

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CITY RESPONSES

Comments received between March 18, 2022 and the close of the Public Comment period on April 19, 2022 are provided below along with the associated City response. All comments will be incorporated in the final submission of the plans to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). All text in *italics* are direct quotes of comments; text in regular font are synopses of comments due to length. All comments received via email and survey are posted below in full. Titles are self-reported by each respondent.

Ambassador Brian Kelly, resident of Council District 3: *Still desperately need Mobile Bathroom / shower trailers downtown and throughout the city. Really unfortunate it's taken this long when we have local manufactures capable of designing / building right here in our backyard.*

Downtown is still a food desert doesn't matter how many street eat events or food trucks we have parked people need nutritional fresh produce and the opportunity to buy them from local farmers. Partner with Arte America for weekly markets and highlight farm workers rights. Also financially support more local garden programs require new apt / housing to hold spaces for these as well.

[City Response:

- Throughout the City's consultation with the community during the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan process, members of the community did not identify having mobile bathrooms or shower trailers as one of the activities that should be funded through CDBG, ESG, HOPWA, or HOME. The City is mandated by federal law to pursue the goals outlined in the 5-year Consolidated Plan through its Annual Action plans. However, those services were identified as a priority for funding during the HOME-ARP community consultation phase and will be eligible for funding through that program.

The community did identify that "[r]ecreation, nutrition, and social services for seniors" should be funded, and in the 2021-2022 Annual Action Plan, the City funded a program to build community gardens for seniors in the Chinatown area of Fresno. The City did not receive applications to fund similar projects in the 2022-2023 Consolidated Notice of Funding Availability.

- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Kim Sorian, resident of District 4: *Let's please build housing right next to safe & clean transportation routes including bike lanes & cheap bike rentals!! Here are some more ideas down below. And please ensure the bullet train gets finished, especially at time when gas prices are very high!* <https://archive.curbed.com/a/texas-california/electric-cars-climate-change-sacramento-california>

[City Response:

- The City shares your desire for safe and clean transportation routes. In the 2020 Analysis of Impediments, the City noted that moderate-income members of the community spend an average of 71 percent of their household income on housing and transportation costs. To address that issue, the City formed a goal of increasing improvements to streets, curbs, sidewalks, and street lighting, particularly in parts of south Fresno, as part of its 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan. That plan informs all of the Annual Action Plans through 2024.
- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Karen Duvall, retiree and resident: *We feel [OASIS/PALS adult-day program] is a much needed community program. After Covid restrictions, there is a great need to get back to a more normal environment. Having had a mother who needed care we can appreciate this effort.*

[City Response:

- The Draft Program Yearly 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan includes funding for Valley Caregiver Resource Center to relaunch its OASIS Adult Day Care program. The Annual Action Plan will be taken to the City Council for consideration and final approval before submission to HUD.
- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Suraj Kairamkonda, owner of Right at Home In Home Care & Assistance: *I recommend OASIS adult-day program to be chosen by the City of Fresno*

[City Response:

- The Draft Program Yearly 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan includes funding for Valley Caregiver Resource Center to relaunch its OASIS Adult Day Care program. The Annual Action Plan will be taken to the City Council for consideration and final approval before submission to HUD.
- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Lily Gutierrez, caregiver and resident of District 5: *The Oasis and Adult programs that VCRC provide are extremely needed for our older and dementia seniors who need to socialize and a place where they enjoy. plus allowing a small break for the family caregiver. Please help us keep the doors open for a place for our loveone's to go spend a little time with other peers with the same brain disease and be with others to connect. Our loveone's desperately need this small time away from home.*

[City Response:

- The Draft Program Yearly 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan includes funding for Valley Caregiver Resource Center to relaunch its OASIS Adult Day Care program. The Annual Action Plan will be taken to the City Council for consideration and final approval before submission to HUD.
- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Tiffany Zambrano, nursing student and resident of District 4: *Please fund the reopening of Oasis Adult Day Program.*

[City Response:

- The Draft Program Yearly 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan includes funding for Valley Caregiver Resource Center to relaunch its OASIS Adult Day Care program. The Annual Action Plan will be taken to the City Council for consideration and final approval before submission to HUD.
- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Tina Valla, fiscal manager at Valley Caregiver Resource Center: *I support the funding the Community Block Grant for Valley Caregiver Resource Center.*

[City Response:

- The Draft Program Yearly 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan includes funding for Valley Caregiver Resource Center to relaunch its OASIS Adult Day Care program. The Annual Action Plan will be taken to the City Council for consideration and final approval before submission to HUD.
- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Natasha Ambriz on behalf of Central Valley Regional Center: *Detailed ... rent reasonableness should be clearly explained with examples of area costs. Appreciated the plain language of the checklists.*

[City Response:

- The City will work to include this information in future publications.
- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Terry Coleman: *Please support OASIS adult day program with funds to allow it to open again. My mother attended previously and it was a wonderful program to help her have activities with others who have dementia.*

[City Response:

- The Draft Program Yearly 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan includes funding for Valley Caregiver Resource Center to relaunch its OASIS Adult Day Care program. The Annual Action Plan will be taken to the City Council for consideration and final approval before submission to HUD.
- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Robin Shepard, resident: *The Oasis/Pals program was a tremendous resource for our family. My aging mother in law is 85 and enjoyed this program TREMENDOUSLY. It gave her a safe and stimulatingly environment and as a care giver it was a blessing to me also. Since the program has been closed we have not been able to find any other program like it. Our aging community has given much in their lives of hard work and sacrifice. This program is one way we*

can show our gratitude and give back. PLEASE SERIOUSLY CONSIDER ANYTHING YOU CAN DO TO BRING THIS PROGRAM BACK!!!

