

9/94

N68311.000539  
NAVSTA LONG BEACH  
SSIC #5090.3

# COA is denied surplus housing

## Wanted Navy units to house homeless

By Nell Strassman  
Staff writer

LONG BEACH — The homeless may have lost out on free housing in West Long Beach because Christian Outreach Appeal's proposal to put them in surplus Navy housing has been turned down.

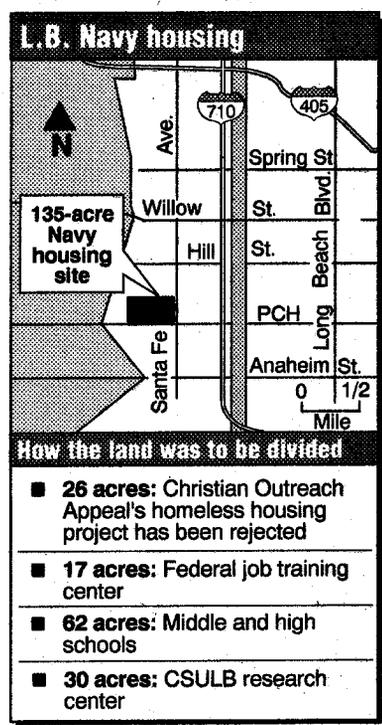
COA, a Long Beach homeless services provider, wanted 200 housing units. On Sept. 15, COA was notified that its proposal had been rejected by the federal Department of Health and Human Services.

The surplus property now goes back to the Navy.

COA was initially approved on June 18, 1993, to receive 26 of the 135 acres at the Navy housing site near Santa Fe Avenue and Pacific Coast Highway.

But COA lost its financial backer, the Los Angeles Mission, and now doesn't have the money to run the program. The Mission withdrew because it wouldn't comply with federal guidelines that prohibit mandatory religious instruction.

"We gave COA a month to find alternative funding. They were granted an extension, but



Press-Telegram

failed to come up with other funding," said Rayford Kyle, an HHS spokesman in Washington. "There was no way we could approve their application."

Under federal law, homeless service providers get first crack at surplus federal property, such as the West Long Beach Navy housing project that was part of the Long Beach Naval Station, which closes Friday.

"We've just received word and will ask for legal guidance on how to proceed with disposal of the property," said Michele Greco, who is in charge of base closure policy in the office of Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy Bill Cassidy Jr. "We don't know what our options are 'til we know what are obligations

PLEASE SEE COA/B3

# COA: No Navy housing

CONTINUED FROM B1

are under the law."

Homeless advocates say the need for transitional housing is still great. The Rev. Kit Wilke, chairman of the Long Beach Area Coalition for the Homeless, said the city's plan for reusing the property balanced the needs of the most impoverished, the need for economic development and for education.

Under that plan, 62 acres went to Long Beach Unified School District for new schools, 17 acres for a federal Job Corps site, 30 acres for a university research center and 26 acres for homeless housing.

"Those needs remain the same. We need to find another group that can move in and run a program similar to the one planned by COA," said Wilke.

COA director Cedric Hinson said he doesn't believe the project is dead. The Salvation Army has expressed an interest in the site, he said, and had been working with COA.

Jerry Miller, head of economic development for the city, said the Long Beach City Council was very serious about including a homeless component in the reuse of the Navy housing property.