

LOOK INSIDE

Our regular Friday issue starts on page 9 and includes news, opinion and sports content.

THE DAILY CALIFORNIAN
March 14, 2014

THE HOUSING ISSUE 2014

Housing in Berkeley

EDITORS' NOTE

Just as a house is more than its roof, windows and framework, the process of finding a home in Berkeley is more than gathering roommates and investigating properties. Apartment-hunting involves piles of documents, compromises with roommates-to-be and tough decision-making — it's an arduous process mined with potential pitfalls and conflicts. Yet the issue of housing also goes beyond personal challenges we face when trying to find and secure a place of our own. From the city's Rent Stabilization Board legislation to property developments to brewing controversy over gentrification, the housing struggle is multifaceted and complex. Luckily, we're here to deconstruct its walls and pillars, leaving you with a foundation to build your home and concretize your future. ■

— Jessie Lau & Kimberly Veklerov

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MAP OF NEIGHBORHOODS


Start Your Career by Serving in the Peace Corps.

Information Session
University of California - Berkeley
Monday, March 17
6:30 to 8 p.m.
YWCA Berkeley/Oakland
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FINDING THE PERFECT PLACE TO LIVE: TYPES OF HOUSING IN BERKELEY

By Perwana Nazif | Staff
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Co-op
It's 7 p.m., and the smell of freshly baked bread hits you. You have just completed all five hours of your shift at work this week, and the vivid murals around you quickly fade as you dig into the kale and quinoa salad sitting on your Tupperware lid. If nightly house-cooked meals in a stimulating environment sound characteristic of your ideal home, the Berkeley Student Cooperative is a viable option for you. The

campus offers 20 co-ops — some of which are vegetarian, all women or African American themed — that all depend on members working together to create a cohesive ambience. Members sign up for weekly work-shift hours, during which they do housework, such as cooking or vacuuming. Co-ops also hold events such as concerts, spoken word, and wine and cheese nights. When applying online, you have to pay a \$50 deposit, input your personal information and list your top housing choices. Tenants pay a monthly rent between \$700 and \$900,

which gives them access to food and most utilities. The slightly crowded and less-than-spotlessly clean feel of communal living can be insignificant when taking into consideration each house's colorful culture.

Campus housing
Campus housing is a good option for students who want to focus on being students and don't want to worry about paying next month's electricity bill on time. For the price of about \$1,300 to \$1,800 a month, you won't have to wash dishes, clean bathrooms

DESCRIPTION: PAGE 7



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Our Voices
Overcoming Violence

UC Berkeley
Wheeler Auditorium

Saturday
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WHERE SHOULD YOU LIVE NEXT YEAR?



Are you a social person or do you want to live in a social setting?
No. Can you handle paying monthly bills on time? Yes!
Yes! Does the thought of cleaning scare you or seem impossible? No.
No. Do you like dining hall food? Yes!
Yes! Do you like cooking? No.
No. Campus housing
Yes! House
No. Co-op
No. Private dorm
Yes! Apartment
No. Greek housing

TINA PAI/DAILY CAL STAFF

Breaking down the housing process

By Jessie Lau and Kimberly Veklerov
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Step one: finding roommates
Perhaps the most important housing consideration is whether you'll be living alone or with other people. Living alone can foster independence and save you from roommate conflicts but may result in loneliness or feelings of unsafety. If you value your own space and being in control, however, living alone might be a great option for you.

Living with your best friend can be the experience of a lifetime. If you know each other's idiosyncrasies and grumpy sides, you'll be better prepared when moods turn sour. When choosing whether to live with your best friend, make sure you both want the same type of living arrangement and communicate well with each other. Set ground rules, be ready to compromise on various issues and don't be afraid to speak up if something is bothering you.

Choosing to live with strangers may seem daunting, but it can also turn into an unexpected friendship. And if it doesn't, as long as you are both willing to communicate and make compromises, there's no reason you can't live together peacefully. There are also many folks look-

ing for people to move into existing apartments, which may mean furniture and utilities will all already be sorted out.

