of people living on the street. Residents are less motivated in resolving homelessness because of the negative stigmas associated with the issue such as threats to public safety and the impact on local businesses.

The 2018 City of Fremont Community Survey determined:

- 44% of residents indicate homelessness was extremely to very serious problem.
- 32% of residents indicated homelessness could be solved and another 49% said it could be improved but not solved.
- A majority also believe the well-being of people who are homeless is the most important reason to address the issue with 64% of respondents indicating the health and well-being of people living on the streets as the most important reason as their first or second choice. 64% also indicated litter and public health issues caused by encampments as their first or second choice.

Homelessness in the Bay Area

Every 2 years the Department of Housing and Urban Development requires counties and local jurisdictions, across the country to count homeless persons within their boundaries. In the Bay Area, this year's point-in-time (PIT) count took place on January 30. EveryOne Home, the non-profit agency that conducts the count and helps in developing countywide strategies to end homelessness in Alameda County, recently released the 2019 countywide PIT figures. In Alameda County, 8,022 individuals were counted as homeless, which represents a 43% increase from 5,629 in 2017. The 2019 count nearly doubles the number of homeless from 2015, which was 4,040.

San Francisco and Santa Clara also released their aggregated 2019 countywide figures for individuals experiencing homelessness. While all three counties experienced an increase in overall numbers, San Francisco, which spends the most on affordable housing and services to low-income people, experienced the smallest increase while Alameda County experienced the largest overall increase in homelessness and spends the least of the three counties.

Fremont has not yet received its numbers for 2019, though they are anticipated soon. The most current 2017 data indicates there were 479 homeless persons in Fremont living in places not meant for human habitation. A separate survey from the Alameda County Office of Education identified 289 students in the FUSD system that identify as being homeless or temporarily housed¹, though the district uses a broader definition of homelessness, which includes things like "couch surfing", living in motels, and having multiple families living in over-crowded housing situations.

Funding for Homelessness

Given the statewide increase in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness, pressure from the Mayors of the large urban cities in the state, as well as broad and increased vocalization from elected officials everywhere, the Governor approved one-time funding in the State's FY 2018-19 Budget to address the state's homeless crisis as part of a new Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP). The HEAP Program was established by statute to provide localities with flexible block grant funds to address their immediate homelessness challenges.

The Homeless Emergency Aid Block Grants provides \$500 million in one-time funding to enable local governments to respond to homelessness. Allocations are as follows:

- \$250 million to Continuums of Care based on 2017 homeless point in time count;
- \$150 million direct allocation to a city or city that is also a county with a population of 330,000 or more as of January 1, 2018; and
- \$100 million to Continuums of Care based on their percentage of the statewide 2017 homeless population.

The State funding allocation for FY 2018-19 included \$8,671,116 in direct funds to the City of Oakland and \$16,192,049 to the Alameda County Continuum of Care, of which the City of Fremont was awarded \$2,078,880, which included the City of Newark's allocation of

¹ [Alameda County McKinney-Vento Homeless Act](#)

\$229,638 based on both cities combined proportion of the 2017 Alameda County Point-in-Time unsheltered homeless population.

The County of Alameda recently sent a draft contract to Fremont which amends the spend-down requirements for HEAP funds. Prior requirements required 50% of allocated funds be contractually obligated by January 1, 2020 - the revision now extends the deadline and requires that no less than 60% of allocated funds be contractually obligated by June 30, 2020. In addition, although not required by the State, the County of Alameda has placed a 30% matching requirement on the funds.

