

Navigation Center

The City of Westminster (City), either independently or in partnership with another city, should offer a Navigation Center for homeless residents which will include access to temporary, emergency shelter beds and support services. The Navigation Center would be accessible to Westminster (and its partner city or cities) residents and individuals, who have a community connection that can be reasonably verified.

Support services will be established and coordinated by the designated services provider. Navigation Center staff will have knowledge of on-site and community resources and be prepared to provide appropriate linkages. Additionally, the Provider will work collaboratively with City Staff, community organizations, and stakeholders.

At the moment, our official Designated Access Point is our Westminster Police Homelessness Liaison Officer. This Officer would still be the main point of contact, but Westminster would also designate other personnel and organizations who on occasion may be first point of contact. Examples of these individuals/organizations may include (but are not limited to):

- Other police officers and staff
- Local fire authority personnel
- Community Services & Recreation personnel
- The city's contracted homelessness services provider (CityNet)
- WIC, OC Health Dept., CHP and other local government agencies with frequent contacts to homeless
- Volunteer faith-based organizations
- Volunteer non-profit organizations
- Westminster School District
- Westminster High School
- Members of the Homeless Task Force, if made a permanent committee
- 2-1-1 Orange County (211OC) local, private, non-profit organization, connecting the vulnerable with the health and human resources.

Designated Access Points will be formally trained and accept expressed risk. They commit to a formalized protocol and code of conduct. They will know how to approach homeless persons safely, compassionately, and knowledgeably. They will be able to answer basic questions and refer homeless persons to the Liaison Officer for further assistance. The Liaison Officer will take the process from that point, providing transportation and other logistics as necessary so that homeless persons may have their unique situations evaluated at the Navigation Center.

Funding

We recommend that the City seeks on-going funding sources with Orange County, State, Federal, non-profit, and private entities. The Housing Continuum would prioritize the City's identified needs and obligations with an awareness that without access to outside funding resources for capital or operational support, the needs within the City cannot be met. Wherever possible, initiatives would be structured with the goal of leveraging outside resources and avoiding "leaving money on the table" in terms of securing outside resources, including the use of City-controlled land where applicable.

For permanent supportive housing, this means aligning the building design and programming so that the housing is eligible and competitive for capital funding from sources beyond the City. For temporary housing such as a Navigation Center or emergency shelter, this includes partnership with at least one neighboring city as a prerequisite for Orange County funding and efficiencies of scale; the County of Orange has indicated that its policies generally favor temporary housing that is established by multiple cities in partnership. In all instances, the City would seek to reduce capital costs by seeking opportunities to utilize City-owned land resources within the City or the City's sphere of influence.

Examples:

- The Orange County Housing Trust Fund (County)
- HOME Funds (City)
- Project-based Housing Choice Vouchers or Mainstream Vouchers (OC Housing Authority)
- Housing for a Healthy California fundings (State HCD)

Designated Access Point

We recommend that the City designate select City staff and community organizations to serve as "Access Points" to refer homeless residents to the Navigation Center for shelter and/or support resources. A referral process should be created to include an assessment of need and linkage to appropriate support resources.

Potential Access Points:

- Schools
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We recommend that the city consider implementing a staff position, or contracting with a service provider to coordinate homeless services in the city, interfacing with police, city departments, elected officials, non-profit organization, the faith community and the business community.

Regional approach/coordination

Partnership with surrounding cities and the County of Orange is recommended to access funding opportunities, share resources, and provide coverage to the region.

Rental Housing

Create a pathway for access to currently available services at levels beyond our city like HUD and other programs, and where possible, route households identified in the Continuum for referrals to housing resources.

Rental Supportive Housing

Actively support and foster the construction of additional supportive housing and affordable housing, where homelessness or chronic homelessness would be a criteria for household eligibility. Strategies to encourage and support more supportive housing include strategic use of existing resources and identifying existing opportunities for re-purposing of underutilized City-controlled assets.

Existing Examples Include:

- Della Rosa on Beach Boulevard, affordable housing with a set-aside of units that are supportive units.
- Westminster Crossing on Westminster Boulevard, affordable housing with a set-aside of units that are supportive units.
- Potters Lane on Jackson Street (Westminster-adjacent), affordable housing where all units are supportive units.

Housing Continuum

All resources – Rental Housing, Rental Supportive Housing, and interim or temporary housing, such as a Navigation Center, emergency shelter, or housing retention support, is considered the Housing Continuum. The Navigation Center may assess the appropriate entry point on a housing continuum with intent that all persons eventually migrate to a permanent housing solution that allows the highest level of independence that is feasible. Unsheltered persons may enter potentially at the temporary emergency homeless shelter or at any other appropriate point on the housing continuum.

Community Engagement

- Enact steps to engage the community to end homelessness. These could be done through direct contact as well as larger marketing strategies. [Businesses](#)
- [Faith based involvement](#)
- [Community education](#)