
VISALIA LOW BARRIER NAVIGATION CENTER

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Where is the Visalia Low-Barrier Navigation Center (“Navigation Center”) located?

Once constructed, the Navigation Center will be located on approximately 2.5 acres of land at the southwest corner of Glendale Street and Court Street. The project does not front on Dinuba Blvd.

2. What is a Navigation Center? "Low Barrier Navigation Center" means a Housing First, low-barrier, service-enriched shelter focused on moving people into permanent housing. The Navigation Center will provide temporary living facilities while case managers connect residents to supportive services. Services will include employment training, public benefits, health services, substance abuse and mental health services and connections to permanent housing opportunities. "Low Barrier" means employing best practices to reduce barriers to entry and may include referrals to specialized services (such as domestic violence referrals), as well as on-site kennels, vaccinations and care for pets, and the storage of possessions.

3. How is this different than an emergency shelter? This is different than an emergency shelter in several ways. First, beds will be assigned, and residents can stay at the Navigation Center 90-180 days. Second, an online reservation system, accessible by local partners and the Police Department, will provide updates on the number of vacancies. Third, there will not be a line formed each day to get into the facility because all residents will be enrolled and assigned a bed. The facility will be open and staffed 24 hours a day so residents will have a safe indoor space to be during the day. The Navigation Center will provide extensive supportive services to help break the cycle of homelessness.

4. Will the Navigation Center house sex offenders? No, the facility will not provide housing for known sex offenders. Because the Navigation Center will provide housing for single individuals and private spaces for families experiencing homelessness, there may be children staying at the Navigation Center. Therefore, Residents will be informed of this restriction and those in the category of sex offender will not be enrolled for housing at the Navigation Center.

5. How many beds does the project include and is affordable rental housing part of the project?

The project team is designing and planning for a 100-bed facility. The Navigation Center project does not include rental housing, but Self-Help Enterprises is planning to develop approximately 90 units of affordable rental housing to the west of the Navigation Center. In the future, additional housing, including multifamily rental housing and homeownership opportunities, are being planned east of the Navigation Center.

6. How will people get to/from the facility? The project includes office space for the Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance, which will have a van available to transport residents. Also, residents can access the project by using the bus stop located on Shannon Parkway to the south (just north of Target). Additionally, several partners already provide transportation, including Kaweah Health, the Visalia Police Department, Family Services of Tulare County, and the County of Tulare.

7. What is the staffing plan? The Navigation Center will have onsite staffing 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Office space will be provided on site for several partners, including the Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance, Tulare County Behavioral Health, CSET employment services, etc.

8. What services will be available at the Navigation Center? Services at the Navigation Center will include access to basic documents such as a birth certificate and/or ID cards. County services will include mental health, other behavioral health services and enrollment in benefits. CSET will provide employment services and opportunities for job training. Case Management, housing referral services, and two meals per day will be provided.

- 9. How does the Navigation Center help the City enforce laws surrounding the use of public spaces?** There are legal limitations on the City’s ability to enforce a ban on sleeping in public places, such as parks, if the City does not have a low barrier shelter available for the community. The Navigation Center begins to address this in Visalia so that community members have a place to go. This will make it easier in the future for the police to enforce no-camping laws in the parks and other public spaces.
- 10. How will the Navigation Center work with other local agencies?** The Navigation Center has a robust network of partners, including Kaweah Health, Family Healthcare Network, County of Tulare, Family Services of Tulare County, and the Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance. If a resident has specific needs, such as being a survivor of domestic violence, a referral will be made to the appropriate partner agency and transportation will be provided. This will include referrals to Family Services, transportation to a medical facility for treatment, and/or enrollment in a local supportive housing program for permanent housing placement.
- 11. When was this site first identified for the potential use for this project, and does the zoning allow for such a project?** The site was first contemplated for this use in February 2021. The zoning for the site is mixed-use, which allows Navigation Centers “by-right”. A zoning code is considered by-right if the approval process is streamlined so that projects that comply with the zoning standards receive their approval without a discretionary review process. The project team plans to submit for site plan review around September 2021.
- 12. Will overnight parking be allowed at the Navigation Center?** No overnight parking will be allowed at the Navigation Center for non-residents and there will not be evening drop-in services, so there will be extremely limited activity to/from the Navigation Center in the evening.
- 13. How can I stay involved?** The Navigation Center facilitators are interested in establishing a Neighborhood Council to provide ongoing feedback on the project during operations. More information and details on how to apply will be posted on CSET’s website in the future.
- 14. What will the building look like and how will the site be secured?** While the project is being modeled on 40Prado, a successful project in San Luis Obispo, for layout and functionality, the elevations will be updated to a new façade that more effectively integrates with the surrounding community. The Neighborhood Council will be given the opportunity to comment on the elevations when developed. There will be a 6’ concrete masonry wall around the facility and security cameras on-site.
- 15. Were other sites considered?** TC Hope was formed in March 2019 and has been looking for a site since then. Many sites were considered but ultimately eliminated because the purchase cost was prohibitive, had no access to a major transit line, lacked appropriate zoning, or the owner was not a willing seller. This site meets all criteria for feasibility.
- 16. Who were the partners listed in the original funding proposal who support the project?**

Bethlehem Center
 Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance
 Central California Legal Services
 Self-Help Enterprises
 Christ Lutheran Church
 Tulare County HHSA

Visalia Police Department
 Turning Point
 College of the Sequoias
 United Methodist Church
 Visalia Rotary Foundation
 Family HealthCare Network

Visalia Senior Housing
 Family Services of Tulare County
 Visalia Emergency Aid
 FoodLink
 Visalia Episcopal Church
 Kaweah Health

