

## UACC Questions re Proposed Temporary Homeless Shelter SE of Tudor Road and Elmore Rd, Anchorage

### 1) Site selection

Please provide some detail on what alternative buildings and sites the Mayor-Elect considered before deciding to propose this idea?

*Our team evaluated well over a dozen sites throughout the Anchorage Bowl. Please see slide titled “Site Selection Criteria.” Please see also the Municipality of Anchorage, Anchorage School District, Student Transportation Maintenance Facility Site Selection Study of Sep 2018.”*

What did you conclude about these alternatives? On what basis did he choose this 1000-person temporary facility at the location specified?

*While the facility has a large capacity, it is intended to function at a similar size as the Sullivan Arena, certainly much less than a 1000 persons. We have not yet identified a superior alternative site. Expert review by multiple service providers, both in Alaska and out, have validated this site selection. Please see slide titled “Site Selection Criteria.”*

Have you completed a feasibility assessment before making this proposal?

*We do not have the means to have done a formal feasibility assessment as we are not yet in office. Please see above for information regarding this.*

If so, could you please provide a website address so we can review it? If not, have you drafted any documentation related to the concept/proposal and included evidence from other's first-hand experience that it should work well?

*Please see above slide presentation.*

Could you provide the relevant websites?

*I'm sorry, too many to list other than references provided in slide presentation.*

Does this concept comply with the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit rulings on treatment of the homeless?

*It exceeds them.*

What Native and homeless-related organizations did you consult before deciding on this proposal?

*Several. Please see second slide of presentation.*

What are their views?

*I cannot speak for any of the agencies or persons we have consulted on this project and would refer you to them directly.*

What criteria would a person have to meet to be a resident of or to enter such a facility?

*This is anticipated to be a remarkably low barrier facility, in fact lower barrier than any currently existing in Anchorage. Persons with pets, life partners/spouses, and those with a range of disabilities may be accommodated. Arrangements will be made that persons are never locked out at night.*

*The only barrier is being a danger to self or others.*

Is this facility envisioned as a low barrier or high barrier facility?

*Low. Please see above.*

What would the next step be if the Muni built this huge homeless shelter and few people choose to reside there because they don't like the facility and or rules?

*It is possible that people will not wish to stay at this Navigation Center. It is unlikely however that people will do so at greater rates than currently exhibited at shelters in town as this facility's design*

*draws upon the combined experience of each of these shelters as well as others nationally. It is built for engagement and service.*

*While it will be vigorously messaged to persons experiencing homelessness that this navigation center is available, and is a much better alternative than the woods or the streets, it will also be messaged that it is no longer acceptable to remain in public spaces. This is a 'carrot and stick' approach that has been used successfully in Houston.*

## 2) Temporary for how long? What then?

This proposal is being billed as a temporary solution. What is your idea of how long this temporary solution would be used?

*Currently the inflow of persons experiencing homelessness is greater than the outflow to permanent housing. Until that tide turns, through solutions already in progress in our community and which we will fully encourage and support, the capacity for shelter must remain. It is expected that the steady state shelter capacity need will be much lower than is required currently, however, as the permanent housing solutions all require longer lead times the anticipated need for the shelter is on the order of a few years. This shelter may also be readily repurposed for other municipal uses or even dismantled and sold.*

What changes will have to be made as colder, more severe weather moves in?

*For the first time in our city's history there will be a warm bed available for everyone who needs it.*

What is the proposed end-game or exit strategy for this temporary homeless shelter? Under what quantifiable condition will the shelter be closed?

*The exit strategy is standing up greater capacity for housing than the inflow of unhoused persons in our community. When this is accomplished the shelter capacity, as measured city wide, may be reduced. It would be a tremendous success, frankly, if this building became unneeded.*

Also, please provide detail on what longer-term alternatives you are fleshing out and working towards?

*Please see slide presentation. These longer lead time efforts are more solutions than alternatives, they fulfill different needs. The shelter/navigation center allows us to keep the promise of no Alaskan having to sleep outside while waiting for shelter. The efforts for permanent housing are the actual solutions to the problem of homelessness. These permanent housing efforts are best done by private public partnerships.*

### 3) Budget and Services

Where do you expect to get funds for this temporary facility?

*We have identified a number of possible government sources of funding and will have more clarity on this issue after taking office July 1, unless sooner informed by the Assembly.*

Has the Muni or Mayor-elect Bronson inquired if the federal government would allow use of Covid-19 funds for such a facility?

*Federal funding of various types has been discussed. Unfortunately, it appears much of the COVID-19 funds have been distributed by the assembly already.*

If such funds are insufficient or not available for such uses, what other sources are you pursuing? We have heard the figure \$12Million. That sounds like an unrealistically low estimate.