The Governor's recent May Revise Budget provides additional resources to help address homelessness, which continues to be a major priority for the newly elected Governor. The May revision increases the state's support to prevent and mitigate homelessness by \$1 billion. Specifically, it provides:

- \$650 million to local governments for homeless emergency aid;
 - The most populous 13 cities receive \$275 million;
 - Counties receive \$275 million; and
 - Continuums of Care receive \$100 million – all cities and counties have access to these funds.
- \$120 million for expanded Whole Person Care Pilots;
- \$150 million for strategies to address the shortage of mental health professionals in the public mental health system;
- \$25 million for Supplemental Security Income advocacy;
- \$40 million for student rapid rehousing and services for University of California and California State University system; and
- \$20 million in legal services for eviction prevention

The State continuing to make homeless funding a priority is a positive step in Fremont addressing our local homeless issue. Assuming the HEAP program is included in the approved budget it is unclear exactly how much of these funds would be accessible to Fremont, but it is reasonable to assume the available funds would be similar to that of the original funding amount. Staff will continue to monitor the State Budget.

On-going City Homeless Investments and New Homeless Projects:

Fremont has a long history of addressing the homeless problem, beginning in the early 1990's with the construction of Sunrise Village, a state-of-the-art homeless shelter created in partnership with Abode Services. The City continues to support Abode as a primary leader in homeless services not only for our community, but also as a regional provider of services in five counties. Abode, in a merger with Allied Housing, has now become a successful developer of affordable supportive housing for the homeless. The City has contributed to the financing of a number of housing developments spearheaded by Abode, including Main Street Village (with Mid-Penn) and Laguna Commons. Several new projects including one for homeless seniors and City Center Apartments are currently in the works. Financial support is also provided to Abode for Project Independence offering housing assistance to foster youth and for rapid rehousing. The City has supported the HOPE Van, and core FRC staff currently collaborates with Abode providing coordinated entry assessments for homeless persons seeking housing assistance. Abode outreach workers support City efforts to reach

out to encampments and housing navigators are working to place vulnerable homeless in our area into housing.

For the last 3 years, the City has invested HOME funds to support the Stay Housed Program at the FRC, which works to assist individuals and families overcome crises, which threatens their housing stability, by offering financial coaching combined with short-term housing subsidies, to keep people from evictions and homelessness. The program operates in tandem with the FRC SparkPoint Program offering financial services including credit repair, financial coaching, tax assistance, and job training assistance to help workers obtain sustainable-wage employment.

In addition to the previous City Council approved actions from 2018, staff has continued to explore new means to address the unsheltered population and get more individuals experiencing homelessness off the streets.

To summarize the City of Fremont's efforts since staff last provided a formal update to the Council on July 17, 2018, the following actions have occurred:

- Declaration of Shelter Emergency: City Council has passed and amended an Emergency Shelter Ordinance that allows for more short-term and temporary places for homeless residents to sleep safely as well as state funding to assist local jurisdictions with the homeless crisis.
- Islander Motel Temporary Shelter: The Islander Motel located in District 2, at 4101 Mowry Avenue, was approved by City Council to be converted from a 70-unit motel into a 128-unit Islander Affordable Housing Project. The non-profit affordable housing developer of the project, Resources for Community Development (RCD), has collaborated with the City to provide 25-units as temporary shelter for homeless individuals allowing immediate reuse of vacated units for a minimum of 10 months or until such time construction of the project commences. The City Council approved of the plan and allocated up to approximately \$650,000. Currently, 30 persons are now housed in this temporary shelter arrangement. A new Homeless Advocate is working with those in the facility, one participant has already been placed in permanent housing, one other has been notified she has been accepted for a housing voucher and placement; two other participants are being supported in training programs, which will increase their wages and expand their opportunities for more permanent housing.
- Seasonal Shelter: In 2013, the City first opened its Warming Center located in District 4. This year, Alameda County awarded the City \$115,127 for the City to expand the Warming Center to a winter shelter operating 117 consecutive nights from mid-November to mid-March. The shelter operated for half the season at the Senior Center and the other half of the season in the Teen Center. The Program received over \$21,000 in private and public contributions from Cargill, Save-Mart and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Medical services were contracted through Tri-City Health Center. Abode's Outreach Team members offered coordinated entry assessments to get participants on the list for housing options. The winter shelter served 438 individual participants, their ages ranged from 6 months to 78 years old. One hundred and twenty-nine (129) volunteers assisted on site and offered 6,338 dinners, coordinated through Compassion Network. Breakfasts and

breakfast items were offered through Daily Bowl and the Senior Center. The shelter provided 4,737 bed nights of service and the same number of breakfasts. On average, the City served 54 dinners and slept 40 people per night.

