



Clinic expands its offerings, grows rapidly



Tulare homebuilder goes green with new development

Model Drug & Fountain tops the list of pharmacies



Richard E. Strid
Chief executive officer
Visalia Medical Clinic

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Violette Mullooly (left), daughter Lilly, son Sean and husband James are eager to move into their new three-bedroom house at La Querencia.

Residents ready to share sense of community

City's first cohousing project nears completion

BoNhia Lee - STAFF WRITER

The last solar panel has been installed, the pool is filled and the common house key has been turned over to the new residents of Fresno's first cohousing development.

After waiting four years for the project to come to fruition, they're eager to move in, but they'll need to wait a little while longer.

Their new homes in the 28-

unit development in northeast Fresno known as La Querencia were supposed to be ready in late July or early August, but some remaining construction details are delaying the move until later this month.

Cohousing is a new name for an old concept. The collaborative housing community features neighbors knowing each other and sharing

Co housing | 12

Large companies get 'small' contracts

Federal agencies award set-asides to Fortune 500 firms

Tainese Arceneaux - STAFF WRITER

The Office of Inspector General of the U.S. Department of the Interior released a report in July that added to years of evidence pointing to federal agencies awarding government contracts reserved for small businesses to Fortune 500 companies.

Whether it boils down to mistakenly miscoding large companies, verification oversights or the limitations of federal regulations, the Department of the Interior is impacted just like many other government agencies who fail to meet the statutory goal for small business contract awards.

No one from the department would make a comment on the record, but the report speaks for itself as an internal review of its slipups and recommendations for future actions to make sure small businesses get their share of agency contracts.

In its evaluation, the Inspector General found about \$5.7 million in awards to large businesses for which Department of the Interior received small business credit in fiscal years 2006-2007.

The office reviewed 472 contracts representing 0.3 percent of the total. Of the sample group, 12 were ineligible large businesses. Universities, Native American groups

and other government entities such as the University of Illinois, Navajo Nation Tribal Government and Montana Department of Justice made up 19 other ineligible businesses.

"Several of the businesses are obviously large businesses such as Home Depot, John Deere, Dell, Sherwin Williams, Starwood Hotels and Waste Management,"

Contracts | 9

Local attorney battles with software firm

Company says lawyer scuttled \$1.5M deal

Gabriel Dillard - STAFF WRITER

A Fresno lawyer's lawsuit against an Arizona software company has cost the firm a business deal valued at more than \$1.5 million, according to the company's managing director.

The head of publicly-traded Amergence Group, a maker of copy protection software designed for DVD and CD burners, said he is taking away a key lesson from the ongoing suit that jeopardizes the future of his firm.

"You probably shouldn't have attorneys as stockhold-

Legal | 7

BEAR program touts early successes

Business services network serves more than 400 firms

Gabriel Dillard - STAFF WRITER

Work force development, financing and business consultation are among the top three things keeping Fresno business owners awake at night.

That's one piece of information gleaned by the Economic Development Corporation serving Fresno County (EDC) in its quest

EDC | 4

TOP CONCERNS OF FRESNO BUSINESSES

As part of the BEAR Action Network, business owners are interviewed to determine their top needs for expanding or maintaining their business. Here are the top services requested by the nearly 80 companies contacted so far in the City of Fresno.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Work force recruitment and training (40 companies). | 5. Website development (13 companies). |
| 2. Financing programs (17 companies). | 6. Telecommunication development (9 companies). |
| 3. Business consultation (14 companies). | 7. Real estate and site selection (9 companies). |
| 4. Assistance with city services (15 companies). | 8. Construction contracting (4 companies). |

Source: Economic Development Corporation serving Fresno County

Cohousing | from 1

certain amenities such as a common house with a kitchen, the pool and laundry facilities.

The bannisters for the stairways of the second-floor homes still need to be installed before permits can be issued and families can move in, said Lynette Bassman, Ph.D., a cohousing member who helped spearhead the project in 2004.

