

SWARTHY, Inc. APARTMENTS

4.2.1 Narrative Development Description

Development Description

Swarthy World Services, Inc. (SWS) will purchase residential property to convert it to use as affordable housing. SWS will identify properties for purchase on funding of predevelopment funds for the project.

SWS's facilities will house 8 homeless individuals in shared housing. Residences will be shared 4-bedroom homes, or small apartment complexes housing no more than four tenants. SWS will take advantage of the current housing market to purchase properties which require minimal refurbishment, and are adaptable for supportive housing.

The proposed projects will provide secure, service-enriched housing for a needy homeless population. SWS will provide a full-time case manager to assist tenants to pursue goals in integrated supportive service plans. We expect that the project will provide residential stability for its tenants, with long-term benefits to wellness, economic stability and personal growth.

Housing and service goals of the development

SWS will identify and purchase single family homes or small apartment complexes to house four tenants per site. Homes will be evaluated as to the suitability to house tenants in separate bedrooms leased as shared housing units. The homes must have suitable common area space for shared kitchen and bath facilities, common living area, and space for programs including computer training. There must be space for the onsite case manager. SWS will provide computer training onsite, so the building must have suitable space for classes.

Similarly, if a small apartment complex is chosen, each unit must meet housing quality standards and be suitable for a single tenant. Space will be made available for group functions, training and an office for the case manager.

By providing onsite case management, SWS will support tenants to pursue educational and training goals, to reduce or stop substance abuse, to maintain a treatment plan including medication, and to engage in the broader community. We expect that tenants will complete educational goals and increase incomes, and that hospitalizations and incarceration will decrease. The Case Manager will assist tenants to access resources in the community, including mental health counseling, peer wellness groups, medication management, employment and educational/training services, life skills workshops, substance abuse services, and self-help groups.

Characteristics of the tenants

SWS's project will house an underserved group in the Antelope Valley, homeless persons with mental illness. All eight units will be permanent supportive housing funded by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), marketed to single adults. Tenants in all units must qualify as homeless under MHSA guidelines. In addition, all MHSA tenants must be consumers of LA County Department of Mental Health programs. MHSA requires all units to be occupied by persons with a family income below 30% of Area Median Income.

Building features

The site for SWS's projects has not yet been identified. Homes selected for conversion to shared housing must have space and layout which can be converted to accommodate staff and training programs. Each unit (bedroom) will be furnished and provided with upgraded doors and locks to ensure the independence of each tenant. Common areas will be furnished and the activity room will be set up for computer training and other activities.

Similarly, if a small apartment building is chosen, it must accommodate the case manager's office and provide space for group functions and training programs. Apartments will be furnished and the office and community space will be set up to accommodate training and group activities.

Swarthy will renovate properties using green building techniques and materials, and plans to install solar power to reduce energy costs. Low-flow toilets and other energy-saving features will be installed. Yards will be xeriscaped and planted with native, water-conserving plants.

Other characteristics of the housing

Location

Antelope Valley offers a range of alternatives in property to be redeveloped. SWS will target search for property in neighborhoods with a residential character which are close to public transit. SWS will look for properties which are adjacent or nearby, to enable joint events and for efficiency's sake.

One unit will be adapted if necessary to meet full accessibility standards.

Development Financing

The SWS project is fully funded through the Mental Health Services Act.