- **Temporary Shelter:** In 2018, the City also adopted an ordinance establishing a permit process for the operation of temporary shelters at existing facilities operated by faith-based organizations. The ordinance included specific performance standards to ensure that temporary shelters are compatible with surrounding uses and provide a safe place for individuals and families to obtain shelter. Last winter, the City issued one temporary shelter permit under this new process at the Centerville Presbyterian Church located in District 2.
- **Mobile Hygiene Unit:** Another enhancement in services that the City anticipates deploying this summer is the new Mobile Hygiene Unit, "Clean Start," in partnership with the City of Newark. Both cities combined their one-time funding totaling \$125,000 from Alameda County's Homeless Impact grant to invest in the project. For someone experiencing homelessness, maintaining hygiene and keeping clean clothes can be challenging and greatly impact a person's ability to get and maintain a job. The mobile hygiene unit is designed to reduce this barrier for homeless.

The Mobile Hygiene unit is comprised of a 51-foot truck and trailer, fitted with two full bathrooms with showers, including one that is ADA accessible, and three washer/dryer units. The Mobile Hygiene unit will provide services in different geographic locations through cities, coordinating with existing food and clothing programs serving the homeless. Each service site will be open for three to four hours and provide 10-15 minutes of shower time per client, as well as laundry services.

- **Drop-in Day Wellness Center for the Homeless:** Fremont has collaborated with Bay Area Community Services (BACS), which has operated a Wellness Center located in District 6 for those with behavioral health challenges in Fremont for 40 years. With City funding, BACS was able to expand the space and services on their site to accommodate a growing homeless population. On-site amenities are expanding with a second shower addition along with laundry services. Participants are encouraged to develop a housing plan and utilize the full array of services the center offers. BACS has added a housing navigator as well as additional peer counselors. In May 2019, 175 unduplicated participants utilized meals, showers, clothing, wellness groups, computer resources, free medical care, resource connections, job support and 1:1 support from counselors. Flexible funds from the City to BACS, which are used for housing deposits, first and last month rent and titrated housing subsidies, have helped transition 22 individuals into permanent stable housing since the center opened in November 2018.
- **Housing Navigation Center (location to be determined):** At the July 17, 2018 Council meeting part of the Council's direction was to explore identifying year-round temporary shelter sites. With this direction, staff began to explore the requirements for building a temporary housing navigation center for homeless adults that would provide wrap-around services for the homeless with the ultimate goal of transitioning them to permanent housing. The balance of this report focuses on proposed goals and criteria to evaluate possible locations for a housing navigation center.

Housing Navigation Centers:

A navigation center provides a clean, safe, calm and flexible environment that allows homeless persons to rebuild their lives and intensely focus on the job of finding stable permanent housing. Participants are accepted into the center after outreach and intake, and generally stay six months or less, before finding a permanent placement. This model has been proven successful in the Bay Area through the City of Berkeley STAIR Center, a housing navigation center that has been in operation for more than a year with 82% of individuals exiting the STAIR Center moving into permanent housing. Exhibits "A" and "B" provide additional information and answers to frequently asked questions regarding housing navigation centers.

