

MT. ALIFAN APARTMENTS – FACT SHEET AND FAQ

Overview

[Wakeland Housing and Development Corporation](#), [PATH Ventures](#) and [PATH San Diego](#) are partnering to develop a high-quality, new community of approximately 52 safe, secure and affordable apartments for people who have been homeless, or are at risk of homelessness, where they have access to onsite services that help them live more stable, productive lives.

The Mt. Alifan Apartments project will be a supportive housing development. Supportive housing combines apartments and onsite services to help residents transition to living healthy and productive lives. Research shows that this form of housing is the most effective way to end homelessness through providing people safe, clean and stable homes with resources such as mental and physical health services, job training and case management.

Site/Location/Design

The proposed site is at 5858 Mt. Alifan Drive. It is currently home to a 1970s-era office building, which will eventually be demolished to make way for the new development. Benefits of the site include: a) appropriate zoning, b) a location that is easy walking distance to transit and shopping; and c) proximity to retail centers where residents can find employment.

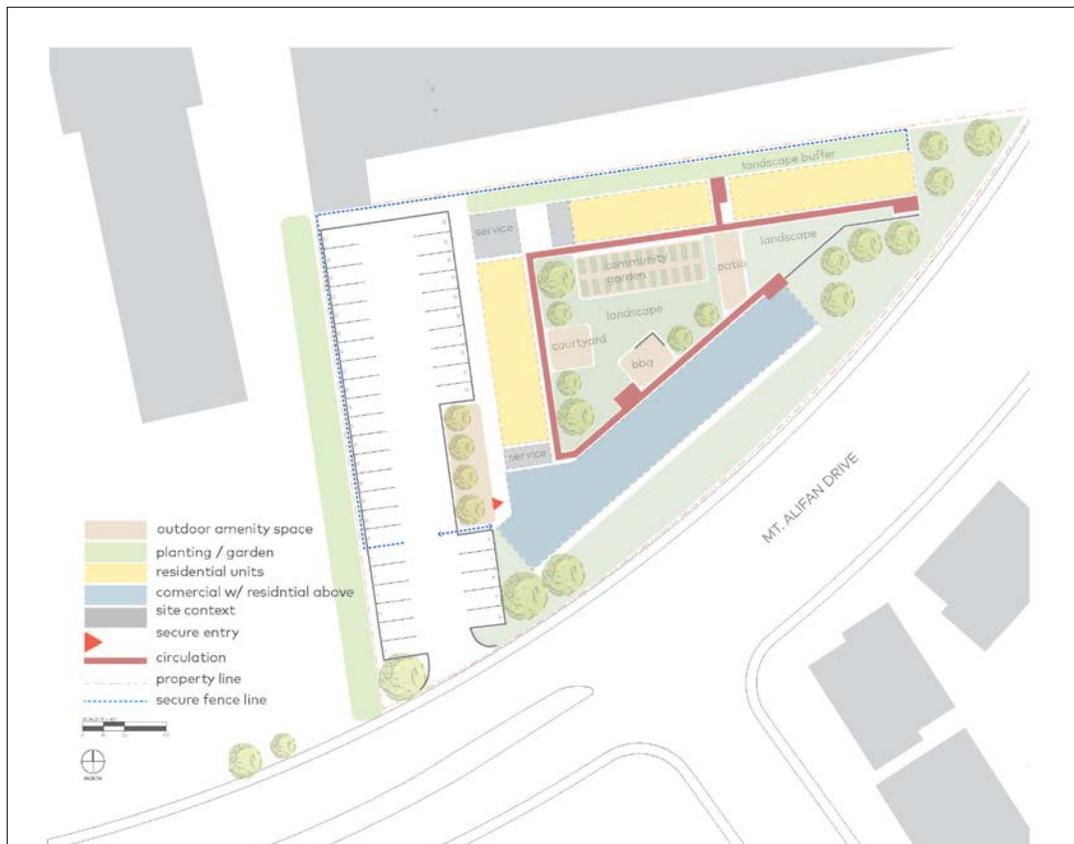


Existing Building



Draft Site Plan

While it is very early in the design process, we anticipate that the building will be a maximum of three stories, with gated access, a single entry with security desk and sign-in, interior recreation areas, and office space for case management and property staff.



