

Coral Street Shelter to Host Transitional Housing Program

Homeless
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hen the announcement came after several years of successful operation that the open air shelter at Coral Street in Santa Cruz would close, the fear of not knowing where they would go next created feelings of panic and frustration among the homeless, shelter sponsors said.

Paul Marceau of the Citizens Committee for the Homeless, which owns the site at Coral Street, said they are going ahead with plans to construct a transitional shelter to provide long term accommodations for homeless people on the property. Ten modular homes are being donated by Stanford University officials to house up to 40 people. Residents would be allowed to stay up to 18 months by enrolling in a program that would help them make the transition away from total hopelessness and dependence so they can make some kind of return to the mainstream. Participants in the program will be expected to have at least partial employment or be on social security and will have to make some kind of contribution for rent.

"The program is designed to give people a ground floor to get out of hopelessness," Marceau said.

After being removed from Coral Street homeless campers expressed frustration over what they described as an unwillingness by officials of the CCH to assist them in their clean-up efforts and with more options for relocating.

Marceau said he felt his agency did everything it could considering that they stepped in to help out in a situation which fell outside of their usual operations.

"It wasn't as if we were trying to design a program to take care of these people's needs in an open-ended, ongoing way. We helped out where we thought we could help out," Marceau said. □