When the discussion turns to affordable housing in Silicon Valley, it seldom – if ever – includes mobile homes. Yet, for residents living in more than 10,000 mobile homes in San Jose, it’s often the only home ownership option within their very limited budgets.

Mobile home residents, for the most part, own their homes, but not the land on which they’re parked. That’s the property of the park owner, who sets standards for exterior appearance and upkeep.

Violations of exterior standards such as issues with decks, fences, paint and stairs can levy stiff fines if repairs aren’t made. That’s where Rebuilding Together comes in.

“The people we serve have been in their homes for years, often decades,” Deanne Everton, Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley Program director said noting that repairs are frequent because “most of the homes in these parks were built in the 1970s and were built to last about 30 years, so they’re way beyond their lifespan.”

Rebuilding Together provides repairs that allow homeowners to avoid fines – and in extreme cases, eviction – and to remain safely in their homes. Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley tackles crumbling decks and stairs, repairs fences, paints and sees to interior needs as well.

And since the homeowners don’t own the land, it can literally be sold right out from under them, said Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley Executive Director Beverley Jackson. High property values in Silicon Valley have developers looking to buy mobile home parks.

With some 10,000 mobile homes in 58 parks within its city limits, San Jose has more mobile home parks than any other city in the state. The City of San Jose is working on municipal code changes intended to either preserve existing mobile home parks, or to specify what action a buyer and seller would be expected to take – such as preparing a relocation impact report and setting up a relocation and purchase assistance program for mobile home owners – before a sale would be approved.

Currently at risk of such a sale is the 16-acre Winchester Ranch Mobile Home Community in West San Jose, home to 140 senior residents, three-fourths of them with low incomes. One resident told the San Jose Mercury News in an article published last year that she’s concerned if their park closes, it will have far-reaching effects. “We are the linchpin,” said homeowner Mary Kuykendall. “If the city allows us to close, you know the opportunity for developers to pursue other mobile home park land will be extreme.”

One of her neighbors has spent $70,000 over the years updating her mobile home and is worried that she’ll lose it all if she has to leave. Most mobile home residents can’t afford such improvements and must rely on the services of Rebuilding Together.

As material prices increase and mobile homes age, the cost for Rebuilding Together to continue to help keep mobile homeowners in their homes rises similarly. “We couldn’t do this work without our generous donors and our incredible volunteers,” said Jackson. “And the need for what we do just keeps growing.”

Upcoming Events

- April 23: Spring Rebuilding Day
- May 12: Supporter Appreciation Event – join us 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. in our warehouse for tacos, cheer and celebrating you! RSVP 408-578-9519
- September 23: Paint The Town – mark your calendar for our annual fundraiser
- October 22: Fall Rebuilding Day
As we begin our celebration of 25 years of service to our community, Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley continues to focus on the work to preserve low-income homeownership for seniors and those who are disabled. In our 25-year history, we have completed more than 2,600 projects impacting 4,686 homeowners and 158,304 nonprofits clients.

In Silicon Valley, Rebuilding Together is the last safety net for low-income homeowners. Investing in critical repairs is more effective than finding new housing for those displaced by their aging, unsafe houses.

Our board is engaged and passionate about meeting this need: our five-year strategic plan calls for expanding services by 50 percent by 2020. That means by 2020 we will be helping more than 1,000 low income homeowners remain in their homes every year.

We’ve invested in additional staff to reach more homeowners and partners to meet our growing needs. Thank you to our supporters – new and continuing – for being part of our mission.

I invite you to join us as volunteers, donors and ambassadors as we continue to transform the lives of low-income homeowners by improving the safety and health of their homes and revitalizing our community.

Sincerely,

Dawn

A Message From Our Chair:
Looking Back, Looking Ahead: Celebrating 25 Years of Service

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FALL 2015 REBUILDING DAY STATS

- 32 Projects completed
- 32 Decks, landings & steps installed
- 29 Disabled persons served
- 34 Electrical repairs completed
- 65 Residents helped
- 25 Plumbing repairs made
- 21 Average years in home
- 51 Smoke and CO detectors installed
- 24 Exteriors painted
- 11 Walkways & sidewalks improved
- 300 Yards of debris removed
- 28 Grab bars installed

Seagate Provides Home Repairs

No one is more cherished in this world than someone who lightens the burden of another. Seagate has been lightening the burden in the South Bay by sponsoring Rebuilding Day for more than seven years, most recently participating on Saturday, October 23, 2015. An enthusiastic crew of 25 including employees and family members worked throughout the day to tackle various tasks for homeowner Debra.

Debra, an immigrant from Burma, has been living in her home for 23 years with her daughter, who suffers from physical ailments. After her husband, a former Seagate employee, passed away it became difficult to manage house repairs. Fortunately Seagate volunteered to help the family of their colleague and friend.

The volunteers installed smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, painted the house exterior, repaired a backyard retaining wall, replaced gutters and removed backyard debris. The backyard is now a happy place where Debra can spend time with her daughter.

Seagate is headquartered in Cupertino and a global leader in data storage solutions, developing amazing products that enable people and businesses around the world to create, share and preserve their most critical memories and business data.

Did You Know?

In our 25 years of operation, Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley has mobilized over 31,348 volunteers to rehabilitate over 2,627 homes and nonprofit facilities.

Take Action Now

Financially support the Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley mission, and ask your employer to match your donation. Our nonprofit tax ID number is 77-0289381.