

June 15, 2018

Honorable Mayor Kevin Faulconer
Distinguished City Councilmembers

RE: 1401 Imperial Ave. Housing Navigation Center

Honorable Mayor Kevin Faulconer and Distinguished City Councilmembers:

As the City moves forward in the opening of the only Housing Navigation Center in San Diego, the East Village community has many questions and concerns.

Background:

East Village shoulders the burden of caring for a large percentage of the city's homeless and mentally ill citizens due to the concentration of social service facilities and supportive housing in the community's footprint. Those in need of services are forced to leave their own neighborhoods and live on the streets of East Village to avail themselves of services. The consequences to the East Village community has been significant as the neighborhood was the epicenter of the Hepatitis A outbreak, has been labeled "skid row" by the media, is the site of incessant public urination and defecation on the streets and sidewalks, and contends with needles, syringes, and razor blades thrown in the landscaping or left on electrical boxes and curbs endangering all who live, work, and visit East Village, *to only name a few impairments*.

East Village South has been hit particularly hard where the new apartments are not being rented, restaurants are closing, and the Central Library staff is spending an extraordinary number of hours on training and abatement techniques to maintain safe and sanitary conditions inside the library.

Mitigating the Impact of the Navigation Intake Center on East Village Community:

With the impending opening of the new large Housing Navigation facility on Imperial Ave., the East Village community has renewed concerns on maintaining even the existing level of tainted sanitary conditions, and wants to call attention to the need of protecting the community against increasing negative economic impacts, and decreasing quality of life.

Therefore, the East Village Community has outlined the following demands regarding the Housing Navigation Center:

- The program is one of outreach, and not a "drop-in" center.
- The Housing Navigation Center will prioritize serving the over 500 homeless currently living on the streets of East Village before extending the services outside of East Village (working within any vulnerability matrix mandated).
- The service provider will offer daily assistance to any person inside or directly outside the Central Library that may be in need of services. Their program will provide an ongoing partnership for navigation within the library.
- After the placement of the current homeless population in East Village, the Navigation Center will next limit their clientele services to the other five downtown districts' homeless (working within any vulnerability matrix mandated).
- Upon primary placement of the downtown homeless population, the Mayor with City Council approval, will guarantee that the homeless brought in from surrounding areas for processing, will be transported back to their original community.
- To provide navigation services to an individual in their original dwelling of residency, the Mayor with City Council approval, will establish a matrix of the additional placement of facilities throughout San Diego within the next year. This document will include a timeline for achieving this goal and be submitted to City Council as an integral part of the approval of this Housing Navigation Center.
- The Mayor and City Council will establish a monthly review Committee to include representatives from the Housing Navigation Center, East Village Community Groups, San Diego Police Department, Clean & Safe, and representatives from the Mayor's office and Councilman Ward's office to oversee the operation for cleanliness, neighborhood crime stats, loitering problems, trash issues, etc. is being debated.

- The Mayor and City Council will meet with East Village Community Groups to establish guidelines for the operation of the Navigation Center which will include, but not limited to, 24/7 police foot patrols within a two block radius of the Center, established rules on loitering, schedules for trash cleanups, and regular power washing of sidewalks within a two block radius of the Center.
- The Mayor and City Council will meet with the East Village Community Groups with a plan to prioritize the Center's clientele, and arrangement of the transport of the Center's intake clients to and from their respective neighborhoods.
- The Mayor will obligate a designated Park Ranger to patrol the East Village parks.
- Costs for all increased services will be paid for directly through Clean SD Program, or other municipal budgets, and **not** from our Clean & Safe Budget.

In addition, the city needs to adopt and work with the County to implement a more progressive and effective system for providing social services and permanent supportive housing to those in need all around the county. This can only be accomplished by decentralizing services and facilities. The structure currently being pursued will create an East Village ghetto for decades to come – thus, a successful approach must be designed, geographically widespread, and implemented now to have a sustainable San Diego homelessness network.

The East Village Community has been increasingly shouldering the burden of the city's homeless crisis at an unwise and unsustainable rate:

- East Village has **84%** of all the **permanent supportive housing** in downtown.
- East Village has **67%** of all the **temporary shelters** in downtown.
- East Village has **66%** of all the downtown **unsheltered homeless**.
- East Village has the **only permanent homeless shelter**.
- East Village has Neil Good Day Center, **the only facility providing laundry services, mail service and social services at one site**.
- East Village has **one of three bridge sheltering tents** in all of San Diego.

Our community hopes that by identifying the already existing ramifications of the *concentration* of the homeless, and those with mental and substance abuse problems in the East Village neighborhood, the City will guarantee that the Housing Navigation Center will not compound the debilitating consequences of the existing situation.

These signees expect that this list of mitigation measures will become a part of a template for effective interventions. We look forward to a healthy discussion at the upcoming Town Hall meeting on June 20, and your commitment to an adoptable countywide solution.

Sincerely,

East Village Residents Group,
President, Kathleen Hallahan

East Village Association, Inc.
Executive Director, Dora McCann Guerreiro

East Village Improvement District,
President, David Malmuth

Cisterra Development
Project Principal, Jason Woods

East Village People,
Rob Wellington Quigley