



June 11, 2020

Dear Neighbors and Friends of the Sisters of Mercy,

As a Sister of Mercy and neighbor to you through our Sisters on the Mercy Burlingame campus, please let me introduce myself. I am Sister Susan Sanders, RSM, Leader of the Sisters of Mercy, West Midwest. With our main office located in Omaha, the Sisters of Mercy, West Midwest include the Burlingame Sisters and are part of an international religious congregation of Catholic Sisters. In this letter, I want not only to introduce myself but also to update you on our Sisters' hopes for the future of the Mercy Burlingame campus and apprise you of the initial steps we are taking to assess the feasibility of realizing these hopes.

#### **Our Hopes for the Future Burlingame Campus**

As you may know, the Sisters of Mercy have a long history in the Burlingame community. We purchased the property at 2300 Adeline Drive in 1924 and have enjoyed this property for our "Motherhouse" home. In this place where we first trained young Sisters and based our congregational administration, we later offered spiritual renewal and education for young people.

Since 1924, the campus has changed significantly. In addition to the Mercy Convent and Mercy Retreat Center, the campus now includes a home for our infirmed Sisters, Mercy High School, and a Montessori school. Mindful of the changing needs of our Sisters, who are aging and diminishing in numbers, the new educational needs of Mercy High School, and our congregation's concern for promoting a healthy ecology and sustainable Earth, the Sisters of Mercy are asking how we can better meet the current and future needs of our Sisters and the spiritual, educational, and residential needs of others. Please see our website ([courb.co/mercycampus](http://courb.co/mercycampus)) for more information about our specific hopes for the future use of the property.

#### **Our Initial Steps to Assess Future Use Feasibility**

I have heard from our Sisters many times what good neighbors you all have been to the Sisters on our campus. The Sisters of Mercy hope to build on our good relationship with you by inviting you to a Community Zoom meeting on **Thursday, June 25, from 6:30-8:00 p.m.** First, I will welcome you, introduce our representatives and partners in this exploration, provide you with some information about our initial studies, and hear your questions and comments. The enclosed communication offers more detailed information about the logistics of this meeting. Sister Pauline Borghello, RSM, and Ms. Jean Hastie are the local representatives of the Sisters of Mercy. If you have questions after the meeting, please do not hesitate to contact Jean Hastie at [jhastie@mercywmw.org](mailto:jhastie@mercywmw.org).

Thank you for considering this invitation. I look forward to our meeting on June 25.

Sincerely,

*Sister Susan M. Sanders RSM*

Sister Susan Sanders, RSM  
Leader, Sisters of Mercy, West Midwest

**Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, West Midwest**

7262 Mercy Road, Omaha, NE 68124 t 402.393.8225 f 402.393.8145 w [mercywestmidwest.org](http://mercywestmidwest.org)

Dear Neighbors and Friends of the Sisters of Mercy,

We are so grateful to all who were able to participate in the recent listening phase of the Mercy Campus planning effort. Whether from the mailed Feedback Forms, comments on the website, messages left at the voice mail number, and/or Virtual Chats, we greatly appreciate your involvement.

As part of our follow-up, we have created a summary of the most Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and our responses. They are enclosed here and are now posted on our website. Additional FAQs will be added as we continue with the planning process and our community engagement work. We encourage you to subscribe to the website so that you will be automatically notified when updates occur. It is at [courb.co/mercycampus](http://courb.co/mercycampus).

We have also completed the Existing Conditions Analysis which will help us better understand the property and how we care for and use it. The Analysis included geological, tree, and utilities studies, as well as the site survey by a civil engineer.

