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# PROJECT PROFILE

**PROJECT PROFILE**

Project Name Beyond Homelessness: Alternatives to Traditional Shelters Location San Francisco and Berkeley, CA

Owner Several owners including City/County of San Francisco, Chemical Awareness & Treatment Services, Travelers Aid, etc.

Project Use(s) Drop-In Center, Multi-Service Centers, Transitional Housing, Housing for the Formerly Homeless, Family Housing

Project Size Sizes vary: from an 1,100 foot drop-in center to a 56,000 square foot multi-service homeless center. Total Development Cost Cost: Several projects; N.A.

Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate) Not applicable

Date Initiated As early as 1983; most 1990-92. Percent Completed, Dec. 30, 1992 75-100%

Projected Completion Date (if appropriate) Some complete already; others will be complete by 1993. See abstract.

(Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates)

Application submitted by: Maurice Lim Miller

Name Maurice Lim Miller

Title Executive Director

Organization Asian Neighborhood Design

Address 80 Fresno Street

Telephone ( 415 ) 982-2959

**Key Participants** (Attach an additional sheet if needed)

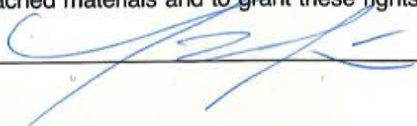
Organization	Key Person	Telephone
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Agencies <u>Mayor's Office of Housing</u>	<u>Jon Pon</u>	<u>(415) 554-8952</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Developer <u>Chinese Community Housing Corporation</u> (one of several developers)	<u>Gordon Chin</u>	<u>(415) 984-1450</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professional consultants: <u>Asian Neighborhood Design</u>	<u>Harry Ja Wong</u>	<u>(415) 982-2959</u>
Architect		
Landscape architect		
Urban designer		
Planner		
Lawyer		
Other		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community group(s) <u>Chemical Awareness &amp; Treatment Services</u>	<u>Cynthia Bellon</u>	
<u>S.F. Homeless Task Force</u>	<u>Bryan Boyd</u>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sponsor		

Please indicate how you learned of the Rudy Bruner Award in Urban Excellence.

mailing       media       previous RBA entrant       other

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# ABSTRACT

**ABSTRACT**Project Name Beyond Homelessness: Alternatives to Traditional SheltersLocation San Francisco and Berkeley, California

1. Describe briefly the project's design and implementation.

Working throughout the Bay Area with community and neighborhood groups, service providers, non-profit housing corporations and governmental agencies, Asian Neighborhood Design (A.N.D.) has been an integral partner in a comprehensive plan to break the cycle of homelessness. The city of San Francisco initially developed the concept in their "Beyond Shelter" program, and A.N.D., a non-profit community agency, has provided architectural services for a variety of projects that have implemented key elements of this comprehensive plan as well as other projects.

**The plan involves:**

1. Initial intake
2. Drop-in Center
3. Multi-Service Center (MSC)
4. Transitional Housing with on-site social services
5. Permanent housing

**Related projects in San Francisco (except as noted) include:**

(start/completion dates in parentheses)

1. Transbay Homeless Outreach Project (1992/1992)
2. McMillan Drop-in Center (1992/1992)
3. North of Market MSC (1990/1992)  
South of Market MSC (1989/1991)
4. Cambridge Hotel (1988/1991)
5. San Christina (1990/1993)  
Madrid Hotel (1983/1986)  
Park View Hotel (1983/1986)  
U.A. Homes, Berkeley, CA (1990/1992)  
Stark Hotel, Berkeley, CA (1991/1993)

2. What local urban issues did this project address? What were its goals? Were there issues that, in your judgement, might have been addressed but were not?

