



DATE: May 10, 2022

TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Councilmember Laura Lothian

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION TO EXPAND UPON SUPERVISOR JOEL ANDERSON'S EAST COUNTY AND CITY'S MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING; DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE DIRECTION TO STAFF ON RESEARCHING POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND GOVERNMENT AND/OR PRIVATE AGENCY PARTNERSHIPS RELATED TO THE PURCHASE AND OPERATIONS OF PROPERTY IN CAMPO TO OFFER ALTERNATIVE SHELTER SOLUTIONS FOR LA MESA'S HOMELESS POPULATION, AND ASSESSING THE VIABILITY OF SUCH A PROPOSAL

Background

As City Council should be aware, La Mesa's homeless population - living throughout our community's streets, sidewalks, parking lots, parks, neighborhoods, businesses, and church entryways - is worsening. The City has done its best to provide services to our homeless residents, through programs like Homeless Outreach and Mobile Engagement (HOME) but the problem persists.

This is a sad and difficult situation for those living without shelter, while also creating significant impacts on our local businesses and community members.

While local agencies including La Mesa have struggled to find solutions in their own cities to address the challenges faced by both the homeless population and the greater community at large, few have had serious conversations about pursuing alternative solutions *outside* their communities.

Discussion and Consideration

A 16-acre site with existing facilities, infrastructure, and utilities is currently on the market for \$5.45M in East County, at 431 Jeb Stuart in Campo. This property dates back to the 1940s. Current tenants include the Border Patrol, a gas station, post office, a Baptist Church, a VFW Hall, a feed and grain store plus 28 residential buildings. The land is level, bucolic, and surrounded by beautiful mountains and meadows. Several buildings need rehabilitation which could provide work and employment. Many of the old barracks have been converted into livable apartments. There are also single-family

homes and duplexes. The location is less than one hour east of La Mesa, accessible by the 8 and 94 Freeways.

The MLS # is PTP2101902

Listing Link: <https://cr.paragonreels.com/publink/default.aspx?GUID=7b4c5184-5036-4344-b57c-68ad39056a5f&Report=Yes>

This parcel has a rich history and was formerly Camp Lockett, a United States Army Military Post with connections to the Buffalo Soldiers of World War II. Per Wikipedia, In July of 1944, the Army Service Forces activated the Mitchell Convalescent Hospital at Camp Lockett. The hospital was the first Army Service Forces convalescent hospital in the United States.

Such a site might be ideal to provide shelter and other services to many of our neediest residents. The potential of pooled resources from other government and/or private agencies could be assessed in a joint venture.

My proposal is for staff to research the funding options and viability of purchasing such a property for the purpose of offering alternative shelter and services for those experiencing homelessness in La Mesa, including potential interest by other East County Regional governments and/or private agencies.

I look forward to any questions and discussions. Thank you for your consideration.