

# Fremont Considers Homeless Navigation Center

According to Google Maps, it's a one minute drive from one location under consideration to the nearest elementary school.

By [Bea Karnes](#) | May 2, 2019 11:48 pm ET | Updated May 3, 2019 1:28 am ET

Fremont has begun the process of finding an operator for a Navigation Center. (Shutterstock)

FREMONT, CA — The City of Fremont is actively exploring the establishment of a Navigation Center to help the homeless find stable, permanent housing. The City reported Thursday evening that conversations with Niles Discovery Church began back in February. However, no final decision has been made. The church is located at 36600 Niles Blvd. That's across from California Nursery Historical Park, and just a few blocks down from Niles Elementary School. According to Google Maps, it's a one minute drive from the church to the elementary school.

“Fremont is actively engaged in finding solutions to help some of our city’s most vulnerable homeless residents find safe housing options,” said City Manager Mark Danaj in a written release. “While the City is exploring multiple sites to build a future Navigation Center, I want to assure the community that no formal agreements have been approved at any particular site. This is not a done deal. A substantial amount of work would need to take place before such a project would be ready for City Council consideration.”

Next month, city staff will go before City Council to update the community's elected officials on the city’s solutions for homelessness. A review of potential sites for a Navigation Center is expected to be part of the briefing.

A Navigation Center is designed to transition people from homelessness to stable lives. It provides temporary shelter, typically six months or less, and comprehensive services including health and wellness resources, employment and benefit assistance, substance abuse services and housing navigation.

Fremont has begun the process of finding an operator for a Navigation Center. The City points to Berkeley where a Navigation Center has been open for more than a year. During that time, 78 of the 94 people exiting the center moved into permanent housing, an

impressive 82 percent. Hayward is in the process of opening a center using the same provider as Berkeley. In addition, San Francisco has several Navigation Centers.

Fremont shared these bullet points of efforts to combat the homeless situation here:

- Expanded the Warming Center model to a seasonal Winter Shelter, operating daily from November 21, 2018 until March 21, 2019 and offering a warm place to sleep while providing showers and meals.
- Partnered with Bay Area Community Services (BACS) to open a Drop-in Day/Wellness Center for the Homeless, which provides prevention and early intervention, as well as holistic wraparound services for people who are housing insecure and dealing with chronic physical/behavioral health diagnoses that are untreated.
- Increased staffing to address aspects of homelessness by adding four new positions: homeless services manager (recruitment underway), crisis intervention specialist, code enforcement officer, and park ranger.
- Allocated resources for bi-weekly cleanups throughout Fremont on community concerns reported around encampments.
- Secured 20+ units at the Islander Motel on Mowry Avenue to temporarily house homeless individuals.
- Utilized an Alameda County grant to fund a Mobile Hygiene Unit in partnership with the City of Newark.
- Formed a Mobile Evaluation Team, which includes police officers and mental health clinicians, to serve those suffering from mental health crisis including the homeless.
- Exploring a safe parking program for individuals and families who have been displaced and are temporarily homeless, living in their vehicles, and need a safe place to park and sleep overnight.
- Adopted and then modified an Emergency Shelter Ordinance to declare a shelter crisis under California Government Code Section 8698 et seq. This allows for state funding to assist local jurisdictions with the homeless crisis, and for more short-term and temporary places for homeless residents to safely sleep such as in a Housing Navigation Center.

The City Report on homelessness, including possible Navigation Center locations, is expected in early June. **Here's how to contact your elected officials** to praise the effort or express concerns:

- Mayor Lily Mei: phone 510-284-4011 or email [lmei@fremont.gov](mailto:lmei@fremont.gov)
- Vice Mayor Raj Salwan: phone 510-284-4082 or email [rsalwan@fremont.gov](mailto:rsalwan@fremont.gov)
- Teresa Keng, Councilmember, District 1: phone 510-284-4012 or email [tkeng@fremont.gov](mailto:tkeng@fremont.gov)
- Rick Jones, Councilmember, District 2: phone 510-284-4083 or email [councilmemberjones@fremont.gov](mailto:councilmemberjones@fremont.gov)
- Jenny Kassan, Councilmember, District 3: phone 510-284-4018 or email [jkassan@fremont.gov](mailto:jkassan@fremont.gov)
- Yang Shao, Councilmember, District 4: phone 510-284-4019 or email [yshao@fremont.gov](mailto:yshao@fremont.gov)
- Vinnie Bacon, Councilmember At-large: phone 510-284-4084 or email [vbacon@fremont.gov](mailto:vbacon@fremont.gov)