**Responses to Homelessness.** The quick-fix approach has been to provide temporary substandard shelter without any supportive social services that will assist the homeless to break the cycle of homelessness. The goals of the comprehensive plan, instead, are to provide **consolidated social services**, including client counseling and follow-up, as well as food and shelter, at the MSCs. The MSCs further assess the homeless needs and build upon the skills they have in order to **achieve stability and structure** in their lives. With guidance and assistance from the MSCs, the homeless are directed toward **transitional housing with on-site social services**. Other projects provide **intake and social service referrals**. **Transitional housing with on-site social services** allows the formerly homeless to worry less about their housing needs and to focus on the skills they will need to acquire independent living. **Permanent housing**, including the Berkeley projects and the San Christina which are designated for the formerly homeless, will further reinforce the supportive services a person needs in the transition back to a **stable living situation and self-sufficiency**. One element of the comprehensive plan that would need further development is the expansion of **job creation opportunities** for the homeless. For example, the non-profit housing corporation of the San Christina renovation project will require the general contractor to hire homeless people in meaningful positions as part of the work force. The ground floor will also be developed as retail/commercial space that will employ the homeless.

3. Describe the financing of the project. Do you think it could be replicated?

The financing of the projects has been developed from a variety of resources including Federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), banking institutions, community substance abuse prevention programs and private contributions. As a result, most of the projects have been developed from a public/private partnership that could be replicated throughout the nation.

4. Why does the project merit the Ruby Bruner Award for Excellence in the Urban Environment?

The projects address the demanding urban social condition of homelessness with a solution that can be replicated in diverse communities across the nation. The projects also establish a framework that encourages the interactive partnership and resources of the public, private, community and non-profit agencies to link together to solve one of today's most visible social deficiencies. As the perspectives note, the projects have been successful in significantly improving the living situations of the homeless already.

## PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE

This sheet is to be filled out by a professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, legal, or other services. Copies may be given to other professionals if desired.

If possible, answers should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. Please limit answers to the area provided.

Name	Harry Ja Wong	Title	Principal Architect
Organization	Asian Neighborhood Design	Telephone (	415 ) 982-2959
Address	80 Fresno Street, San Francisco, CA 94133		

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**1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project?**

Asian Neighborhood Design (A.N.D.) provided the architectural services for a variety of projects that dealt directly with the issues of homelessness. A.N.D. researched existing homeless programs/shelters and met with community groups, neighborhood advisory committees, social providers and government agencies to help develop the architectural program and construction documents which challenged the preconceptions of what homeless shelters should look like or what services they should provide.

**2. From your perspective, how was the project intended to benefit the urban environment?**

The intent of the projects is to establish different types of facilities that would provide comprehensive services for the homeless. By providing the social services that would provide the opportunities for the homeless to stabilize and change their living situations, the benefits to the urban environment will have long term impacts with the reduction of the number of people who are homeless.

**3. Describe the project's impact on its surroundings and on the people in the area. Do you have data that document these effects? Attach supplementary material as appropriate.**

Projects that involve social issues like the homeless must overcome NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard). Providing community meetings and developing neighborhood advisory committees helped address the local business, civic and community questions about the projects. For example, concerns about long lines of homeless standing in the streets next to the multi-service centers (MSCs) and the resulting street litter translated into designs which provided waiting areas with overflow spaces and the organizing of street cleaning teams comprised of homeless participants. By actively involving the community with joint participation and alleviating the community misconceptions through education, projects, combined with the necessary political will, have the potential to have lasting benefits for the fabric of the urban environment. Most projects have not detrimentally affected the immediate surroundings. For example, while the MSCs discourage loitering, some does occur next to the facilities. The drop-in centers and the transitional and permanent housing, however, are exceptional in their abilities to blend cohesively into their neighborhoods.

4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them?

Most projects involving social issues have limited operating and construction budgets. The challenge is to develop innovative designs with basic building materials and systems. Working with clients and service providers on selecting the low-maintenance building materials and if necessary, the design elements to be simplified, A.N.D. was able to maintain a high design standard for all the projects.

5. What was the least successful aspect of the project? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

While most projects continue to be successful overall, the multi-service centers come to mind, in hindsight, for changes to the building design. The client, for example, had requested low-maintenance features in the toilet room design. Toilet rooms were provided with heavy-duty ceiling-mounted toilet partitions and wall-hung toilets that would essentially free the floor from obstacles for easy cleaning. The homeless population, however, has proven to be more destructive than these partitions and toilets were durable. Some have grabbed onto the partitions and swung back and forth until they have broken. In hindsight, floor-mounted partitions and toilets would have been more cost-effective to maintain than providing for the replacement of the above mentioned partitions and toilets.

