November 2014

Dear Neighbors,

Any worthwhile project that can benefit the entire community is typically complex and requires time and attention to details. Transitions-Mental Health Association's project to repurpose the historic Sunny Acres orphanage into apartment studios for our most independent clientele is no exception.

The good news I want to share with you is that despite the complexity, we are steadily making progress toward completing this project in a way that satisfies the vast majority of neighbors as well as our clients. Much of the progress to date is due in large part to the outpouring of support and encouragement we have received from many of you. I cannot thank you enough!

One important example I want to share up front: Many of you who are interested in our project suggested that we update the historic name (Sunny Acres) to more accurately reflect the project's attributes. Candidly, many of you suggested that we avoid confusion with Dan DeVaul's Sunny Acres sober-living facility on Los Osos Valley Road, especially since the services we will be providing are vastly different.

After considering dozens of excellent ideas, we settled on a name that simply and clearly reflects exactly what the project will be: Studio apartments on Bishop Street, hence **Bishop Street Studios.**

Here are a few more updates about the project:

➢ Over the summer, we held a series of workshops that many of you attended to offer ideas about what should be included in **Bishop Street Studios** – and what should be avoided. We were greatly aided by the excellent work done by Professor Margarita Hill's Cal Poly Landscape Architecture class. At our request, her 12 students delivered wonderfully creative ideas for landscaping, building, infrastructure placement, and other site amenities. Their ideas were informed by the three workshops held over the summer where neighbors, potential residents and our staff gave input. You can find an overview of the workshops and some of the ideas on our website: www.bishopstreetstudios.org/?page_id=263. The next step is to focus on making the best of those ideas workable and affordable.

➢ Over the next few months, we plan to finalize the proposal for the project so that an application can be filed with the City Planning Department. This next step requires studies and architectural drawings, all of which take time.

I want to reiterate that the size of this project is well established. The historical structure will house approximately 14 single-occupancy studio apartments. We could conceivably add up to another 21 single-occupancy studios by building two more structures. As mentioned, the units will be occupied by residents that are from our most independent population. It's also important to note that Transitions-Mental Health Association will provide ongoing support to the residents. We will have a full-time Resident Manager living on site, so we can state with certainty that the minimum number of client residents would be 14, and the maximum would be 35 (including the manager).

Information about the proposed project can be found at www.bishopstreetstudios.org. We will continually provide new information as updates become available.

In the meantime, I welcome a continuing dialogue with you. I encourage you to talk to me, our staff and meet our residents. We would be glad to arrange a presentation for small groups, and we invite you to ask us for a tour of the Nipomo Studios site at a time that is convenient for you.

Lastly, please know that we will be creating numerous opportunities for community discussion about **Bishop Street Studios** once our permit application is formally filed in 2015.

With warm regards,

Jill Bolster-White

PS: Thank you again for taking an interest in Bishop Street Studios. It's gratifying that so many of you understand the community's need for this project. If you have questions or comments, please let me know by calling (805) 540-6505 or jbw@t-mha.org.