



APPROVED

OCT 15 2024

CITY OF ATASCADERO
PLANNING

**CITY OF ATASCADERO
PLANNING COMMISSION**

MINUTES

**Regular Meeting – Tuesday, October 1, 2024 – 6:00 P.M.
City Hall
6500 Palma Avenue, Atascadero, California**

CALL TO ORDER - 6:00 p.m.

Chairperson Keen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and Vice Chairperson van den Eikhof led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Anderson, Carranza, Heath, Hughes, Schmidt, Vice Chairperson van den Eikhof and Chairperson Keen

Absent: None

Vacant: None

Others Present: Annette Manier, Recording Secretary

Staff Present: Kelly Gleason, Planning Manager
Xzandrea Fowler, Senior Planner

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: By Commissioner Schmidt and seconded by Commissioner Heath to approve the Agenda.

Motion passed 7:0 by a roll-call vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

Chairperson Keen closed the Public Comment period.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT MINUTES OF AUGUST 6, 2024

- Recommendation: Commission approve the August 6, 2024 Minutes.

MOTION: By Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Carranza to approve the Consent Calendar.

Motion passed 7:0 by a roll-call vote.

PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. 6370 ATASCADERO AVE, EL CAMINO HOMELESS ORGANIZATION

The project is a request for an Amendment to the Emergency Shelter Overlay Zone text, the ECHO Operations Management Plan, and the Conditional Use Permit (PLN 2014-1492) to increase the number of client serving beds from 60 to 90, increase the number of meal program participants from 80 to 100, and increase the shower program operation to 15 hours per week on APN 030-341-013. This Amendment would facilitate the construction of a 7,600 SF 2-story addition to the existing shelter facility. (AMND24-0060).

- CEQA: The project is covered by the general rule exemption (CEQA Section 15061 (3)(b) and categorical exemption Class 1 (CEQA Section 15301(c)(2)).
- Recommendation: Staff's recommendation is for the Planning Commission to adopt the Draft Resolution recommending that the City Council take the following actions:
 - i. Introduce an ordinance for first reading, by title only, that would approve amendments to the Atascadero Municipal Code Title 9 Chapter 3 Article 23 ES (Emergency Shelter) Overlay Zone text;
 - ii. Approve amendments to Conditional Use Permit (PLN 2014-1492);
 - iii. Amend the Operations and Management Plan for the El Camino Homeless Organization (ECHO) to allow for an expansion of an existing shelter and programs located at 6370 Atascadero Avenue; and take such additional, related, action that may be desirable.

DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS:

Commissioner Heath is familiar with some of the projects at ECHO and is familiar with this project through Kiwanis, as they do a lot of work with ECHO.

Commissioner Anderson echoed what Commissioner Heath said, and stated they do work through ABC Church, and through Kiwanis, are familiar with ECHO.

Vice Chairperson van den Eikhof had no ex parte.

Commissioner Carranza took a tour with the CEO, Wendy Lewis on Monday, and spends time at their garden.

Commissioner Schmidt is a member of Kiwanis, and through that organization, is very familiar with what goes on at ECHO, as well as being familiar through the Church.

Commissioner Hughes met with Wendy Lewis on Monday and was able to see what ECHO is all about.

Chairperson Keen met with Wendy Lewis and Austin Solheim a few weeks ago and toured the facility which included looking at the location for the future addition. She has also served dinner at ECHO and has made donations.

Planner Fowler presented the staff report and answered questions from the Commission. Planner Fowler stated that this project is scheduled for City Council action on November 12, 2024, and that the City Council will be the final decision-making body for the project.

Austin Solheim (Director of Development for ECHO), introduced Rebecca Newman (Architect with Arris Studio Architects) who made a presentation on the project (Exhibit A). Wendy Lewis (CEO for ECHO) also spoke about the presentation and read a letter that was sent in from Kelly Hadley.

The applicant team and staff answered questions from the Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following members of the public spoke: Jay DeCou, Carol Woodruff, Greer Woodruff, Babette DeCou, John Sanders, Tess Davis-Cheek, Kyle Flaherty and Andrew Hayes.

Staff addressed questions raised during public comment.

Chairperson Keen closed the Public Comment period.

MOTION: By Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Hughes to adopt PC Resolution 2024-0016 recommending the City Council approve Text Amendments to the ES (Emergency Shelter) Overlay Zone (AMC 9-3.504), Conditional Use Permit (PLN2014-1492), and the El Camino Homeless Organization (ECHO) Operations and Management Plan for the expansion of an existing shelter and programs within the Emergency Shelter (ES) overlay zone on APN 030-341-013.