[City Response:

- The Draft Program Yearly 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan includes funding for Valley Caregiver Resource Center to relaunch its OASIS Adult Day Care program. The Annual Action Plan will be taken to the City Council for consideration and final approval before submission to HUD.
- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Jennifer Webb, HICAP Program Manager: *I support the Valley Caregiver Resource Center and the reopening of the OASIS adult day program.*

[City Response:

- The Draft Program Yearly 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan includes funding for Valley Caregiver Resource Center to relaunch its OASIS Adult Day Care program. The Annual Action Plan will be taken to the City Council for consideration and final approval before submission to HUD.
- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Edward Y Ramos, via email: *I would like to see funding be reinstated to support this program. It supports many individuals that need that day care for adults extra care to survive the day to day life support it takes to help cognitive support for many residents. You youngsters are the life support for us oldies, please support us older citizens.*

[City Response:

- The Draft Program Yearly 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan includes funding for Valley Caregiver Resource Center to relaunch its OASIS Adult Day Care program. The Annual Action Plan will be taken to the City Council for consideration and final approval before submission to HUD.
- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Stephanie Maruquez, resident of District 3: *I would like for there to be a bike path created in Edison. I also would like for sidewalks to be installed on every street in the area. I would also like to see more beautification with drought resistant plants in the area.*

[City Response:

- The City has applied for funding through the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) grant which will fund the installation of approximately 1,190 linear feet of sidewalks along the south side of California from Fruit to Thorne and along the north side of California between Kern and Pottle.

In 2017, the City adopted the Active Transportation Plan that includes prioritizing higher quality active transportation infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians.

- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Hope & Effort Appropriately Thriving (H.E.A.T) for South West Fresno Community, a group of residents living in Southwest Fresno:

The City held an in-person meeting on March 28, 2022 to discuss the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan. Below is a synopsis of the comments provided by the approximately 10 members who were in attendance:

- Public outreach can be improved by taking the funds used to publish public notices in the Fresno Bee and reappropriating them to door-hanger distribution or mailing notices through the United States Postal Services. Members felt that the Fresno Bee's circulation is expensive and largely digital
- Holding community meetings in Selland Arena, Chuckchansi Park, or the Save Mart Center would benefit public outreach
- Public service announcements should be made on television during the local news
- The City should coordinate with schools to distribute fliers to children for them to take home to their parents
- The City is not using the federal funds allocated through the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan to address blight in the Southwest Fresno area

[City Response:

- The City is looking to improve its outreach efforts wherever possible. The suggestions provided by members of H.E.A.T. will be considered for feasibility, and implementation methods considered feasible will be incorporated into future outreach efforts.

When the City consulted residents during the development of the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, they did not feel blight was a high enough priority for the federal funds administered through the Annual Action plans. As a result, the City primarily focuses on addressing homelessness, creating more affordable housing, funding community services, promoting fair housing practices, and programmatic compliance.

- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

The Disability Advisory Commission provided its comments via letter:

- Would like the City to look at its goals to provide decent, affordable housing, create suitable living environments, and expand economic opportunities through the lens of disability access
- CDBG funds should be used for public infrastructure barrier removal in accordance with the ADA Transition Plan
- Recommends continuing to partner with subject matter experts for greater understanding of the diverse needs amongst people with HIV/AIDS
- Would like to see funds go to more service providers for a greater diversity of choice, available options, and more effective assistance in available programs
- Wants to see a larger allocation to Fair Housing services with a greater emphasis on providing legal help for existing tenants to request reasonable accommodations
- Would like to see HOME funds made available for home modifications for people of any age who have acquired disabilities. Should also include people who rent homes (with permission of the property owner)

- It would also like to see different metrics used to define “success.” Recommends reporting the extent to which a person was assisted
- Would like to see more funding allocations toward increasing options for duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, tiny houses, and mixed-use rental homes that can be located in established neighborhoods
- Wants funding to be made available for mental health support services
- Would like more afterschool programs available to more youth
- Would like the City to work toward a more robust outreach effort to provide people who are served by these funds with opportunities to provide input

[City Response:

- The City will continue to work to be as inclusive as possible in its decision-making process and the programs it chooses to implement. The goal of reducing barriers to access along the City’s roadways is achieved through the work of the Department of Public Works in consideration of the ADA Transition Plan.

While the City is excited about the partnerships it has developed through this and previous Annual Action Plans, it continues to work to develop additional partnerships to grow the level of access provided to Fresnans.

The City uses metrics that are outlined by federal regulations; however, it will take into consideration expanding those metrics for City reporting purposes.

The City is continuing to expand its outreach efforts year-over-year. With COVID-19 restrictions on staff being reduced, more in-person meetings have the opportunity to occur for future Action Plans. The added flexibility of in-person meetings alongside the virtual meetings the City has implemented over the past two years will help residents become more informed about opportunities for public comment.

- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Nicole Linder sent an email on behalf of the Marjaree Mason Center. Below is an excerpt:

- *Although we have been grateful for your past support from CDBG funds for renovations of parts of the shelter, previous ESG, CARES Act dollars and Emergency Rental Assistance, and those dollars all provided survivors in our community with safe shelter, there is nothing in this 2022 Annual Action Plan budget or on any City of Fresno homeless planning documents that would suggest there is consideration of housing resources for survivors starting June 1, 2022.*

[City Response:

- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Priscilla Meza sent an email on behalf of Rape Crisis Advocates of Fresno. Below is an excerpt:

- *As the City of Fresno looks to create and fund a comprehensive action plan to address the issue of homelessness, it is imperative that this plan includes strategies to adequately and effectively meet the housing needs of survivors impacted by sexual assault, domestic violence and human trafficking and at risk of experiencing*

homelessness as a result of their assaults. Having access to safe shelter/housing is a basic human right and a core issue in the advocacy work provided by RCS Fresno, along with the advocacy work provided by our community advocacy partners.

[City Response:

- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Michaela Bennet provided a public comment via email:

- Would like to see the City implement programs like Santa Barbara's Safe Parking Lots program and Mountain View's Life Moves' program

[City Response:

- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Brandi Nuse-Villegas submitted a comment via email:

- Would like to see eviction protections, right to counsel, funding for other potential programs (e.g. deposit program) incorporated into the Annual Action Plan
- Wants to see greater outreach and assistance to renters navigating tenants rights
- Would like to see an organization other than Poverello House chosen to assist the HART team. States that Poverello House staff lack mental health outreach training
- Would like to see a committee formed of unhoused and recently unhouse (i.e. housed for less than two years) to assist in finding ways to address concerns affecting the unhoused
- Wants Wifi and surveys available at all shelters. Would like to see surveys made available during outreach efforts, at libraries, and on bus signage. These efforts could gain feedback on current and proposed projects and give information about upcoming City meetings

[City Response:

- The public comment has been considered and accepted.]

