

December 8, 2020

Board of Supervisors
San Mateo County
400 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063

RE: Acquisition of the Coastside Inn in Half Moon Bay for Transitional Housing

Honorable President and Members of the Board:

I am writing on behalf of the City of Half Moon Bay. Homelessness has been a long-standing priority for the City Council, yet a very challenging issue in Half Moon Bay. The Coastside of the County has a higher percentage of homeless individuals when compared to the rest of the County, yet many of the necessary services are not on the Coastside. Additionally, trending numbers show that positive COVID-19 cases are higher on the Coastside than the County average.

The City Council is supportive of this acquisition to purchase the Coastside Inn and very appreciative that the County is pursuing this unique opportunity afforded by the CARES Act. The City held two public meetings on November 19 and December 1, 2020 to discuss this proposal with the community. The Council wants to specifically acknowledge Supervisor Horsley, County Manager, Mike Callagy, and the Human Services Agency Director, Ken Cole, for attending these two meetings, presenting the proposal, and answering questions from the Council and public.

Addressing homelessness is one of the most vexing challenges of our time, and part of the challenge is the community stigma attached to these individuals—human beings—who have found themselves without basic shelter. At the December 1, 2020 meeting, over 200 community members attended the meeting and 60 people spoke. While many people were in favor of establishing transitional housing in Half Moon Bay, many had concerns and questions, and many were outright opposed.

The City Council prides themselves on serving *all citizens of the City* and they are grappling with the opposition and community concerns. They want to break the stigma of homelessness, address the concerns of the community members who are opposed, and ensure that this facility is successful in the long-term.

To do that, the Council and community are requesting some commitments from the County. Specifically, they are requesting the County consider and commit to the following:

- Reimbursement of the financial loss from removing a hotel from the tax rolls (there is a huge loss to the City of Transient Occupancy Tax but also property tax and sales tax to a lesser extent)

- City participation in selection of the operator and design of the program(s). The “short list” of potential operators would also make a public presentation before final selection is made
- City and community ongoing involvement to ensure success of the facility and associated programs
- The use of local non-profits and businesses to provide support and services
- A clear commitment by the County to prioritize City residents and Coastsiders in the facility
- County assistance in remediating and restoring abandoned homeless encampments
- Comprehensive and reliable background checks that will screen out potential program participants with violent criminal backgrounds including assault, battery and sex crimes involving either children or adults (including Megan’s list).
- County, in consultation with the City, to draft a plan to turn the facility into permanent supportive housing or deed-restricted Below Market Rate housing for low-income individuals, or co-housing, or workforce housing within five years from the date of the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
- A plan for appropriate disposition of the facility should the program not be successful as originally envisioned

The key to these commitments is that the success of the facility is dependent on partnerships: between the City and County; the service providers and the City/County; the facility residents; and most importantly, the community. The commitments listed above, while not exhaustive of all concerns and program details, were the essential themes at the December 1, 2020 meeting and many people spoke to the need for a written document that consummates the partnership between the County and City. The City Council requests that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be developed and

approved by both agencies that establishes roles, responsibilities and the commitments summarized above. The City and community want to ensure the facility is successful: a facility that breaks down the sigma of homelessness and is a source of pride for the Coastside.

On behalf of the City of Half Moon Bay, thanks again for your Board’s dedication to the goal of “functional zero” homelessness and your commitment to the City and Coastside.

Sincerely,

*****signed copy sent by mail*****

On behalf of the Half Moon Bay City Council
Robert Nisbet, City Manager

CC: Mayor and Councilmembers, City of Half Moon Bay