Not all housing navigation centers follow the same operation model. Both the Cities of San Francisco and Berkeley have navigation centers with varying success due to differing policies and procedures. San Francisco's navigation centers limit participants to a 30-day stay unless the individual has been homeless for 13-years or longer. Very few people meet this criterion and are subject to a limited 30-day stay. San Francisco's navigation centers follow a more traditional shelter model resulting in lower successful exits. There were 46% of Total Successful Exits (with only 14% of their clients exiting to "Permanent Housing.") Given the criteria for the population San Francisco Navigation Centers serve (the extremely chronic homeless), successful exits could include exits to treatment and rehab programs.

Staff recommends following Berkeley's model for a navigation center in Fremont that would allow for longer stays regardless of length of homelessness or health conditions. The longer stay allows more supportive services to be administered as well as time to find permanent housing; which can be a complex and difficult system for homeless individuals to navigate.

Proposed Housing Navigation Center Conceptual Design and Operator

Staff proposes the following concept for a navigation center in Fremont, which would include:

- Two double-wide portables (24' X 60') for dormitories to accommodate 45 beds
- One portable to serve as a community room offering tables, chairs, and microwaves and a refrigerator
- On site restrooms, showers, and laundry facilities
- Storage containers for participant belongings
- Open space with seating and picnic tables for gathering and eating outside
- Fencing and landscaping

To accommodate the minimum amenities listed above, and provide an accessible navigation center to all, staff recommends that an area of at least 16,000 square feet is necessary (e.g., 100' by 160' site) based on preliminary test-fit layouts. If a site could afford more space then additional space could be provided for administrative office needs and on-site parking for staff and participants.

Part of the exploration process of preparing for a housing navigation center has included selecting an experienced operator to assist in the development and operation. A Request for Information (RFI) was developed and solicited by the City and sent to four potential service

operators and EveryOne Home. Two highly qualified agencies submitted proposals. After review of information submitted and a response to written questions, interviews were held with six raters, one each from the City Manager's Office, the Police Department, Human Services Department, Community Services Department and two community members. In late May, after significant discussion, Bay Area Community Services (BACS) was selected to be the potential operator of the housing navigation center. This is contingent on City Council direction to move forward with this project at a location, which has yet to be determined by the City Council.

BACS is the operator of the Berkeley Stair Center, Oakland's two Navigation Centers, and has also been selected to operate a Navigation Center in Hayward. BACS anticipates being able to quickly replicate existing services and ramp up operations. BACS has extensive experience providing navigation services for persons experiencing homelessness and has operated in Fremont since 1974.

Proposed Housing Navigation Center Site Selection Process:

In accordance with Council adoption of Resolution No. 2018-60, the housing navigation center must be approved by the Council prior to implementation, and must include detailed plans for the project and the standards and requirements being applied to the facility and its operation. Once a site is selected and approved by Council, a detailed plan would immediately be developed and applicable local minimal building and safety standards identified.

Preliminary conversations and due diligence information has been exchanged with the Niles Discovery Church (NDC), which first initiated in February 2019, have been held about a potential partnership for establishing a navigation center at the westerly portion of their property. NDC would still like consideration as a potential site for the proposed navigation center. More recently, Irvington Presbyterian Church, which has a well-established breakfast program serving the homeless, has also reached out to the City to offer land to establish a navigation center on their property. However, the site offered has been determined to be smaller than the space needed for a center.

To expand the search, with the exception of developed parkland, staff is collecting data and information on all City-owned sites and proposes a process that should identify a selection of options for locating the navigation center. By focusing on City-owned properties, the City would be able to take immediate actions necessary and move expeditiously to provide a housing navigation center consistent with the City's goals, policies and priorities described in the methodology overview below.

