



SONJA DOSTI | COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

PHONE: 559 | 600-1224
EMAIL: sdosti@fresnocountyca.gov

AUGUST 15, 2024

THE FRESNO COUNTY ELKHORN FACILITY ALREADY APPROVED AS A MULTIPURPOSE LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING FACILITY, NOT FOR HOUSING

FRESNO, CA – Fresno County has received questions from the media about an agreement between the County and the City of Fresno to use the Elkhorn facility at 500 E. Elkhorn Avenue in Caruthers, CA (in District 4) as a potential shelter for the unhoused. One media outlet stated Councilmember Miguel Arias believes the Elkhorn facility should be converted into a shelter for the unhoused.

At the time of this media release, the County is unaware of any contact from the City regarding this matter; however, the County is willing to discuss with the City any viable city or county-owned sites that best meet the needs of the unhoused population.

On December 13, 2022, the Fresno County Board of Supervisors approved and authorized the Department of Public Works and Planning (PWP) to proceed with the preliminary design to transition the Elkhorn facility into a multipurpose training facility for law enforcement, funded by Proposition 172 revenues.

The Elkhorn facility would not be suitable as a homeless shelter for the following reasons:

- It is located approximately 15 miles outside of the metropolitan area.
 - o There are no city bus routes that travel to the Elkhorn facility and the walking distance to the nearest metro area would be approximately 6 hours.
- There are no behavioral health services near the Elkhorn facility, making it improbable to get the needed treatment to address the underlying causes of homelessness.
- There are no medical services near the Elkhorn facility.
- There are no social services offices near the Elkhorn facility, creating barriers for individuals to apply for benefits to which they may be entitled.

- There are no jobs near the Elkhorn facility.
- There are no government offices such as the DMV, Social Security, or the Recorder's Office near the Elkhorn facility for individuals to obtain documents when attempting to exit homelessness.
- The isolated location of the Elkhorn facility would remove unhoused individuals from their community and support systems which could exacerbate their situation.

Because of the location and lack of nearby essential offices and services needed for an individual to successfully exit homelessness, the County believes the Elkhorn facility would be unsuitable for the councilmember's alleged proposed use.

In addition, the County believes any proposed use of the Elkhorn facility for a homeless shelter would not be supported by the State due to their position on the importance of strategic shelter locations that provide accessible supportive services. The State has consistently communicated this position and expectation through requirements and guidelines for various homeless funding programs.

####