

December 22, 2022

To the City of Brentwood Planning Department:

Shepherd's Gate respectfully requests the approval of our new building expansion that would allow us to build an additional building joined by a breezeway to the existing house. (605 Sycamore Ave., Brentwood, CA) This single-story new building expansion would provide three cottages (702 square feet each -2 bedroom, 1 bath) for our alumni graduates to spend an additional 6-9 months practicing everything they learned in the program while going to college or saving money from their new employment. It would allow them to continue to work on their sobriety, legal cases, and child reunification process with Child Protective Services. It would also provide one large pantry space (771 sq ft) to store food and supplies for all the women and children that are in our entire program. Included in this additional space is also a laundry facility for the cottages.

These critically needed cottages will enhance, expand, and centralize our services and will nearly double our capacity to help women and children in need. Without these cottages, women leave the program too early and rent rooms or apartments right back in their old neighborhoods that are either near their abuser (unsafe) or right back into the hands of drugs. They need to financially afford safer housing and gain employment to provide for their children. Plus, they need to find stable housing close to Shepherd's Gate so they can continue their Alumni services and support. Also, what is currently happening is women are staying in the program longer and not free up a spot for the next woman on the waiting list. These cottages would help them to stay on campus but free up their bed for the next woman.

This new construction of the cottages and pantry would be completed by Home Aid of Northern California and Shea Homes. Both construction companies-built cottages on our Livermore campus many years ago and they have proven to be an important part of our 80% success rate to support women in their sobriety and improve their lives.

HomeAid Northern California partners with care providers, builders, and construction trades with a unique and collaborate approach. Through housing development and community engagement, their mission is to help those experiencing homelessness to build new lives. The partnership between HomeAid and Shea Homes and trade partners helps us afford this expansion because of the many donated hours of labor and goods.

We are grateful to SDG Architects for their donation off all services and leadership to guide us through this process and make an architecture design meet both our needs and fulfills the requirements of the City of Brentwood.



ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

Shepherd's Gate began providing crisis care and shelter for women and children in Livermore, in 1984, out of a small home. Today, we are one of the largest comprehensive programs for homeless and abused women and children in the San Francisco's Tri-Valley region. Our campus in Livermore has the capacity to serve up to 70 women and children at a time and was made possible by a \$3.6 million partnership with HomeAid. This flagship campus includes two residence halls, five independent-living cottages, administrative offices, and an 8,200 square-foot learning facility that houses resident classrooms, children's care services, resident computer labs, and program offices.

Our Brentwood campus opened in 2006 and is a ten-bedroom and five bath home in a peaceful residential neighborhood. It was made possible through a \$2.5 million donation by Signature Properties. Within the home there are additional rooms for the following:

- Large front office to greet women and client, volunteers, and guests
- Nursery to care for newborns and toddlers while their mothers are in class.
- Communal kitchen and refrigerators and dining room for all guest
- Large family room with tv
- Three offices for staff (case managers to meet privately with clients)
- Large classroom for education classes and AA meetings
- One additional bathroom for staff on the main floor
- Large laundry room on second floor
- Security cameras around the exterior of the home

Phase 2 - New addition to the home in 2021 added the following on the main floor:

- Learning and career center to focus on adult education online or job skills training
- After school program room for older children. This room is also used by therapist for children to privately meet.
- Two additional offices for additional case managers to meet privately with women
- Covered patio – allows us to gather outside for BBQs, AA meetings, family reunification, staff meetings, and alumni meetings.

Our mission is to meet the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of women and children suffering from homelessness, addiction, poverty, and domestic violence through a Christian long-term recovery program. Our services are provided to women and children in crisis, regardless of race, age, religion, creed, national origin, disability, or marital or veteran status. We help single women and mothers of all ages. Our 38 years of experience has given us a deep understand of emergency care. A nightly homeless shelter does little to help achieve the kind of self-sufficiency that has lifelong and generational benefits. Therefore, in addition to providing shelter, Shepherd's Gate addresses the underlying causes of residents' desperation through a comprehensive multi-phase approach/curriculum (9-12 months) that includes a residential Road to Freedom Program, an Aftercare Program for alumni, and a Family Reunification Program for non-resident children who are no longer under their mothers' care.

While women are at Shepherd's Gate they work on their recovery, relapse prevention plan, debt reduction, legal issues, take parenting classes, focus on their education, mental and physical health, and attend multiple classes to heal from their trauma. Our children have a full program as well for their physical needs, educational, and therapy to recovery from their trauma. This is a very brief description of our services and classes. Also, we focus on community partnerships. We want women to build healthy relationships in the Brentwood community. We also want them to have a heart of gratitude for this program that they have been freely given, so we require before graduation to complete 45 hours of volunteering in the community. That can be at their child's school, local non-profits, their church, community events, and even at Shepherd's Gate. Since 1984, we have helped over 14,000 women and children in crisis situations.

SUCCESS OF OUR PROGRAM

At Shepherd's Gate, families in crisis can heal and create healthy, secure legacies free of abuse, violence and trauma. Our success rate—which we define as a woman's ability to sustain employment, stable housing, and sobriety 12-months post-graduation—is greater than 80%.

A newer success factor has also been achieved – a 90% success rate in helping women reunify with their children. In many domestic violence or addiction cases, children are removed from the mother's custody and placed in foster care or with relatives. We work carefully with legal counsel and the court systems to help the woman rebuild their lives so they can be moms that will provide for their children. Many judges praise our in-depth program and find approval in granting custody back to mothers that have proven sobriety, working towards employment, and have taken parenting classes at Shepherd's Gate. This past year we helped reunited 23 children with their mothers on both of our campuses.