Exhibit 1: Survey Response – Brian Kelly (1 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

#1

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, March 28, 2022 4:39:34 PM
Last Modified: Monday, March 28, 2022 4:49:33 PM
Time Spent: 00:09:58
IP Address: 174.208.169.190

Page 1

Q1 **Homeless and Homelessness Prevention, Community Services**
Which priority areas are you commenting on? Select all that apply.

Q2
Please give your input or comment on the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan
Still desperately need Mobile Bathroom / shower trailers downtown and throughout the city
Really unfortunate it's taken this long when we have local manufactures capable of designing / building right here in our backyard
Downtown is still a food desert doesn't matter how many street eat events or food trucks we have parked people need nutritional fresh produce and the opportunity to buy them from local farmers Partner with Arte America for weekly markets and highlight farm workers rights Also financially support more local garden programs require new apt / housing to hold spaces for these as well

Q3
Name
BK

Q4 **I am a resident**
Which choice best applies to you?

Q5 **District 3**
In which Council District do you live? If you are unsure, please go to <https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/council-district-locator/>

Q6
Title
Ambassador

Exhibit 1: Survey Response – Brian Kelly (2 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

Q7

Email Address

briankellyvb@gmail.com

Q8

Yes

Sign up for email updates from the City of Fresno's
Housing and Community Development Division

Exhibit 2: Survey Response – Kim Sorian (1 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

#2

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 7:51:15 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 7:55:17 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:02
IP Address: 116.86.57.152

Page 1

Q1

Which priority areas are you commenting on? Select all that apply.

**Affordable Housing,
Public Infrastructure and Facilities,
Community Services**

Q2

Please give your input or comment on the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan

Let's please build housing right next to safe & clean transportation routes including bike lanes & cheap bike rentals!! Here are some more ideas down below. And please ensure the bullet train gets finished, especially at time when gas prices are very high!
<https://archive.curbed.com/a/texas-california/electric-cars-climate-change-sacramento-california>

Q3

Name

Kim Sorian

Q4

Which choice best applies to you?

I am a resident

Q5

In which Council District do you live? If you are unsure, please go to <https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/council-district-locator/>

District 4

Q6

Title

Respondent skipped this question

Q7

Email Address

Respondent skipped this question

3 / 24

Exhibit 2: Survey Response – Kim Sorian (2 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

Q8

No

Sign up for email updates from the City of Fresno's
Housing and Community Development Division

Exhibit 3: Survey Response – Karen A Duvall (1 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, April 04, 2022 3:24:31 PM
Last Modified: Monday, April 04, 2022 3:31:36 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:04
IP Address: 107.209.225.200

Page 1

Q1

Which priority areas are you commenting on? Select all that apply.

Community Services,

Other (please specify):
OASIS/PALS ADULT-DAY PROGRAM

Q2

Please give your input or comment on the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan

We feel this is a much needed community program. After Covid restrictions, there is a great need to get back to a more normal environment. Having had a mother who needed care we can appreciate this effort

Q3

Name

Karen A Duvall

Q4

Which choice best applies to you?

I am a resident

Q5

In which Council District do you live? If you are unsure, please go to <https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/council-district-locator/>

Respondent skipped this question

Q6

Title

retired

5 / 24

Exhibit 3: Survey Response – Karen A Duvall (2 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

Q7

Email Address

woodcrestmorgans@aol.com

Q8

No

Sign up for email updates from the City of Fresno's
Housing and Community Development Division

Exhibit 4: Survey Response – Suraj Kairamkonda (1 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, April 04, 2022 3:26:49 PM
Last Modified: Monday, April 04, 2022 3:32:35 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:46
IP Address: 122.161.114.128

Page 1

Q1 **Community Services**

Which priority areas are you commenting on? Select all that apply.

Q2

Please give your input or comment on the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan

I recommend OASIS adult-day program to be chosen by the City of Fresno

Q3

Name

Suraj Kairamkonda

Q4

I am commenting on behalf of an organization

Which choice best applies to you?

Q5

District 4

In which Council District do you live? If you are unsure, please go to <https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/council-district-locator/>

Q6

Title

Owner

Q7

Email Address

SURAJK@RAHFRESNO.COM

7 / 24

Exhibit 4: Survey Response – Suraj Kairamkonda (2 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

Q8

Yes

Sign up for email updates from the City of Fresno's
Housing and Community Development Division

Exhibit 5: Survey Response – Lily Gutierrez (1 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

#5

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, April 04, 2022 9:08:51 PM
Last Modified: Monday, April 04, 2022 9:24:11 PM
Time Spent: 00:15:19
IP Address: 75.106.161.5

Page 1

Q1

Which priority areas are you commenting on? Select all that apply.

Community Services,

Other (please specify):
the OASIS and Adult program that Valley Caregiver Resource Center

Q2

Please give your input or comment on the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan

The Oasis and Adult programs that VCRC provide are extremely needed for our older and dementia seniors who need to socialize and a place where they enjoy. plus allowing a small break for the family caregiver. Please help us keep the doors open for a place for our loveone's to go spend a little time with other peers with the same brain disease and be with others to connect. Our loveone's desperately need this small time away from home.

Q3

Name

Lily Gutierrez

Q4

Which choice best applies to you?

I am a resident

Q5

In which Council District do you live? If you are unsure, please go to <https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/council-district-locator/>

District 5

Q6

Title

caregiver

Exhibit 5: Survey Response – Lily Gutierrez (2 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

Q7

Email Address

lilyg453@aol.com

Q8

Yes

Sign up for email updates from the City of Fresno's
Housing and Community Development Division

Exhibit 6: Survey Response – Tiffany Zambrano (1 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, April 05, 2022 5:06:49 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, April 05, 2022 5:16:22 AM
Time Spent: 00:09:32
IP Address: 73.41.199.80

Page 1

Q1

Which priority areas are you commenting on? Select all that apply.