Motion passed 7:0 by a roll-call vote.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND REPORTS

None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Planning Manager Gleason stated that the next meeting will be held on October 15, 2024, and the Commission will hear a project for a development agreement for the site on Viejo Camino and El Camino Real, as well as CEQA streamlining.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:40 p.m.

The next regular meeting will be on October 15, 2024, at City Hall, 6500 Palma Avenue, Atascadero, CA.

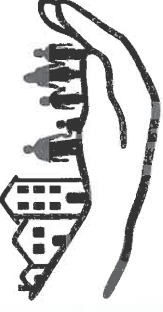
MINUTES PREPARED BY:

Annette Manier

Annette Manier, Recording Secretary
Administrative Assistant

Adopted 10/15/24

The following exhibit is available in the Community Development Department:
Exhibit A – PPT Presentation by applicant



EL CAMINO HOMELESS ORGANIZATION

Atascadero Planning Commission

October 1st, 2024



Empowering people in San Luis Obispo County to make positive change by providing food, shelter, and supportive services.

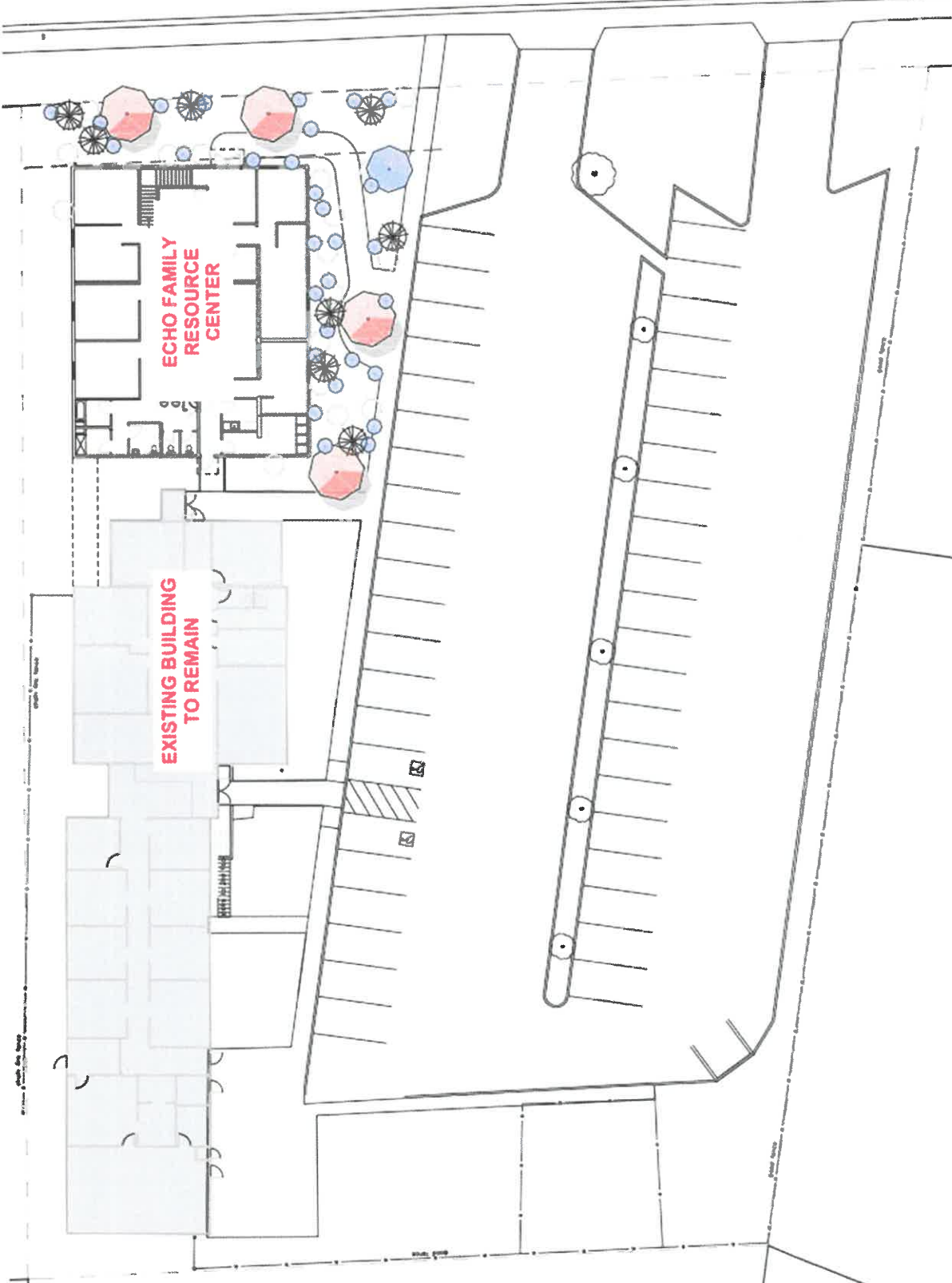
Presented By:
Rebecca Newman, Arris
Austin Solheim, Director of
Development
And Wendy Lewis, CEO

