

# County of Santa Clara

Office of the County Executive

County Government Center, East Wing  
70 West Hedding Street  
San Jose, California 95110  
(408) 299-5105



June 26, 2014

Mr. Robert Walker  
Interim City Manager  
City of Sunnyvale  
456 W. Olive Avenue  
Sunnyvale, CA 94086

SUBJECT: Potential Sites for the North County Cold Weather Shelter Program

Dear Mr. Walker:

Thank you for allowing me and staff from HomeFirst to visit the various facilities and properties that were described in your letter dated May 30, 2014. We identified four potential locations for a new North County Cold Weather Shelter Program (CWSP) facility in Sunnyvale. While the County has been the most significant funder of the CWSP, the program has been operated by HomeFirst (formerly EHC LifeBuilders) for about two decades. Generally, the North County CWSP operation includes the following elements, some of which can be modified to accommodate a new site.

Primary Service	Overnight sleeping accommodations on sleeping mats with blankets.
Capacity	Planned for 125 homeless individuals (mainly single adults), but can accommodate up to 140 without additional staff.
Space Needs	Approximately 5,000 sq. ft. if the floor plan includes a large open area
Hours of Operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily from approximately December 1 through March 31</li> <li>• Staff presence from 5PM until 7AM;</li> <li>• Client presence from 6PM until 6AM the following morning</li> </ul>
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 staff members on each of two shifts</li> <li>• Usually 5-10 volunteers during the first shift</li> </ul>
Food Services	A hot dinner, snacks, and a cold breakfast are served daily. Some meals are brought in by volunteers and from the Boccardo Reception Center (San Jose).
Storage	Two storage containers are used to store supplies and food, but those items could be stored inside if there are storage rooms.
Parking	25-30 parking spaces to accommodate clients, staff and volunteers; however, HomeFirst could make do with less.
Security	A private security guard is onsite from 5:30 10:30 daily.
Health Services	Valley Medical Center's mobile medical unit comes to the site once a week.
Social Services	Volunteers and various non-profit organizations bring donations (e.g., socks) and provide referrals and services (e.g., haircuts, bus tokens) on a weekly basis.

Your assistance in determining the feasibility of the following sites would be greatly appreciated.

1. From a facilities standpoint, the **Sunnyvale Community Center Gymnasium** would be a very suitable location for the North County CWSP. The gymnasium has several significant advantages. First, the gymnasium has a large open floor plan that could easily accommodate the projected number of clients, staff and volunteers. The large open floor plan minimizes staffing levels. Second the gymnasium has separate restrooms and shower facilities for men and for women. The old site of the North County CWSP did not have separate hygiene facilities and had fewer showers and restroom stalls than the gymnasium. Finally, the Sunnyvale Community Center has ample parking and space to store program supplies. Staff from HomeFirst indicated that they could work with Sunnyvale staff to overcome operational concerns related to the gymnasium flooring, food service and concerns from Sunnyvale Community Center staff and clients.

2. While not as large and accommodating as the gymnasium, HomeFirst staff indicated that they could operate the North County CWSP from the **Sunnyvale Community Center Ballroom**. Using the ballroom would free up the gymnasium for other uses, but HomeFirst staff would likely request access to the gymnasium's hygiene facilities in the late evening or early morning.

3. County staff are also exploring the possibility of erecting temporary facilities (e.g., modular buildings) on the **City of Sunnyvale's property on the former Onizuka Air Force Station (OAFS)**. We understand that Sunnyvale and Foothill-De Anza Community College District (Foothill-De Anza) are sharing the cost of demolishing and clearing the buildings on their respective parcels. On June 24, 2014, I spoke with a representative of Foothill-De Anza, and learned that demolition and clearing activities would be completed by the end of July 2014. Once completed, the Sunnyvale parcel would consist of a parking lot and of dirt pads where buildings had once stood. Foothill-De Anza would erect a fence between its property and Sunnyvale's (and the Veterans Administration's property) and begin constructing its new building. It is also my understanding that Sunnyvale's property would be accessible without impinging on Foothill-De Anza's property. While there would be operational concerns to address, the advantage of using the vacant Sunnyvale property on the former OAFS would be that clients/customers of and residents near the Sunnyvale Community Center would not be impacted. Moreover, contrary to my initial assumptions, the former OAFS properties are accessible by bus and light rail.

4. Finally, what steps would be required in order for the **County-owned excess roadway** at Fair Oaks Blvd. and California Ave. to be used as the location for temporary structures for the North County CWSP? As indicated in our report to the Board of Supervisors, this is not an ideal site because of safety concerns (i.e., California serves as an on-ramp to Central Expressway). However, we would like to vet all potential options.

Sincerely,



Ky G. Le  
Director of Homeless Systems  
County of Santa Clara

Cc:

Gary Graves, Chief Operating Officer, County of Santa Clara  
Hanson Hom, Community Development Director, City of Sunnyvale  
Suzanne Ise, Housing Officer, City of Sunnyvale  
Jenny Niklaus, Chief Executive Officer, HomeFirst