None of the above,

Other (please specify):
OASIS Adult Day Program

Q2

Please give your input or comment on the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan

Please fund the reopening of Oasis Adult Day Program

Q3

Name

Tiffany Zambrano

Q4

Which choice best applies to you?

I am a resident

Q5

In which Council District do you live? If you are unsure, please go to <https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/council-district-locator/>

District 4

Q6

Title

Student of RN

Exhibit 6: Survey Response – Tiffany Zambrano (2 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

Q7

Email Address

tiffanyalva@yahoo.com

Q8

No

Sign up for email updates from the City of Fresno's
Housing and Community Development Division

Exhibit 7: Survey Response – Tina Valla (1 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, April 05, 2022 8:22:20 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, April 05, 2022 8:33:00 AM
Time Spent: 00:10:40
IP Address: 50.73.54.115

Page 1

Q1

Community Services

Which priority areas are you commenting on? Select all that apply.

Q2

Please give your input or comment on the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan

I support the funding the Community Block Grant for Valley Caregiver Resource Center.

Q3

Name

Tina Valla

Q4

I am commenting on behalf of an organization

Which choice best applies to you?

Q5

Respondent skipped this question

In which Council District do you live? If you are unsure, please go to <https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/council-district-locator/>

Q6

Title

Fiscal Manager

Q7

Email Address

tvalla@sbcglobal.net

Exhibit 7: Survey Response – Tina Valla (2 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

Q8

No

Sign up for email updates from the City of Fresno's
Housing and Community Development Division

Exhibit 8: Survey Response – Natasha Ambriz (1 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

#8

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, April 05, 2022 9:09:36 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, April 05, 2022 9:15:01 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:25
IP Address: 96.71.192.233

Page 1

Q1

Which priority areas are you commenting on? Select all that apply.

**Homeless and Homelessness Prevention,
Affordable Housing,
Community Services**

Q2

Please give your input or comment on the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan

Detailed ... rent reasonableness should be clearly explained with examples of area costs. Appreciated the plain language of the checklists

Q3

Name

natasha

Q4

Which choice best applies to you?

I am commenting on behalf of an organization

Q5

In which Council District do you live? If you are unsure, please go to <https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/council-district-locator/>

Respondent skipped this question

Q6

Title

Respondent skipped this question

Q7

Email Address

nambriz@cvrc.org

15 / 24

Exhibit 8: Survey Response – Natasha Ambriz (2 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

Q8

No

Sign up for email updates from the City of Fresno's
Housing and Community Development Division

Exhibit 9: Survey Response – Terry Coleman (1 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

#9

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, April 05, 2022 9:14:09 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, April 05, 2022 9:18:56 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:46
IP Address: 73.235.155.228

Page 1

Q1

Community Services

Which priority areas are you commenting on? Select all that apply.

Q2

Please give your input or comment on the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan

Please support OASIS adult day program with funds to allow it to open again. My mother attended previously and it was a wonderful program to help her have activities with others who have dementia.

Q3

Name

TERRY COLEMAN

Q4

I am commenting on behalf of an organization

Which choice best applies to you?

Q5

District 6

In which Council District do you live? If you are unsure, please go to <https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/council-district-locator/>

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Title

Q7

Email Address

amgbkr@aol.com

Exhibit 9: Survey Response – Terry Coleman (2 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

Q8

No

Sign up for email updates from the City of Fresno's
Housing and Community Development Division

Exhibit 10: Survey Response – Robin Shepard (1 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, April 05, 2022 10:26:50 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, April 05, 2022 10:35:40 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:50
IP Address: 73.48.172.224

Page 1

Q1

Which priority areas are you commenting on? Select all that apply.

Community Services,

Other (please specify):
Oasis/Pals Program

Q2

Please give your input or comment on the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan

The Oasis/Pals program was a tremendous resource for our family. My aging mother in law is 85 and enjoyed this program TREMENDOUSLY. It gave her a safe and stimulatingly environment and as a care giver it was a blessing to me also. Since the program has been closed we have not been able to find any other program like it. Our aging community has given much in their lives of hard work and sacrifice. This program is one way we can show our gratitude and give back. PLEASE SERIOUSLY CONSIDER ANYTHING YOU CAN DO TO BRING THIS PROGRAM BACK!!!

Q3

Name

Robin Shepard

Q4

Which choice best applies to you?

I am a resident

Q5

In which Council District do you live? If you are unsure, please go to <https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/council-district-locator/>

Respondent skipped this question

Q6

Title

Respondent skipped this question

Exhibit 10: Survey Response – Robin Shepard (2 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

Q7

Email Address

robshep50@gmail.com

Q8

Respondent skipped this question

Sign up for email updates from the City of Fresno's
Housing and Community Development Division

Exhibit 11: Survey Response – Jennifer Webb (1 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

#11

INCOMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, April 06, 2022 9:28:11 AM
Last Modified: Wednesday, April 06, 2022 9:29:47 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:36
IP Address: 50.73.54.115

Page 1

Q1 **Community Services**

Which priority areas are you commenting on? Select all that apply.

Q2

Please give your input or comment on the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan

I support the Valley Caregiver Resource Center and the reopening of the OASIS adult day program

Q3

Name

Jennifer Webb

Q4

I am commenting on behalf of an organization

Which choice best applies to you?

Q5

District 1

In which Council District do you live? If you are unsure, please go to <https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/council-district-locator/>

Q6

Title

HICAP Program Manager

Q7

Email Address

jwebb@valleycrc.org

Exhibit 11: Survey Response – Jennifer Webb (2 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

Q8

Yes

Sign up for email updates from the City of Fresno's
Housing and Community Development Division

Exhibit 12: Survey Response – Stephanie Marquez (1 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

#12

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, April 11, 2022 1:14:32 PM
Last Modified: Monday, April 11, 2022 1:18:40 PM
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Page 1

Q1

Public Infrastructure and Facilities,

Which priority areas are you commenting on? Select all that apply.

