

The Retirement Center

Working Name: Mount Carmel Hillside Villas. The motto of the center is “Live wisely and well.”

Objectives:

To provide gracious living in a “front porch friendly” setting for seniors, age 55 and up, catering to lower middle and middle -income persons.

To enable sustained independent living in a secure environment.

To encourage volunteerism in the on -site school, clinic, and church.

To enhance the opportunities for community members to participate in volunteer programs for seniors and as seniors.

The Service Concept:

The retirement center is to be an independent living facility that provides rooms (furnished if desired), meals, activities, cleaning, and laundry service if requested. Wheel chair residents will be accepted if they can care for themselves or with the aid of their roommate. Prospective residents will be encouraged to bring their own furniture to create a familiar and home-like environment. The resident nurse, who will be shared between the retirement center, the school and possibly the health clinic, will monitor the health of the residents closely. The staff of the facility will also be involved in the oversight of the residents’ health and well-being. When a resident is no longer capable of independent living, he or she will be required to move to a more appropriate facility. The Arbors care facility is four blocks away and accepts all levels of residents including those with Alzheimer’s disease. This would allow couples to be close together and still receive appropriate care. The center will follow state standards and seek national certification from the appropriate agencies as soon as is feasibly possible.

The Facility:

The retirement center will be a full service facility designed to meet the ongoing living needs of approximately 60 residents. The living rooms will all be studio rooms with a door-less partition between the sleeping area and the kitchenette and living area. The sleeping area will be large enough to accommodate two super twin beds or a queen size bed. Walk-in closets will provide space for clothing and other personal items that are not used on a daily basis.

The bathroom will be handicap sized with the attachment points for assist bars built into the walls and a full five-foot turning radius. The assist bars will not be installed until needed by the residents. Walk in showers and all other fixtures will be installed according to handicapped access codes (Sanford, 2001). The rest of the apartment will be designed to be wheelchair accessible also.

The kitchenette will have a sink with garbage disposal, a small refrigerator, a microwave, and enough counter space for a few electrical appliances. This area is not designed for cooking meals, but for light snacks, liquids for taking medication, and microwavable foods like popcorn. The living room will have a window that either looks outside or into the courtyard. Thus every room will have at least one source of outside light.

All units will have telephone hook-ups for personal phones, emergency call systems and Internet access. The cost will determine if the Internet access is WiFi or hardwired Cat 5 plugs in the walls. Each floor above the first will have a communications closet for telephone and network wiring and equipment. A small server room will be located on the first floor with additional power, air conditioning and room to

accommodate the UPS, servers, networking and phone equipment for the building. Each unit will be electrically wired so that it has its own circuits.

At least two public restrooms will be installed on each floor with a lounge for reading, talking, television, and table games on the each of the upper floors. The ground floor lounge will be sized to contain the library and large enough for group activities. The dining room will be able to seat all of the residents with guests at one time at six foot round tables. A small 15-seat chapel will be located on the main floor of the center adjacent to the chaplain's office. In addition to the fire escape routes and stair access, a gurney-sized elevator will be centrally located in the building.

The kitchen will be designed to prepare and serve meals for all residents, staff and a minimum number of guests for each meal. Sufficient storage, refrigerator space and walk-in freezers will be available to allow buying in enough quantity to be cost effective. Recreational facilities will include, in addition to the lounges, an exercise room with space for group exercise as well appropriate workout machines. This area will also include access to the monitored hot tub and lap pool. The land available for the project does not allow for a standard size pool.

The Staff:

In addition to the previously mentioned nurse and public safety director, the center will have a director, an activities director, an operations director, an executive chef, a part-time chaplain, a part-time mental health professional, and other sufficient full-time and part time staff necessary to carry out the mission of retirement center. An outside company will provide the landscaping service for all three facilities. The laundry service and other specific services may be contracted through outside vendors. The

facility will be unobtrusively fenced with 24-hour security. A 1300 square foot two - bedroom apartment will be built with a private entrance on the ground floor. The apartment will be part of the compensation package for the director of public safety who will be responsible for five shifts a week. A private security contractor will provide security the rest of the time under the supervision of the public safety director. The garden level-parking garage will be accessed through a radio frequency controlled gate and will be monitored by video cameras and a sequential security recorder. Additionally, all staff will be required to agree to a criminal record background search. The research done by the committee showed that the three top concerns for seniors were safety, quality and variety of the food, and interesting and varied activities.

A residents' advisory council will be established that will provide insight and feedback to the permanent staff of the center. The staff directors will select the first ten members of the council. Once established, the council will select replacement members with two residents rotating off each year. The council will decide on the structure that best serves their needs and the center director will be an ex officio member of the residents' council.

Activities:

Community service will be a critical feature for the center as most of the residents are still mobile and contributing members of society. Seniors Serving Seniors – Seniors Serving Society is an organization that assists with connecting groups and individuals with opportunities for service in the community within the Holiday Retirement Corporation (SSS, 2007). Our center is committed to using this model for our community involvement.

The activities director will be responsible for on-site activities as well as excursions to specific activities in the area. San Diego is blessed with a wide variety of cultural and natural attractions. Some examples are the museums of Balboa Park, the art galleries in several neighbors, the Birch Aquarium, Petco Park and the more touristy destinations of Sea World, the Zoo and the Wild Animal Park. Many of these locations have special programs and rates for seniors and are worth several visits a year. Group transportation will be offered for these types of outings. Residents may also choose to drive on their own.

The Demographics:

While the demographics indicate a slight increase in the population over age 60 in our target area, the success of the retirement center will depend on an intensive and ongoing marketing program to attract residents from the greater San Diego area as well as the western United States. Specifically, in 2000 the age 50-64 group composed 18.1% of the population within a three mile radius of the center and the 65+ group was 7.4% of the population. In 2010 these groups are projected to composed 23.9% and 8.6% of the population with the same area (Trends, 2006). This facility is specifically designed for persons who cannot afford the high-end retirement communities located in San Diego and still want to experience life in a community of active vital senior adults.

The Location:

The Hillside Villas is ideal in that it is located two blocks from State Route 56 with easy access to I-15 or I-5. There are two bus routes that stop at shopping and recreation opportunities both north and south of the center location as well as downtown

San Diego. The Metropolitan Transportation System also connects with the Poway bus system for those who want to be involved in the senior center and the activities and connections available there. Our research discovered that the nearest facility similar to the Sages is located 15 miles away in Escondido.

The facility will be just across the street from a Stater Brothers grocery store, a 24 Hour Fitness, several fast food establishments, a bank, a video store and an Armstrong Nursery. Just 1.5 miles away is another shopping center with several restaurants, banks, food store, hardware store, and other typical neighborhood shops. On the same side of the street in the next block is a strip mall with fast food, personal services, a bank, a dry cleaners, and other typical businesses. Thus the location has easy access to most the needs of the senior adult community.

Funding Goals:

The goal is to build the center with no debt and then to fund an endowment that will support equipment replacement, subsidies for residents who might not be able to otherwise afford to live in the center, and to fund special programs for the center. One such program could be a missionary in residence for a year or longer who would be a world cultures resource for the center residents, the school, and the church. The endowment could also be used to fund special events and trips for the residents outside of the normal support channels. The purpose of building the center debt free is to keep the monthly cost in the \$2250 to \$2750 range per month per person.