Development Description

Volunteers of America of Los Angeles (VOALA) Navy Village for Families consists of 76 townhouses on nine acres in the San Pedro area. The area is south of Palos Verdes Drive North and West of Gaffey. It is in an area that is predominantly single family homes, and Navy Village itself is surrounded on the south and east by Navy land, to the west by a ten-acre butterfly preserve (the Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly, an endangered species, has its habitat there), and on the north by Rolling Hills Prep School. The area is tranquil and spacious, yet close to many public amenities such as public transportation, markets, libraries and schools. In addition, VOALA offers a multitude of supportive services in the area, including preschool to over 160 children.

The land, which was deeded to VOALA as part of the 1995 base reuse process, is restricted for homeless housing and services. The 1989 buildings are in good condition, but require interior remodeling. In addition, utilities must be run from the city, since prior to the transfer from the Navy, the utilities were sourced from the Navy land to the east and south.

VOALA will act as Development Sponsor, Developer, and Service Provider. In addition to VOALA's own experience developing and/or managing its 2000 emergency, transitional and permanent housing units, we draw on the experience of the national Volunteers of America which has developed over 300 affordable housing properties and houses over 25,000 people nationwide.

The development is projected to cost $23 million, of which $18 million is for construction. Of this, approximately $5 million is for the utilities infrastructure and the remainder is for refurbishment of the units. Sources of funds include Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)/Department of Mental Health (DMH)/California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA), Los Angeles Housing Department Permanent Supportive Housing Program (LAHD/PSHP), Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), and VOALA's homeless endowment. Of this, VOALA is requesting $1,257,960 from MHSA/DMH for capital. We are also requesting Project Based Vouchers and VASH (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing - rental support for veterans), as well as $1,248,000 of capitalized operating subsidies from MHSA/DMH.

The target population for these two-bedroom units will be homeless families. Each two bedroom unit is townhouse style in groups of four and six units. There is a playground area on the site, and VOALA plans to eventually build a large community space. These rental units each have their own garage, as well as laundry hook-ups, kitchens and baths.

Twelve of the units will be dedicated to tenants who have been certified by LA DMH as having mental illness. One unit will be a manager's unit and one unit will be a community space. The remaining 62 units will be supportive housing for homeless families. Units will not be specifically designated for DMH, so that they

will be scattered throughout the property, thereby contributing to the integration of the families into the community, which serves to reduce the stigma of mental illness.

Supportive services, as described in our Supportive Services Plan, will promote wellness, recovery and resiliency based on a positive psychology emphasis, i.e., focusing on psychological strengths rather than weaknesses. The approach is integrated Wraparound services which are community based and unconditional, centered on the strengths of the individual, culturally competent, and includes the delivery of coordinated, highly individualized services in key life domain areas.

Services will be offered both on-site and off-site. In addition to the on-site services such as home-based preschool and mental health supportive services, VOALA, with its breadth of service offerings is the primary Service Provider to this development, offering preschool and childcare, educational support services, job training and placement, and life skills. In addition, as a result of our more than 110 year history in Los Angeles, we have many collaborative partners to whom we refer clients for services.