Some members have sold their old homes within the last couple months and have made temporary living arrangements as they wait to move into their new homes. Others are still waiting for their houses to sell in a tough real estate market, and that has resulted in at least one family pulling out of the development.

There are 11 homes still available for purchase in the 2.8-acre development on East Alluvial Avenue. The homes, which range in size from 1,100-1,900 square feet, are priced from \$332,000 for a two-bedroom house to \$490,000 for a five-bedroom home.

The entire development uses solar energy harnessed from the solar photovoltaic panels installed on each home and the common house. The homes have dual flush toilets, which help to save on water use. The laundry room in the common house will have energy-efficient machines.

More important is the sense of family the residents hope to achieve. It's how communities began, said James Mullooly, a cohousing member.

Mullooly, who is originally from Wisconsin, and his family will move into a three-bedroom home in the development.

The Business Journal interviewed the Mulloolys and two other families about why they chose cohousing.

Name: James and Violette Mullooly; children Lilly, 7, and Sean, 3.

Current residence: Fresno.

Occupations: James Mullooly is an assistant professor of anthropology at California State University, Fresno. Violette Mullooly provides day care out of her home.

Where they learned about cohousing: The Mulloolys received an informational card in the mail, and James Mullooly attended a meeting to learn more about the project.

Why they chose cohousing: With no immediate family in town, the Mulloolys chose cohousing for its sense of community. Violette Mullooly said she knew her life would change once she left her native Egypt, but she never stopped dreaming of living in a close-knit community similar to the apartment building she grew up in,

where all the tenants were like family.

"When I heard about cohousing, I knew I belonged there," she said.

She is most excited about her new kitchen, which looks into the living room where she will be able to keep an eye on the handful of children she cares for in her day care program, something she can't do in her current home.

The energy-efficient features of the development are another plus.

Name: Ruth Kern and her daughter Ana, 2.

Current Residence: Kern sold her house in Fig



▲ Residents hope to move into La Querencia, Fresno's new cohousing development, within the next two weeks.

◀ Two-year-old Ana Kern spends some time in the sandbox before hitting the pool.

▼ Barbara River of Clovis, who moved from Vermont to live in cohousing, swims with her grandson, Darien Labbe.

Garden and is living with another cohousing family.

Occupation: Professor of ecology at CSUF.

Where she learned about cohousing:

Through other members.

Why she chose cohousing: Kern decided to join cohousing when she adopted her daughter and brought her home from Guatemala more than two years ago. As a single mother, the community aspect was important for her daughter. As an ecology professor, she felt it was time to practice what she taught.

"It's basically two important things that represent how I wanted to live my life," Kern said.

She said the development will use fewer resources because people are living in smaller spaces while using less water and less electricity.

"Everything is very eco-groovy," Kern said.

Name: Barbara River.

Current Residence: Clovis.

Occupation: Registered nurse at Community Behavioral Health Center.

Where she learned about cohousing: River lived in a similar housing complex in Cambridge, Mass. many years ago. She met



cohousing members when she attended the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno during a three-month visit with her daughter and grandchildren. River lived in Vermont at the time.

Why she chose cohousing: The No. 1 reason River chose cohousing is for the community and to be close to her two grandchildren.

"This is the best thing I could offer them, by living in this place," River said.

River thought she would be OK living alone, until her dog died in

February. She realized then she made the right decision to sell her house in Vermont three and a half years ago to move to Fresno.

River is also excited about sharing dinner with the cohousing community. During the week, residents can choose to come together for dinner in the common house.

"I work 12-hour days," River said, "and to be able to come home to a home-cooked meal is nice."

BoNhia Lee | Reporter can be reached at: 490-3466 or e-mail bonhia@thebusinessjournal.com

AT A GLANCE

La Querencia

2658 E. Alluvial Ave., Fresno

Started: 2004.

Finished: 2008.

Developer: Fresno Cohousing LLC.

Architect: Charles Durrett of McCamant & Durrett Architects.

Contact: (866) 246-7717

Website: www.fresnocohousing.org