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The North Valley Community Foundation has awarded a grant of \$100,000 toward construction of a centralized Navigation Center at the Torres Shelter in south Chico.

True North Housing Alliance, which operates the Torres Shelter, kicked off a fundraising campaign last month to build the Navigation Center. With the donation from NVCF, True North is within \$1 million of its \$2.5 million goal.

The Navigation Center would provide anyone in the community who is in need with a centralized entry point to receive services and support, featuring case management, housing assistance information, health care, counseling and access to community service providers all under one roof.

Alexa Benson-Valavanis, NVCF president and CEO, said the need for such wraparound services is more evident than ever as the city of Chico enforces laws prohibiting camping in public places.

“The Torres Shelter is the largest year-round option for people experiencing homelessness,” she said. “Taylor Bunch and the team there have a workable set of solutions to help end chronic homelessness in our community. It starts with preventative care, early intervention and recognizing that every person has a unique story and therefore a unique path for healing. The Navigation Center will be focused on wraparound services and direct care.

“As I watch the necessary cleanup of camps, my heart is broken that we cannot do better for people already deeply suffering. I’m confident that True North is a meaningful part of the solution to get people off the streets and into permanent housing. The people hurting deserve this chance at healing, and so does our entire community.”

NVCF has granted millions to organizations to address homelessness in Chico in the past six years in addition to millions more for housing in the Camp Fire footprint.

True North last year served 838 people, which represents more than two-thirds of the unhoused population in Butte County. The shelter is open every hour every day of the year.

"NVCF is a longtime partner and integral community changemaker. We are so grateful for their ongoing support and commitment to transforming lives in our community and inspiring hope," said Taylor Bunch, executive director of True North Housing Alliance. "This donation is a huge step forward in providing tangible solutions to homelessness in our community.

"The True North Navigation Center is all about homelessness prevention, rapid rehousing and early intervention so that individuals and families are assisted and supported before they become homeless or end up on the streets. Approximately 40,000 families in our community are a paycheck away from homelessness. We can prevent them from experiencing homelessness. Together, we can stop the cycle of homelessness before it starts."

To learn more about True North and to donate to the Navigation Center campaign, go to truenorthbutte.org/navigation-center.