Step two: hunting down the homestead
Start the hunt as soon as possible. At first, you'll fantasize over endless Craigslist and PadMapper postings, but soon the reality will sink in — finding an affordable place in your desired sector of the city with all needed amenities can be a challenge. You may have to start sacrificing dreams of balconies, pet-friendly landlords and dishwashing machines.

In addition to the number of rooms and location, be sure to consider parking options, safety and laundry machine availability. During housing tours, be sure to ask which utilities are included in rent, what is required for an application, what you'll need for a lease agreement and how much the deposit will be. While touring, ask current tenants and neighbors what they honestly think of the place and what complaints they might have. Be sure to bring your rental application and checkbook on the tour.

Step three: sealing the deal with documents
The co-signer agreement is a document signed by a financially secure third party who will be responsible for

taking financial responsibility of the lease if the primary tenant can't pay. Your co-signer can be anyone who is financially stable and able to cover rent if you are unable to do so. Usually, parents or guardians will act as co-signers. Some agreements may need to be notarized, and most ask for the co-signer's social security number, employment information, bank details and salary. Students with a significant financial aid package may need to provide documentation of such if the aid will go toward rent.

The lease contract is another crucial document. Always read this agreement carefully. It contains important information about guest policies, pet regulations, rent collection and subletting rules. If you have any questions about the contract, ask your landlord before signing. If you suspect a red flag or a possible area of disagreement, contact the city's rent stabilization board, which provides counseling to Berkeleltenants on their rights and responsibilities.

Most landlords require a security deposit — money you pay to move into a new apartment or house and will usually be due along with your first month's rent. If all goes well, your deposit will be returned when you move out of

APPLYING: PAGE 6

Communal living thrives in alternative-style house

A former Sikh retreat provides housing for UC Berkeley students

By Jeff Landa | Staff
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Tucked just around the bend of Le Conte Avenue sits a four-story cottage — wood framed and shrouded in redwood trees — home to an elderly couple, 26 UC Berkeley students, two cats and one dog.

Named “Kluegel House” after its original owner, the cottage currently represents one of the few alternative housing options — not owned or operated by the university — for students who are looking to find a collaborative living space with more flexibility and autonomy than the dorms.

Originally designed in 1911 as a duplex, Kluegel was acquired through foreclosure in 2010 by current owners John Lewis and Paula Bauer, who live in the house’s lower level. Like Kluegel’s previous owners, the Bauers continue to rent out the house’s 14 rooms to UC Berkeley students.

Michelle Pei, a UC Berkeley sophomore and a resident of Kluegel house, calls the cottage “quaint and quiet.” Pei used to live at Clark Kerr Campus, but after a yearlong stay, she felt hampered by the dorm’s lack of local camaraderie.

“No one really wanted to

socialize with anyone else in the dorms,” Pei said. “We really had to make an effort — it’s nice to have someone around (at Kluegel).”

Bauer relies on traditional means to advertise the space, yet the majority of renters find the space via word of mouth. There are no restrictions for applying to Kluegel, and most of its residents are UC Berkeley students. As a result, former and current residents espouse not only the quality of quarters but also the unique mix of tenants made up of students at various stages in their college careers.

Erika Gavitt, a UC Berkeley senior who moved in in the fall, was attracted to the unregimented autonomy available to the denizens of Kluegel.

“There are no bureaucratic set of rules, only general courtesy,” Gavitt said. “We’re not afraid to call each other out, and we can easily speak to Paula. She puts a lot of trust in us.”

Upon entering, visitors are greeted with a large corkboard lined with photos and brief biographies of the housemates. Midday voices clutter the area, but considerate murmurs from the living room barely echo over the long dining table where students normally catch up on their studies. The sounds of shuffling feet, the low-key hum of appliances and the sound of people eating contribute to the human buzz of a cooperative atmosphere.

The home is also brought

together by friendly competitions dubbed “Kluegel Games,” with the kitchen serving as a central hub during the Thanksgiving potluck and Secret Santas organized during the holidays.

“This never happened in the dorms,” Gavitt said. “When you share common spaces, you find creative ways to make things work.”

