

## County Affordable Housing Program Found Legal!

### Judge dismissed developer attack

Thanks to the excellent counsel of Legal Services of Northern California, critical support by State Attorney General Bill Lockyer and the outstanding commitment of Sacramento Housing Alliance organizational and individual members, a judge ruled today that the Building Industry Association's lawsuit against the County of Sacramento's affordable housing program is invalid. Judge McMaster dismissed the case. The County's program stands!

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### Housing lawsuit dismissed by judge:

<http://www.sacbee.com/content/news/story/14225710p-15049950c.html>

### Editorial: Affordable housing

#### Victory today, but the fight is not over

<http://www.sacbee.com/content/opinion/editorials/story/14225627p-15049896c.html>

## Save the Date

### SHA Annual Dinner

Monday, June 12, 2006

The Grand  
(1215 - "J" Street)

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Joan Burke

As many of you know, Tim Brown, the Executive Director of Loaves & Fishes and a founder of SHA, is leaving at the end of April for a year-long Grand Adventure. Sister Libby Fernandez of the Sisters of Mercy will succeed him at Loaves & Fishes. Tim and his wife Cece Martin are selling their house, storing their earthly goods and will live in a tiny travel trailer, towed by their trusty Subaru. They plan to travel throughout the western United States, Alaska, Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, roaming as far as Alaska and Ecuador. Tim took a few minutes to look back on his career in homeless and housing advocacy.

**Q:** Tim, of what are you proudest?

**A:** I'm proud to have been part of the housing and homeless struggle for over 20 years working on inclusionary ordinances in the city and county of Sacramento, the Housing Trust

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## Program Stands

This means that the immediate legal threat to the County's program is gone, however a political threat and possible appeal remain!

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We must support the County Board of Supervisors and encourage them to remain strong. The affordable housing program is successful. Development is moving forward, and plans to meet the affordable housing requirements are being approved.

Sacramento County Planning staff has been processing affordable housing plans associated with numerous planning entitlement requests. The largest projects are located in Specific Plan or Master Plan areas where development is planned, but building has not yet taken place. The units referenced in the following summary are units that will be constructed throughout the County over the next several years. The following is a progress report was compiled to show estimates from current proposals to meet the affordable housing program.

🔄 171 projects are subject to the Ordinance representing over 29,000 total units with the following components:

- ✓ Proposed construction of 900 units to be sold at low-income levels in 27 different projects
- ✓ Proposed construction of over 1,600 rental units in 9 different projects
- ✓ Proposed dedication of 87 acres - 75 required and 12 acres from over-dedication - in 15 projects

🔄 Of the overall 171 projects, 15 of them which represent 2,132 market units have reached final approval stage with the following components:

- ✓ 199 rental units
- ✓ 18 for-sale units
- ✓ \$2.65 million of in-lieu fees
- ✓ \$1.13 million of affordability fees to assist the funding gap for the construction of housing affordable to low, very low and extremely low income families.

## Housing Choice throughout the City of Sacramento

In downtown Sacramento, plans are brewing for over 4,000 new homes - mostly luxury condominiums. Mayor Heather Fargo has expressed interest in expanding the City's mixed-income housing ordinance to cover all new housing construction throughout the City, not just that in new-growth areas. SHA Board members have met with Mayor Fargo and City Council members to support the Mayor's proposal and asked the Council to expand the program in two ways: to set aside some of the new affordable housing for extremely-low-income people, as Sacramento County does; and to make the housing permanently affordable, preventing the loss of public investment.

This proposal is consistent with principles in the City's general plan to include *"a range of housing choices to meet the needs of our rent and future residents and having affordable housing spread equitably throughout the city!"*

# City Council Protects Affordable Homes Downtown

## SRO ordinance long overdue

The market has changed. Downtown is *the* place to develop - high-rise luxury condos, boutique hotels, and restaurants. Excitement is in the air and the tide is rising. This same boom, however has made it more difficult to find adequate safe housing, especially if one is disabled and living on a fixed income. Downtown motels historically have been a place where many have found a stable and secure home downtown. Single Residential Occupancy hotels (SRO) are one of few choices for people who are elderly or disabled and have incomes of only \$800-\$1000.

