

Guest Column: Low income projects are coming our way

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The “Not Now, Not Ever!” Triplicate editorial was spot on correct. The opinion content was ominous and very unnerving.

There's much more you need to know about the homelessness crisis, and I'm certain you won't learn anything new by watching Senator Mike McGuire's Town Hall on the Crisis. You won't learn anything helpful from the good Senator or his political extensions: The Del Norte County Board of Supervisors or the Crescent City Council.

For those who missed the April 5 Zoom Town Hall, it was daunting, intimidating, breathless at times and wildly utopian.

State Senate Majority leader McGuire (D-CA 2) promised constituents in his District (North Coast counties from the Golden Gate Bridge to the Oregon border) 150 new low/no income housing projects in the next two

years. If McGuire and his fellow Utopians have their way, this results will create nothing short of a Dystopian state. These projects will forever alter the face of the North Coast.

Some \$223 million has already been spent through Operation Home Key and other housing programs along the North Coastal counties.

McGuire also promises a new court system. If legislation is successful, the Care Court will oversee drug-addicted, alcoholic and mentally ill who would be compelled to follow the new court's orders.

Statewide, \$14 billion is promised to build 50,000 units with three years wrap-around services for the estimated 161,000 individuals who claim to be without a home, but suffer from drug, alcohol and/or mental health problems. The \$14 billion divided by the reported homeless population translates to nearly \$87,000 per individual. Staggering!

McGuire also announced these once-homeless folks are now eligible to be placed in low income, subsidized housing and would now be hired by Cal Trans in career positions at prevailing wage. The projected hires are expected to number about 10,000 in the Golden State, according to McGuire.

Assuming the utopian model of hiring more Caltrans employees takes place, can you imagine the future workers compensation and disability claims that will emerge from this grandiose, utopian plan?

What message are we sending to those who toil at minimum or low-wage jobs in Del Norte County with no housing assistance component?

What remains uncertain is the financial impact upon taxpayers of providing free housing and support services to 1,000 or more unemployed individuals.

How have we learned about these projected numbers?

Recently, I was contacted by a District 2 Washington Park resident who was very concerned that his neighborhood might be the site of one of McGuire's projects. I asked the voter why he held this opinion. He said that by attending a September 2021 Zoom meeting he deduced his home was situated in an area the county and state might find suitable to build low-income and no-income housing.

Every eight years cities and counties conduct a Regional Housing Needs Allocation survey. Those surveys, completed last September, indicate that, for the period of 2022 to 2030, Crescent City will need 189 more housing units, while the unincorporated area of the county will need 386 units. Forty percent of all allocated housing units must be directed for low- or no-income recipients, approximately 250 units, with attending family members. This adds up to perhaps 1000+ new residents with little or no economic viability.

I contend and share the very minimum a project is already in works. With the hundreds as yet unannounced projects on the McGuire-hit list, one can reasonably extrapolate the numbers of those without home will grow significantly in Del Norte County.

The WHERE remains undisclosed, but reliable sources tell me, one City project off Third St is planned for as many as 75 low income units.

Homeowners near Mary Peacock School need also to be vigilant as parcels totaling 17 acres involving 11 owners who own property near Arlington and Washington.

Our local elected and Del Norte government officials with whom I have spoken claim to know nothing about any Del Norte project; or they are simply not talking. I suspect the latter.

There are those who live in denial and will claim nothing I've shared with you is valid. My challenge to the City and County as well as the charming State Senator is: Deny that what I am alleging is untrue.

All too often, the public remains in the dark until one sunny day, bulldozers show up and start the heretofore mentioned projects.

Readers, consider yourselves so advised. Now is the time to be very vigilant.

Next week, I'll be writing about, "What is Homelessness?" and offer cogent common-sense solutions to addressing this rapidly growing problem in Del Norte County.

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