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TODAY'S NEWS

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

MERCED SUN-STAR: Affordable housing a problem for California farmworkers
With low wages and rising rents, affordable housing is a problem for many farmworkers in California's agricultural communities. The Ventura County Star reports officials are trying to find creative ways to build affordable housing for farmworkers, but are finding challenges with the little land available for development.

TIMES OF SAN DIEGO: Developer starting 205-unit affordable housing project downtown
By Chris Jennewein // Wakeland Housing and Development Corp. will break ground on Tuesday for a $79.3 million affordable housing project on a long-vacant site in downtown San Diego. The Atmosphere development is a 205-unit, 12-story apartment complex at 4th Avenue and Beech Street. It will include 51 supportive housing units for individuals with special needs, including formerly homeless, as well as ground-floor retail space.

SAN MATEO DAILY JOURNAL: San Mateo senior complex to get facelift
By Bill Silverfarb // The Edgewater Isle senior apartments in San Mateo earned a tax credit from the state for a major facelift that will temporarily displace the residents who live in the 92-unit complex. California State Treasurer John Chiang announced last week that tax credits were awarded to 16 California projects, three in San Mateo County, to construct or preserve more than 1,800 affordable housing units across the state.

MULTIFAMILY BIZ: Award-winning senior housing community continues to rack-up industry honors
Perris Station Senior Apartment Homes in Perris, California continues its winning ways. Most recently the community, which was developed by Highridge Costa Housing Partners of Gardena, California, received several coveted Gold Awards in competition held by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

FRESNO BEE: Habitat for Humanity dedicated two southeast Fresno homes
By BoNhia Lee // The first pair of houses in Habitat for Humanity’s Hope Village in southeast Fresno were dedicated on Saturday.
The Yang and Xiong families were given their keys and an official “welcome home” after spending more than a year helping Habitat workers and volunteers build their homes in the small development at Church and Laval avenues, west of Chestnut Avenue.

**HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

**KCRA NEWS: Drought doesn't slow California’s housing growth**

Despite the start of a fourth year of drought, California’s housing construction shows no sign of slowing down. According to the California Homebuilding Foundation, local government issued permits for 85,000 new homes in 2014, about the same as the year before. A few communities have considered temporary bans on development during the drought, but in most places, the sounds of hammers and saws have been growing louder.

**LAND USE / PLANNING / REGULATION**

**SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE: Opinion: California's housing crunch costs us big time; how to fix it**

Californians already know how expensive housing is in our state. But a new report from the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst’s Office makes it clear that as a state, this ever-growing bill is one we simply can’t afford to keep paying. Housing in California is more expensive than everywhere else in the nation (except Hawaii). The average home price in California is nearly $440,000, a whopping 2.5 times the national average. Median rents of $1,240 are nearly 50 percent more than the national average.

**MALIBU SURFSIDE: Secondary units not adequate form of low income housing, court says**

By Ashleigh Fryer // The Los Angeles Superior Court granted a Writ of Mandate against the City of Malibu on March 11 invalidating the City’s Housing Element and Low Income Housing Ordinance, which counted guest houses as low income housing. The State of California Housing Element Law mandates that local governments plan to meet existing and projected housing needs of the community on all economic levels. These Housing Elements must be updated every five years to reflect current demographics.

**SILICON VALLEY BUINESS JOURNAL: San Jose’s general plan imperiled by greenhouse gas lawsuit**

By Nathan Donato-Weinstein // When it was adopted in 2011 San Jose’s new general plan, Envision 2040, promised to limit sprawl by focusing growth in urban nodes and balancing the city’s jobs and housing mix. So it’s something of an irony that it’s under fire for allegedly — you guessed it — causing sprawl.

**ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER: To keep up with demand, O.C. needs 7,000 new homes per year, state says**

By Jeff Collins // Orange County needs to build 7,000 more homes a year than it is currently building to make housing more affordable, the state Legislative Analyst’s Office reported this week. Statewide, the pace of new homebuilding needs to be increased by 100,000, the agency said in the new report.

**HOUSING MARKETS / REAL ESTATE**

**WEST HOLLYWOODVILLE: Study says efforts to restrict housing density are responsible for high California housing costs**

By Henry (Hank) Scott // A recently released study of housing costs in California suggests a major conflict between the professed desires of many West Hollywood residents and leaders to keep housing affordable and to also curb development. “Building less housing than people demand drives high housing costs,” says the study,
“California’s High Housing Costs: Causes and Consequences,” which was conducted by the Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) of the California State Legislature.

**HOUSING WIRE: Here’s how to afford homeownership in California**
California is infamous for its outrageous housing market, making it nearly impossible for anyone to jump into homeownership. So what’s the answer for people in California who are looking for more affordable housing? Save.

**WORLD PROPERTY JOURNAL: California pending sales spike in February, highest in 6 years**
By Miho Favela // According to the California Association of Realtors, pending home sales in California soared in February 2015 to record the first double-digit annual gain in nearly three years, the third straight year-to-year increase, and post the biggest annual increase in nearly six years.

**MONTEREY HERALD: Monterey County home affordability continues to decline**
By Phillip Molnar // Home affordability hit record lows in 2014 for Monterey County and much of California, according to the California Association of Realtors. Only 27 percent of homes were considered affordable in Monterey County based on median household income and current home prices — a major change from the beginning of 2011 when more than half of all homes were considered within reach.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**
**STOCKTON RECORD: ‘Stockton is going to be a destination’**
By Roger Phillips // On a June morning more than nine months ago, Stockton officials led 50 developers through three decrepit and long-shuttered city-owned downtown hotels, hoping someone would be sufficiently inspired by a vision of urban restoration to dig into their pockets and back up their ideas with their money. But no inspiration was sparked, no cash flowed, and nothing happened.

**HOMELESSNESS**
**VICTORVILLE DAILY PRESS: In search of solutions for the homeless**
By Anneli Fogt // The solution to homelessness relies on collaboration, according to leaders who gathered at Loma Linda University on Monday to discuss one of San Bernardino County’s most visible problems. The county has 2,140 homeless, according to the most recent count conducted in late January. Of those, 176 are in the High Desert.

**NBC LOS ANGELES: Hollywood’s homeless youth get helping hand**
By Angie Crouch // About 4,000 young people are living on the streets of Los Angeles, many come to Hollywood with stars in their eyes. But when they don't get discovered, they end up homeless. Others are escaping abusive environments. The nonprofit Covenant House California is working to rescue them.

**NATIONAL HOUSING NEWS**
**CBS NEWS: America’s incredible shrinking middle class**
If the middle-class is the economic backbone of America, then the country is developing osteoporosis. Each of the 50 states has seen its share of middle-class families shrink from 2000 to 2013, thanks to stagnant incomes and rising housing costs, according to an analysis from the Pew Charitable Trusts. In the hardest-hit states, such as Wisconsin and Ohio, the share of middle class families has dropped by more than 5 percentage points, shifting the percentage of middle-income families to below half of the state’s population.
COVERAGE INFORMATION:
California Department of Housing & Community Development WEB NEWS service coverage:

Tuesdays and Thursdays each week includes electronic format articles retrieved from newspapers or news services that report housing and community development news in California and some national services. Coverage is for California newspapers that are available electronically via the Internet – and any significant related breaking news.

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