**As noted in the cover letter from Sister Sue Sanders, on June 25<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30 to 8:00 pm, we will host a Community Zoom Meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be to provide a review of the key findings of the Existing Conditions Analysis and a summary of the community input, as well as receive your input and respond to your questions. The Zoom call-in instructions for this Presentation are:**

- **Zoom Link:**  
(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82987341980?pwd=SlExenZuNzZVZGdQYTNFQUc5a1V3QT09>)
- **Meeting ID: 829 8734 1980 / Password: 6ZbirA**
- **Phone In - +1 669 900 6833**

**A video of the Presentation will be posted on the website for anyone unable to participate on the 25<sup>th</sup>.**

We have included the following in this mailing:

- **FAQ Summary:** This is a review of the questions that have been asked most often and our corresponding responses.
- **Feedback Form:** Please complete this form after you have participated in or viewed the Presentation from the June Community Zoom Meeting.
- **Virtual Chat Request:** These Chats are a great way to talk directly with our Administrative Team members and have your comments heard and questions responded to. This is included as part of the Feedback Form.
- **Website Card:** Please share this with anyone interested in this planning process. The website is the best way to stay current and engaged.

We also welcome your input by mail, addressed to: Sisters of Mercy, 2300 Adeline Drive, Burlingame, CA 94010, c/o Campus Planning, and by voice mail at 650-373-4515.

We are committed to working with our neighbors and the greater Burlingame community. Please let us know of any suggestions you have for further engagement. We appreciate and value your input and interest.

Sincerely, the Administrative Team

Jean Hastie, Pauline Borghello, RSM  
Una Kinsella, Bob Grassilli  
Barbara Gualco, Amy Bayley, RSM

Sisters of Mercy  
Mercy High School  
Mercy Housing

June 2020

## **Sisters of Mercy Campus**

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**June 2020**

The following questions were those asked most often in the feedback from the spring Listening Sessions, in the comments section of the website, and during individual and small group chats. From time to time, additional FAQs and their responses will be added, and an Update will be sent when they are posted at [courb.co/mercycampus](http://courb.co/mercycampus).

#### **1. Why are the Sisters of Mercy looking to make changes on the Mercy Campus? What are their goals for this planning?**

As many know, the Sisters of Mercy purchased the original 40 acres, known as “The Oaks”, from the estate of C. Frederick Kohl in 1924 as the home for their Motherhouse and novitiate. Over the years, new ministries, activities, and uses have been added to the campus.

In 2017, the Sisters of Mercy engaged in an internal visioning process to determine how best to continue long-term good stewardship of the Campus. After significant reflection and discussion, the following goals were established to guide future planning.

- Create new, accessible housing to meet the current and long-term housing needs of the Sisters.
- Protect the legacy and advance the educational and spiritual ministries of the Sisters of Mercy.
- Address the future needs of Mercy High School Burlingame with an Athletic/Student Life Center.
- Protect and enhance the historic and “woody” character of the campus while keeping it available to the public.
- Explore the opportunity to assist in addressing the housing needs of the broader Burlingame community.

We take our stewardship responsibility very seriously, and it is our desire and our intention to plan both for the future care of the sisters and the future of the campus. Sisters of Mercy across the country, as well as other religious congregations, are involved in similar planning efforts with regard to their often historic “Motherhouse” properties.

We are genuinely grateful to the neighbors and community members who are engaging with us in this planning process.

#### **2. Will the Campus remain open to neighbors for their continued use for light recreational activities such as running, walking, and use of the labyrinth?**

As noted above, an important goal of this planning process is that neighborhood residents continue to feel welcome on the campus. It is intended that the natural beauty of the property will continue to be a valued resource for the broader community.

### **3. What are the current City of Burlingame regulations for the existing Mercy Campus uses?**

The Amended Conditional Use Permit for 2300 and 2750 Adeline Drive, Effective August 5, 2010, includes the following:

<u>Mercy High School</u>	540 students, 83 faculty/staff
<u>Morning Glory Montessori</u>	30 students
<u>Motherhouse</u>	50 residents
<u>Mercy Center</u>	97 guests
<u>Marian Oaks</u>	40 residents
<u>The Lodge</u>	4 residents

### **4. What approvals will be required from the City of Burlingame for proposed changes to the Mercy Campus?**

The campus was originally unincorporated county land and was annexed into the city in the 1950s. It is currently zoned for single family housing, and the school, retreat center, convent, and retirement residence for sisters operate under a conditional use permit. Any significant new construction or new use on the campus would require new land use entitlements from the City of Burlingame. These would include the approval of a master plan/specific plan, an extensive Environmental Review process, and a rezoning process. These reviews and approvals would require multiple public hearings before the Design Review Board, Planning Commission, and City Council.

