



OAKLAND BUILDERS ALLIANCE
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Press Release

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With City Crumbling, Oakland Builders' Alliance Calls for Leadership

Cronyism, Interference, Ineptitude, and Lack of Leadership costing the City Revenues and Lives, and tax payers shouldn't pay the bill with new taxes!

Oakland (CA)—The Oakland Builders' Alliance, one of the fastest growing organization in Oakland, made up of over 60 members from the buildings trades and professions, is calling for greater accountability and leadership in Oakland, and calling for an end to cronyism, interference, polarization, and lackluster leadership.

The Problems Mount

As the City burns, residents look for leadership to emerge. Oakland's future looks more and more dismal, with every passing day:

- The Oakland Tribune notes that the East Bay is suffering one of the worst job losses in the State.
- The housing industry in the East Bay is suffering one of the worst declines ever.
- Vacant and boarded-up, bank-owned homes are at an all-time high
- The City Budget faces a \$15 million shortfall, with more drops in revenue coming within the next year, while Oakland homeowners pay 40% more in property taxes than their neighbors in San Francisco.
- New building permit requests for housing are at the lowest levels they have been in over 50 years of recorded history.
- Violent crime hurts the city, and its image, more than it has in twenty years.
- Confidence of residents is waning, and getting worse.

The members of the Oakland Builder's Alliance, who live or do business in Oakland, along with all Oakland residents, are suffering not only because of the downturn of the economy, but because of the lack of leadership in the city. Oakland is a rider-less horse, running toward a cliff.

“We recognize that the council members have stepped back in the last two years to give the mayor a chance to implement his vision, but the dysfunction of the city has reached critical levels, and we need them to re-emerge. We need every leader in Oakland to show leadership, now, in fixing our city”, stated the President of the Oakland Builder's Alliance, **Carlos Plazola**.

“The building industry is all but dead in Oakland, which means severe job losses, and Oakland families are in pain. The director of our Community and Economic Development Agency, Dan Lindheim, refuses to help builders in any way and scoffs at the request that he act as a cheerleader for Oakland. **Mayor Dellums** wants to tax residents for more police, while the administration of our city is in shambles. And our City Council is completely silent. It's time for the leaders to stop

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studying our problems and start solving our problems.” expressed **Kathy Kuhner**, Vice-President of the OBA

Burden Placed on Homeowners

Oakland’s leadership is, once again, considering shifting the burden of revenue growth to Oakland residents by asking them to approve a tax increase to pay for more police. Meanwhile Oakland homeowners already pay a higher percentage of property taxes than most, if not all, other cities in the area. Oakland residents are already being squeezed by falling prices in housing, an increase in unemployment rates, increasing crime, and uncertainty in the short- and mid-term outlook of the economy.

OBA Calls For:

Rather than shifting the burden onto Oakland homeowners, it is time for **Mayor Dellums** and the **City Council** to step-up and show real leadership on behalf of the citizens of Oakland.

To this end, the OBA is calling for:

- **Mayor Ron Dellums** work 24/7 to fix Oakland’s problems and that he immediately take responsibility for everything that happens, or does not happen, under his administration; that the buck must stop with him; and he must say so. No excuses.
- **Mayor Ron Dellums** must find a replacement for **Dan Lindheim**, who was brought in only as interim director of the Community and Economic Development Agency because of his inexperience in running such a department, and find a director through a national search who has successfully managed a department of similar size, or larger. This agency is responsible for much of the revenue production in Oakland, and a strong leader in this position should be able to double Oakland’s revenue in 5-10 years, so leaders can stop taxing Oakland homeowners for every new endeavor.
- **Mayor Ron Dellums** must conduct a national search for the position of **City Administrator** that will become vacant on July 31st. He must show his commitment to a new direction in management of the city by recruiting from the best talent in the United States for this position. Only this type of effort can restore resident’s confidence in the administration of the city. ***Word is spreading that Dan Lindheim is being considered for the City Administrator position upon Edgerly’s departure. This would be a mistake for Oakland. Lindheim lacks experience in managing even one department, let alone an entire city. It would send a signal to Oakland residents that Mayor Dellums is not serious about fixing the city, but cares instead about rewarding friends.***
- There should be no further efforts to tax citizens until the economy recovers, revenue growth is on the rise, and the **Mayor** and **City Council** have shown they can manage the city’s resources effectively.
- The **City Council** must re-emerge and show real leadership by:
 - Proposing programs and policies that help Oakland weather the economic downturn and reduce crime.
 - Working collaboratively to deliver leadership when it really counts: now!
 - Encouraging the **Mayor** to bring proven leadership to the positions of Director of Economic Development and City Administrator.

The Oakland Builder’s Alliance, in service to its members and the residents of Oakland, will be actively working to promote and encourage the type of leadership that Oakland needs to fulfill its destiny as a great city. This is the beginning.

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