



Legislation Text

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Board of Supervisors' Ad Hoc on Housing and Homelessness Programs in concert with the Chief Administrative Office, Health and Human Services Agency, and Sheriff's Office recommending the Board:

- 1) Direct staff to develop a permanent navigation center with stand-alone transitional housing units at 300 Forni Road, an approximately one-acre site adjacent to the Placerville Jail, and pause all progress on developing a permanent navigation center at 300 Fair Lane;
- 2) Direct staff to develop a temporary family area at the temporary navigation center with the option to include temporary transitional housing, if feasible, at 300 Fair Lane to serve the community while developing the permanent navigation center site;
- 3) Approve the use of the design-build construction project delivery method for the navigation center project at 300 Forni Road;
- 4) Find that the proposed navigation center projects are statutorily exempt from CEQA review pursuant to Government Code section 65660(b);
- 5) Continue to conduct outreach meetings with the City of Placerville, businesses and residents near the proposed site, and other stakeholders for input on program and site design for the permanent navigation center; and
- 6) Negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Placerville to mitigate the impacts of the navigation center and coordinate City and County efforts and return to the Board for approval of the MOU.

FUNDING: Permanent Local Housing Assistance, Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention, and American Rescue Plan Act.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

On April 19, 2022, with Legistar Item 22-0630, the Board adopted Resolution 061-2022 declaring a shelter crisis in the County. On September 20, 2022, with Legistar Item 22-1693, the Board decided to utilize the dormant juvenile hall located at 299 Fair Lane as a temporary navigation center until a permanent one could be constructed at 300 Fair Lane, Placerville. The Board also directed staff to prepare architectural and design drawings, as well as cost estimates to construct a permanent navigation center at 300 Fair Lane.

The Board approved an Agreement for Services with Vanir Construction Management, Inc. for the development of Criteria Documents for the permanent navigation center on June 6, 2023, with Legistar item 23-0478. Vanir has worked with staff, service providers, and other stakeholders to develop a site plan for the facility which is an approximately 7,763 square foot facility. The facility includes a large congregate dormitory setting that accommodates approximately 60 beds, a lobby/welcome center, multi-use community bathrooms and showers, staff restrooms, client support & administrative/office areas, dining areas, a laundry facility with dog wash capability, storage areas, and a non-cooking kitchen facility.

On February 7, 2023, the temporary navigation center opened at 299 Fair Lane. In the first year of operation of the navigation center, there were 258 successful referrals from Law Enforcement and

the El Dorado County Opportunity Knocks Continuum of Care (EDOK CoC), resulting in 176 individuals being temporarily sheltered; many individuals have been referred back after being exited. All referrals are for persons that were experiencing homelessness in El Dorado County. The average length of stay was 72 days. 63% of residents were male and 37% were female. 39% of residents were 55 years and older. On average 51 beds were filled of the available 60 beds, an 85% average. The average beds filled increased with time as the navigation center was operating, with 46% of the beds filled in February 2023 and 95% of beds filled in January 2024. 9% of those exiting the Navigation Center, exited into Permanent Housing; 18 people in El Dorado County who are no longer experiencing homelessness.

Over the past year, through the coordination and operation of the temporary navigation center, staff have learned key lessons on the needs in the community that cannot be addressed with the current plan. The temporary navigation center cannot serve families and does not have the capability to provide a safe and isolated space for families experiencing homelessness. To increase the number of individuals served who move into permanent housing, the County needs transitional housing that serves as the next step after the navigation center where residents can live more independently while still receiving support services.

In developing a plan for transitional housing at 300 Forni Road with the Sheriff's Office, staff determined that the build of the permanent navigation center with transitional housing units at 300 Forni Road, adjacent to the Placerville Jail, would have the following benefits:

- Operational cost savings by having the navigation center and stand-alone transitional housing units at one site with one operator.
- Ability to serve families at the site by putting families in stand-alone transitional housing units.
- Efficiency in providing self-sufficiency and behavioral health services to those at the navigation center and people who are released from the Jail as required by California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM), by staff being located in close proximity to both sites and providing services to both sites.

The Criteria Documents developed by Vanir can be adapted to be used at the 300 Forni Road site with some additional work needed for the plan of the stand-alone transitional housing units. Staff anticipate that these transitional housing units will be some form of stand-alone housing units with shared restrooms. The initial site plan is attached as Attachment A and the approximate site location is outlined in Attachment B. Due the Jail Expansion Project, this new plan will result in an estimated completion date of March 2027.

Before presenting this plan to the Board, the County wanted to ensure that the EDOK CoC had a chance to learn about the new plan and provide feedback. The revised plan was discussed at the April 5, 2024, EDOK CoC Meeting. During that meeting there was no negative feedback from the EDOK CoC, and there was excitement about the opportunity to serve families and increase transitional housing beds in the community.

To meet the needs of families and provide transitional housing units, a temporary site will be erected at 300 Fair Lane, likely using portable buildings and stand-alone housing units. Staff are determining the utility requirements and will return to the Board with an estimated cost, design, and date this site can be up and running.

