



The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it for me." *Matthew 25:40*

How We Plan to Help the Homeless

As is the case with cities, there are a large number of chronically homeless individuals who do not have adequate and safe housing options at night and who congregate in public areas during the day. Many of the homeless suffer from mental illness and addictions. Prior efforts to assist this niche of homeless individuals has been to offer services in order to get them stable enough to qualify for housing. Research studies on municipalities and organizations that employ the highly successful *Housing First* approach have found that providing a place to live is an important first step in assisting the homeless.

Brother's Keeper is partnering with a new separate non-profit organization called **Saving Mercy**, whose mission is to provide **Hope and Help for the Homeless**.

In Marion County it is estimated that it costs \$32,000 a year, on average, to care for one chronically homeless individual. By implementing the *Housing First* model via Saving Mercy, we believe we can save our community over 20 million dollars in those ancillary costs. Saving Mercy has the plan and the expertise to restore dignity and positively improve the lives of the homeless while making a positive impact on local resources and our community at large.

Saving Mercy was founded to provide a housing option where the homeless can have their basic needs met - housing, food, safety. Saving Mercy will serve the community by providing a campus for the homeless with on-site housing, case management, and a wide array of social services. This effort will be augmented with a public-private relationship with local government agencies, private entities, social service providers, and local churches. Case management will be utilized to aid the clients of Saving Mercy to find adequate, permanent housing and to direct them to the community's social services that can be most useful to them. The Saving Mercy campus will also provide Permanent Supportive Housing to those men and women who qualify for subsidized long-term housing.

Implementation

Saving Mercy is developing a campus to serve the homeless at the current Motor Inns Motel & RV Park located at 3601 W. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala. Our goal is to implement a multi-year, multi-phase approach to develop a high-quality, attractive, functional campus to provide housing and access to on-site support services for homeless veterans, families, and individuals.

The Motor Inns Motel & RV Park is an ideal location for a housing campus as it is close to many businesses and employment opportunities, such as restaurants, hotels, UPS, ClosetMaid, the Goodwill Outlet Store, Cheney Brothers, Gander Outdoors, & Chariot Eagle. The property is close to I-75 and on Silver Springs Blvd (HWY 40) and is also within walking distance of a Sun Tran bus stop to assist clients with transportation throughout Ocala.



Strategies for Success

Saving Mercy will incorporate the successful, proven strategies by implementing the Housing First model. Hiring high-quality staff members, collaborating with partner agencies, and cultivating a high-quality volunteer base is essential. Next, the leadership of Saving Mercy will form a strong partnership with the Continuum of Care, the local body that handles all of the HUD and governmental funding for the homeless. This agency is critical as it is the local planning body required by HUD to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the needs of people who are homeless.

Another critical component to the success of Saving Mercy will be the ability to raise capital. Approximately five million dollars will be needed to purchase and operate the facility for the first three years. We are intent on using a diverse funding approach comprised of local, state, federal, and private grants and donations.

The Housing First model has proven to be highly successful in cities with very different demographics including Tampa, Pinellas County, Tallahassee, Oakland, California and Salt Lake City, Utah. When properly initiated, the Housing First model saves municipalities, local law enforcement, governmental agencies, legal entities, and health care providers millions of dollars each year – **and most importantly, helps our homeless brothers and sisters in the community regain their dignity and become the best versions of themselves.** Learn more at savingmercy.org