NEED FOR PROPOSED PROJECT

Each month we receive about 75-100 intake calls for our Brentwood site located in Contra Costa County. The majority (88%) of women calling will report a history of family violence, and roughly half (56%) will be seeking to escape from a current situation of domestic violence. More than half (56%) will have a dependency on alcohol or drugs. Nearly all will be women with low levels of education and high incidences of traumatic life events. We are also helping more senior women experiencing homelessness living in their cars in Contra Costa County. The county plus the state of California leans on Shepherd's Gate because of our specialty in child reunification with Child Protective Services and the Court system. There are not enough programs in the state of California that except older children. We except girls of any age (newborn

– 18 years old) and boys (newborn – 11 years old). When children are with us, we focus on getting them the necessary trauma therapy they need such as play therapy, pet therapy, art therapy with professional counselors. If a woman is unable to pay for therapy for herself or her children, we will step in to pay. Most of our children have experienced violence from their parent’s domestic violence and addiction situation and trauma from being separated from their mothers as CPS stepped in to remove them from the household. California Judges turn to Shepherd’s Gate because we focus on helping the mother first change her life so she can care for her children when they return.

Our Brentwood campus opened in 2006 as a direct response to the community’s great need. Over the last 16 years, every space within the 7,600 square-foot, 10-bedroom home has been maximized.

Additions to the Brentwood site have reached a state where they have become critical. Not only to save more women and children from living in dangerous situations but to enhance, expand, and centralize the services that are essential to our families’ recovery and long-term success.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Our campus advancement has been broken down into three phases.

Phase 1: (Completed June 2021) Added 1,000 sq. feet to the back of the existing house by Signature Home - a new Learning and Career Center for adult education and job training services, and an After School Program room for older children, and two case management offices. Also, they provided us with a covered a patio that is used for multiple meetings and gathers.

Phase 2: (Completed 2022) We have also installed a secure playground in the backyard that was necessary for child reunification meetings.

Phase 3: (anticipate start date - late 2023) – One single story structure attached to the existing home by a breezeway. This structure would include 3 cottages for alumni to stay on campus while they practice everything they learned in the program. Graduates can live for free in the cottage as long as they are attending college or working. This extra time on campus allows them to save money so they can afford to live in our community. Also, they attend alumni and AA meetings on campus to continue their support and recovery. They meet with their case manager to make sure they are achieving all their personal goals. Some mothers need additional time on campus to meet the requirements of the court system to reunite with their children.

Also, the large pantry in the new addition will give us enough space to store food and supplies for all our women and children on campus. Once we build this new pantry, we would convert our current pantry inside the home into the originally designed bedroom that could accommodate 3 single women or one family of three.

The architecture design of Phase 3 ties in seamlessly with the existing home. Flat tile roofs, stucco wall finish and gable roof forms with board and batten detailing mimic the existing home. Door and window trim are also consistent. Each cottage is designed with their own usable porch space of approximately

116 square feet. To minimize the impact of the addition of the cottage we have kept them at a 1-story addition with a maximum height of approximately 16'-6".

With the addition of the cottages there is some shift in location of the current trash enclosure as well as parking. Overall, we gain 1 parking space on-site. The project addition is designed to be located within the PD setbacks. Most of the women that come to Shepherd's Gate do not own cars until they gain employment after graduation and then it is after they have saved financially to afford a car and insurance.

FUNDING

Shepherd's Gate is 100% funded by individuals, foundations, companies, and churches. We don't use government funds. We are not asking for any funding from the City of Brentwood for this expansion project. This expansion will be completely funded by individuals and foundations. Companies will donate gifts in kind through HomeAid of Northern California and Shea Homes partnerships. Also, it is worthy to mention that our program is 100% free for women and children to attend. Shepherd's Gate does not ask for any reimbursements from the city, county, State, or Federal funding.

EXPANSION PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Shepherd's Gate has experience successfully executing a multi-phase capital project at our Livermore campus that has expanded our services in Alameda County. Concluding in 1999 at \$1.8 million was the first phase of construction resulting in administrative offices and one residence hall, capable of serving 32 women and children at a time. Concluding in 2005 at \$2.5 million was the second phase resulting in construction of a second residence hall and five cottages, capable of serving an additional 48 women and children. Concluding in 2015 at \$1.5 million was the third and final phase that resulted in construction of an 8,000 square-foot resident learning facility to house all program services and offices. This final phase also doubled our capacity to serve children and expanded our capacity to provide on-site job-training and adult education services.

In Brentwood, we have successfully completed our expansion plan to add our Learning and Career Center, After School Room and two case management offices that opened in June of 2021. We have experienced firsthand how these enhanced spaces and services improve resident success.

During our recent expansion in 2019-2021, we were specifically careful to notify our neighbors on the two sides of our property of all the details of construction. For our new cottages, we have purposefully located them on the side of the property that has no neighbors. I would say 90% of our neighbors are donors to our program. Because we are at the end of a closed street, we are isolated from the neighbors. Many people in the community don't even know we are at the end of the street. I think we would have good neighbor reports from both the local Brentwood Police Department and the Fire Department.

We are grateful to the City of Brentwood and our community for allowing us to compassionately care for those women and children struggling in our community.

Sincerely,

Carol Patterson (cpatterson@shepherdsgate.org – 925-443-4283)
CEO - Shepherd's Gate