Community Services

Q2

Please give your input or comment on the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan

I would like for there to be a bike path created in Edison. I also would like for sidewalks to be installed on every street in the area. I would also like to see more beautification with drought resistant plants in the area.

Q3

Name

Stephanie

Q4

I am a resident

Which choice best applies to you?

Q5

District 3

In which Council District do you live? If you are unsure, please go to <https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/council-district-locator/>

Q6

Respondent skipped this question

Title

Q7

Email Address

Stephanie.marquez.209@gmail.com

Exhibit 12: Survey Response – Stephanie Marquez (2 of 2)

2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Public Comment

Q8

Yes

Sign up for email updates from the City of Fresno's
Housing and Community Development Division

Exhibit 13: Email Response – Nicole Linder (1 of 3)

From: Nicole Linder [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 5:03 PM
To: HCDD <HCDD@fresno.gov>; Clerk <Clerk@fresno.gov>
Cc: Nicole Linder [REDACTED]
Subject: 2022 Action Plan

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Dear Mayor Dyer, Council President Esparza and members of the Fresno City Council,

I am writing today in response to the 2022 Annual Action plan as listed on the Council agenda for April 28, 2022.

Although most of the community doesn't equate homelessness with domestic violence, human trafficking and sexual assault, survivors DO fall homeless when their own nighttime sleeping arrangements are unsafe. In addition, those who are forced to live on the street are re-victimized. Although not visible to the public on a regular basis, these thousands of victims, often times with their children, NEED safe emergency shelter and longer-term housing supports in the same way that the street homeless population needs. Federal confidentiality mandates through the Violence Against Women Act requires the most strict levels of confidentiality, often meaning that the numbers of these types of individuals in need of housing are not even provided to you.

Although I am most familiar with domestic violence numbers, I know we have significant human trafficking and sexual assault problems in our community and the housing needs and confidentiality protections of those survivors parallels that of domestic violence. **The City of Fresno ranks #1 in per capita calls to law enforcement for domestic violence in the entire state of California.** And we all know that many survivors don't even engage law enforcement. Nationwide, domestic violence is reported as the leading cause of homelessness for women and also the leading cause for preventable death for women ages 18-44. A year ago this month, True Cindy Vang was murdered by her husband in the City of Fresno, leaving behind 6 children. Back then we were outraged. We were outraged again by the consecutive domestic violence murders that continued throughout the year. Last year, there were 8 DV related deaths in Fresno County. Almost all of the victims were mothers with children who are now left behind. That does not include attempted homicides (often shootings) in which survivors lived but their lives have been impacted forever. This does not include an 8-year-old girl, Maria Ortiz, killed by an automobile on Friant road when she got out of a vehicle where her mother was being abused by her partner. We must change these statistics!

Last year, Marjaree Mason Center assisted 7,691 adults and children. Of those, 5,851 were from the City of Fresno. The majority of clients served were either Hispanic (53%), Caucasian (18%) or African American (13%). 68% of clients served last year reported earning no income of their own. Of the households that did report an income (1,668 adults), 63% reported making less than \$15,000 per year.

Exhibit 13: Email Response – Nicole Linder (2 of 3)

This means that 97% of all MMC households were considered low-moderate income and lived below the poverty line. When looking at homeless vulnerability, typically a ViSPDAT is conducted to indicate a person's likelihood of dying on the streets. At Marjaree Mason Center, not only do we conduct a ViSPDAT on individuals coming to us for help, we also conduct a lethality risk assessment. This evidence-based law enforcement screening tool is a 15-question survey that is used to measure the level of physical danger an individual in an abusive relationship is in. A score above 5 is considered severely high risk for lethality and over the last year, MMC's clients collectively scored an average of 10.6.

We are grateful to have a strong partnership with Fresno Police Department, where Marjaree Mason Center advocates partner with both patrol officers and the domestic violence detectives to respond out to calls and also follow up on domestic violence crimes. For decades, the officers have been accustomed to responding to domestic violence calls, being able to offer emergency protective orders and transportation to the Marjaree Mason Center for safe shelter. And although safe emergency shelter is the costliest of our multiple services, it is a critical first step in providing safety, transformation and hope that ultimately changes the trajectory of life for the adults and children we serve. This service, however, is primarily funded through private donations due to a lack of available dollars for emergency shelters and a redirection of the existing emergency shelter dollars to fund programs designated for street homeless populations (almost exclusively single individuals). I so grateful to tax payers in our community for their private philanthropic support to make sure that the emergency shelter resources were sustained to bridge the gap between public dollars and annual costs.

Although we have long looked at the financial toll street homelessness takes on our, already stretched community systems, domestic violence does the same. If you look at the resources spent on law enforcement, the courts, the jails, increased social services, hospitals, emergency services, mental health services, employment turn over, etc, you would see that providing both preventative measures and immediate solutions would be most cost effective.

Although we have been grateful for your past support from CDBG funds for renovations of parts of the shelter, previous ESG, CARES Act dollars and Emergency Rental Assistance, and those dollars all provided survivors in our community with safe shelter, there is nothing in this 2022 Annual Action Plan budget or on any City of Fresno homeless planning documents that would suggest there is consideration of housing resources for survivors starting June 1, 2022.

Fresno has MULTIPLE public health crises, one of which is domestic violence. Providing adequate housing is only one of the components to the solution, but is an ingredient that can NOT be ignored. Enormous City resources, paid dedicated staff, council commissions and significant dollars (blended of local, state and federal) have been used to attack street homelessness. They are being done in a collaborative manner with the County and Fresno Madera Continuum of Care. I am asking the city to also invest time and resources to create and fund a comprehensive and sustainable plan that adequately and effectively meets the housing needs of survivors in our community.

