



September 5, 2009

City of Las Vegas
Planning & Development Department
Development Services Center
731 South Fourth Street
Las Vegas, NV 89101



Dear City of Las Vegas Planning & Development Department:

The Shade Tree shelter for women, children, and their pets seeks to meet the immediate needs of those in crisis through the provision of not only shelter and food but also life changing opportunities through education. Currently these services are provided within the 36,000 sq. foot building that has been at capacity every night for more than six months due to the economic crisis impacting the Southern Nevada region. Each day more than six new families arrive in need of shelter and the census count conducted at midnight fluctuates minimally. With each success and departure from shelter, new families in crisis are in line for the next bed or family cubicle. One of the critical components to success is our Job Development program that equips our residents for employment. The program seeks to build the women's self-esteem, teach them to update their resume, provide appropriate interview attire, prepare them to apply for employment utilizing computer and web-based applications, and ensure they have the means to utilize public transportation for the search and interview process.

In addition to the Job Development Program, Life Skills classes address the factors that may have lead women and children to shelter including budgeting, grief and loss, domestic violence indicators, credit repair, women's health, nutrition, and child abuse prevention. The shelter lacks a classroom for the Life Skills facilitation so each hour the use of space is transformed to meet the needs of the residents. The Victim's Service Center becomes the "Conflict Resolution" classroom, the shelter day room becomes the "Work Place Skills" work shop, and the Children's Activity Center becomes the Parenting Class. Currently 52 topics in English and Spanish are provided each month along with week long Job Development programs for Adults and Work Readiness for Youth.

In the absence of dedicated space to accomplish the goals and objectives of the educational component, the success of the women is hindered and results in longer shelter stays in order to become work ready and self-sufficient. Funding has been provided by the Omidyar family to address this challenge of inadequate space. The grant allows the purchase of two portable buildings that would be placed in the vacant space on the campus as well as cover 100% of the expense to operate the buildings during the first

year and 50% of costs in the second year if necessary. The vacant space is held in anticipation of the future HOPE Center, a permanent three story education and program provision facility. The capital campaign is underway for this critical component to assist the women and children in shelter. The portable buildings will expand our capacity to address the educational needs of women and youth has been named Bridge to HOPE.

Bridge to HOPE Components

Portable Bldg. #1

Main Function: Job Development and Education/Life Skills

Occupant: The Shade Tree Clients (Adults and Youth) and staff

Days/Hours of Operation: Sunday through Saturday 9 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Space Allocation

- 5 staff offices
- Computer lab
- Dress for Success room (extremely large walk in closet including floor to ceiling shoe racks)
- Class Room
- Copier and Storage room
- Restrooms

Occupancy- Maximum 37 persons

- Staff offices – 1 Job Development manager, 3 job developers, 1 volunteer worker
- Computer lab for 12 students, 1 volunteer, 1 employee
- Class Room for 15 adult students, 1 volunteer, 1 employee

Community Partners providing services in Class Room or Computer Lab

- GED preparation through distance education from College of Southern Nevada
- Reading Comprehension provided by Urban League
- Basic Math, English, and computer classes from numerous professional tutors
- Health care class for teens provided by University of Southern Nevada nursing students
- Nutrition classes provided by University of Reno Cooperative Extension
- Yoga provided by certified instructors
- HIV Prevention provided by Aid for AIDS of Nevada

Employee facilitated classes in Class Room

- Housing classes including lease, credit reporting, tenant responsibility, application process, subsidized rent opportunities, transitional housing programs
- Job Development including identifying the right job (Meyers Briggs), the art of resume' building, navigating the on-line application, Dress for Success, Interview Hurdles, and Attitude is Everything.

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- 50 Life Skills classes each month addressing issues impacting women- grief and loss, communication, healthy relationships, time management, healing, attitudes, assertive skills, and motivation.

Projected Number of Clients per Year

- Job Development- 200 last year, projected to increase to 650 adults per year.
- Life Skills- 1240 last year, projected to increase to 1860 adults per year.
- GED Preparation- 22 last year, projected to increase to 260 adults per year.
- Nutrition/ Health- 113 last year, projected to increase to 720 adults per year.

Portable Bldg. #2

Main Function: Job Training

Component: Print Shop for letterhead, envelopes, business cards, pamphlets

Occupant: Clients, staff, and public customers

Occupancy- Maximum 20 persons

Customer area- 1 Job Coach, 2 trainees (clients)

- lobby and service counter
- Place, view, receive orders
- HOPE Center Fund Raising Area- Rendering/ Kiosk
- Restroom (customers, clients, and employees)

Pre-press area (computer work station) 2 trainees

- Printer area (Laser printers, computer work stations)

Separate Room

Assembly area (8' tables to compile and package orders) 2 trainees

- Storage area (racks and shelves for paper, ink, stock items)
- Small break area for staff from both buildings

The Shade Tree shelter for women and children has been in operation since 1990 and has resided at the current location since 2000. Job Development has been a component since 2000 and Life Skills provision increased from two classes per day in 2007 to the current level of 6 sessions per day and is available 7 days per week. Classes are taught by staff and volunteers that are professionals in their respective disciplines in our community. There is not a requirement for additional certification or licensure for the components listed in this request from the state or local municipalities.

The Job Development, Job Training, and Life Skills participants would all be current residents of the shelter. To attend classes, they would exit the shelter building and then after walking across the parking lot, enter the Job Development or Job Training buildings. Additional parking is not required as the staff, volunteers, and clients have been accommodated in the current scenario of providing these components within the shelter.

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By adding these two portable buildings to the campus, constantly moving women and children out of rooms in the shelter would cease and the intended purpose of each space would be available each day. For example, the children could play, watch movies, practice music, or create art in the Children's Activity Center while parenting classes are conducted in Bldg. #1. Victim's of Domestic Violence could find a moment of respite and healing in the Victim's Service Center while budgeting classes are held in the other building. This expansion would also allow a larger class to participate in Job Development, and women that have not worked in years could build their work readiness skills in the Job Training program. The end result of this project is that more women could become employed, thus reducing the amount of time they would remain in shelter. With six new families arriving each day, available space in the shelter is essential for their survival. Thank you for your consideration of this proposal to add two portable buildings to the campus of The Shade Tree.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marlene E. Richter".

Marlene E. Richter
Executive Director

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September 02, 2009

Att: CITY OF LAS VEGAS
Planning & Development Department
Mr. Steve Gebeke
Planning Supervisor

RECEIVED
SEP 03 2009

RE: The Shade Tree Shelter
One West Owens
Mobile class rooms

Landscape requirement waiver request:

Requesting a waiver of all landscape requirements for this project:

1. The existing masonry fence wall is at 8' high, and the required landscape will not be visible from the street.
2. This project is a temporary project, to remove the landscape after a few months for the construction of new building, does not make an economic sense for this shelter.

Regards:

Marlene E. Richter
Executive Director

The Shade Tree Shelter