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City Manager's Report
May 14, 2024, City Council Meeting
Prepared by: Cleve Morris, City Manager
Item #: 12.7

Subject: Review Report and presentation from El Dorado County on potential changes to County Navigation Center and provide direction to staff.

Recommendation: Receive Report on potential changes to County Navigation Center and provide direction to staff.

Purpose: To provide direction to staff and the County on City concerns with changes to the proposed Navigation Center and recommended mitigations to address those concerns.

Strategic Plan Strategy: Health & Public Safety

2) Strategy – Address Homelessness

a. Work with El Dorado County to identify interim and long term solutions to mitigate the effects of homelessness.

Background: In the Spring of 2022, the County identified various sites for both short and long term use for a potential Navigation Center. After review of the potential sites, the primary identified site was Perks Court, just off Missouri Flat Road. In a subsequent meeting the County Board of Supervisors authorized a feasibility contract to determine the costs and any issues regarding Perks Court. On Friday, July 22, 2022, County Staff released their report to the Board regarding the feasibility and cost to develop Perks Court as a Navigation Center. Included in the recommendation was a request for the City of Placerville to fund a shortfall in the amount of \$287,500. The City held a special meeting on July 25th and approved the funding. At the Board Meeting, on July 26, 2022, the Board heard the item and then continued it to August 23, 2022. Although the Board did not take action, four of the Board Members seemed to indicate their approval of the program. The feasibility demonstrated that the site would work with recommended improvements.

On August 23, 2022, the Board of Supervisors considered the approval of the Perks Court Navigation Center. Due to opposition to the site, including a flyer distributed by the El Dorado County Republican Party, the City held a Special Meeting to consider a letter of support for the Perks Court Site and to encourage the County to move forward. The City approved the letter and forwarded it to the County. The County approved the Perks Court site on August 23, 2024 including a request for funding in the amount of \$287,500 from the City. Subsequent to that meeting and based on discussions for identifying immediate solutions to homelessness to mitigate wildfire concerns, the County identified the vacated Juvenile Hall as a temporary site, and the former Sheriffs office site for the permanent Navigation Center, as opposed to Perks Court. The

Temporary Navigation Center was opened in February of 2023 and has operated at the temporary site since then.

On April 18, 2024, Staff received a call from Supervisor Wendy Thomas stating that the County had determined that the identified site for the new Navigation Center would not work and that they had identified a site next to the County Jail that was a better location. In addition, we were informed that the new site would allow for the construction of Tiny Homes/Pallet Homes to serve as a transition for clients from the Navigation Center to permanent housing and to address needs for families that can not be served at the congregate navigation center.

At the Board Meeting on April 23, 2024, the Board considered the following action.

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 abandon plans to develop a permanent navigation center at 300 Fair Lane;
- 2) Direct staff to develop 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;
- 3) Approve the use of the design-build construction project delivery method for the navigation center project at 300 Forni Road; and
- 4) Find that the proposed navigation center project is statutorily exempt from CEQA review pursuant to Government Code section 65660(b).

Mayor Neau and Vice Mayor Clerici attended the meeting and provided comments.

On May 1, 2024, Mayor Neau, Vice Mayor Clerici and City Manager Morris met with County staff and supervisors to discuss the change. Included at the meeting from the County were Supervisors Thomas and Parlin, CAO Schmid, Health and Human Services Staff, and Sheriff's department staff. We had a good discussion and were able to express some of the City's concerns with the change and on-going concerns with a navigation center and potential was to mitigate those concerns. The attached report outlines the discussion at that meeting. City staff recommended and requested that the County provide a presentation to the full Council regarding the plans for the new location and additional housing. Supervisor Wendy Thomas will present the changes to the Council at our meeting.

Staff recommends the following items be discussed with the County and negotiated to identify solutions. It is recommended that an MOU be negotiated and approved in the next 3 months to address these issues.

1. Adopt an MOU between the City and County to address concerns identified with a Navigation Center.
2. Provide an improved exit strategy for those who voluntarily or due to violations leave the Navigation Center. Of 290 referrals to the Navigation Center, 70% came from the County Sheriff and therefore are assumed to be from areas outside the City limits. Only 22% were referred by City Police Department. Staff recommends that a procedure be adopted to allow

those who leave to be transported to the area they originally came from to avoid placing a heavier burden on the City.

3. Identify a solution to address increased Police Services to the Navigation Center and surrounding area. This could some or all of the following:
 - a. Sheriff respond to Navigation Center calls.
 - b. County to provide funding for increased City staffing, 2 officers, to provide response to the Navigation Center and surrounding area.
 - c. Adopt an MOU to have County Sheriff handle calls to County facilities. City PD would agree to respond and stabilize a situation and County Sheriff would take over once they arrive. This is similar to a process used in Placer County.
 - d. Sheriff response to observed concerns in the immediate area of the Navigation Center, including El Dorado Trail and the Forni Road Park and Ride.
 - e. Hold public meetings with neighbors and individual meetings with adjacent businesses to hear their concerns and consider mitigation measures to address the concerns.
 - f. Include environmental design in the process to discourage loitering on property adjacent to the site and develop outdoor areas for center residents to meet.
 - g. Create a barrier to the El Dorado Trail to discourage inappropriate behavior on the trail.
 - h. Begin discussions with the Upper Room to address continued concerns with the homelessness around the Upper Room. Consider opportunities to partner with the Upper Room for Homeless and other services.

The County plans to continue approvals for the new site at their meeting on May 21st. City should provide a letter to the board outlining these concerns and recommendations for the project moving forward.

Options:

1. Approve the recommendations for mitigation as outlined above and provide support for the new location if these issues can be addressed.
2. Approve the additional or modified recommendations and provide support for the new location if these issues can be addressed.
3. Do not support the new location and direct staff to prepare a letter to the County accordingly.
4. Direct staff to take other action.

Environmental:

This activity is not a "project" as defined under Section 15378 of the State CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) Guidelines in that the activity will not result in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

Cost: NA

Budget Impact: NA



M. Cleve Morris, City Manager

Attachments:

Att. A: May 1, 2024 Meeting Notes