I want to personally thank you and commend you for your decision to provide funding (CARES Act and other resources) for the Marjaree Mason Center and other victim service providers during the COVID pandemic. The design of Marjaree Mason Center's existing structure did not allow for us to provide shelter that met COVID safety guidelines. In addition, we faced unprecedented numbers that our small non-profit could not meet alone. Without your support, countless families would have been turned away and our DV homicide numbers would have likely been even higher.

Domestic violence ONLY rises to a level that a community is willing to accept. Fresno has a history of taking insurmountable challenges and turning them into success stories. It's what got us designated as an All-American City. I am totally confident that the work will be challenging, but together, we can significantly reduce violence in our community and move toward the vibrant, healthy future to which each of you is firmly committed.

Exhibit 13: Email Response – Nicole Linder (3 of 3)

Thank you,
Nicole

Nicole DiBuduo Linder

Executive Director

Marjaree Mason Center

559-487-1319

1600 M Street | Fresno, CA 93721

Socialize with MMC: mmcenter.org | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#)

Exhibit 14: Email Response – Brandi Nuse-Villegas (1 of 4)

From: Brandi Nuse-Villegas [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 8:46 PM
To: HCDD <HCDD@fresno.gov>
Subject: Public comments on Annual Action Plan

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

-
-
- Housing Services
 - -
 -
 -
 - The document states that the Here To Stay report was referenced in the priorities. I would like
 - to see this reflected in the plan, such as eviction protections, Right to Counsel funding, funding for other potential programs, including a deposit program, and such. Also, greater outreach and assistance to renters in navigating tenants rights.
 -
-
-
- Homeless Services
 - - 1.
 - 2.
 3. Regarding the potential funding partner, Poverello House for the HART Team. While outreach is needed,
 4. one of the major points that many community members noted was the

Exhibit 14: Email Response – Brandi Nuse-Villegas (2 of 4)

need for mental health services, for mental health providers to be part of outreach, and that all people who have contact with the unhoused be trained in “mental health first aid.” This is imperative,

5. as it affects service to those who are unhoused. For example, I was out at an encampment clean up and several women dealt with extreme anxiety disorders that were activated when they were being asked to move their belongings. Currently, there was no outreach
6. worker assisting them and instead, unpaid advocates were with them. I have assisted a person who was resistant to going to a shelter because she was afraid to ride in the van and advocates negotiated an alternative to get there. We have also observed that
7. based on past trauma and mental health issues, the unhoused may have difficulty interacting with outreach and law enforcement and may even be resistant to services and shelter due to anxiety and perception and may need assistance. They may seem “combatant”
8. because of this and need someone who understands, can de-escalate and assist them. Others struggle when law enforcement is involved and if law enforcement is engaging the unhoused, those who have mental health training should be with them at all times. Considering
9. that being homeless causes people to suffer mental health problems, including from assault, traumatic loss, exploitation, etc, successful outreach to the unhoused is crucial. The agency proposed for this team doesn't have people who are trained in mental health
10. and their services do not include assistance to the unhoused during all part of HART interactions. The team also has not included client centered requests, such as including in their outreach reason why people may not accept services in order to identify areas
11. of improvement. Though they may not have responded to the NOFA, agencies such as Kings View, who do outreach for the county and are trusted by the Fresno Police Department to do crisis response, would be more appropriate. Also, for any outreach, there should
12. be development of outreach from in-depth understanding of the perspective of those who are unhoused.
- 13.

Outreach must not only be client centered, but trauma informed, and this must be part of their program.. Outreach should include those trained to work with specific needs, such as survivors of sex trafficking, survivors of domestic violence, etc.

1.

Exhibit 14: Email Response – Brandi Nuse-Villegas (3 of 4)

- 2.
3. I ask that the HCDD includes mental health services, for the shelters, for outreach, and training
4. for all who work with the unhoused. One unhoused person requested a mobile mental health service to attend to them. I understand that mental health is considered a county issue, but as the city and county partner with one another, there must be a way to ensure
5. this vital service is included in the continuum of care.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
9. I continue to request that within the plan, funding be given to include substantial engagement
10. with the unhoused community in the form of some sort of committee made up of the unhoused and the recently housed (less than two years, as the situation and concerns affecting the unhoused change rapidly in the city), as well as finding ways to address and
11. overcome accessible issues and lack of involvement of the unhoused, such as surveys done during outreach and available at shelters, town halls at the shelters to identify needs and give feedback on current and proposed projects, access to wifi and inclusion/information
12. about city meetings at the shelters and libraries, signage at bus stops, etc.
- 13.

-
-
- Please consider KAHOOTS as a program.
-
-
- We need more services to unhoused youth.
-
-
- Please include funding wi-fi in all shelters. This is vital as people use it to access services,
- make appointment, do online appointments, and other tasks most of us take for granted.
-

-
-
- **Programmatic compliance (page 9):**
-

1.

Exhibit 14: Email Response – Brandi Nuse-Villegas (4 of 4)

- 2.
3. *"The*
4. *City of Fresno will use grant funding to conduct public participation in support of planning activities"*.
5. In general, the City of Fresno's efforts to gain public participation have been in drastic need of improvement and generally poor, reaching a very small part of the population, though some departments have had more extensive reach than others. The funding
6. should be used to have a dedicated position of someone trained in community relations with social media experience and on the ground experience to improve the scope and quality of community outreach and the organization of community based meetings. Focus should
7. be on accessibility for all; looking into what may keep a community member from learning about and also participating in these meetings. Funding should be invested in expanding the reach of the publicity of meetings to include postings that are visible to
8. the unhoused, email lists, postcards, etc in all languages, communicated in a way that allows people to understand the purpose of the meeting and why they should engage. The city websites should include easy to use and easy to find information on all committees
9. and meetings in the same place (there are commissions and committees with meetings that are not posted on the city calendar and difficult to find. All city sponsored meetings should be easily viewed and accessible. A mailing list, such as some departments
10. and committees do, should be created to send information on all public meetings and be easy to understand.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
14. Third party review and assessments should be done and made public regarding the progress and performance
15. of vendors in meeting the program goals and requirements. There should be a means of public input in this. There must be transparency on each program.
- 16.