6. How might this project be instructive to others in your profession?

The documentation of the development and the post-occupancy evaluations of these projects would provide valuable insights on:

- 1) working relationships with neighborhood groups on overcoming NIMBYism to achieve community support;
- 2) complex programming needs that include supervision, operation and social services;
- 3) design parameters, spatial relationships and the selection of durable building materials; and
- 4) developing building code requirements.

7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

The characteristics that would demonstrate these projects' long-term success in architectural design would be that the designated spaces and choice of materials would still actually be in use for their intended purposes. The cumulative hope for these projects, however, is to effect social change and to improve the lives of the homeless. One measure of success for these projects would be the eventual conversion of the drop-in and multi-service centers into permanent housing for the homeless.

## DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE

This sheet is to be filled out by the person who took primary responsibility for project financing or is a representative of the group which did.


If possible, answers should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. Please limit answers to the area provided.

Name Gordon Chin Title Executive Director

Organization Chinese Community Housing Corporation Telephone ( 415 ) 984-1450

Address 1525 Grant Avenue San Francisco, CA 94133

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1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project? Describe the scope of involvement.

The Chinese Community Housing Corporation (CCHC) was the owner-developer of the Cambridge Hotel project, a 67 room SRO hotel rehabilitized as permanent housing for the homeless in 1991. CCHC was also the construction manager for the project, and as with most of our developments, is the property manager. As the project is a housing tax credit syndication, CCHC is also the general managing partner of the Cambridge Hotel Partnership Corporation.

2. What, if any, modifications were made to the original proposal as the project was developed? What trade-offs or compromises were required during the development of the project?

The Cambridge Hotel was not originally planned as housing for the homeless. When acquired in June of 1989, the project was conceived as a SRO to serve the working poor, Southeast Asians, and seniors in the Tenderloin area of San Francisco. It was after extensive citywide dialogue between housing developers and social service agencies in San Francisco that a number of "collaborations" were formed to expand affordable housing resources for the homeless. The Cambridge was actually the first of these social needs housing collaborations, which were given "impetus" by the urgency of housing for the homeless after the Loma Prieta Earthquake in October of 1989.

3. What, if any, innovative means of financing the project were used?

As a newly conceived housing for the homeless project, significant changes and trade-offs were made in the project's financial plan, which became much more complex (than the original SRO concept). No fewer than ten (10) financing sources were secured for various aspects of equity, construction, and interim and take out financing. The California Equity Fund invested \$659,000 towards the project's four million dollar cost. (\$2.3 for acquisition, \$880,000 for construction) Perhaps the most innovative aspect of the financing package was a ten year payment period for permanent financing negotiated with Equitable Life, which coincided with the expiration of the project's 10 year McKinney Section 8 financing, hence providing a secure stream of financing.

4. How did the financial benefits and economic impacts of this project differ from other projects? How does the project's quality relate to the financial goals?

The project's financial and economic benefits, although much more complicated than any of CCHC's projects over the past decade, can be characterized as providing evidence that with perseverance and creativity, complex project financing packages can be structured. Indeed, with a "base" of major committed players involved (the City, State, California Equity Fund, Equitable, etc. ), the project was able to further leverage other grants and in-kind resources including 60 refrigerators donated from PG&E, 2,000 cubic feet of carpet and furnishings from major downtown hotels. The project's operating budget is very tight, (the organization derives minimal net income) however the learning experience in structuring the deal was invaluable.

5. What was the most difficult task in the development of this project? What was the least successful aspect? With hindsight, would you do anything differently?

The most difficult aspects of the Cambridge project were in pulling the different financing partners together in a relatively short period of time. Further, the project's social service component, utilizing a social service agency contracted by the City's Social Service Department, was a new structure for the organization, requiring a great deal of organizational planning to delineate the role for CCHC as program manager, and the the social service provider.

6. What about this project would be instructive to other developers?

The Cambridge Hotel project may provide many lessons learned which may be instructive to other developers. In sum, they are: Secure long term, permanent sources of social services for homeless projects; Plan construction and site amenities collaboratively with tenants and social service providers; Build a sense of community by getting many institutions, businesses, volunteers, involved.

