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Navigation Center pilot showing success moving people from the street into permanent housing

HAYWARD, Calif., Dec. 2, 2020—The City of Hayward Housing Navigation Center for people experiencing homelessness has successfully placed into permanent housing almost half of the 91 individuals served during its first year of operation.

The Navigation Center marked its one-year anniversary on Nov. 18 amid a global coronavirus pandemic that limited the number of people who could participate in the program but didn't upset its mission of helping people off the streets.

Of the total 91 clients served through the first 12 months, 45 exited to permanent housing and 26 are still enrolled. Sixteen individuals exited into a COVID-19 isolation shelter offered through the County of Alameda, and four left the program for other reasons.

The City Council authorized establishment of the Navigation Center as a pilot project in January 2019 following declaration of a shelter emergency in the City and with homelessness on the rise in Hayward and regionally. From 2017 to 2019, homelessness across Alameda County jumped 43 percent and in Hayward by 23 percent from 397 to 487 people, according to the findings of biennial point-in-time counts of unhoused people in the Bay Area.

Under its original configuration when it opened on Nov. 18, 2019, the Navigation Center, located at Whitesell Street and Depot Road, was providing short-term housing for up to 45 people at a time in dormitory settings with one meal a day, on-site restroom, shower, laundry and kitchen facilities, and intensive case management geared toward long-term housing placements.

Due to COVID-19, it was necessary to decrease operational capacity from 45 beds in two residential trailers to a total of 25 beds. In October, however, four recreational vehicle-style

trailers were added to increase capacity to 32 beds. Soon, a third residential trailer, acquired through the City's federal Community Development Block Grant funds, will be installed to allow for the Center's capacity to be restored to 45 through the remainder of the pandemic.

Under the program, outreach workers visit encampments and other locations in Hayward, and work with other social service groups, police officers, paramedics and City maintenance crews to identify people in need who may be suitable participants. The Center does not accept walk-ins, and all residents have to complete an intake process.

A hallmark of the Hayward Navigation Center, which is operated for the City by the nonprofit Bay Area Community Services, is a commitment to racial equity, whereby it seeks to serve a population reflective of the racial and gender makeup of the overall population of people experiencing homelessness in Hayward.

The Center was developed and furnished through a combination of state and local funding, and donations. To learn more, go to the [Navigation Center webpage](#) on the City of Hayward website, www.hayward-ca.gov. To make a donation to the Center, click [here](#).