Population and Tenant Selection

While the exact population of Mt. Alifan Apartments is still being determined, we do know the following at this time:

- It will likely include seniors, veterans, survivors of domestic violence, disabled individuals and people who experience a sudden and unexpected loss of income.
- A thorough background check, including criminal background screening, will be conducted on all applicants. No sex offenders will be allowed and no individuals who have been convicted of manufacturing methamphetamine. Additionally, applicants may be ineligible if they have been arrested, convicted, or have engaged in drug-related or violent criminal activity within the prior five years. Applicants may be denied if there is a preponderance of evidence to believe that they are illegally using a controlled substance or are abusing alcohol in a way that may interfere with the health, safety or right to the peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.
- Tenants must be U.S. citizens or legal immigrants.
- Tenants must have become homeless in the City of San Diego. Additionally, we will advocate for prioritization of tenants from Clairemont, as requested by community members. The team will also do extensive targeted outreach around the Clairemont area prior to opening to ensure that those experiencing homelessness in Clairemont are engaged and ready at the time the lease-up process begins.
- Tenants will likely be referred to the property through the Coordinated Entry System (CES). The system works with households in order to understand their strengths and needs, and to connect them with appropriate resources.

We understand there are many concerns about the Coordinated Entry System and the idea that it results in having only the “hardest to serve” homeless placed in supportive housing. This has not been Wakeland or PATH’s experience with the system, which is in the early stages and is being continuously refined. We will continue to provide more detailed information on CES as it becomes available.

Services

Tenants will receive onsite physical and mental health support, job training and other services. This will include addiction treatment, if needed. Each resident will have a dedicated staff member who helps each resident identify goals and track progress. These case managers will assess residents’ needs, work with them on an action plan to meet their goals and support their progress. Every day while living in these homes, tenants are supported to rebuild their lives and become productive community members.

There have been many questions about the hours services staff will be on site. The Mt. Alifan staffing schedule will be developed later in the planning process based on property and tenant needs and could include weekends and evenings if needed.

Staffing and Security

This complex will have onsite security and a 24-hour presence of highly-trained property management staff. Security and staff are there to ensure that residents are accountable to the strict building rules and are being good neighbors to the community. Disturbances, excessive guests or illegal activities will be immediately addressed by staff on site.

Funding

Affordable housing development is different than traditional market rate development in that it can take years to assemble the funding needed. For this reason, the funding is often assembled after a site is purchased, with the developer holding the site until they have enough funding to construct and operate the development. Supportive housing offers another level of challenge in that the developer must also assemble funding for comprehensive onsite services and rental subsidies.

The primary funding source for this development will be 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits, a federal funding program allocated by the State of California through a highly-competitive process. In addition to this funding source, the development team has applied for funding through the County of San Diego and will be monitoring a number of local and state funding sources as they become available. These funding sources will drive the design of the program at this development, as they each have requirements for the population served.

Schedule/Development Process

The development team entered into a Purchase and Sales Agreement on the Mt. Alifan site in January 2018. Escrow closes on the site in late June. In the meantime, the team is beginning the design phase, which covers two key areas:

- Architecture and site planning (building design, parking spaces, etc.).
- Program design (who will this development serve, what services will be offered, staffing levels, etc.).

The goal is to be far enough along in the development process to submit plans to the City by Fall 2018, and to begin to submit applications for funding in early 2019, with construction starting in early 2020 at the earliest.

Answering Community Questions

Q. How many people will live at Mt. Alifan Apartments?

A. Approximately 52 – 60.

Q. Will 100 percent of the residents at these apartments be chronically homeless individuals, i.e. “the hardest to house?”

A. No, there will be no requirement that Mt. Alifan solely serve individuals who are chronically homeless, and none of the funding sources that we intend to apply for will have that mandate. While there are some HUD funding sources that require supportive housing to only serve the chronically homeless, this project will not be applying for those funds.

