

Rancho Los Amigos Recuperative Care Center Project

Options are limited for homeless individuals who are recuperating from hospitalization. Typically, when a patient no longer needs acute care but is still recovering from an illness or injury, they are discharged home to rest and may receive follow-up care as an outpatient. Homeless individuals, however, have no safe place to recover and end up staying in the hospital for a much longer period of time than necessary. Recuperative care facilities are a viable, short-term alternative; they offer on-site nursing support, health oversight, case management and linkage to permanent supportive housing. Further, recuperative care facilities cost a fraction of an acute care hospital bed. As of December 2017, the County has opened 432 recuperative care beds, but the Department of Health Services (DHS) estimates that approximately 10 homeless people a day are discharged from hospitals that could benefit from recuperative care. Creating more recuperative beds for our homeless individuals is crucial to ending the cycle of costly and repeated emergency room visits and prolonged inpatient days.

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MOTION

SOLIS _____

RIDLEY-THOMAS _____

HAHN _____

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KUEHL _____

Rancho Los Amigos (RLA) National Rehabilitation Center, which is located in the City of Downey, is currently undergoing a major undertaking called the “North Campus Consolidation Project.” The project will create a state-of-the-art, seismically compliant facility for the patients of RLA. Building 900 is one of the existing buildings of the RLA north Campus center, which currently houses inpatient beds for the hospital and provides space for rehabilitation therapy programs. These functions are expected to be relocated to other parts of the Rancho campus in the summer of 2018.

In January 2016, DHS requested that the Department of Public Works (DPW) carry out an assessment of Building 900 to evaluate the feasibility of repurposing it into a recuperative care facility. The proposed project would remodel the 78,000 square-foot building into a 165-bed recuperative care facility. DPW collaborated with DHS to draft a preliminary program and scope of work, which includes construction, change order, contingency, plans, specification, jurisdictional approvals, consultant services, and County services. Given the urgent need for recuperative care, however, DHS should explore innovative ways to complete this project as soon as possible, with a target completion date of December 2018.

The Departments have determined that the proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA because 1) it consists of interior improvements to an existing facility with negligible or no expansion of use and the restriping of an existing parking lot; and 2) it would provide similar services already provided on campus. Therefore, the project is within certain classes of projects determined not to have a significant impact on the environment. Additionally, based on the project records, the project will comply with all applicable regulations and is not located in a sensitive

environment. The project will not have cumulative impacts, unusual circumstances, damage to scenic highways, listing on hazardous waste site lists compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, or indications that it may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource that would make the exemption inapplicable.

Recuperative care facilities provide a critical link for homeless individuals who are recovering from hospitalizations by offering a safe space to recover and the opportunity to be connected to permanent supportive housing. This project would increase the number of recuperative care beds in the County from 432 to 597 beds (a 38% increase), helping the County reach another major milestone in combating the homeless crisis.

I, THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Find that the proposed Rancho Los Amigos Recuperative Care Center Project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15301 (a) and (d) and 11(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines and Class 1(c), (d), and (x) and 11(a) and (f) of the County's Environmental Document Reporting Guidelines, Appendix G and direct the Department of Public Works to file a Notice of Exemption for the project with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk in accordance with Section 15062 of the State CEQA Guidelines;
2. Approve and establish Capital Project No. 87465 for the Rancho Los Amigos Recuperative Care Center Project; and

3. Direct the Department of Health Services to identify funding for the capital project and work with the CEO's Homeless Initiative to identify ongoing operating funds, and return to the Board with a plan in 30 days of how best to expedite this project.

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JH:jh