



For Immediate Release

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FRIENDSHIP MANOR HOUSING FOR SENIORS SEEKS LAND FOR RELOCATION

Friendship Manor committed to building a purpose built property for senior residents; free up current University-area location for student housing

Goleta, CA, March 1, 2010—For over 37 years, Goleta-based Friendship Manor has been a prominent fixture in the Isla Vista community. While the retirement community offers some of the most affordable housing for those 62 and over in the Santa Barbara area, leaders of the nonprofit organization say it is time relocate and create 'purpose built' housing for their senior residents.

While Friendship Manor has been making the most of its resources over the years to maintain a secure and safe environment for seniors, there are insurmountable limitations to re-design and retrofit. The concept of purpose built is an approach to housing design and development that, in the case of senior communities, accommodates mobility, access to community resources, and transportation. The current Friendship Manor building was built for student housing in 1967.

In addition to spreading the word of their search for new real estate, Friendship Manor is also seeking to partner with a like-minded organization or nonprofit to expand the scope of services available at the new location to meet the needs of a growing senior population. Friendship Manor would seriously consider an organizational "match" such as a senior day care center or other type of senior-related group that has an interest in sharing part of their new space.

Friendship Manor has been conducting a Carpinteria to Goleta-wide search for the perfect 4-5 acre location on which to build—ideally a location that would provide easy access to public transportation, local shopping, and medical facilities. Friendship Manor is diligently rising to this challenge of finding the right property, in the right location, with the proper zoning. The organization faces a much more arbitrary, yet major, obstacle to building new housing: As a 501c3 tax exempt property, this becomes a challenge to cities or counties facing increasing deficits.

"Our tax exempt status is critical for us to maintain our affordability," said Skip Szymanski, Board President of Friendship Manor and also serves as the COO of the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara "Having a broad overview of the affordable housing needs in our area, Friendship Manor is a critical piece in the senior housing market. This allows us to offer incredible value to our senior residents and also sends out an important message about how we operate in the community."

“In this economy, a project such as this would generate significant local benefits such as contract work for local companies, and the humanitarian benefit of improving the quality of life for our resident seniors,” added Szymanski. “We also believe that our current location will be ideal for housing UCSB students. We think it’s a win for the greater Santa Barbara Community.”

Currently, Friendship Manor houses 200 senior residents and employs 40 people. Friendship Manor is a mixed income property allowing seniors of diverse socio-economic backgrounds to live together in one location. Monthly rental rates include meals and utilities and range from \$782-\$962. Amenities include resident “community” gardens, laundry facilities, beauty shop, library, theatre, pool, computer access, onsite maintenance staff, a small store, exercise area, transportation, covered parking, and a variety of planned on and offsite activities.

Community benefits of a new location

- Provide purpose built housing for approximately 200 seniors
- New construction and landscaping will incorporate green building and environmentally friendly elements
- A convenient location will reduce the need for residents to drive, thereby reducing traffic and safety impacts
- Increased business for local retailers that are located near the new Friendship Manor
- Architectural design will enhance and beautify area
- Workforce housing is increased due to UCSB students freeing up rental units in the area and relocating within walking distance to UCSB

Benefits for Isla Vista/UCSB area

- Additional housing for students, which is in critical demand
- Reduced traffic impacts in the congested Isla Vista area
- New jobs created to re-create and maintain housing

About Friendship Manor

For 37 years, Friendship Manor has been quietly providing senior housing in the Santa Barbara, California area. It is not just a place to live, but a community that offers comfortable surroundings, which reinforce self respect, self esteem, and encourages new friendships.

For more information about Friendship Manor and to learn about how you can help, please contact Patricia Fabing, Community Outreach Coordinator at 805-968-0771 or on the web at <http://www.friendship-manor.org/>

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