

Dear Residents

I am pleased to present this Special Edition of **City Highlights**. In this issue of the newsletter, we focus on the City's upcoming **Housing Summit on Monday, December 4, 2006 at 6 p.m. at West Hollywood Park**. The summit will kick-off a community dialogue on how to address the housing challenges we now face throughout California. In addition, it will begin the process to update the Housing Element in the West Hollywood General Plan.

Also, we shine the spotlight on the West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation, the nonprofit organization that has worked to develop affordable housing for Seniors, persons with disabilities and low to moderate income persons in West Hollywood for nearly twenty years.

Reflecting on 2006, West Hollywood continues to be a safe place to live, work and play. We are particularly grateful to our West Hollywood Sheriff's deputies and Los Angeles County Fire department staff who work tirelessly to protect us. They are truly the unsung heroes of our City.

This year, our local economy continued to thrive due to the collective efforts of our many diverse businesses. We all benefit from the extraordinary talents of our business people who make a significant contribution to the City each day.

As we look back at our many successes this year, it's the collective vision and involvement of our residents that makes West Hollywood such a great City. Our residents are our greatest asset. You challenge us. You support us. You clarify our purpose and insist that we never lose our collective core values as a community.

As we conclude 2006, I hope you and your family have a safe holiday season. I look forward to seeing you in 2007!

Sincerely,
Paul Arevalo,
City Manager

WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY COUNCIL

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PAUL AREVALO | CITY MANAGER

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HIGHLIGHTS

WEST HOLLYWOOD

2006

SPECIAL EDITION

INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD

City of West Hollywood to Host Housing Summit on Monday, December 4, 2006 at 6 p.m. at West Hollywood Park

The State of California is facing a housing crisis. From the escalating cost of renting an apartment or purchasing a home or condominium, to the traffic and congestion pressure placed on neighborhoods and communities by the state's burgeoning population, California is facing an unprecedented housing challenge. For the City of West Hollywood and other Westside cities, the changes in the housing market are creating many public policy concerns.

As changes in market forces affect housing stability for many residents, there are increasing concerns about what can be done to respond to the housing crisis and protect the affordable housing stock in West Hollywood. These and other issues will be discussed when the City of West Hollywood hosts a special **Housing Summit on Monday, December 4, 2006 at 6 p.m. at West Hollywood Park, 647 N. San Vicente Boulevard**. The regular City Council meeting will begin at 5 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend and participate. (This interactive Housing Summit is the first in a series of community discussions on housing issues.)

Protecting the City's affordable housing stock has been a fundamental core value since West Hollywood was incorporated in 1984. Today, more than 16,000 households in West Hollywood rely on the City's

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Laurel/Norton Affordable Senior and Family Housing building, a project of West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation (see article on page 2).



Historic Laurel Avenue Affordable Senior Housing Project Approved by the West Hollywood City Council

Staying true to the City of West Hollywood's core value to make affordable housing a community priority, the City Council has voted to uphold the Planning Commission's action to certify the final Environmental Impact Report and approval of permits for the historic Laurel Place Project located at 1343 Laurel Avenue in West Hollywood. The development, a project of the West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation, will provide 27 units of very-low-income Senior housing, one manager's unit, rehabilitation of a historic mansion and chauffeur's quarters, and preservation of nearly a quarter-acre of lushly landscaped green space along Laurel Avenue as a public park.

The City Council also voted to incorporate the following design changes to the project:

- Eliminate a translucent screen facing the interior courtyard;
- Expand the landscaping, with the possible inclusion of vines, on the side of the new building facing the street;
- Directed staff to engage in discussions with the West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation and WASET regarding the management of the property; and
- Modify the materials on the façade of the rear building to be more compatible with the historic structure.

All tenants living at the proposed project will receive Section 8 vouchers, limiting their out-of-pocket rents to one-third of their income. Most Seniors will pay less than \$300 per month for rent, based on typical Social Security income of around \$900. Average market rent for comparable one-bedroom units in West Hollywood is more than \$1,200.

The property was designated historic by the City in 1994 and donated to the City in 1997 by Elsie Weisman, who resided there from childhood until her death in 2000. For more information regarding the Laurel Avenue Affordable Senior Housing Project, please contact Jeff Skorneck, Housing Manager at (323) 848- 6596.



The West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation at a Glance

The West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation (WHCHC) began in 1984 as a recommendation of the founding West Hollywood City Council's housing task force to create a non-profit housing development corporation.

WHCHC was created to purchase, build, rehabilitate, and manage affordable housing for people with limited incomes in West Hollywood. As of 2006, WHCHC has 13 projects in its portfolio and owns and operates 244 units of affordable housing in West Hollywood serving a variety of populations including Seniors, people with disabilities, and low to moderate income families.

WHCHC not only provides affordable housing, many of WHCHC's residents require a variety of social services and medical services to continue living on their own. WHCHC combines standard property management practices with referrals to a wide spectrum of community-based service agencies and provides information about support services available.

For more information on the WHCHC, please call (323) 650- 8771 or visit: www.whchc.org

What is a Housing Element?

The "Housing Element" is a section of the City's General Plan. It ensures that cities adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. Specifically, the Housing Element includes goals, policies and programs that address:

- 1) Conserving and improving existing affordable housing;
- 2) Providing adequate sites for new housing;
- 3) Assisting in the development of affordable housing;
- 4) Removing governmental constraints to housing development; and
- 5) Promoting equal housing opportunity for all residents.