In 1961 there were approximately 78 hotels in the Sacramento downtown area, providing 3,558 housing units, most of which were residential. Currently there are 946 units remaining, a loss of 2,612 units.

As a result of SHA and member involvement and the support of the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Commission, the City Council voted UNANIMOUSLY to approve a \$15 Million SRO/Efficiency construction and renovation program and directed staff to draft an **ordinance** to replace any very low income SRO units that are destroyed, converted or closed. Thank you, City Council!

## Perspectives from a student and residents

**William Green III** - For the past seven months I have been privileged to work on protecting extremely-low income city residents. In the downtown area, there is new construction, tearing down and building up. Where a building goes up has an impact on the physical environment. There are people being displaced, moving in and out. Those residents that cannot afford to move often are left without housing.



Former Biltmore Hotel residents before it closed in 2000

Certainly a business owner has the right to get out of the rental business. However, laws must be passed to protect the residents when a business owner decides to no longer rent to them. For the past 40 years, the tenants of residential hotels in the Sacramento downtown area have been minimally protected. A wise man once said every society is judged by how it treats its least fortunate amongst them. Well, I would consider people on fixed income to be the least fortunate when it comes to competing for housing.

The same government that protects the rights of business owners must ensure the rights of the consumers. At the City Council meeting, I witnessed an endeavor by the Mayor and Council Members to safeguard the availability of affordable housing in the downtown area from disappearing in the cloud of expansion and new development. As an intern I was provided the opportunity to be a lead person advocating for the right to have adequate housing and to represent this action to the community. The experience was fascinating to say the least.

In the process, I have met **champions**, people who are using public policy to help those least fortunate in our society. This experience has been truly rewarding.

Thanks to you all...

**Elizabeth** - I am a community resident and have lived in SRO housing downtown. An affordable home and community support very important. It has helped me be more independent. Now, I am taking a big step to move from an SRO to being on my own using community support and my friends.

## The Impact of Organizing on the Bottom Line

Ron Dwyer-Voss

Research by NeighborWorks® America, including pilot programs run locally by Sacramento Mutual Housing Association, has shown that housing organizations that engage in community organizing for systemic change experience a positive impact on their own financial bottom line. For a report summary see:

<http://www.nw.org/network/neighborworksprogs/leadership/default.asp>



Money, services and cash flow are not the only bottom line impacted. Organizing has an impact on values, especially democratic participation, collective action and collective power. These values are one of the fundamental bottom lines of the American democratic experiment.

When Alexis de Toqueville traveled through North America in the 19th century he was struck by a phenomenon that he considered rare in Europe. De Toqueville noticed that Americans were quick to form associations of mutual interest to solve problems and create public life. He contrasted this with the European model where everything from solving a problem to creating entertainment was left to governmental bodies and the professional classes that created them. Steeping himself in observation of the democratic tendency to "form a deliberative bodyÖ[that] remedies the trouble before anyone has thought of the possibility of some previously constituted authority" led de toqueville to conclude that in the United States the "most natural right of man, after acting on his own, is that of combining his efforts with those of his fellows and acting together.

Community organizing, "combining efforts Öand acting together", is an essential element of the bottom line of democracy. Good community organizing does not rest with fighting issues and then going separate ways again. It builds strong bonds between people that form a web of relationships - a community that has power. Power to act!

How can we measure this bottom line impact? Simple! In Sacramento, we could do what worked in Savannah, Georgia and take Ö the Neighborhood Services budget, or a portion of the CDBG budget, and invest it with community-based organizations of residents trying to solve problems and improve community



life. Each year we could measure how much organized communities accomplished and compare to what the same financial investment produced through city services.

The bottom line would not just be projects, programs and festivals, but also engagement in neighborhood and city life. The more involved people are in community life, the less afraid they are of "others" they only meet in the newspaper or TV shows. The removal of fear through democratic participation would change the entire nature of debates and policy discussions related to housing. This is what it would mean to organize on the bottom line.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

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Fund, homeless programs at both Mather and McClellan when they closed as military bases, Sacramento's 10 Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness. I'm proud that we've expanded the ways to help people through emergency shelters, transitional housing programs and permanent housing. I'm proud of our strong advocacy program at Loaves & Fishes, and that we've started new programs like Women's Empowerment, Genesis and Sister Nora's Place during the six and a half years I've been there.