7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

Stability in the lives of the project's residents, not only in the traditional definition of low tenant vacancy rates, but seeing the projects' residents use the "housing resources" as a base from which to stabilize and enhance their lives and employability. As such, the Cambridge Hotel legacy may be demonstrated by how well it functions as a community at any given time, but also by how well it former residents function in society after they leave the Cambridge.



# COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Please note: Our office received some water damage from a recent storm/leaky roof. We have kept this page w/signature in the proposal but transcribed the information on the reverse of this sheet.

This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

If possible, answers should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. Please limit answers to the area provided.

Name CYNTHIA J. Belon, LCSW Title Executive Director  
Organization Chemical Analysis & Treatment Service, Inc Telephone ( 415 ) 241-1199  
Address 1446 Market San Francisco Ca 94102

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Signature Cynthia J. Belon

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play? For example, was there a public review process in which you took part?

CATS bid on the project for the drop-in center. Asian Neighborhood Design was chosen to provide the architectural services. CATS worked closely with AND in developing the environmental design of the project as it related to the program needs and client needs. CATS participated in a series of public hearings related to acceptance of the site for this particular project - architectural design was a crucial part of the process.

2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project?

The major issues related to the types of services to be provided for the described population (homeless substance abuser); acceptance of site chosen and opposition of neighborhood to the site; from the providers point of view - environmental and architectural design crucial to the goal of the project. Major emphasis on environment that was de-institutional and "homeless" in its effect.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them? With hindsight, what, if anything, would you do differently?

- Largest compromise was a set of mitigation measures attached to the contract for implementation of project at site chosen - neighborhood. Seared at thought of homeless drop-in center in their area - came up with a list of factors to be addressed as part of implementation.  
- In long run, the deep part of the neighborhood advisory committee became an asset as members from neighborhood began talking to each other about creating a safer environment.

Responses from Cynthia Belon, Executive Director of Chemical Awareness and Treatment Service, Inc.

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play? For example, was there a public review process in which you took part?

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The major issues related to the types of services to be provided for the described population (homeless substance abusers); acceptance of site chosen and opposition of neighborhood to the site; from the provider's point of view, environmental and architectural design crucial to the goal of the project. Major emphasis on environment that was de-institutional and "homelike" in its effect.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them? With hindsight, what, if anything, would you do differently?

The largest compromise was a set of mitigation measures attached to the contract for implementation of the project at the site chosen. The neighborhood was scared at the thought of a homeless drop-in center in their area and came up with a list of factors to be addressed as part of the implementation. In the long run, the development of the neighborhood advisory committee became an asset as members from the neighborhood began talking to each other about creating a safe environment.

4. How has this project made the community a better place to live? Why should it win this Award? Please be as specific as possible.

This project has made it possible for individuals to have a safe refuge from the streets. The availability of this project will decrease the incidence of individuals who die on the streets because they have nowhere to go. By giving people this type of refuge off of the streets, with no hidden agenda, hopefully they will be encouraged to make positive changes in their lives. Individuals have a right to a place off of the streets - individuals should not have to die in doorways.

In addition, the process of developing this project was a collaborative one, involving homeless service providers, substance abuse providers, Asian Neighborhood Design, government officials, and the mayor's office. This collaborative was the first of its kind in San Francisco. Furthermore, a neighborhood advisory committee was developed which has made this neighborhood a safer place to be since everyone is discussing and resolving neighborhood issues.

5. If a community group came to you for advice in carrying out a similar project, what would you tell them?

Get the community involved in a collaborative effort as described above in the development and implementation of the project, for greatest community investment and success.

6. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

- 1) Decrease in the incidence of street deaths (individuals who are intoxicated and have nowhere to go)
- 2) Community is still involved in ongoing implementation of the project.

## PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE

Name JON PON Title PROGRAM MANAGER  
Organization MAYOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (415)554-8952  
Address 10 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA, STE 600, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102

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Signature  \_\_\_\_\_

1. What role did your organization play in the development of this project?

MOCD was the lead agency in developing the two multiservice centers (MSCs) for the homeless. After the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, then Mayor Agnos decided to develop two multiservice centers that would house the additional homeless people displaced by the earthquake. With federal funding, MOCD then contracted with Asian Neighborhood Design (AND), a nonprofit community agency, to design the two MSCs. AND was selected as the architect because of its many years of experience in designing community facilities and housing serving the needs of lower income people. Working with neighborhood groups and the Department of Social Services, MOCD selected the two sites and provided the design parameters for AND to develop preliminary drawings. AND assisted MOCD in negotiating with FEMA on the rehabilitation financing for the two projects. MOCD coordinated the various public approvals and environmental review necessary to meet FEMA deadline for completing the projects.

