



October 20, 2020

Board of Supervisors
County of Mendocino
501 Low Gap Road
Ukiah, CA 95482

Reference: **Homelessness in Mendocino County**, 10/20/2020 BOS Agenda, Item 5h

Dear Members of the Board,

To my knowledge Mendocino County is not a profit generating entity, and therefore the money it spends is earned by the citizens of this country. In reviewing the agenda item 5h for your meeting tomorrow, it appears you are trying to proceed with the purchase of the Best Western property at 555 Orchard Avenue for \$10,640,000, silently and under the radar. This action would be yet another false start and an inappropriate solution to solving our homelessness problem.

Thinking back two years, after spending a sizable amount of money for the Marbut Consulting **Homelessness Needs assessment and Action Steps** report produced in March 2018, there is little evidence the County has implemented the well thought out recommendations. e.g.

- Section 10 The Different Cohorts Need to Be Treated Differently
- Section 11 Establish System Wide Service Eligibility and Triage Criterion

If these recommendations were put in place, we would be dealing with a third fewer individuals utilizing our services, and we would be dealing with our homegrown cohorts.

Logistically to purchase a motel for an inflated price with the idea of making improvements to meet the needs of the homeless; and to have it be amongst local businesses on a key Ukiah commercial corridor, away from the services they rely on, makes absolutely no sense. If you feel compelled to buy a motel, at least pick a motel that is not a 45 minute walk to get to their next meal. Motel 6 on South State Street is a more appropriate location, and is only a 6 minute walk. Regardless, looking at your agenda **Table 1: Target Client Population Breakdown**, makes us think you are paying little attention to the cautions provided in Dr. Marbut's Action Steps.

The County could contract to build a facility that meets your needs in a more appropriate location for considerably less investment, and then be able to put an estimated 30% of the intended purchase price, mentioned above, into operating the facility efficiently. Check out the Sierra Sunset apartment complex to benchmark a cost comparison.

Once again, we are in the mode of "buy it or build it, and they will come", and there is no apparent mandatory mental health care as a component. Unfortunately, it seems we are in a homelessness endless loop.

Please do not proceed with your intended purchase of the Best Western facility; you would not be spending our hard earned tax dollars wisely.

Sincerely,

John and Karen Moon