

The Ivy Group Represents San Francisco Non-Profit Organization to Turn Vision into Dreams and Reality in the East Bay

“Thanks so much for the professional way you handled today’s closing. It was a real pleasure working with you guys from start to finish. Congratulations on a most professional stewardship of this transaction! Thanks for a classy close!” . ~ **Bryan Bashin, CEO and Executive Director, Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Inc.**

PROVIDING SOLUTIONS

The Challenge

The Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Inc. (“Lighthouse”) is a San Francisco, CA based non-profit organization that has served the blind and visually impaired community for nearly 100 years. Lighthouse touches the lives of thousands of people who have been blind their whole lives or people who are new to blindness because of eye disease or trauma.

In the Bay Area, there are approximately 25,000 blind and visually impaired people who lead companies and work alongside sighted peers. The blind and visually impaired community has a disproportionately high level of unemployment that remains above 50%. Through the “Blind Leaders Program”, Lighthouse specializes in equipping its clients with confidence to set lofty career goals as well as the training and support to fulfill their ambitions.

Through collaboration and community connections, Lighthouse set competing teams of commercial real estate brokers scouring the East Bay looking for sites that were close to public transportation and yet still in a 24-hour safe location. Eventually, The Ivy Group discovered, negotiated and represented Lighthouse in the purchase a massive existing 42,139 square feet light industrial manufacturing property in San Leandro, CA. The \$3M San Leandro complex is seven times the footprint of Lighthouse’s San Francisco Headquarters building and when finally built out will employ up to 60 blind workers, supervisors and teachers. The property would build on previous blind employment efforts the Lighthouse has conducted for nearly a century. When built out more blind employees will be working at this single building than at any other building in California.

Among Lighthouse’s challenging requirements were:

- The need to be near bus lines and within 1 mile of a Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station on the East Bay.
- A tax strategy involving a donation component simultaneously benefiting the seller and Lighthouse.
- Quick closing (from contract to close of escrow).

CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

The Challenge: Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Inc. desired to purchase a manufacturing property located near transit-oriented destinations to expand its “Blind Leaders Program” to build on previous blind employment efforts and to turn the facility into the single largest employment site for the blind in California.

The Strategy: Through collaboration and community resources, The Ivy Group deployed a proprietary technique to identify and engage property owners, and then swiftly secured the optimal property with a negotiated purchase contract. During the contractual phase, The Ivy Group assisted in resolution of critical exceptions revealed in the preliminary title report.

The Solution: Devised a realistic schedule to resolve issues related to environmental inspections, property repairs and escrow deadlines.

The Results: The diligent efforts of The Ivy Group resulted in Lighthouse taking possession of the building in 3 weeks, avoiding the need to extend its existing lease at a separate rental facility in Oakland, CA, that would have resulted in a double increase in rent.



The Strategy

Tapping available resources and accrued experience, The Ivy Group began literally knocking on doors of quality commercial buildings which weren't even listed for sale and identified several properties which fit Lighthouse's profile.

Once a property was identified, immediately The Ivy Group engaged with property owners. Through communications and understanding, The Ivy Group conveyed Lighthouse's stringent requirements to property owners. When the seller was identified, The Ivy Group quickly formulated a negotiation strategy through a letter of intent and quickly secured the purchase contract to lock in the property. Throughout the contractual phase, The Ivy Group worked closely and diligently with the seller, title company and related parties to resolve several critical exceptions that were revealed in the preliminary title report.

The Ivy Group directly connected the following resources to seal the deal:

- City of San Leandro zoning and planning administrator.
- City leaders such as the Mayor and Councilmembers.
- Chicago Title Company.
- Lighthouse staff.



The Solution

Engaging with the seller, The Ivy Group identified several challenges that required swift and precise resolutions. Because the property has not exchanged hands for over 40 years, there were several outstanding exceptions which required resolution through creative strategies to eliminate the risk of cloud on the title for Lighthouse.

The Ivy Group devised and maintained a realistic but progressive time schedule to keep track of developments related to environmental inspections, property repairs and escrow deadlines.

The Results

The diligent efforts of The Ivy Group resulted in a record close of escrow in 3 weeks. Lighthouse took possession of the building and moved its 23-year factory operations from Oakland to San Leandro in record speed, avoiding the need to extend its existing lease at a rental facility in Oakland, CA, which would have resulted in an increase in double rent.

Blindness crosses all communities, ages and socio-economic levels. In a world where there may be only one blind employee in any given workplace, the Lighthouse is a place where blindness is the norm, not the exception. The Ivy Group was thrilled to have partnered with Lighthouse to turn dreams into a reality by securing a property where blind people who are engulfed in darkness have an opportunity to engage in careers alongside countless other peers.

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The Ivy Group, headquartered in Fremont, CA, is the leading commercial and investment real estate firm with expertise in consulting, brokerage and technology solutions. We advise clients in the areas of acquisition, disposition, leasing, partnership formations, portfolio/asset management and value-added services. The Ivy Group offers best-in-class solutions by leveraging innovative process, technology and market conditions to tactically identify the best return on investments. We specialize in office, retail, medical, multi-family, hotel/motel, industrial warehouse, self storage and vacant land. By offering a wide range of comprehensive professional expertise including buyer/seller negotiations, landlord/tenant representations, portfolio management, site selection, investment analysis, strategic consulting and risk management, we help clients balance long-term strategies with short-term expediency to create, grow and maintain value.

The Ivy Group is a privately owned, commercial real estate firm whose goal is to transform real estate into a competitive advantage. Recognizing clients need for real estate counseling, The Ivy Group created innovative methods to utilize knowledge, experience and technology to deliver customized solutions to enterprises, businesses and property owners. In 2001, The Ivy Group was formed to serve its clients by providing an integrated source of capability for all commercial and investment real estate needs.