Most recently converted from a Sikh retreat into a private residence hall in 1976, the house is a Berkeley city landmark. The common area

includes a meditation tower that was added by the Sikh Dharma community during its previous 20-year stay, when the house served as a yoga center and residential commune. Although no longer the spiritual monastery it once was, Kluegel remains a peaceful place for students to conduct their daily activities.

“The layout of the house lends itself to community,” said Julia Gomes, a UC Berkeley freshman and Kluegel resident. “(It has) a nice and friendly atmosphere.” ■



MICHAEL DRUMMOND/SENIOR STAFF
Kluegel House, located on Le Conte Avenue, provides an alternative housing option for students looking for a collaborative living space.

THE TALE OF
MY SISTER AND
THE CHEESECAKE
THIEF

Sarah Dadouch
sdadouch@dailycal.org

Last week, while my Facebook posts about getting into Stanford’s and Harvard’s graduate programs, I faced a dilemma: Do I change out of my 5-year-old sweatpants and oversized sweater when getting my SpoonRocket order? Not that I cared how I looked — I was just worried the guy who delivered my mac and cheese at 3:21 p.m. would be the same one who delivered second one at 3:42 p.m. I decided I didn’t care and kept my comfortable clothes on.

Walking around in whatever you please and looking like absolute hell are only two of the perks of living in an apartment with your younger sister: You can holler for toilet paper when you’re all out, there’s no embarrassment in having a messy room, and any food in the house is up for grabs. And best of all, you get to eat hot buffalo wings and blue cheese dressing at 10 p.m. in her bed while watching “The Office,” and no one judges you for it. In fact, that type of behavior is deeply celebrated and highly encouraged.

Three years ago, I lived in a house that had previously been a sorority. When the sorority lost its charter, it decided to lease out its rooms to girls for a very reasonable amount, and I considered myself extremely lucky to have found such a bargain. I lived with 29 other girls. Being more of a guy-friend kind of gal, I thought this total immersion in estrogen would drive me up the wall, but I loved it. Twenty-nine girls means 29 possible friends, each unique and awesome in her own way. Well, almost each. Because we had a food thief.

The culprit first stole small portions or bites from people’s food. Some pasta here, a few spoonfuls of ice cream there — she must have liked her food rich, because no apple or brussel sprout ever went missing. But then, she started getting comfortable. I baked two cheesecakes once and left one in my assigned fridge slot. A few hours later, I came back and saw one-third of the cake missing and a knife with traces of cheese filling and crust thrown rudely on the counter. That knife carried a message: “Not only will I eat your cheesecake, but here, look at the knife I cut it with.” How dare she? I beat that cheese by hand! I crushed the graham crackers with my fists!

I furiously typed my first — and hopefully last — angry, ranting email and sent it to the house. “From now on, I’m spitting in my food” remains the most credible threat I’ve ever made.

Five days later, our house manager’s cheesecake was also selfishly devoured, and all hell broke loose. Food was laced with laxatives, and warning messages colored the kitchen until cameras were installed, which was announced to everyone via email. But the thief struck again.

When caught, she was faced with two options: pay a huge “I’m sorry” fee or leave the house. She paid the fee, we got a free meal, and that was that. Somehow, though, that didn’t make it all right.

My experience may sound bad, but the food theft — as utterly traumatizing as it may have been — was only one small aspect of living there, and I thoroughly enjoyed my time at that house in general. It was so convenient always having someone around to hang out with. I met girls from Oslo, Lyon and Taipei. I even met girls all the way from Southern California, believe it or not. I learned that artichokes aren’t completely disgusting and that strawberries in salad are a thing. I saw stereotypical American chick-flick moments come to life in front of my eyes: baking cookies from leftover cookie dough (because cookie dough can totally constitute a meal), cutting and styling one another’s hair (my bangs had never looked so lopsided, and I loved them), and emptying whipped cream cans in and on one another’s faces. It was terrific.

