

# Santa Rosa Housing First

## DESIGN NARRATIVE

### Site:

Our site is a 1-acre urban lot located in downtown Santa Rosa on busy College Avenue. Presently the lot is undeveloped after previous unused structures have been demolished prior to the purchase of the property. The lot has no topographical features as it is essentially a flat gravel site. The West side is adjacent to the Smart Train and Smart Trail system which is a major public 70-mile Bay area transportation system that connects throughout Santa Rosa. The site's major frontage is along College Avenue on the North side, which is a major 4 lane two-way vehicular route. The North side also has a pedestrian sidewalk with traffic signals at both ends. Cleveland Avenue runs along the East side with a pedestrian sidewalk. South of the property line there is a classic industrial Quonset and other 1 story industrial structures.

### Architecture:

The proposed project is designed as a residential "Housing First" building for 54 apartments. 53 of those apartments are studios available for low income/homeless individuals as permanent supportive housing. Along with the studios, there is a 1-bedroom resident manager apartment, offices, therapy rooms, resident amenities and a 24/7 security office. Housing First is a proven approach to getting homeless people off the streets and providing them a true home. The proposed building is 3 stories with its major face along the stretch of College Avenue. Within the existing commercial and industrial neighborhood, the building presents a clean industrial aesthetic using stucco, metal panels and a flat roof. The ground floor level is faced in stucco with color accents highlighting the portal entry. The first floor is set 18" above grade to minimize grading and to elevate the first floor for privacy from the pedestrian eye level. From the street, the building is punctuated by large unit windows and rectangular bays that modulate the length of the façade. At the portal entry, there are open balconies at each floor opposite the elevator lobby. Open circulation to the units is along the courtyard edge which faces South.

### Landscape:

We are proposing a series of improvements along College Avenue including a line of street trees and landscaping along the sidewalk, a bike lane and multi-use bike lane which would allow us to retain the existing curb locations. We are also seeking to underground the utilities along College Avenue and eliminate the overhead wires and utility poles.

We are proposing secure access gates from the property directly to the Smart Trail and a wide landscape buffer along the West side. Vehicular access is from Cleveland Avenue with a gated entry and internal parking. Residents typically do not have cars, but we have provided 12 spaces for staff and visitors.

Once in the building, there is a private and secure inner courtyard with faces South. Here we will develop the courtyard with trees, plantings, vegetable gardens and seating for residents only. The planting areas will serve as stormwater treatment locations for the building. There will be amenities such as a BBQ, seating and direct access to the large multipurpose room with overhead garage doors. The courtyard is to be secure from all sides with discreet electronic gates and a secure entry. There is a covered bike shelter on the Courtyard level with a bike tool/repair station for the residents.

### Placemaking/Livability:

The College Avenue neighborhood has public transportation, bike paths and dense urban opportunities that are essential for a Housing First project. The aim to is celebrate a living in a truly positive building with lots of sun and plantings within a vibrant part of downtown. The aim is not to make a place out of reach and isolate these individuals but have them share the light and all the great amenities of Santa Rosa. Making a home and making it a wonderful place to be is of the highest priority.

### Sustainability:

The building will meet and exceed California's CALGreen and Title 24 Energy Codes. The materials will express a modern approach using recycled steel for its cladding and energy efficient HVAC systems, plumbing, irrigation, windows, LED lighting and heat pump hot water heaters. Additionally we are aiming to generate 80 kilowatts with an extensive photovoltaic panel array on the roof including a section which will be visible from College Avenue which will overhang over the front entry.

