



REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Title: Lease Agreement with FAC for Managed Outreach and Community Resource Facility

Preferred Agenda: February 8, 2022

Submitted By: Blair Larsen, Community & Economic Development Director

Reviewed By: Blair Larsen, Community & Economic Development Director

Type of Action: Resolution ____ Motion X Roll Call ____ Other ____

Relevant Code/Policy: SHMC §15.01.090, SHMC §15.03.020

Towards Council Goal: Aspiration I, desirable community; Aspiration IV, viable and sustainable essential services; Aspiration V, economically strong environment; Goal 3: essential services.

Attachments: Lease Agreement with FAC
Lease Agreement Exhibit A
Draft Facility Site Plan

Purpose of this RCA:

The purpose of this Request for Council Action is to present a lease agreement with Family Assistance and Resource Center Group (FAC) for a Managed Outreach and Community Resource Facility primarily directed at unsheltered members of the community, located at the City's Public Works Yard.

Background/Context:

City of Sweet Home residents have suffered from homelessness and the effects of homelessness for many years. Recent court decisions have limited the City's ability to enforce any ordinances restricting urban camping, sleeping, or otherwise occupying public rights-of-way or public property. For many reasons, the problem has only grown worse in recent years.

Last summer, the State legislature passed a bill exempting facilities for the unsheltered from normal land use rules, removing the City's ability to regulate the location of such facilities if they meet basic safety considerations. This means that an organization can open a facility anywhere in the City if they can do so safely.

For over a year, the City has been working with FAC to create a facility where the unsheltered can keep warm, sleep, and access the services necessary for them to move into permanent housing. Such a facility would enable the City to enforce its urban camping ordinances and direct individuals to the facility, as long as the facility has space available.

Previously, the City and FAC were considering a County-owned property adjacent to the City's Public Works Yard, and began working with Linn County to transfer a parcel to the City. Unfortunately, that process has been delayed due to the environmental state of the property,

and it is unknown how long it will be before the property is ready to host a facility. City Staff then identified an area behind the current City Hall which is large enough for the planned facility, but member of the public and the Council determined it was not an appropriate site. At the special Council meeting on February 1, the City Council directed Staff to locate the facility at the Public Works Yard, with the intention that it be moved from there to the adjacent County-owned land when that parcel is ready for development.

Development at this site will require relocation of the historic train depot that currently sits on the property. The depot was dragged to that spot many years ago, and the City's intention has been to eventually relocate it and have it renovated to serve as an actual train stop. However, the City has been unable to find an appropriate site. The building is in serious disrepair, and staff is concerned about its ability to survive a move. There is space for the depot elsewhere on the property.

Attached to this request is a proposed lease agreement with FAC for a portion of the City's Public Works Yard, where FAC can provide services for the unsheltered. In addition, attached is a proposed site plan.

The Challenge/Problem:

How does the City address the impacts of homelessness in a way that meets the needs of the housed, unhoused, and business community, while still following case law and State statutes?

Stakeholders:

- Sweet Home Residents – Residents deserve a neat, clean, and orderly city. Unsheltered residents need a place to sleep and keep warm.
- Sweet Home Businesses – Local businesses deserve a city in which they can operate their businesses and serve customers in the community without the negative impacts that typically accompany homelessness.
- Sweet Home City Council – Council members are the voice of the citizens they serve and represent and are responsible for determining the uses and services offered on City property.
- City of Sweet Home Staff – City Staff need to be able to enforce Sweet Home ordinances but are prevented from doing so by court decisions and State law. In addition, Staff need authorization from the Council regarding the proposed lease with FAC.
- Family Assistance and Resource Center Group – FAC desires to serve the unsheltered and others in the community, but needs a site from which to do so, and would like to cooperate with the City to do this.

Issues and Financial Impacts:

FAC has obtained grant funding of over \$400,000 to create and operate the proposed facility. This funding will cover all development costs except for Public Works Staff time, the value of which is expected to amount to \$15,000. The City budgeted \$50,000 in the current fiscal year to address homelessness, of which \$42,700 remains. This funding would be tapped to pay for Public Works Staff time. In addition, the City would commit to providing nighttime security at the site, which is expected to cost approximately \$88,000 annually.

Elements of a Stable Solution:

An ideal outcome would be to partner with a non-profit organization for the creation and operation of a facility that provides services for the unsheltered, which would allow the City to follow court decisions and State statutes, but still enforce ordinances that promote a safe, clean, and orderly community.

Options:

1. Do Nothing – Make no agreement with FAC and allow the homelessness situation to continue as it is.

2. Motion to approve the Lease Agreement with FAC as presented – This would allow City Staff and FAC to move forward with the development of the facility.
3. Motion to approve the Lease Agreement with FAC with changes – The Council may approve the agreements with identified changes. This does not guarantee that FAC would agree to the changes.
4. Direct staff to investigate other options – Direct staff to research other ways to comply with State Law and address the problem of homelessness in our community.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends option 2: Motion to approve the Lease Agreement with FAC as presented.