Q. Aren’t all homeless people drug addicts and alcoholics?

A. People become homeless for a wide range of reasons, including job loss, unexpected medical bills, disability, and rent increases. At Talmadge Gateway, Wakeland’s development serving 59 formerly homeless seniors with chronic health conditions, we have many residents who lost their homes due to illness and the resulting high medical bills. One resident owned a small book store in North Park for many years – a valuable small business for the community that left him with no retirement savings or health insurance. Many could no longer keep paying San Diego rents on their social security income, which is less than \$1,000/month.

Residents of supportive housing who suffer from addiction are immediately offered appropriate services (outpatient drug and alcohol services, psychiatric care, psychotherapy, community and therapy groups, etc.) to develop a treatment plan in order to overcome their addiction. In addition to general supports such as dedicated staff members who help each resident identify goals and track progress, residents are connected to immediate and intensive inpatient or outpatient recovery programs. The stability and services offered with supportive housing allow individuals to recover and lead productive lives in a way that would not be possible while they are experiencing homelessness.

Q. Will you provide housing for people who are mentally ill?

A. These apartments will provide homes for some people with disabilities, which could include mental illness. In the United States, one in five adults has a mental illness, and in San Diego County that number is even higher – one in four. The difference with supportive housing is that comprehensive services are available onsite for residents to treat their disability – something that is not available in a regular apartment complex, or even in traditional affordable housing.

Additionally, the daily trauma of being homeless greatly exacerbates symptoms of mental illness – meaning housing is often the best medicine. The key to supportive housing is having appropriate services in place to help all of our residents live stable, productive lives regardless of which varied path led them to homelessness.

[Please click here to learn more about the myths and facts about mental illness.](#)

Q. Could this project provide housing for homeless families?

A: We believe there is a strong need for housing for all types of people experiencing homelessness, including families with children. However, families do not often require the intensive level of wraparound services offered at supportive housing.

Q. Will you require sobriety for tenants?

A. No. Just as it would in a traditional apartment complex, Fair Housing law prohibits us from requiring sobriety as a condition of tenancy. However, residents must abide by the rules of their lease, which will prohibit illegal drug use onsite and alcohol use in common areas.

It is important to note that in the past, homeless solutions often required sobriety prior to admission into housing, and this model has not worked effectively. Communities are seeing better success rates with a “Housing First” approach based on the understanding that stable housing is essential to gaining life stability. This model focuses first and foremost on connecting people to housing and surrounding them with the support they need. Then, in their own housing, residents work on personalized life goals. Research has shown that this model keeps people housed longer and dramatically decreases the likelihood that they will return to homelessness.

Q. Will there be a hotline set up for neighbors to call if they have issues with the new development once it is opened?

A. Yes. We will provide a number that residents can call to report issues and we commit to a quick response.

Q. Doesn't Wakeland also own Stratton Apartments, and isn't that property mis-managed?

A. Stratton Apartments is a 312-unit affordable property that was built in 1970. Wakeland partnered with Fairfield Residential to purchase the Stratton in 2000. At the time of purchase the property was fully renovated and new property management and security was put in place to reverse years of disrepair.

Since that time, we have actively worked to improve the community, and we believe we have made strides. Recent discussions with long-term neighbors and the area's Community Police representative confirmed that the property has improved over the period of Wakeland's ownership. In response to additional recent community input, we have taken further proactive steps, including starting a new crime-prevention program (Crime Free Multi-Housing), improving security at the property and working with the community police to start a Neighborhood Watch. We will continue to work to make it better and listen to residents who have concerns.

Q. Is Wakeland submitting a proposal to develop the Mt. Etna/Crime Lab site?

A. No. While we are on a pre-approved list of qualified developers for the site, we will not be submitting a proposal for its development.

Q. What's next for this development?

A. We anticipate that we will have plans that are far enough along for discussion by this fall. In the meantime, we are continuing to engage with residents and businesses to hear from them and incorporate that feedback into the development process.

Q. How do we stay informed about this development?

A. The project team will be sending regular development updates to community members via email. If you would like to receive these updates, please email: mtalifan@wakelandhdc.com

Additionally, if you are interested in learning more about supportive housing, we are offering tours of our team's existing San Diego supportive housing communities. We can accommodate groups of up to 5 people. Please email tour requests to mtalifan@wakelandhdc.com