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VETERANS SETTLE INTO NEW HOMES



JERRY LARSON PHOTOS, TRIBUNE-HERALD

A crowd of supporters gathers at Thursday's grand opening for Freedom's Path Waco on the Doris Miller Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center campus. Two historic buildings, like the one center left, have been renovated to provide apartments for homeless veterans. At right, a new building contains a community center and eight apartment units to house vets with mobility or sensory impairments.

Once homeless, new residents have place at Freedom's Path Waco

BY CHRISTOPHER DE LOS SANTOS
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Former Navy sailor and disabled veteran Elmo Hamilton, 66, is happy to have a new home.

He's one of the first formerly unsheltered veterans to move into Freedom's Path Waco, a \$14 million, 34-unit apartment complex on the campus of the Doris Miller Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

"I'm glad for you to share my story; it will bring hope to other veterans," Hamilton said Thursday after a grand opening and ribbon cutting for the new complex at 5018 Beverly Drive.

"This is the first apartment I have ever lived in where I was the first person to live there and that feels so good," Hamilton said. "No one else ever lived in that apartment before me. It smelled like fresh paint when I first walked in the door and the floor was so clean. They provided furniture, towels and



Elmo Hamilton, 66, a disabled Navy veteran, says he enjoys being the first person to live in his new efficiency apartment at Freedom's Path Waco.

washcloths, pots and pans, dishes, even silverware and bed sheets. And it's all brand new."

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City eyeing short-term loan finance strategy

Novel method would be used for downtown project, operations center

BY CHRISTOPHER DE LOS SANTOS
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The first phase of downtown redevelopment, along with renovations of the former Central Freight Lines property to create a city of Waco joint operations center, may be funded through a more than \$250 million financing plan that would be the first of its kind for a Texas city.

The financing package under consideration would be similar to a construction bridge loan sometimes used in commercial and residential development, allowing the city to draw smaller amounts of debt at short-term interest rates as construction progresses, then allow it to refinance the full package at a long-term interest rate once work is complete. The approach may save the city on borrowing costs if interest rate projections hold, and it would prevent the need to borrow the full amount upfront, cutting down on repayment costs until the projects are complete and the city can start recouping funds, Chief Financial Officer Blu Kostelich said.

Kostelich and the city's financial advisers told the Waco Budget and Audit Committee on Tuesday they are working with the Texas Attorney General's Office to develop a public notice for a short-term to long-term financing package for the pair of "major, generational" projects.

The first phase of the city's wide-ranging downtown redevelopment plan is expected to cost \$167 million to \$172 million and last two to five years, and renovations of the former Central Freight facility at 5601 W. Waco Drive are expected to cost about \$84 million and last five years.

The first phase of downtown redevelopment, focused around Barron's Branch, includes work on water, wastewater and drainage infrastructure, and a portion of the debt would be backed by future utility revenue. That would require monthly residential utility bills to increase by about \$5.38 annually over the next five years, up from the \$4.45 increase approved in this year's city budget.

New financing tool

A financing tool like this has never been used by a Texas city before, though it is allowed in current statutes, Glenn Opel, a public finance attorney for Bracewell LLP, told the city's Budget and Audit Committee.

The city would set a top amount to be borrowed within a term of four to five

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Trump appeals deployment to Supreme Court

Judge had temporarily blocked Guard's actions in the Chicago area

BY MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration on Friday asked the Supreme Court to allow the deployment of National Guard troops in the Chicago area, escalating President Donald Trump's conflict with Democratic governors

over using the military on U.S. soil.

The emergency appeal to the high court came after a judge prevented, for at least two weeks, the deployment of Guard members from Illinois and Texas to assist immigration enforcement. A federal appeals court refused to put the judge's order on hold.

The conservative-dominated court has handed Trump repeated victories in emergency appeals since he took office in January, after lower courts have ruled against him and often over the objection

of the three liberal justices. The court has allowed Trump to ban transgender people from the military, claw back billions of dollars of congressionally approved federal spending, move aggressively against immigrants and fire the Senate-confirmed leaders of independent federal agencies.

In the dispute over the Guard, U.S. District Judge April Perry said she found no substantial evidence that a "danger of rebellion" is brewing in Illinois during Trump's immigration crackdown.

But Solicitor General D. John Sauer, Trump's top Supreme Court lawyer, urged the justices to step in immediately. Perry's order, Sauer wrote, "impinges on the President's authority and needlessly endangers federal personnel and property."

Eleven people were arrested at a Friday protest outside a U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement facility in the west Chicago suburb of Broadview.

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Attacks on houses of worship increase fears,

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