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County Approves Homeless Shelter Site in Anaheim

(Santa Ana, CA) — The Orange County Board of Supervisors will purchase an empty building in Anaheim as the site of a new 200-bed year-round emergency shelter and multi-service center to serve the homeless.

Supervisors voted unanimously Tuesday to purchase the building and land at 1000 N. Kraemer Place in Anaheim. OC Community Resources, the department in charge of County housing programs, will solicit proposals for the development and operation of the shelter under rigorous security guidelines adopted by the Board, including prohibiting walk-in clients and those with criminal backgrounds.

“Today’s vote represents an historic achievement for Orange County,” said Board of Supervisors Chairman Todd Spitzer, who championed an inclusive process for community and city engagement for the project, which will be housed within his Third District. “We have a duty to help those who need our help. We can do this right and we can solve the problem of homelessness in our community.”

The process of identifying a year-round homeless shelter began five years ago under the stewardship of Supervisor Shawn Nelson, who represents the Fourth District and much of Anaheim. “This is a long overdue initiative that will benefit those most in need of support and provide them a center to retrieve essential services necessary to improve their lives,” Nelson said.

Eighty-five people spoke at the special meeting held to consider the property purchase, with more than twice as many speakers supporting the proposal than were opposed.

The County will pay \$4.25 million for the 24,384 square-foot industrial warehouse and 12,842 square feet of office space, situated on about 1.87 acres with 68 parking spaces. The building, built in 1975, had been occupied by a commercial heating, ventilating and air conditioning contractor.

The cities of Anaheim and Fullerton contributed \$500,000 each toward the project, with \$100,000 coming from the city of Brea. The city councils of Anaheim, Brea, Buena Park, Fullerton, Orange and Placentia adopted resolutions in support.

An environmental review of the property found no substantial evidence that the proposed use would have a significant effect on the environment. A purchase and sale agreement was approved by the Board in June but a final vote was needed to execute the grant deed for the property.

The County has operated a seasonal armory shelter program in Fullerton and Santa Ana for the past 28 years. However, the armories were only open part of the year and only at night.

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