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Reeling Them In

Film and television location service firm Real to Reel Inc. has added the Hope Gardens Family Center in Sylmar to its list of properties available to host filming.

The center in Sylmar, operated by the Union Rescue Mission in downtown Los Angeles, serves homeless mothers and their children and prior to December had not been much used in feature films and television shows.

Real to Reel Chief Executive Gary Onyshko finds Hope Gardens is not a tough sell to location managers. For one, it is a cost-effective place to shoot because the center has multiple buildings available for multiple scenes.

More importantly – and this is a factor that Real to Reel promotes – the fees paid to Hope Gardens are used by the nonprofit to serve its clients. “The filmmakers are glad to know the proceeds go back into their programs,” Onyshko said.

Hope Gardens provides transitional living quarters for up to 225 women and children and works to move them toward independent living.

Since taking on Hope Gardens in December, Real to Reel has placed Comedy Central series “Workaholics” and “Review with Forrest McNeil,” CBS TV drama “Criminal Minds” and feature film “Max Rose” starring Jerry Lewis at the center.

The center is proving popular because it has the looks most requested by location scouts including apartments, dormitories, multiple cafeterias and hospital hallways. The site also lacks palm trees so it can stand in for anywhere in the United States, Onyshko said.

The challenge has been to make sure filming occurs with minimal disruption to Hope Gardens serving its clients,” Onyshko said.

Staff Reporter Mark R. Madler can be reached at (818) 316-3126 or at mmadler@sfvbj.com.