Methodology Overview for City-owned Property Search

The methodology that staff proposes to use for the navigation center site selection process would be consistent with the following goals, policies and priorities adopted by Council, starting with the 2011 General Plan update:

- Ensure that all persons have equal access to housing by providing shelters for to the homeless in need²;
- Ensure availability of supportive services to help people stay housed³;
- Fremont has declared a shelter crisis and will develop plans and undertake efforts to combat homelessness by making additional affordable, supportive housing available within the City⁴;
- Fremont affirms its commitment to combating homelessness and creating or augmenting a continuum of shelter and services options for those living without shelter in the community⁵;
- As the homeless population rapidly continues to grow in Fremont, the City will actively engage in finding solutions to help our most vulnerable community residents find safe housing options⁶; and
- Due to the extent of the shelter crisis in Fremont and the short timeline for the City to obligate and expend HEAP funds, the City needs to take immediate and emergency actions to move expeditiously to provide services and housing to the homeless and implement a housing navigation center⁷;

Staff is proposing to use an objective-criteria driven process to determine if there are City-owned sites that could be viable to accommodate a housing navigation center. Identified sites must be readily available to develop and, to the extent feasible, provide a clean, safe, calm and flexible environment for the navigation center participants.

The site selection process is proposed to be completed in four steps:

1. Step 1 – At tonight’s hearing, receive feedback and direction from City Council on the proposed methodology presented in this staff report, including the expanded search to only City-owned properties (excluding developed parkland); proposed initial screening criteria for disqualifying sites; and proposed development criteria and overall process outlined to identify a final site for development of the navigation center.
2. Step 2 – In July, return to the City Council to report on eligible City-owned properties based on initial screening and development goals and criteria approved by the City Council. All eligible sites, including the Niles Discovery Church site, would be evaluated based on the development goals and criteria to determine the viability and development feasibility of each site. These eligible sites would be listed in a table accompanied by property information for each site. Based on the site evaluations,

² 2011 City of Fremont General Plan, Housing Element Goal

³ Ibid.

⁴ City of Fremont Resolution No. 2018-60

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ City Council Priority – April 17, 2018

⁷ City of Fremont Resolution No. 2019-12

the City Council can choose to select one or more sites, or provide further direction to staff.

3. Step 3 – During the August recess, staff would conduct neighborhood outreach for the site or sites selected by the City Council.
4. Step 4 – After the August recess, staff would report back to the City Council as soon as possible with additional site feasibility analysis of the potential site(s) selected and community input received. The City Council could then select the final site to develop.

The proposed process in Steps 2 and 3 listed above is described in greater detail below. Staff would immediately proceed with procurement of contracts to implement the navigation center upon the City Council’s approval of the final site.

Step 2 - Initial Screening Criteria

The proposed initial screening criteria listed below will be used for the property search at a macro level to identify City-owned sites that could be viable for establishing the navigation center and operating it for up to five years. The list of sites will be determined based on these minimum threshold conditions to determine eligibility and rule out easily identifiable impediments that would eliminate them from consideration.

Proposed Initial Screening Criteria – disqualifying factors for City-owned properties

- sites less than 16,000 square feet
- site with a slope greater than five percent (area of buildable footprint)
- developed parkland
- not immediately available
- not available for a period of up to five years
- currently have approved and funded projects by Council

Step 3 - Navigation Center Development Goals and Criteria

To assist in the evaluation of City-owned properties, staff recommends using the following goals and criteria in determining viability and development feasibility of each site, including the one proposed by Niles Discovery Church. Divided into three overarching goals – accessibility, physical suitability, and environmental suitability – staff recommends the following criteria.

Goal	Criteria
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 0.50 miles of food services • Within 0.50 miles of bus stop • Bus service with access to BART
Physical suitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility connection points abut property
Environmental suitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located outside of a fault trace zone

- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No known significant environmental issues exist |
|--|---|

The significance and definition of each criterion are explained in Exhibit "C," Navigation Center Site Goals and Criteria. These goals and criteria are intended to be used as a tool by staff and City Council in the evaluation process and as an aid in highlighting sites immediately available that warrant further evaluation and consideration. The City Council can also choose to prioritize any goal or criteria for the property search. For example, if accessibility is prioritized, then those sites would likely be located within more developed areas of the City. Identified City-owned sites that are not disqualified by the initial screening process will be included in a table as shown in Exhibit "D," Navigation Center Property Analysis.