**Q:** What stands out about the Housing Alliance?

**A:** The amazing collaboration that has led to much more of a consensus about low-income housing policies, about a "housing first" approach. The housing crisis helped bring the need for sound housing policies home to a much broader cross-section. It's been so rewarding to see so many committed people involved with the Housing Alliance and the progress that we've made.

**Q:** What else stands out?

**A:** To have been one of the founders of a number of homeless and housing organizations: the Housing Alliance, the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee (SHOC) and Self-Help Housing.

**Q:** What do you and Cece plan to do during your sabbatical year?

**A:** Well, travel obviously, but also spend time with family, write and pursue other creative projects. Cece is a poet; I'd like to do some autobiographical writing and also develop some thoughts on homelessness. I'm looking forward to reflecting on 20 plus years of work and housing policy, recharging and coming back ready to take on a new role. A lot of people think I'm retiring; I'm not. I'll be back.

**Q:** I admire the leap you're taking.

**A:** We'll see how it goes. Most people can't believe how tiny the trailer actually is, so that will be a challenge right there. We also want to stay in touch with everybody. Our e-mail is brownmartinfree@mac.com We've also just set up a web site:

**Q:** That e-mail address kind of sums it up, doesn't it?

**A:** Pretty much.

I'd personally like to share two stellar attributes of Tim. Firstly, how his innate decency and lack of self-importance helped build a consensus time and time again among people of disparate interests and viewpoints. Secondly, how his door was always open to anyone who needed his time, whether it was the State Senate Majority Leader wanting his advice on homeless policy or a homeless guest of Friendship Park with a lengthy, delusional grievance about the powers that be. Both would be equally graced by his unhurried compassion and common sense.



## Special Outreach Program Success

### Talking to residents about affordable homes

Our mission states that SHA promotes affordable housing and enhanced opportunities for lower income residents and people experiencing homelessness. A major activity of the organization is to create dialogue among community groups about the need for and benefit of quality affordable and accessible housing. Alvin Fincher, SHA's Education Campaign Coordinator, speaks regularly before community advisory boards, business associations and neighborhood groups.

With the recent legal challenge by the Building Industry Association, the lobbyist group for the big market rate homebuilders, to Sacramento County's landmark affordable housing program, SHA decided to take our education effort *to the streets*. The idea was simple: recruit new supporters to SHA and ask people to send a letter of support to members of the County Board of Supervisors. The County spent over 2 years creating its successful affordable housing program (see p. 2). It is important that the community actively support its leadership.

This was a new program for SHA, so we had to first raise money. It was amazing to see the response. We were successful in our initial fund-raising. This allowed us to set up a two-month trial project to test affordable housing messages and increase community involvement.

Our project involved phone banking and face-to-face contact at local Safeways and the Natural Foods Coop. If you shopped either of these places in December, you certainly found one of our hard working organizers asking you to sign a support petition.

In all, we talked to a few thousand people. Hundreds of support letters were sent to members of the Board and many joined as contributing members of SHA.

Lessons learned:

- ◆ People care about the lack of affordable, accessible housing
- ◆ People support our idea: some new homes should be made affordable and accessible
- ◆ People will act on the issue of accessible, affordable housing
- ◆ Running a program like this is not easy - It takes a lot of work!