Exhibit 15: Email Response – Michaela Bennet (1 of 6)

From: Michaela Bennett [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 6:45 PM
To: HCDD <HCDD@fresno.gov>; Clerk <Clerk@fresno.gov>
Cc: Brandi Nuse-Villegas [REDACTED] >; Amber Crowell [REDACTED] >; Janine Nikosi [REDACTED] >
Subject: Public Comment : Agenda 2022 (Housing)

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Public Comments Due: April 19, 2022

Hello,

1. Fresno's Continued Failures

I've read the draft report, and Fresno continues to get it wrong when it comes to solving homelessness.

This wrong-headed approach will continue to NOT solve the homeless crisis.

There aren't new, safe solutions being proposed such as a Safe Parking Lots Program like Santa Barbara, Ca's established, viable solution to one part of the problem, homeless singles, couples, and families in vehicles. Giving them a safe place to sleep at night, and case management.

There are no fast, safe housing solutions like Life Moves' in Mountain View, CA (Santa Clara County/Silicon Valley) cargo container apartments, made in four months in the East Bay, and up to all codes. They come in family size or single size, and can be seen on YouTube.

2. Fresno's Untrue Stigmas About Homeless

The same untrue dangerous stigmas and unacceptable solutions are perpetuated by Fresno, and by the same stakeholders given money (Poverello, Westcare, Fresno Rescue Mission, Continuum of Care).

A. None of these organizations can cite the research data: 74% of homeless people are NOT substance users, but have had a major destabilizing event like a medical

Exhibit 15: Email Response – Michaela Bennet (2 of 6)

problem, job loss, loss of housing.

B. It takes a whopping 3 to 20 yrs to be approved for Social Security disability income, when you know what you're doing. Most people have to get an attorney to appeal their case at the federal level.

C. Most of the medically sick whom I've met on Fresno, Ca's streets aren't getting a dime of Social Security disability income.

I describe the situation as akin to asking someone who survived a car crash to climb Mt. Everest! It's designed for failure. Few will EVER make it.

Social Security has intentionally destabilized our sick, creating chaos for them and our communities.

D. The cheapskates at Social Security didn't save our communities a dime, but have driven costs in other categories through the ceiling such as hospitalizations for worsening, acute medical conditions.

3. Attorney Emily A. Benefer on the East Coast (who works for the White House at present), writes about housing. She has written that, "Housing is health." So true. The lack of shelter, protection from the elements, a kitchen, safe drinking water, a bathroom, showers, creates very serious medical problems.

4. Substance Use Is NOT Common Among Majority of Homeless

Only 26% of our homeless are substance users, usually with a co-occurring mental health problem.

5. I'm A Former Paralegal, A's College, Fresno's Free Auditor of This Failed Housing System

I'm the system's "free auditor". Me: age 60, SF Bay Area native, priced out due to high housing costs. (I moved to Fresno, CA, five years ago for the cheaper cost of housing and to obtain another degree at Fresno State. My plans were derailed by repeated hospitalizations for life-long epilepsy problems (too much electrical activity in the brain which causes seizures, the side effects of anti-seizure medications (major depressive disorder seen in more than 55% of epileptics which requires separate medical care), diagnosed at Stanford, 1968, age 6).

I am a former paralegal, worked for Silicon Valley law firms, A's college, Mock Trial Winner, no smoking, drinking, drugs, crimes, or tickets.

I changed California law for crime victims and I got the Safe at Home Program passed to give more protections to California's high-risk domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking victims. It took me four years of hard work, and I testified before a California State Senate committee.

Exhibit 15: Email Response – Michaela Bennet (3 of 6)

I was inspired by a letter to newspaper columnist "Dear Abby" by Washington Secretary of State Ralph Munro about their state's ground breaking law and program, after a stalking victim contacted them that she could not vote, a public record.

Washington state officials mentored me in getting a duplicate law passed into California law. They advised me how to overcome obstacles in Sacramento.

6. Lepers' Colony Mentality

Fresno's Lepers' Colony mentality to law-abiding, educated, hardworking people, that we must have broken moral compasses and need to be in dangerous neighborhoods, is wrong, deeply offensive, discriminatory, and most likely actionable in court.

That's why Fresno has so few takers. People want peace, calm, and stability, to live their best possible lives and contribute to our community.

7. Failures of Poverello

The employees have a poor work ethic, fail to meet promises and deadlines, and there is a high turn over of employees.

I have never had the MAP Point trailer group meet a single promise to house me, a law-abiding former paralegal with life-long epilepsy.

Fresno doesn't treat these appointments in a professional manner, like medical appointments.

Instead law-abiding clients, those with disabilities, and senior citizens have to walk a gauntlet of rape, murder, battery, robbery, and human trafficking threats.

Fresno needs to have a safe, professional alternative site for services.

8. About My First Amendment Rights As An Epileptic

Fresno's forcing us all to go through the Fresno Rescue Mission to get a letter of homelessness is deeply offensive.

I DID NOT forfeit my First Amendment rights to my faith to the Fresno Rescue Mission because I have a brain condition, epilepsy.

The Fresno Rescue Mission has no training in the brain, no medical degrees, and they can do zero for me.

I have been treated at Stanford since age 6. They have medical degrees, and specialists in epilepsy.

The Fresno Rescue Mission was a vile, filthy disgusting environment. Their Rescue the Children out on Highway 99 was equally vile. They kicked out vulnerable women

Exhibit 15: Email Response – Michaela Bennet (4 of 6)

with serious medical conditions and left them to walk more than six miles to Poverello in the morning. The women had been taken out there by minivan.

9. Where Are Fresno's Audits and Surveys

Fresno has a bad habit of not listening to intelligent homeless people who can tell you what's wrong with the system.

One senior told me about the lack of cell phone charging stations at Poverello.

A middle-aged veteran, highly educated with cancer, told me that he had been the victim of an attempted rape at the Fresno Rescue Mission. He has told homeless vets to NEVER stay there.

It is important to fix problems early and fast. It is important to survey clients in a variety of ways.