Additional points of information may be of interest to City Council in examining sites including:

- Frequency of bus service
- Bike lane networks near sites
- Certain environmental constraints
- Proximity to other services and agencies
- Site context and surrounding uses

Accompanying the completed table will be property information for each site as well as its development challenges and opportunities to determine which sites are most suitable for a navigation center. Exhibit "E" provides an example template of the property information.

Zoning and Development Compliance

Under Resolution No. 2018-60, Fremont declared a local Emergency Shelter Crisis on September 18, 2018. Under the Shelter Crisis Act, the City is authorized to provide emergency housing, shelters, bridge housing communities and other services to the homeless. City Council adopted the second Resolution No. 2019-12 on April 17, 2019, authorizing the city manager to implement the city's housing navigation center for the homeless and take immediate and emergency actions pursuant to the Council's shelter crisis declaration.

The law provides that, "... any state or local regulatory statute, regulation, or ordinance prescribing standards of housing, health, or safety shall be suspended to the extent that strict compliance would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of the shelter crises." Government Code Section 8698.1(b) Furthermore, the law states the governing body may take such action as is necessary to carry out the provisions of the Shelter Act. Government Code Section 8698.2. In addition, upon a declaration of a shelter crisis, the city would be immune from liability for ordinary negligence relative to the "conditions, acts, or omissions directly related to, and which would not occur but for, the provision of emergency housing." Government Code Section 8698.1(a).

While land use and zoning may be considered for informational purposes, City Council is not restricted by the location of the shelter due to broadened and more flexible land use compliance standards likely applicable during a declared shelter emergency as described

above. Furthermore, to the extent required by law, development of the housing navigation center will comply with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) or be subject to an exemption under CEQA and/or the Shelter Crisis Act.

There is no known correlation between the opening of a shelter or navigation center and an increase in crime. Crimes perpetrated by the homeless are often against other homeless individuals or lifestyle crimes, i.e. sleeping/camping outside or stealing amenities. Providing individuals with a safe place to stay would help alleviate the impetus for these crimes. In a navigation center, participants are supervised 24/7 by trained staff. Participants are focused on their own tasks of daily living. Some participants work, others will be tending to personal matters and some will be off site exploring housing options with their Housing Navigators. Participants in a navigation center create their own community and, in many ways, become self-regulating. They learn to support each other and re-enforce with each other, the importance of following the rules.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Exhibit A - Housing Navigation Center Infographic
- Exhibit B - Navigation Center Questions
- Draft Exhibit E - Sample Property Information Narrative
- Draft Exhibit C - Navigation Center Site Criteria
- Draft Exhibit D - Navigation Center Property Analysis Template

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Staff is seeking policy direction from City Council to proceed with the process for site selection to identify and evaluate potential housing navigation center sites, using the proposed goals and criteria outlined in this report, or as modified by City Council. The City Council can provide direction/input on the following, whether:
 - a. the expanded property search should only include city-owned properties or both City-owned properties and non-City-owned properties;
 - b. the initial screening criteria (disqualifying factors) are adequate; and
 - c. the goals and criteria for qualifying sites are appropriate and/or should be prioritized.
2. Staff is proposing to report back with the initial list of properties and the results of the evaluation at a hearing in July for direction on which sites the City Council believes are most favorable and feasible.
3. For sites identified as most feasible by City Council, staff will conduct neighborhood outreach to obtain community input and comments.
4. Staff will report back after the August recess, the outcome of community feedback and will seek City Council's final site selection.
5. When a final site is determined, staff will immediately proceed with procurement of contracts to implement the navigation center.

6. Staff also recommends that while exploring potential housing navigation sites, sites which could serve as potential "sanctioned" parking sites for families and individuals sleeping in RV's and cars may also be identified and brought back to the City Council for consideration.