But that doesn’t beat living in my own apartment with the girl who’s down to have a marathon of every “Friends” Thanksgiving episode that’s ever aired, despite the fact that we’ve been rewatching this series for about six years now. I mean, she’s

MOVING: PAGE 7

Downtown Berkeley to see spike in housing developments

Construction Downtown aims to increase city housing supply

By Tahmina Achekzai | Staff
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Hard hats and construction trucks may become a familiar sight to Berkeley residents within the next few years as Downtown Berkeley experiences a surge in housing developments.

More than 1,400 new housing units in Downtown Berkeley are set for completion by 2018, a number the Downtown Berkeley Association expects will both affect rent prices and nearly double the city’s population, bringing the number of Downtown residents up to 5,500.

Many of the developments underway could serve as rent-controlled, student-friendly apartments for UC Berkeley students upon completion.

Lance Goree, operations manager for the Downtown Berkeley Association, said because of its location and easy access to public transportation, Berkeley is now a “hot desti-

nation” for those looking for housing. The association is an independent organization that is facilitating the housing projects and represents nearly 200 property owners and their business tenants.

Though all the projects are predicted to be completed by 2018, some are expected to be ready earlier. Goree said he expects Fidelity Apartments, which are located near the intersection of Shattuck and Bancroft, to be finished within six months.

Some of the projects have already received requests to reserve rooms in advance — including those that have not yet passed zoning laws. One project, Berkeley Central, filled about one-third of its rooms within one month of opening last year.

“Berkeley is a very good location, but our rental supply is very low, and that’s why rentals are really hitting hard now,” Goree said. “It’s just such a needed commodity. To keep rents at a somewhat affordable level, you need to supply (the demand).”

Although Goree reasoned that the additional apartments will curb the steady rise in rent rates, unit prices are still expected to increase.

According to a market re-



port from Cassidy Turley, a commercial real estate service firm, Alameda County leads the Bay Area in rental costs. The asking price for rentals in the

county increased by more than 8 percent over the last year.

When faced with rising

DOWNTOWN: PAGE 6

Clarifying gentrification and its repercussions in the Bay

By Noah Kulwin | Senior Staff
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Over the last couple of years, there has been a noticeable increase in media coverage of gentrification and the rise of Bay Area urban real estate prices. Below is meant to be an explanation of what gentrification is and why the issue of affordability in cities has become such a high-profile topic lately.

I’ve been hearing a lot about “gentrification” and an increase in Bay Area housing prices lately. What’s all this about?

To put it in as few words as possible, gentrification is what happens when a neighborhood experiences an influx of people with more wealth than the current residents, thereby increasing the costs of living — such as rent prices — in the neighborhood. The resultant displacement forces out the poorest residents of a neighborhood, usually fixed-income retirees or those working minimum wage.

Even if this displacement is caused by “green-friendly” development, the goal of any successful redevelopment project is

to increase the land value of the targeted area, which inevitably leads to higher rents, mortgages and so on. This brings us to the key puzzle at the root of gentrification: How do you increase property values in a given area without pushing out its native residents?

Malo Hutson, a UC Berkeley assistant professor of city and regional planning, told the High Country News in 2011, “You would get the Nobel Prize in Economics — or Peace — if you could figure out a way to keep the community that existed before the redevelopment project came along.”

Well, hold up a minute, doesn't the quality of these neighborhoods go up along with the housing prices and land values? And doesn't an increase in the aggregate wealth of an area lift the bottom up as well?

LIZZY KLINGEN/STAFF

When new, wealthier residents move into a lower-cost neighborhood, it's true that better services often follow them there, as some academics have shown. These improvements could be new municipal transit lines, renovated or recently constructed public parks and a whole host of other public

services. This simultaneously increases the standard of living in a neighborhood while pricing out those who already live there.

Rising tides of wealth in America tend to lift all yachts. Though it’s true the 2000s Silicon Valley tech boom created massive economic gains in the Bay Area, little of this rapid economic growth went to the Bay’s poorest or rapidly collapsing middle class. It also doesn’t hurt that some of the most well-funded tech companies have received huge tax breaks for merely keeping their offices in Bay Area cities, even if they don’t employ that many people.