## Thank You to Our Start-up Supporters

### Underwriter

Housing California  
Deborah Ortiz

### Platinum Level

AIDS Housing Alliance  
Council Member Steve Cohn  
Council Member Lauren Hammond  
Ann Kohl

### Gold Level

Jim Alford  
Cathy Creswell  
Community Housing Opportunities Corporation  
Ron Javor  
Lincoln Crow  
Virginia Moose  
Andy Sawyer  
SEIU 1877  
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Tim Brown	Lenny Goldberg
Joan Burke	Roderick Hayes
Cottage Housing Resident Council	Mark Lovington
Ken Cross	Leslie Marcus
Stephan Daues	Peter McNamee
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### Bronze Level

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Andrew Gross-Gaitan  
Lyla Hanson  
Joyce Mihanovich  
Pete Price  
Paul Trudeau

# Citizens Unite to Ensure One Rancho Cordova

A team of Rancho Cordova residents banded together forming Citizens for One Rancho Cordova: Affordable for All! to ensure that their vision of One Rancho Cordova is the future of their city. As highlighted in "Who's your neighbor?", a study by the Public Policy Institute of California, Rancho Cordova has managed to grow its diversity equally in every one of its neighborhoods.

With developers planning to build over 35,000 new homes in the city, these residents proposed a program that would ensure that a percentage of new homes and apartments will be affordable to low, very low and extremely low income households.

As a direct result of the hard work of these Rancho Cordova residents, the City Council unanimously approved the following policy for their Housing Element:

Action H 1.1.3 Create a broad range of options available throughout the city that will result in the production of housing available to all income levels and will result in the production of at least 10% of housing in new neighborhoods being affordable to moderate- and lower-income households.

## Perspectives from a Rancho resident

Reprinted from Grapevine

On behalf of Citizens for One Rancho Cordova, Affordable for All, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the city council and staff for their many grueling hours of research and work leading to last night's compromise vote to start Rancho Cordova's housing element on the right track to a world class document.

Much appreciation and thanks to the hard working citizens who volunteered many hours in support of our goal of One Rancho Cordova, Affordable for All.

I believe Rancho Cordova now has a good strong housing engine on the track. It is now up to the city staff, through meetings with all concerned, to choose the best cars, i.e. high density housing, condos, land donations, non-profit builders, and dozens more to make our housing element a world class plan.

We have all the elements to be the best, and I have faith that can be the outcome.

Thanks again for voting and working for a plan to keep our town One Rancho Cordova, Affordable for All.

Ross LeFever, Rancho Cordova

## *YES! I want to support SHA!*

- Full Membership: 0.1% (point one percent = budget x .001) of agency budget, \$175 minimum. Full members can be nominated to have a representative on the Board of Directors.
- Associate Membership: \$150 or more, \$50 for agencies with a budget under \$100,000.
- Individual Membership: \$35 and up, \$15 low income.

**Payment**  I have enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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SHA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. All gifts are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Tax ID #68-0252305

# Sacramento: A Potpourri of Housing Advocacy

**A year of housing...**the City Council kicked off a year long series workshops on housing issues. To see the outline of what is to come view:

[http://sacramento.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view\\_id=6&clip\\_id=887&meta\\_id=64275](http://sacramento.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=6&clip_id=887&meta_id=64275)

**10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness...**A new approach - *Housing First* ! The aim is to move homeless persons directly into permanent housing with services. The City and County consider it in April. Leadership of co-chairs Mayor Heather Fargo and Supervisor Roger Dickenson, makes approval likely.

**Rental Inspection...**The Council considered proposals to proactively inspect all rentals to ensure safety and avoid deterioration that eventually results in a loss of housing. Councilmembers Pannell, McCarty and Hammond provided leadership for a city-wide mandatory program. However, the majority approved a less universal pilot program that will cost the city \$350,000 from its general fund. The pilot program does not explicitly protect tenants from being displaced. Current relocation assistance is inadequate.

**Condominium conversion, loss of housing?...**Under pressure from developers and multifamily apartment owners, the city will consider changes to the condominium conversion program. Allowing widespread conversion of existing inhabited rentals could be dangerous and needs consideration.

1) How will current residents who cannot afford to purchase their units be protected? 2) Will a loss of rental units significantly tighten the market, lowering vacancy and raising costs? 3) What percent of converted units will be affordable to Low, Very Low and Extremely Low Income residents?

**Stay tuned to [www.sachousingalliance.org](http://www.sachousingalliance.org) for calendar updates**

**To receive this in large print call (916) 442-1198.**

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- ★ Judge dismisses BIA lawsuit
- ★ Residents unite for One Rancho Cordova
- ★ Protection for SRO units