ECHO's Balay Ko Family Resource Center

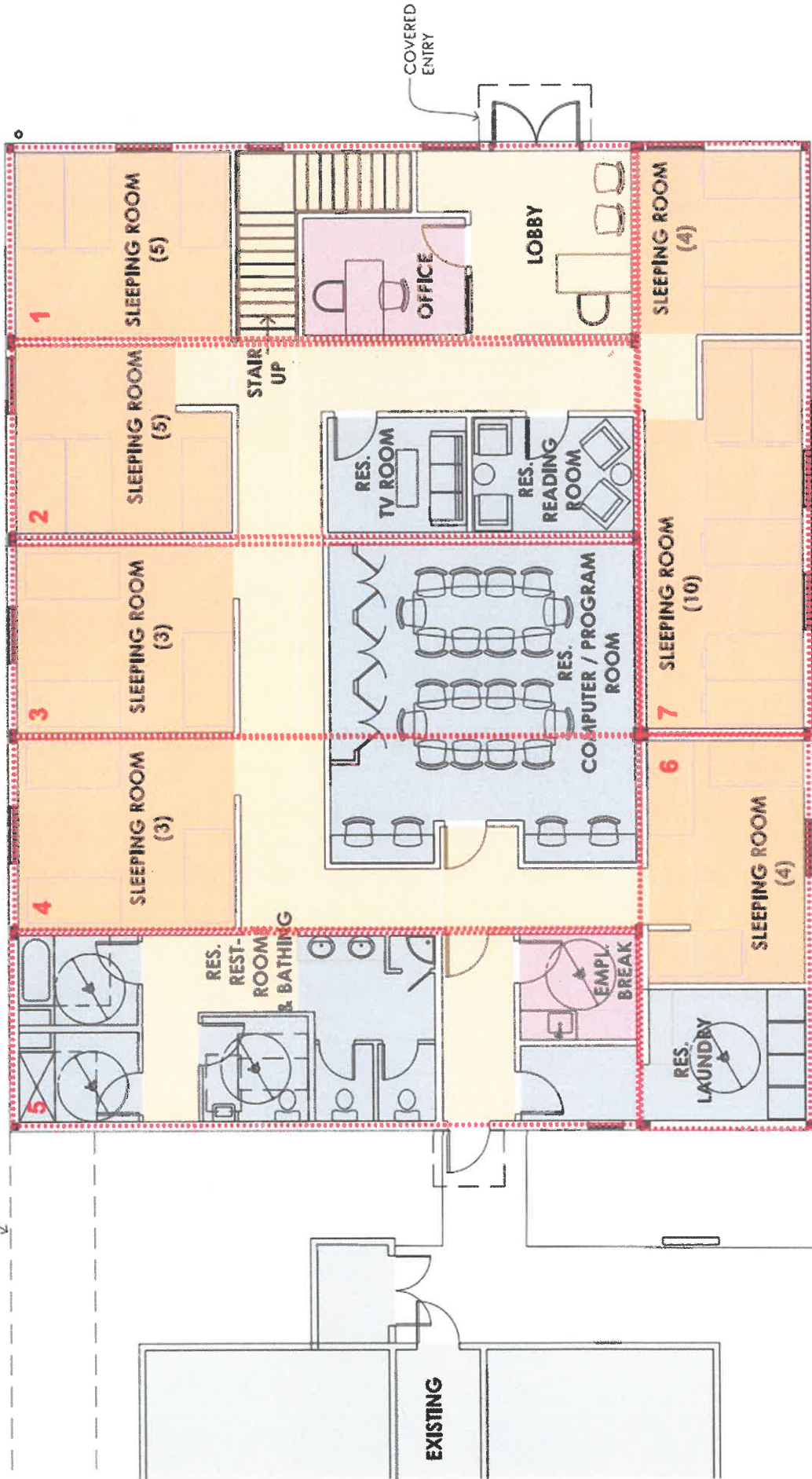