*We are confident of adequate funding for the project. A more reasonable figure would be approximately \$15 million. The increase is due to rapidity of construction.*

What is your proposed budget for purchase or rental of a Sprung structure to house 1000 homeless? And what are your detailed budgets and plans for maintenance, repair, operations, staffing, meal service, medical services, mental health and counselling services, case management, services, sanitary facilities, security services, etc.

*Detailed budgets for operations are unavailable until we take office and have seen the results of the RFP/bid process.*

And how will the proposal deal with individuals who could be diagnosed as addicted to drugs or alcohol or mentally ill or some combination of these conditions?

*This is one of the most exciting ‘value adds’ of this project. A partner has offered to stand up a medical detox facility on site. By relocating the ‘sleep off center’ to the facility persons suffering from alcoholism will now wake up in a place where they can get treatment, rather than returning to the street. We believe this alone could dramatically change the trajectory of alcohol abuse for these individuals.*

#### 4) Covid 19

What are your plans to prevent spread of Covid-19 in such a facility?

*The prevention of the spread of all infectious diseases is important to any congregate living facility. Multiple regulatory agencies have promulgated recommendations which this facility is designed to follow.*

#### 5) Alternative Sites and Facilities

Have you taken an inventory of and costed out using existing, vacant facilities in Anchorage in lieu of constructing a new huge one-size-fits-all temporary facility?

*This facility is the opposite of ‘one size fits all.’ By subdividing the space, with sound proof robust walls, and designing the smaller spaces for engagement, dignity and quiet, co locating the full menu of wrap around services, with easy separation of persons based on*

*the type of care they need, this facility will be the only modern purpose built from the ground up building in Anchorage for the homeless.*

*Costs, and time to occupancy, are considerably less with this purpose built building than they are with any of the less desirable vacant buildings available for sale in the municipality. More importantly, however, this location and its possibility of purpose built design give this plan a significant advantage over renovating existing structures. The cost savings is a nice bonus, however.*

Lots of useful space is available and collectively could be a lot less expensive. How do the pros and cons of this proposal compare with pending proposals for homeless facilities in Muni areas zoned B-3?

*Please see above and slide deck.*

6) How have previous one size fits all experiences worked out?

*Not very well at all, that's why we aren't doing that. The services and facilities provided here will be as varied as the individuals needing them.*

How much information have you gathered on experiences of housing the homeless in Anchorage and other cities of the US?

*A good bit, but there is always more to learn.*

How many such large (1000 person) shelters have been tried with what results?

*Several, with both advantages and disadvantages. Of course, we aren't intending to house that many persons and it is much more a Navigation Center than a shelter. The difference being the collocation of services, the design for engagement, privacy, and dignity, and the recognition that efforts must be made simultaneously for longer lead time permanent solutions.*

#### 7) Neighborhood Security

Where do you think the homeless in Anchorage who choose to stay in such a facility will go when they are not at the facility?

*I expect it will depend on the individual and possibly the weather. When talking to folks staying at the Sullivan I was surprised by how many said that they wanted to go to church services, perhaps less surprisingly many desired to have activities, find work, and generally do what needed done to successfully having their own place. Several were working full time jobs.*

What provisions have you looked at to provide adequate public transportation for homeless residing in such a facility?

*Transportation, both to and from the facility, for medical care, education, therapy, work and other uses has received a good deal of attention. The facility is located near existing bus stops but will not*

*have direct access to either Tudor or MLK, with entrances instead off the main arteries.*

What plans do you have for security patrols to protect homeless people, neighborhood businesses, residents and private and public property in nearby areas?

*Security and safety are the first two requisites for a successful Navigation Center. I do not know that security patrols will be a tactic employed, but security is a top priority. It is one of the primary reasons for siting the facility here.*

Assemblyman Christopher Constant who represents downtown is quoted in the 6/11/21 ADN as saying that “Putting 1000 people in one site costs that neighborhood their integrity.” How would you prevent that from happening?

*Again, we do not intend to place 1000 persons there. I am also not entirely sure what is meant by the phrase ‘a neighborhood losing its integrity.’ It is expected that the facility will operate at around the same size as the Sullivan, with the ability to increase capacity if actually needed. We hope to do better than we have at the Sullivan – an emergency shelter stood up in just a few days in a hockey rink. We have learned a lot from the experience and will bring that institutional knowledge to bear. The Bronson administration recognizes that those without homes are not the only victims of homelessness, and we when say our goal is to help everyone we mean it. Everyone includes the homed and the homeless.*