Recognizing that housing needs change over time, Housing Element updates are required by State law and typically done every five years. For each update cycle, the State gives each City housing goals which represent the City's "fair share" of projected housing need for that period. Cities are then required to update the Housing Element to accommodate any new policy or program changes needed to address the State's mandate. The City's next Housing Element update is due in 2008.



City Kicks-off “Campaign to End Hunger and Food Insecurity in West Hollywood”

Declaring that no one in the City of West Hollywood should go hungry, the City has begun a **“Campaign to End Hunger and Food Insecurity in West Hollywood,”** which seeks to create food assistance collaborations that will provide help to people of all ages, backgrounds and ethnicities.

West Hollywood is generally viewed as a relatively affluent community, however, census data shows that a significant number of West Hollywood residents live below the poverty line. Many of these households include Seniors, children, immigrants and people living with AIDS or other disabilities.

For more information about food programs in West Hollywood, contact the City’s Social Services Division at (323) 848-6510. For the hearing impaired, please call (323) 848-6496.

City Adopts a Heritage Tree Program

The City of West Hollywood has adopted a Heritage Tree Program to recognize select trees and shrubs as distinct and unique natural living resources. Trees or shrubs must meet an established criteria to be eligible for nomination as a heritage tree. Incentives for heritage tree nomination will include regular inspections by a certified arborist, care and maintenance recommendations and a heritage tree plaque. The City will also maintain a heritage tree inventory of all designated heritage trees.

For more information regarding the City’s Heritage Tree Program, please visit www.weho.org or call Sam Baxter, Facilities & Landscape Manager, at (323) 848-6321.

Club Freedom New Year’s Eve Party Set for Sunday, December 31, 2006

The City of West Hollywood, Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center, Van Ness Recovery House and the WeHo Life HIV Prevention Collaborative will host the ninth annual alcohol and drug free New Year’s Eve celebration, **Club Freedom**, on Sunday, December 31, 2006 from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the Village at Ed Gould Plaza, 1125 N. McCadden Place, Los Angeles. The Club Freedom dance party provides a fun and festive environment for those who wish to celebrate the New Year without indulging in alcohol or mind-altering substances. **Admission is free.**

For more information, please call (323) 860-7389 or go to www.cityx1.com/clubfreedom

City to Offer Free Christmas Tree Recycling from December 26, 2006 to January 13, 2007

The City of West Hollywood will offer free Christmas tree recycling from December 26, 2006 to January 13, 2007. Please place your tree on the sidewalk for collection on your regular trash day. Remove all decorative trimmings and the tree base. Do not place the tree in a plastic bag, as this will create jams in the wood chipper.

For more information, call the City’s Environmental Services Division, at (323) 848-6404.

Sheriff’s Deputies to Distribute “Don’t Drink and Drive” Cocktail Napkins and Pledge Cards

To increase public awareness about the dangers of drinking and driving and help reduce the number of drunk driving-related fatalities and injuries during the holidays, West Hollywood Sheriff’s deputies will distribute “Don’t Drink and Drive” cocktail napkins to bars, clubs and restaurants along Sunset Boulevard and Santa Monica Boulevard, on Tuesday, December 12, 2006. In its ninth year, the “Don’t Drink and Drive” Cocktail Napkin campaign will urge patrons to take a taxi or use a designated driver if they have been out drinking.

West Hollywood Sheriff’s deputies will also distribute “Pledge Cards” to party goers throughout the holidays. The small pledge card will conveniently fit into a wallet and point out the fines and penalties as well as incarceration risks associated with drunk driving.

Call the West Hollywood Sheriff’s Station at (310) 855-8850 for details.



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rent stabilization law to help protect their affordable housing.

For many residents, the increasing cost of housing is a major concern, particularly Seniors, people with disabilities and young adults. In rent control cities like West Hollywood and Santa Monica, state law changes which allowed vacancy decontrol (when a property owner is allowed to increase a unit's rent to market rate after a voluntary vacancy) have resulted in increases in rents that were formerly stabilized to protect those persons most vulnerable to the fluctuating housing markets.

Some of the topics to be discussed at the Housing Summit will include:

- The state of the current housing market and housing trends;
- How State laws affect the housing market;
- Regional economic and demographic projections and their effect on the housing market;
- How cities are meeting the need for affordable housing through rent stabilization laws, inclusionary housing requirements and the development of non-profit affordable housing projects;
- What can be done to create workforce housing, low to moderate income housing and other needed housing in the community;
- How the demand for more housing and development of new housing is impacting residential neighborhoods, public infra-

structure and municipal services; and

- How to proceed in the development of the update of the Housing Element of the General Plan (see article on "What is a Housing Element?") which is due to the State in July 2008. Some of the distinguished professionals scheduled to participate in the panel discussions include Jack Kyser, Chief Economist for the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation; Mercedes Marquez, General Manager of the City of Los Angeles Housing Department; Robin Hughes, Chief Executive Officer, Los Angeles Community Design Center; Kathe Head, Principal with Keyser Marston Associates, Inc.; Christine Minnehan, Director, California Housing Law Project; Lawrence Bond, Principal with Bond, Ltd.; and Bob Moncrief, Housing Manager, City of Santa Monica.

Those who attend the Housing Summit will also have an opportunity to create a toolbox of ideas on how the City should respond to the current housing crisis. These ideas may include expanding lobbying and legislative efforts; developing short, middle and long-term housing plans; developing land use policies to more effectively respond to the housing crisis and helping to establish the City's priorities in the development of these policies.

For more information about the Housing Summit, call the City's Community Development Department at (323) 848-6475.

