

MEMO

To: Fort Wayne Common Council
From: Andrew Downs
Date: July 23, 2026
Re: Evaluation of potential locations for the homeless resource center

Mayor Tucker and her Administration began researching locations for a homeless resource center in 2025. They started with five locations downtown. They added other locations to investigate as they were suggested by members of the community. 333 East Washington Blvd. was consistently the best option.

On Tuesday June 9, 2026, Council was asked to appropriate and pledge funds for the acquisition of 333 East Washington Blvd. for a non-profit to use as a homeless resource center. Council voted 5-3 to hold that request until additional steps were taken. One of the steps was to research potential locations.

The City has continued to investigate locations including those suggested by members of the community and by real estate professionals. As of July 20, 2026, 46 locations have been researched. The City investigated all suggested locations when possible. For example, someone suggested a **“Methodist Church on Putnam is for sale”** but didn’t provide an address. The City was able to identify and investigate that location. The City was not able to identify and investigate suggestions like, **“there are a bunch of empty buildings on Calhoun.”** There were 21 suggestions from members of the community that were investigated.

The attached file (locations for council 072326) includes the full list of locations and coding for the criteria. Another attached file (maps for council 072326) includes maps of the locations with Citilink routes, Citilink stops, libraries, and schools.

Two evaluation methods have been used for the 46 locations.

Evaluation Method One

A location was removed from consideration if:

1. It was zoned residential.
2. It did not have 20,000 square feet or more.
3. It did not have room for at least 30 parking spots.
4. It did not have room for a courtyard space.
5. It was three miles or more from downtown.
6. It did not have sidewalks for the entire walk to downtown.
7. It would require a new building.

There were 13 locations that met all of the criteria listed above. Those locations were examined. Reasons that present challenges to specific locations are listed in the table below.

Location	Challenges
1301 South Harrison St.	This is the current home of Lincoln Financial Group. The asking price is not known and the cost to renovate likely would be high. Additionally, it might be necessary to purchase additional land for parking and the outdoor courtyard.
140 East Jacobs Ave.	This is the current home of Contract Interiors. The asking price is not known. Most of this parcel is in Flood Zone AE and there are environmental reports suggesting that environmental remediation may be needed.
1500 Goshen Ave.	This is Gateway Shopping Center. It shares a property line with many homes on Cambridge Blvd.
1711 Creighton Ave.	This land is zoned I1 but has residential zoning adjoining it to the south and west.
200 East Superior St.	This is a large building with more than 100,000 square feet. The current asking price is \$2,950,000.
2021 Broadway Ave.	This is the home of George's International Market. It is the primary grocery store for nearby neighborhoods.
205 Murray St.	This is the home of Jensen Cabinet. This business is still operating.
300 East Washington Blvd.	This is the Grand Marquis. It is currently providing assisted living.
333 East Washington Blvd.	There are tanks under the parking lot. There has been some testing and more is being done. There is reason to believe things are stable.
413 East Jefferson Blvd.	This is the current home of Matthew 25. They will be moving in the next couple of years. They are asking \$3M for the building.
505 East Washington Blvd.	This is the current home of Kreig DeVault. They have a lease through 2027. The asking price is \$3.6M.
525 Hayden St.	This is the home of TRAA.
525 Tecumseh St.	This is a brownfield site that would require significant environmental remediation.

Several locations are occupied and would necessitate moving organizations to new locations. Waiting for organizations to find new locations and move to those locations would slow the opening of the homeless resource center. Other locations might be zoned for something other than residential but adjoin residentially zoned areas. Still other locations are likely to be more expensive than others due to the asking price for purchase or due to environmental remediation. Finally, there is one location that has been sold in the months since the exploration of sites began.

The best option is 333 East Washington Blvd. Additionally, the City has site control (e.g. purchase agreement signed between the City and the seller) of this location.

Evaluation Method Two

A second method was used to evaluate locations. This method counted the number of criteria that each location failed to meet. (The lower the number the better.) It also included two additional criteria – being within 500 feet or 1,000 feet of residential property.

No location scored zero. Five locations scored 1. Twelve locations scored 2. A summary of the challenges faced by these locations is included in the table below.

Location	Number of criteria missed	Challenges
140 East Jacobs Ave.	2	This is the current home of Contract Interiors. The asking price is not known. Most of this parcel is in Flood Zone AE and there are environmental reports suggesting that environmental remediation may be needed.
1500 Goshen Ave.	2	This is Gateway Shopping Center. It shares a property line with many homes on Cambridge Blvd.
1711 Creighton Ave.	2	This land is zoned I1 but has residential zoning to the south and west.
200 East Superior St.	2	This is a large building with more than 100,000 square feet. The current asking price is \$2,950,000.
2021 Broadway Ave.	2	This is the home of George's International Market. It is the primary grocery store for nearby neighborhoods.
301 West Superior St.	2	This is the former site of the Rescue Mission. A new building will have to be built.
333 East Washington Blvd.	2	There are tanks under the parking lot. There has been some testing and more is being done. There is reason to believe things are stable.
413 East Jefferson Blvd.	2	This is the current home of Matthew 25. They will be moving in the next couple of years. They are asking \$3M for the building.
4646 Arden Dr.	2	The location is located 5.3 miles from downtown Fort Wayne. It is more than 1,000 feet to the closest bus stop and lacks sidewalk for part of the walk.
525 Hayden St.	2	This is the home of TRAA.
525 Tecumseh St.	2	This is a brownfield site that would require significant environmental remediation.
7603 Nelson Rd.	2	This location is located in New Haven and is located 5.1 miles from downtown Fort Wayne.
1301 South Harrison St.	1	This is the current home of Lincoln Financial Group. The asking price is not known and the cost to renovate likely would be high. Additionally, it might be necessary to purchase additional land for parking and the outdoor courtyard.

205 Murray St.	1	This is the home of Jensen Cabinet. This business is still operating.
300 East Washington Blvd.	1	This is the Grand Marquis. It is currently providing assisted living.
4133 New Haven Ave.	1	This location is located 3.1 miles from downtown.
505 East Washington Blvd.	1	This is the current home of Kreig DeVault. They have a lease through 2027. The asking price is \$3.6M.

333 East Washington Blvd. missed two criteria (500 feet and 1,000 feet from residences). In spite of this, 333 East Washington Blvd. is the best option. Additionally, the City has site control (e.g. purchase agreement signed between the City and the seller) of this location.

The five locations that missed fewer criteria than 333 East Washington Blvd. presented significant challenges. Those included needing to convince existing businesses to vacate their buildings, waiting for those businesses to relocate to a new location, delaying the renovation of the location for use as a homeless resource center, and elimination of a needed type of housing downtown.

The 11 locations that missed the same number of criteria as 333 East Washington Blvd. also presented significant challenges. Some of the challenges are similar to those in the previous paragraph. Other challenges involve likely environmental remediation, location in another city, proximity to neighborhoods, and the need to build a new building. One of the locations has been sold recently.