6370 ATASCADERO AVE. | ATASCADERO, CA



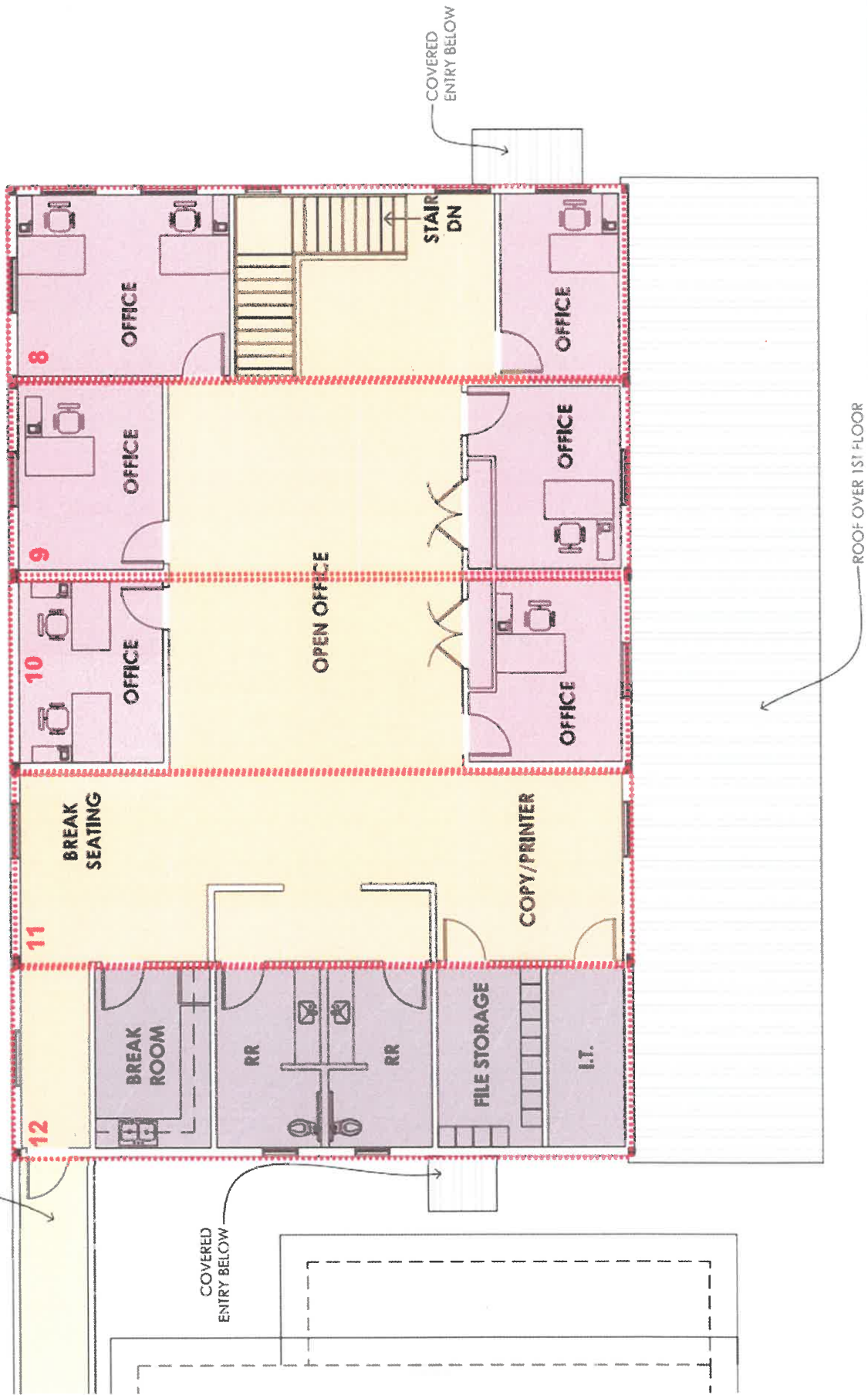
ATASCADERO AVE.