On April 23, 2024, with Legistar item 24-0726, the recommended plan for the new site was presented

to the Board of Supervisors. As a result of the item, the Board directed 1) staff explore a permanent navigation center with stand-alone transitional housing units, at 300 Forni Road, an approximately one-acre site adjacent to the Placerville Jail; 2) while the County is exploring this option further, staff to collaborate with the City of Placerville on issues to be reconciled; 3) staff to explore a temporary family site with the option to include transitional housing, if feasible, at 300 Fair Lane to serve the community while developing the permanent navigation center site; and 3) staff to return to the Board within 30 days with recommendations.

The Housing and Homelessness Programs Ad Hoc, with the Chief Administrative Office, Health and Human Services Agency, and the Sheriff's Office, met with the City of Placerville to discuss their concerns. The primary concerns identified by the City were the impacts of the site on nearby residents and businesses, the law enforcement impacts of the new site, the need for an exit strategy to encourage participants leaving the navigation center to return to their previous community, and increased bed capacity of the proposed site.

The Placerville City Council discussed the Navigation Center at their May 14, 2024, Meeting. The Council supports the concept of moving the permanent navigation center site to 300 Forni Road, if a MOU between the City and County is put into place within three months. The MOU would address concerns the City has identified with the Navigation Center. The City recommended the following items be discussed with the County:

- The Navigation Center adopt a procedure that would allow those who are exiting the Navigation Center to be offered transportation back to the community in the County that they were living in before entering the Navigation Center.
- The City and County identify solutions to address increased Police Services to the navigation center and surrounding area which could include a change in practice in what agency responds and how they respond to the navigation center or surrounding area, County funding for additional Placerville Police Officers, and/or site design to discourage loitering on property adjacent to the Navigation Center, including the El Dorado Trail.
- To begin discussions with the Upper Room to address concerns with homelessness around the Upper Room and consider opportunities to partner with the Upper Room for services.

If directed, the Housing and Homelessness Programs Ad Hoc in concert with the Chief Administrative Office, Health and Human Services Agency, and Sheriff's Office will negotiate a MOU between the City and County and return to the Board for final approval.

The design, estimated cost, number of beds, and details of the proposed site at 300 Forni Road cannot be determined until staff are directed to pursue this option. There are costs and staff time associated with the exploration of the new site. Staff cannot expend these costs unless the Board directs the pursuit of the new site at 300 Forni Road. The plans for a permanent navigation center need to be determined, so Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Grant funding can be used to purchase stand-alone transitional housing units before the funding expires. These units will be used at the temporary site and moved to the permanent site once construction begins. Due to the limited resources for these projects, it is recommended that all progress on plans for the permanent navigation center at 300 Fair Lane are paused while the site at 300 Forni Road is explored.

If approved by the Board, staff will finalize the criteria documents for the new site which will include meetings with all stakeholders for feedback on site and program design for the new site. Once the

criteria documents are drafted, staff will return to the Board for feedback and approval of issuing a Request for Proposals for the design-build construction project delivery method for the navigation center project. Utilizing a competitive process, the County would contract with a design-build contractor that would complete the design of the facility, usually based on a preliminary scope or design (performance specifications). The County and contractor would negotiate a guaranteed maximum price to complete the Project's design and construction work. The design-build team would not only be responsible for construction of the project, but also for design. Since the construction team is working together from the outset, the design-build method offers the opportunity to save time and money through value engineering.

Gov Code 65660 (b) exempts from CEQA actions taken by a public agency to lease, convey, or encumber land owned by a public agency, or to facilitate the lease, conveyance, or encumbrance of land owned by a public agency, or to provide financial assistance to, or otherwise approve construction of a low barrier navigation center. A notice of exemption will be filed following Board approval.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board could deny the move of the permanent navigation center to 300 Forni Road and provide alternative direction to staff.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

11/09/2021 Legistar Item 21-1668 - The Board directed that the Health and Human Services Agency work with the Continuum of Care (where the Sheriff's Office has a representative) to assess potential sites for a congregate Navigation Center with an emergency shelter component.

04/19/2022 Legistar Item 22-0630 - Adoption of Resolution 061-2022, Shelter Crisis Declaration.

09/20/2022 Legistar Item 22-1693 - The Board directed staff to open a temporary Navigation Center at 299 Fair Lane and prepare architectural and design drawings as well as cost estimates to construct a permanent Navigation Center at 300 Fair Lane.

05/16/2023 Legistar item 23-0647 - HHSA presented an update of the Navigation Center operations, successes, challenges, and next steps towards implementation of a homeless response system of care in El Dorado County.

04/23/2024 Legistar item 24-0726 - Presentation of 300 Forni Road site proposal.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

See above.

CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS

Approve as recommended.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

\$4,000,000 has been included in the Accumulative Capital Outlay (ACO) budget for the navigation center. This number is an estimate. Actual costs will not be known until bids are received. It is unknown at this time the increased cost of the transitional housing units in the proposed plan. Once

updated, the Criteria Documents will allow staff to estimate the cost of the units. Staff continue to look for new funding and explore all options to fund the construction of the site. A final plan will be presented to the Board when the RFP is awarded, and the cost of the project is known.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

N/A

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

By approving this item, the Board will be working toward the strategic plan priority to “Develop a continuum of support and housing opportunities for unhoused individuals.” Specifically, this item contributes to the action items of “Complete the Navigation Center” and “Continue engagement with County department, the homeless community, and countywide partners to develop effective strategies including for example, transitional housing.”

CONTACT

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