MOCD also selected AND to design other specialized homeless facilities. One of them is the Transbay Project where an outreach center was created in a major transit hub terminal. Located in space provided by Greyhound Express, this new facility provides services to homeless people and assists those who are out-of-town to return home. Another project is the Alcohol Drop-In Center which provides temporary respite and peer counseling for homeless inebriates. AND's design of this facility creates an atmosphere that promotes self-esteem and well being.

2. Describe what requirements were made of this project by your agency (e.g. zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statements).

Homeless shelters and facilities have previously been drab-looking, warehouse or institutional style, with little or no amenities. Besides consolidating sleeping, social counseling and drop-in services in one location, another important objective with the new MSCs was to change the public's negative perception of what a homeless shelter looks like. The architects were required to design the MSCs so that they are inviting and comfortable to homeless people. The MSCs are designed to be the entry points for homeless people to obtain shelter and a variety of services. In order to encourage people to come off the street, the MSCs must treat homeless

people with respect. City staff from various departments would be located there so that homeless people would not have to go from one agency to another seeking appropriate services. The final design of the MSCs gives homeless people privacy, comfort, and ample space without having to wait in lines. AND also met with the neighborhood advisory group to help finalize the design of the facility that met their needs as well.

3. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment? Describe how, if at all, these intentions changed over the course of the project. What trade-offs and compromises were required? How did you participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

Most urban cities have large numbers of homeless people loitering on the street. Part of the reason is that most shelters empty their building in the morning and homeless people have no other indoor place where they are welcome. With nowhere else to go, homeless people end up loitering or walking in the streets or standing in line for free meals. The presence of homeless people loitering, standing in lines, or panhandling creates a detrimental effect in the urban environment and reinforces the growing disparity between the haves and have-nots. The MSCs hope to address these problems with its design and operation as a 24 hour facility. Now any homeless persons can always find a place to sit and rest at the MSCs day lounges. The tradeoff is that additional staff is required to supervise and maintain the space.

4. Describe any data you have that document the impact this project has had on its surrounding and the people in the project area. Attach supplementary materials as appropriate. What have you observed of the project's impact?

The MSCs became an immediate success because they are the most attractive and desirable homeless facilities in the City. A high number of "turn aways" occur each day as the facility cannot accommodate the huge demand. The result is that in the evening, some of the sitting areas are temporarily converted to more sleeping areas.

Staff and volunteers working at the MSCs have praised the new facilities. Many nearby merchants and residents have initially opposed the project's location. Now, after they are open, the MSCs demonstrated that they can be good neighbors and not be a source of urban problems.

5. What about this project would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?

Cities should realize that the homeless population will remain high for many years. There is a tendency for local governments to not spend enough money on permanent homeless facilities or to develop a concept to consolidate different services at one location. Too often, shelters are developed as temporary sites with low budgets which eventually lead to deteriorated or depressing conditions unacceptable for human occupancy. It would be cost effective to spend additional money in the initial development of homeless facilities, to make sure that finish

materials are attractive and durable, equipment are high quality and vandal resistant, ventilation is sufficient to remove odor, sanitation facilities are adequate to prevent people lines, office space provides good privacy, and respite area are available for staff use.

6. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

If, five years from now, the homeless problem has not improved, I would expect the MSCs to still function pretty much the way they were originally designed. As long as there are large numbers of homeless people on the streets, there will always be a need for the MSCs. It is important that homeless people see the MSCs as a place to go to for assistance and be treated with dignity.

Another objective of the MSCs is to provide the avenue for homeless people to connect with the available social services that will eventually change their homeless situation to one that includes affordable permanent housing. One of the measures of success for the MSCs would ultimately be the adaptive reuse of the facilities to some other functions or to permanent housing if and when the needs that made the MSCs a reality will no longer exist in the distant future.