LINE OF COVERED WALKWAY ABOVE

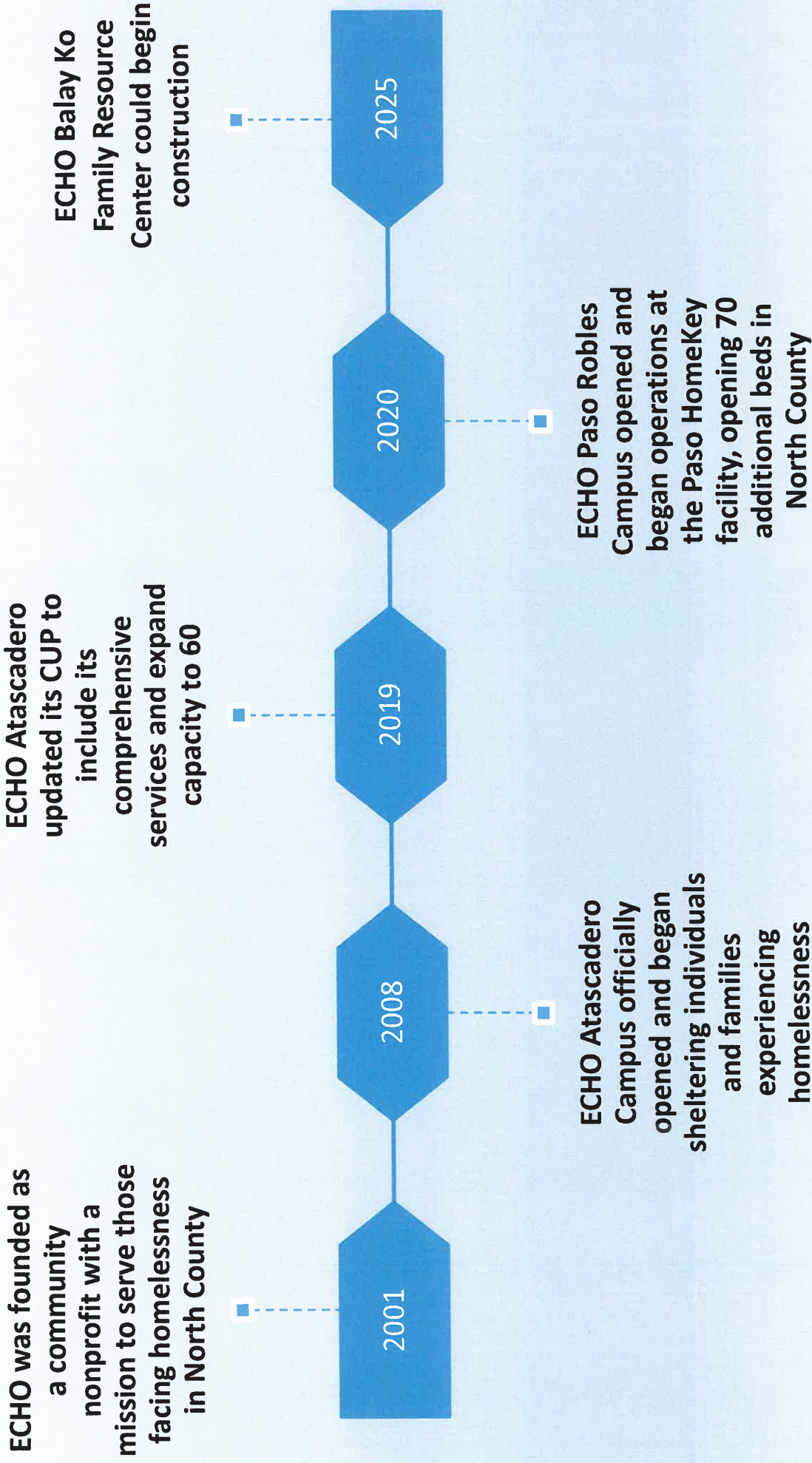


ENCLOSED WALKWAY TO
EXISTING 2ND FLOOR OFFICES



ROOF OVER 1ST FLOOR

Timeline



ECHO: A Legacy of Service

ECHO began in 2001 with a simple, community-focused mission: providing meals and support to those in need.

What started as a volunteer-run initiative, with local churches rotating to host overnight shelters, quickly revealed a growing need for more comprehensive services for those experiencing homelessness in North San Luis Obispo County.



In 2024 alone, **2,886 individual volunteers** have generously contributed their time and energy to support our services

In the late 2000's, with overwhelming support from the community, ECHO opened its first dedicated campus in Atascadero, marking the organization's shift from temporary, rotating shelters to a permanent location where services could be provided.





