



## City Manager/Mayor's Office

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### Memorandum

Date: February 16, 2022

To: Linn County Commission

From: Blair Larsen, City Manager Pro Tem, City of Sweet Home

RE: FAC Land Donation

Respected Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to update you on the City's actions regarding our cooperation with Family Assistance and Resource Center Group (FAC) to address homelessness in Sweet Home, and to request that the County donate land for this purpose to FAC.

#### Background

For several months, City Councilors and Staff have discussed various options with Linn County Commissioners and Staff regarding the so-called 'knife-shaped' property. There seems to be general agreement that a facility for the unsheltered could be located on the eastern third of the property, and a County-owned RV dump station may be developed on the western two-thirds. A partition of the property and accompanying easement through the neighboring City property has been approved by the City of Sweet Home, and a final plat is being prepared for recording. While the City has declined to accept the property from Linn County, FAC has indicated its desire to own the property and develop its facility there.

The City has also been working toward developing a rail crossing in order to extend 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the north—an effort for which Linn County and Albany & Eastern Railroad have indicated support. Currently, the 'handle' of the 'knife-shaped' property extends eastward to that street, and the whole property is accessed at that point. Unfortunately, this access is not compatible with a rail crossing—a driveway or street would need to be at least 100 feet south of the proposed rail crossing. Consequently, the City is seeking to change access to the property to make way for the rail crossing and is willing to provide an easement through the City's Public Works facility to facilitate the rail crossing.

#### Proposed Development

The City, FAC, and Linn County Parks Department have collaborated on a site plan for the property, which can be seen on the enclosed map. As you can see, an easement through the City's property is proposed to provide access to both portions of the 'knife-shaped' property, as well as an easement through the eastern portion of the property that would benefit the western portion. These easements will include street lighting and water, power, and telecommunications lines to serve both properties. Wastewater connections will be made along the south side of the property to a City wastewater main line.

In order to accommodate pedestrians and large recreational vehicles, the driveway to the two properties will need to include paved vehicle lanes and a sidewalk or multi-use path along the southern edge, separated by a three-foot-wide strip (often called a 'beauty strip'). While a 'beauty

strip makes the site more attractive, its main purpose is safety—greater distance between moving vehicles and pedestrians decreases accident rates.

The FAC facility will include exterior parking, an office building, and a fenced compound containing site lighting, security cameras, portable restrooms, a mobile shower unit, and 'Conestoga huts'—small, insulated, mobile structures that provide basic shelter. The fencing will be constructed with privacy slats, providing a visual barrier around the site. The proposed County RV dump site will consist of service islands where RVs can dump their waste, a bulk water filling station, a turnaround loop, and a small pet recreation area.

### **City Council Actions**

The City Council has been working toward an agreement with FAC and the creation of a facility for the unsheltered for over a year. At its January 25, 2022 meeting, the City Council approved an agreement for services with FAC. This agreement was based on the idea that FAC would be leasing property from the City, and therefore has not been signed and needs to be updated. Later, at its February 8, 2022 meeting, the City Council voted 5-1 in favor of entering into an agreement with FAC to operate a facility for the unsheltered and request that Linn County donate property to FAC for this purpose. At the same meeting, the Council voted 7-0 to authorize an easement through the City's Public Works Yard to the 'knife-shaped' property.

Since that meeting, City Staff have been working to move this project forward. FAC is currently revising the agreement for services, after which the City will make revisions. City Staff have also met with Linn County Parks Director Brian Carrol to iron out the details of this venture.

### **Request**

The City of Sweet Home requests the Linn County donate the eastern third of the 'knife-shaped' property to FAC. While there are still many items to be worked out regarding this project, the City and FAC are well on our way to working them out. There are additional items to be worked out with Linn County, of course, but they are not negatively affected by the proposed donation of the property. There are still agreements needed regarding the allocation of development costs, but those agreements are necessary for the development of the RV dump station, not the facility for the unsheltered.

We are trying to work as fast as possible on this proposal. FAC has been approved for grants to fund their operations, but these funds are contingent upon owning or leasing a property on which a facility can be built. The transfer of the property to FAC will allow FAC to obtain these funds.

I appreciate your kind attention to this matter, as well as your willingness to collaborate with the City.

Thank you,



Blair Larsen,  
City Manager Pro Tem