

Recognizing City of Dublin's Project- Emerald Vista Decade-2000-2009

Is the project/program still going? If the project/program has ended, what went well and what could have been improved?

Emerald Vista, a vibrant mixed-income community, exemplifies that a well-designed neighborhood can be created to include market-rate, affordable housing for families and affordable housing for seniors. By 2006, Arroyo Vista, a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) public housing development in Dublin, had fallen into disrepair. Built in the early 1980s, it consisted of 150 garden apartments that served low-income households.

The City desired to:

- Preserve affordable housing;
- create a vibrant mixed-income community;
- provide on-site amenities for the neighborhood; and
- make the development environmentally sustainable.



The challenge was to improve the property without federal resources. In 2006, the City, together with the Alameda County Housing Authority, selected Eden Housing, one of California's most successful non-profit developers, and KB Home, a market-rate homebuilder, to partner to replace public housing with public and market-rate housing. The partners worked collaboratively and involved Arroyo Vista residents in the planning process to meet the needs of the community.

The Public Agency/Private Developer team was able to complete the transformation from the Arroyo Vista public housing project to the Emerald Vista neighborhood without forcing any of the existing residents to be permanently displaced. (Residents received vouchers to move to newer affordable housing during the interim and were given priority for apartments in the new development, and many chose to return.)

Emerald Vista includes 180 affordable apartments (50 reserved for seniors and 130 for families). There are also 198 for-sale single family and townhomes, 14 of which were reserved for moderate-income households.

EMERALD VISTA AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT | DUBLIN, CALIFORNIA

DUBLIN is the heart of the Bay Area. It's a vibrant, diverse community with a rich history and a bright future. The City of Dublin is committed to creating a vibrant, mixed-income community that meets the needs of all residents.

BEFORE | **AFTER**

Partners: City of Dublin, Eden Housing, KB Home, Alameda County Housing Authority, and others.

Lessons Learned: Collaboration, transparency, and community involvement are key to successful development.



Both the single-family and townhome market rate units sold at a very brisk pace throughout 2012 and 2013. This illustrates that, with a well-designed and well-integrated neighborhood, it is possible to overcome the stigma associated with affordable housing and demonstrates that market-rate buyers are willing to purchase homes immediately adjacent to an affordable development.

The project received a number of awards, including:

- 2013 ABAG Growing Smarter Award -https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fuWI_K3-YqA&feature=youtu.be
- 2014 Helen Putnam Award for Excellence (Housing Programs and Innovations category)
- 2014 Urban Land Institute Jack Kemp Award
- 2014 The Affordable Housing Tax Credit Coalition (AHTCC) Annual Charles L. Edson Tax Credit Excellence Award – http://www.taxcreditcoalition.org/awards/ahtcc-announces-20th-annual-charles-l-edson-tax-credit-excellence-awards-program/
- 2016 ICMA Community Partnership Award – <https://icma.org/articles/article/community-partnership-awards>

Explain, in detail, how the project/program has had an impact on employment, expansion of local tax base & diversification of the area's economy? (500 Words Max)

In addition to replacing a formerly blighted site with attractive new development, the Emerald Vista development had a substantial positive impact on its residents and the surrounding area. It is estimated that land value of property surrounding the new community increased from under \$12 million to \$117 million in just a few years. The construction of the total project created 462 construction jobs and 122 on-going jobs. Emerald Vista's creative approach to a widespread need for affordable housing has brought considerable positive attention and several awards to the City and its partners, which has allowed other communities to learn from these best practices.

However, perhaps the most innovative outcome of the project were the many partnerships formed to make Emerald Vista possible. In order to transition the development from aging, non-sustainable public housing to a seamless combination of private and affordable housing, stakeholders collaborated to devise creative solutions that overcame limited resources and addressed a desire for innovative design as well as the need for community amenities. In the face of stiff competition for federal assistance, project stakeholders responded with diplomacy and creativity while identifying alternative funding sources. Dublin made a substantial

investment, \$7.6 million, of its Inclusionary Housing Fund; Eden Housing capitalized on recent changes to HUD's regulation of the Housing Choice Voucher Program, enabling the County Housing Authority to provide Section 8 contracts for all senior apartments and 25% of the family apartments (81 total vouchers). KB Home helped subsidize the replacement of the public housing units by purchasing land for an adjacent residential development, providing critical capital and construction assistance.

During the development's planning stages, stakeholders and the Dublin Unified School District met regularly to discuss ways to enhance education outcomes for the low-income children who would live in Emerald Vista. This interaction led to an inspired partnership between Eden, the Dublin Unified School District, and the YMCA that serves youth residents with comprehensive after-school programming on-site in the community center, including homework tutorials, recreational programs and technology support in the computer lab. By re-imagining the site as a combination of private and affordable housing, Emerald Vista became a fully integrated mixed-housing development.

The partnership between the non-profit builder and market-rate builder, established early in the planning process, allowed the development to incorporate the affordable housing component seamlessly. This inclusivity is deliberately reinforced through development features such as a main thoroughfare that connects the three housing components, a main entrance, and community gathering area.

If the project/program has not ended, please explain what phase it is in and what will come next.

Construction was completed in 2013 and Emerald Vista continues to be a vibrant mixed-income neighborhood in Dublin. Eden Housing offers a variety of services and programs to residents of the affordable units including technology training, financial literacy, on-site after-school programming, community involvement, green education, health, wellness, and programs to help Seniors "age in place" and live independently for as long as possible.

What advice would you give other communities who want to replicate this project/program?

Emerald Vista has become a model for well-designed mixed income housing in the Bay Area. Many cities have come to tour the development due to its aesthetics, the focal community/village area, and integration of four different developments into one large community. The layout and seamless integration of multiple income levels can easily be replicated in other cities.

Another key point other cities and developers can replicate is the partnership that allowed the project to transpire. Working together, the City of Dublin, Eden Housing, Housing Authority of Alameda County and KB Home expanded and improved upon available affordable housing, redeveloped an infill site, increased density and created mixed use housing to elevate the

community as a whole. Each of the partners were necessary in order to realize the goal of a vibrant mixed-income community.

Where possible, stakeholders took advantage of cost-savings measures which could easily be adapted for use in other communities. For example, subcontracts were shared by Eden Housing and KB Home in order to negotiate better rates, and floor plans from a previous development with a similar layout were adjusted, rather than created from scratch, to fit Emerald Vista's specifications. Upon reflection, one of the most important lessons to derive from Emerald Vista is the need for a clear vision and strong leadership. For example, the City facilitated creation of a unified workplan, with input from all stakeholders, which allowed the project to continue moving forward - despite turbulent housing market conditions, the recession, and other hurdles.

Additionally, the lifetime of the project spans several years and includes many twists and turns; the City's perseverance in pursuing its objective of integrated affordable housing was crucial to the realization of the Emerald Vista's development.

Please list any social media usernames and website addresses so that other members can connect with you.

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