December 2, 2020

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors
    Jeffrey V. Smith, County Executive

FROM: Consuelo Hernandez, Acting Director, Office of Supportive Housing

SUBJECT: Shelter Opportunity in East Palo Alto

Under advisement from May 5, 2020 (Item No. 16), this report responds to a referral initiated by Supervisor Simitian directing the Administration to report to the Board of Supervisors (Board) with options for considering shelter partnership in East Palo Alto.

Project WeHope is a community-based organization that provides mobile hygiene services, job training, and operates a shelter in East Palo Alto. The County contracts with Project WeHope for access to five beds at that shelter as well as mobile hygiene services. In early 2020, Project WeHope identified a commercial property in East Palo Alto that could be suitable for operating a shelter and approached the County with the opportunity in April 2020. Project WeHope also approached the County of San Mateo about the same opportunity. The property required tenant improvements, and is approximately 8,000 square feet in an industrial area that is zoned to allow shelter.

The property that prompted this Board referral is no longer available, but shelter capacity in North County will double in January 2021. If more shelters are needed to serve North County after LifeMoves Mountain View opens, the County will be better prepared to respond to opportunities to partner with Project WeHope and the County of San Mateo. To prepare, County staff will meet with Project WeHope and County of San Mateo staff to develop a non-binding agreement that outlines how the counties could share in capital and operating costs for a future project.

Cc: Chief Board Aides
    Miguel Marquez, Chief Operating Officer
    James Williams, County Counsel
    Megan Doyle, Clerk of the Board
    Ky Le, Deputy County Executive