### **5. What studies have been done to date? How will the community and neighbors learn of their findings?**

We are nearing the completion of the Existing Conditions Analysis which will help us better understand the property and how we care for and use it. To date, the analysis has included a geological study, an arborist report and tree survey, as well as a utilities and site survey by a civil engineer. A summary of the findings will be presented at a virtual community meeting at the end of June, with the announcement of the meeting sent by mail, through the website, and by phone, when requested. The presentation will also be posted on this website along with the request for feedback and continued community input.

### **6. Given Shelter in Place restrictions, how will community input take place?**

At the end of February, we initiated an interactive website ([courb.co/mercycampus](http://courb.co/mercycampus)) in order to share as much as possible with the community. Input for the first series of Listening Sessions in April was solicited through the website, by mail, and by phone. Within the confines of Shelter in Place, we have continued to work hard at communicating with and gaining input from neighbors in multiple ways including the website, voice mail, two communications mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods, and many Coffee Chats both on-line and by phone. As noted above, a virtual community meeting will be scheduled at the end of June to share the findings of the

Existing Conditions Analysis. The presentation will then be posted on this website with an opportunity to ask questions and provide input on the findings, as well as schedule future Chats. We will continue to seek additional ways to involve our neighbors and the broader community, and we welcome your suggestions on how best to engage and communicate with you. Previous mailings are included on the website in the Neighborhood Communications tab.

## **7. When will you have plans to share?**

We will give careful consideration to the findings of the Existing Conditions Analysis and the community input to date, as well as financial feasibility assessments, combining them to create the outlines of a balanced, responsible plan that achieves our primary goals as stated earlier. We intend to have conceptual plans to share with the Burlingame community by the end of the third quarter of 2020.

## **8. What information can you share about the proposed Mercy High School Student and Athletic Center?**

Mercy High School's proposed Athletic and Student Life Center answers a growing need for more collaborative space for the student body, faculty, and staff to gather and build community. As the only school of the 14 high schools in the San Francisco Archdiocese that does not have its own indoor space for athletics and school-wide community gatherings, Mercy has limited on-campus indoor facilities and no current indoor space large enough for the entire student body to meet.

It is imagined that the Athletic and Student Life Center would be in the area now occupied by the tennis courts. In addition to providing much needed athletic practice and competition space, it would provide a space where the entire Mercy community could join in all aspects of student life and athletics, including meetings, rallies, and other events.

Mercy High School has a strong history and future in the Peninsula community, and the addition of an Athletic and Student Life Center will further strengthen the school's ability to attract prospective students while reinforcing the strong sense of community that defines Mercy High School.

# First Community Zoom Meeting

## Feedback Form – June 25, 2020

### Let us know the best way to stay in touch with you?

We are committed to keeping everyone informed and gaining their input. Please check one or more of the options below.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
First Last

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mail (Address) \_\_\_\_\_

### Your input is valued

We thank you for participating in or viewing the Community Zoom Meeting and we look forward to hearing your feedback.

Please mail your responses to Sisters of Mercy, 2300 Adeline, Burlingame, CA 94010, c/o Campus Planning. These same questions can also be answered on the website ([courb.co/mercycampus](http://courb.co/mercycampus)).

### Based on what you learned at Our First Community Zoom meeting:

Are there any topics you think we missed related to the Existing Conditions Analysis?

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What do you see as opportunities for the Sisters of Mercy Campus?

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What are your concerns about the planning related to the Sisters of Mercy Campus?

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### Request a Virtual Chat

Members of the Administrative Team are available to talk one-on-one or in small groups. We will be in touch to set up a Chat.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
First Last

Availability \_\_\_\_\_  
(Days and times that work best for you for Virtual Chat)