One of the most significant transformations in ECHO's service model was the transition from an overnight shelter to the 90-Day Emergency Shelter Program. This change enabled ECHO to offer more than just a bed for the night—it became a vital part of helping individuals and families work toward long-term stability through case management, housing navigation, and support services.

As the demand for shelter and support services grew, ECHO expanded its operations in 2020 by opening a second campus in Paso Robles, converting a former motel into a functional emergency shelter. This strategic move allowed ECHO to increase its capacity and meet the needs of the community.

Over the years, ECHO has expanded its services to include homeless prevention programs, workforce development initiatives, and outreach services, helping hundreds of individuals and families each year move from homelessness to stability.

Our Impact Today

ECHO is more than just a shelter—it's a comprehensive support system designed to address homelessness from multiple angles.

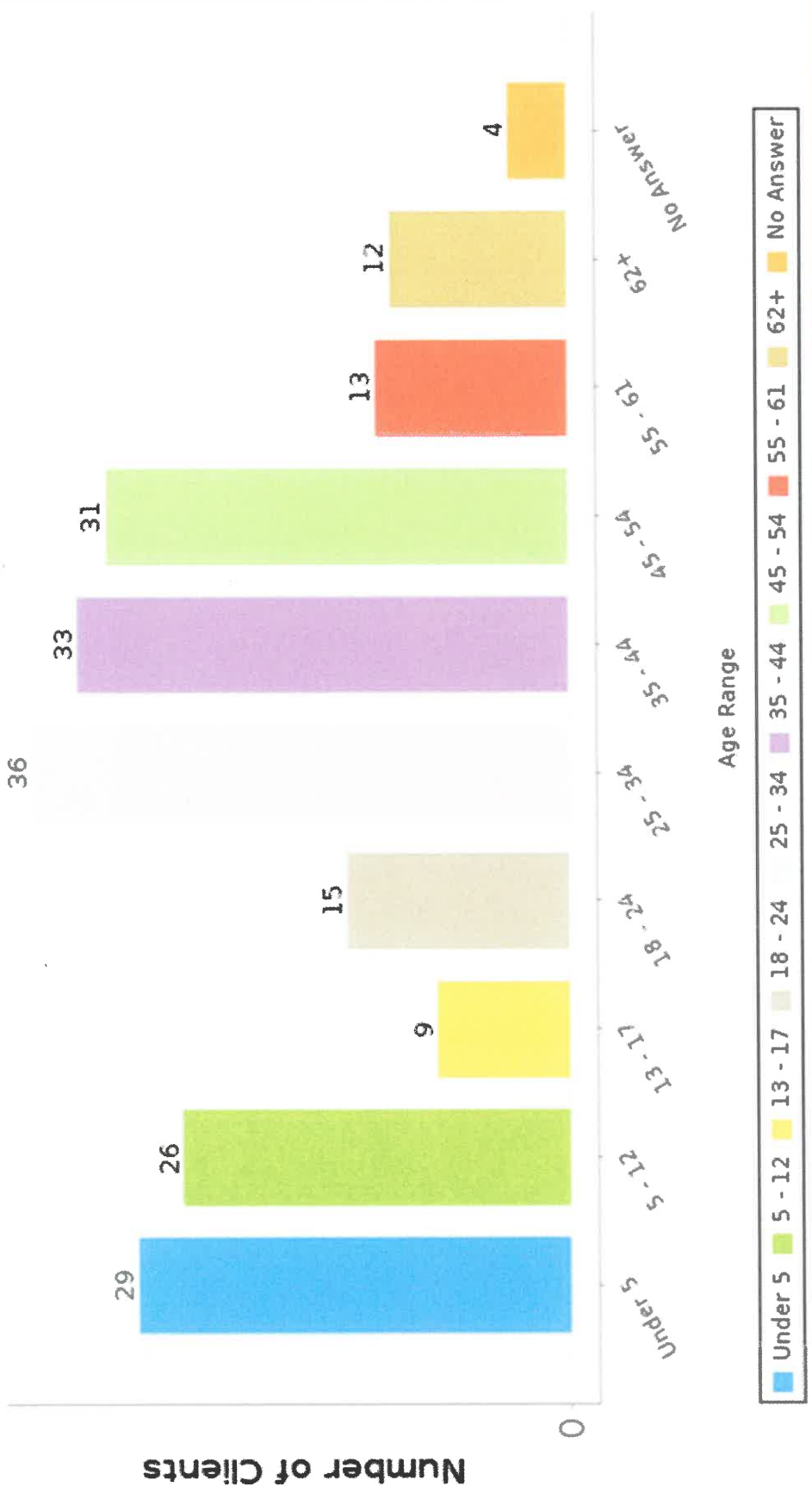
Through a range of programs and services, ECHO works daily to help individuals and families not only find immediate shelter but also secure the tools they need to regain stability and self-sufficiency.

