

## Local News

# Project designed to ease housing crisis

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### Studios being built for residents with very low incomes



Santa Barbara is moving forward with a plan to build 61 studio apartments for very low-income people.

Dozens of officials and several members of the City Council gathered at the site of the El

Carrillo studios, 315 W. Carrillo St., for a groundbreaking ceremony.

"We have a huge tremendous need," said Rob Fredericks, director of administrative services for the city's Housing Authority. "It's a travesty that people today in this country live on the streets."

Rents for the units would range from \$340 to \$453. The tiny apartments would be about 216 square feet.

Officials intend to house downtown workers and very-low-income, single individuals who would otherwise be homeless. The rents are designed to be no more than 30 percent of a resident's income.

City Councilman Roger Horton is president of the Santa Barbara County Housing Trust Fund, a group that uses private money to help fund housing and gave \$1 million to the project.

Mr. Horton said that unfortunately, over the years Santa Barbara has lost too many residential hotels because of redevelopment in the downtown area.

"A lot of people don't have a place to stay because they lost their residential hotels," Mr. Horton said.

In the 1980s, there were seven privately owned residential hotels with more than 600 rooms. But those rooms have steadily disappeared, largely because of a state requirement to retrofit those buildings to withstand earthquakes. High-priced hotels are popping up in their places.

City officials expect construction to take one year, and then the units will be open to those who qualify.

Work Training Programs Inc., a nonprofit organization, will offer on-site workshops and classes for the residents of the units.

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## **MIKE ELIASON / NEWS-PRESS PHOTO**

*Dignitaries gather at 315 W. Carrillo St. for a groundbreaking ceremony for El Carrillo studio apartments.*