No county case workers went out to meet the two elderly senior citizens (women) staying in the medical respite room at Rescue the Children.

Valuable time to stabilize them was lost. Why didn't their stay trigger automatic case management?

Rescue the Children was permitted to expel these two senior citizens, whom I saw at Poverello.

I am used to working for deadline driven, high-performing Bay Area law firms.

I am not used to Fresno's lax attitude about deadlines, and meeting goals.

Fresno has bought a troubled, lax, unprofessional homeless Services' system by not requiring yearly professional audits, medical audits, and a modicum of training on the major issues.

10. Unprofessional Supervisors

I was kicked out of Naomi House at Poverello on the trumped up charge of prescription drug theft of an elderly woman's medication.

Keisha, the Naomi House manager, did not comply with California law as a mandated reporter. She did not immediately file reports with Fresno Police and Fresno County Adult Protective Services.

Keisha's failure to report are crimes on her part under CA law.

Keisha hated my guts as a law-abiding, educated paralegal who gave her pushback on her and her staff's unlawful orders.

Exhibit 15: Email Response – Michaela Bennet (5 of 6)

There are security cameras everywhere the size of bowling balls, including on the street. Fresno Police would have had an easy time refuting Keisha's story.

As an epileptic, I can't even take Tylenol or drink alcohol, as they will damage my liver when combined with anti-seizure medications.

Take someone's medication? Perish the thought! My life depends on my own epilepsy medications twice a day for 54 yrs.

A. Another middle aged Black woman knee surgery patient was kicked out of Naomi House by Keisha, in front of me, for taking a nap in her car when Naomi House was closed.

Keisha took reprisals against the knee surgery client for her report to Fresno Police that her narcotic pain killer medication was stolen from Naomi House.

B. A second woman, middle aged Black woman educator with a Master's degree (she had me read it on my computer), lost her career and home due to the onset of mental illness.

She was kicked out of Naomi House for bumping her laundry sack, a hand sewn gift from me, that she was taking down from a storage shelf in the shed.

She became the rape victim in People of CA v Micah Collins.

Naomi House staffs' unprofessionalism cost the victim who sustained life threatening injuries and was in the hospital for more than a month, and every agency in the area, Fresno Police detectives, the California Courts, jurors, district attorney's ofc prosecutor, public defender's, the sheriff's, and the corrections system (Collins was convicted and sentenced to 40+ yrs). That case alone has cost tax payers to the tune of tens of millions of dollars.

A woman with a brain malfunction was further damaged, when she needed safety and support. Services.

C. Human Trafficking

Another woman has warned homeless women to NEVER stay at Naomi House.

She said she was drugged and trafficked through Naomi House, had to escape human traffickers.

The entire "low barrier shelter" is a total failure. It's a code phrase for "violent st gang dominated".

11. Failure to Grid the City of Fresno, Outreach

Fresno continues to fail to build trust with homeless people. Water, coffee, new

Exhibit 15: Email Response – Michaela Bennet (6 of 6)

tshirts, new socks, athletes' cream, and basic medical care. Mobile laundry and showers.

Fresno does not establish rapport and trust, including using Fresno State students (Nursing and Social Work, UCSF residents, etc).

12. Stipends

It is important to build a stipend fund and get the state, philanthropists, religious groups and charities to give to it.

Locals need a monthly stipend to show they have some income. Facebook employees did this for LifeMoves homeless clients in Mountain View, CA.

13. Conclusion

Please improve on all fronts. Don't wait to be sued into changing.

Research best practices that have worked for other communities, and do the same in Fresno.

Thank you

Regards,

Ms. Michaela Bennett

[REDACTED]
Fresno, CA 93701

Exhibit 16: Email Response – Priscilla Meza (1 of 2)

From: Priscilla Meza [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 6:03 PM
To: HCDD <HCDD@fresno.gov>
Subject: 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan

External Email: Use caution with links and attachments

Good afternoon,

This email is in response to the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan (AAP) for Housing and Community Development recently posted. Sexual assault is a most intimate crime, and when it happens in our most intimate sanctuaries, the trauma is devastating and difficult to escape. According to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, “the majority of sexual assaults take place in or near victim’s homes or the homes of victims’ friends, relatives or neighbors”. Thus, for many survivors of sexual violence, home often is not safe. On average, Rape Counseling Services of Fresno (RCS Fresno) provides direct services to 1,400 survivors of sexual violence each year. Less than half of these survivors (about 44%) have reported their assaults to local law enforcement and nearly 86% knew their perpetrators (*i.e., friend, relative, partner, acquaintance, etc.*). If a survivor must leave their home, whether to get away from the constant triggers, or due to an eviction, or in order to flee the perpetrator, losing the comforts and familiarity of home only compounds the trauma of sexual violence.

RCS Fresno’s advocates play a critical role in supporting and empowering survivors by meeting the survivor where they are, and in many instances the survivor is needing a safe place. A safe place is needed for the survivor to begin their emotional work of recovery and to regain a sense of safety. Healing from sexual violence can only happen on a foundation of safety and the safety for many starts with home. Throughout the years, our agency has worked with the Marjaree Mason Center and other community organizations to help meet the needs of those needing emergency shelter. However, the demand is far greater than the current resources available. As a result, our advocates must often look at available shelters and safe housing located outside of our county. Unfortunately, accessing resources outside of our county decreases the likelihood of safely relocating the survivor and many instances, their children, to an emergency shelter.

As the City of Fresno looks to create and fund a comprehensive action plan to address the issue of homelessness, it is imperative that this plan includes strategies to adequately and effectively meet the housing needs of survivors impacted by sexual assault, domestic violence and human trafficking and at risk of experiencing homelessness as a result of their assaults. Having access to safe shelter/housing is a basic human right and a core issue in the advocacy work provided by RCS Fresno, along with the advocacy work provided by our community advocacy partners.

Exhibit 16: Email Response – Priscilla Meza (2 of 2)

Thank you for your work and please feel free to contact me if there are any questions or if further information is needed.

Best,

Priscilla Meza
Executive Director