Our 90-Day Emergency Shelter Program offers individuals and families a safe place to stay while providing essential case management services. Clients receive personalized support that includes access to housing navigation, financial literacy education, job readiness training, and other resources that assist in their journey toward permanent housing. Each client also has a case plan tailored to their unique needs, ensuring that they have the opportunity to achieve long-term success.



So far in 2024, ECHO has served **208** individuals and families in its 90-Day Emergency Shelter Program.

Age Range Chart



In the 90-Day Emergency Shelter Program, ECHO served:
Men: 98 Women: 106
Other: 4

Beyond shelter, ECHO's **Homeless Prevention Program** works proactively to keep individuals and families in their homes. This initiative provides financial assistance and case management to those facing the threat of homelessness, helping them stay housed and avoid the challenges of entering the shelter system.

ECHO also offers vital **outreach services**, engaging individuals living on the streets or in unstable environments. Our outreach teams build trust and provide immediate resources, connecting them to housing, healthcare, and social services.

A critical part of our mission is making sure our clients don't just survive—they thrive. That's why we also working a **Workforce Development Program** in partnership with Must! Charities, which focuses on equipping people with the skills and training needed to secure employment in the hospitality industry.



Documented Success

ECHO HAS HELPED

253

**INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES SECURE
STABLE HOUSING IN 2024!**

In 2024, more than 50% of the individuals and families served in ECHO's 90-Day Emergency Shelter Program successfully exited into housing.

**ECHO HAS HELPED 250 PEOPLE ACHIEVE THIS
INCREDIBLE GOAL THROUGH THE FOLLOWING SERVICES**

Shelter Programs and Outreach:

181

Individuals and Families

Homeless Prevention Services:

72

Individuals and Families

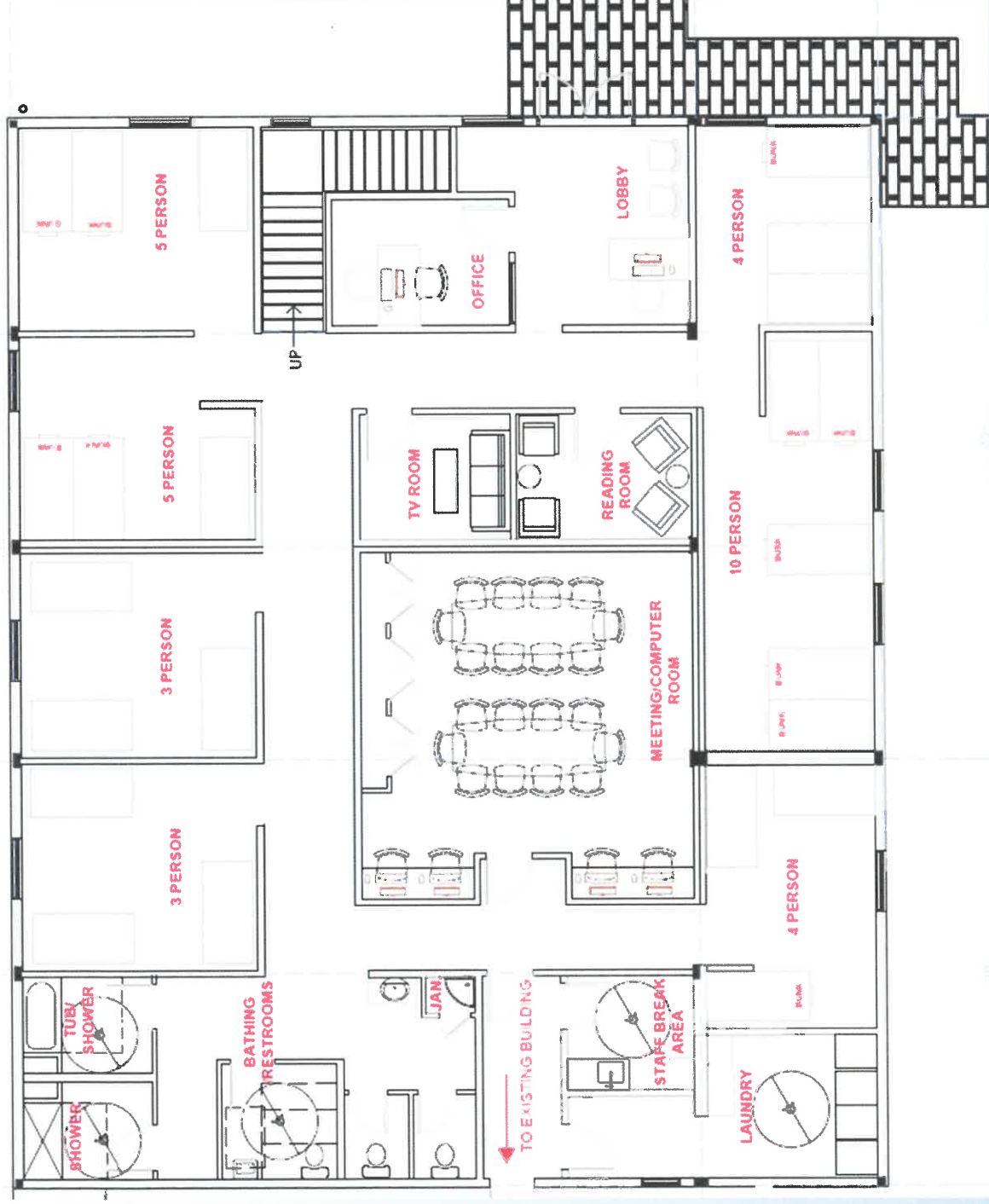
In 2023 through both ECHO campuses 201 Individuals and Families with children were housed. Over 90% of those individuals remain housed in our community

The Need for Growth

While ECHO has made remarkable strides in helping individuals and families move from homelessness to stability, the demand for our services continues to outpace our capacity. As our community faces increasing housing challenges, more families are finding themselves on the brink of homelessness, and unfortunately, the number of people seeking help has grown significantly.



In 2024 alone, we have seen our **waitlist for shelter services grow**. Each day, more families in need are reaching out to us for assistance. While we've successfully helped hundreds of individuals and families transition into stable housing, the reality is that many others remain without access to the services they need.



The new Family Resource Center will add **30 additional beds** on the campus and improved rooms for families, expanding our continuum of care and reducing the numbers on our waitlist. Beyond the additional beds, the Center will offer critical support services such as parenting workshops, job training, and access to healthcare and educational resources, all in one centralized location.

Choosing the Right Partners for Expansion

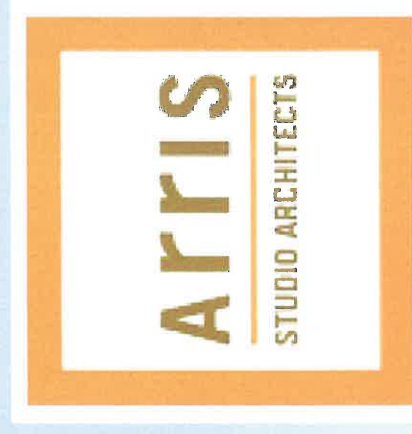
For the construction of the **Balay Ko Family Resource Center**, ECHO carefully selected partners that align with our goals of efficiency, quality, and minimizing disruptions to the community. After an extensive evaluation, we are excited to partner with **Bevy House** as the lead for modular construction and **Arris Studio Architects** as the project's on-site architectural firm.

Why Modular Construction with Bevy House?

Bevy House was chosen for their expertise in modular construction, which offers several key benefits that are critical to the success of this project. By building the modular units off-site, Bevy House allows us to streamline the construction timeline and reduce the impact on our existing operations. This approach means:

- **Less disruption** to our current shelter services and the community around us.
- **A faster project completion time**, with modular units being built in parallel to the on-site foundation work being completed by a local contractor.
- **Cost-efficiency**, as off-site construction reduces on-site labor costs and limits potential delays caused by weather or other external factors.

bevyhouse



Community Testimonials



ECHO

El Camino Homeless Organization



— EST. 2001 —



Empowering people in San Luis Obispo County to make positive change by providing food, shelter, and supportive services.

Presented By:
Rebecca Newman, Arris
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