In a feature article for the New Yorker last year, George Packer detailed this increase in inequality and the tech industry’s response to it:

“Why has a revolution that is supposed to be as historically important as the industrial revolution coincided with a period of broader economic decline? I posed the question in one form or another to everyone I talked to in the Bay Area ... Few of them had given the topic much consideration.”

GENTRIFICATION: PAGE 7

IF WALLS COULD

Cloyne's timeless murals

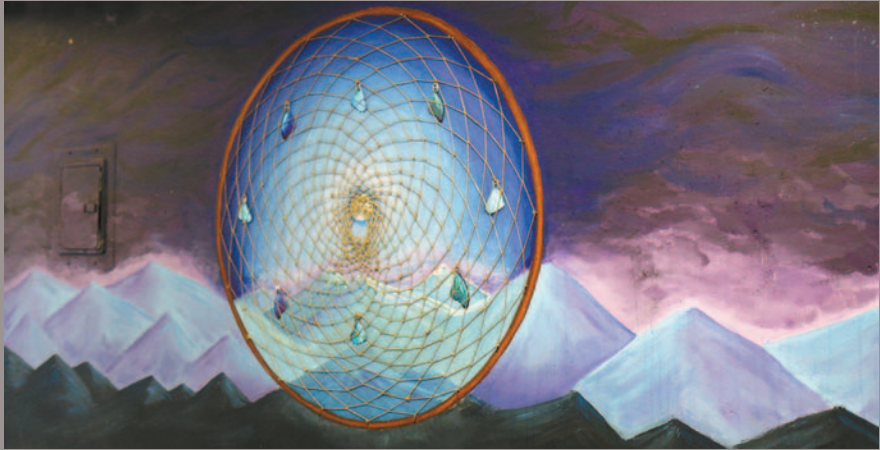
By Michael Drummond
Senior Staff
mdrummond@dailycal.org

Pictured here are some of the murals of Cloyne Court, one of the largest cooperative houses in the country. At a meeting Thursday night, the Berkeley Student Cooperative's Board of Directors was set to vote on whether these paintings — and the members of the house — should be allowed to stay at Cloyne Court come fall.

The proposed whitewashing of the murals and what some have called a "purge" of Cloyne members come as part of the BSC executive cabinet's response to the recent settlement of lawsuit against the co-op. The suit was filed against BSC by the mother of a former UC Berkeley student and Cloyne resident who sustained brain

damage after overdosing at the house in 2010. The cabinet's proposal aims to mitigate future liabilities and facilitate an overall culture shift at Cloyne in response to the suit's allegations that BSC and Cloyne fostered a dangerous and drug-tolerant environment.

Since the proposal was announced last month, it has been hotly contested. Many residents of Cloyne — who call themselves Clones — said they feel as if they were excluded from the democratic process by not being involved in cabinet's drafting of the proposal. Some Clones who have helped create the murals see the act of painting as an extension of the Free Speech Movement. As of press time, no decisions have been made about the future of the murals or whether current and former Clones will be able to move back into the house for the fall semester. ■



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— STEVEN FOX NA



"EVERY SINGLE DAY, I
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MOOD IS INSTANTLY CH
ABSORBING ALL OF TH
THAT IS AROUND
— JUSTIN HSIU

PHOTOS BY
MICHAEL
DRUMMOND



"EVERY SINGLE DAY, I ACTUALLY WANT
TO COME HOME, AND MY MOOD IS
INSTANTLY CHANGED BY ABSORBING ALL
OF THIS COLOR THAT IS AROUND ME."
— JUSTIN HSIUNG



"IF I CAME TO VISIT CLOYNE SOMETIME IN THE
FUTURE, AND ALL THE WALLS WERE PAINTED WHITE,
AND MY ARTWORK WAS PAINTED OVER AND ALL MY
FRIEND'S ARTWORK WAS PAINTED OVER, I WOULD
FEEL AS THOUGH MY EXPERIENCE IN THIS HOUSE
HAS BEEN COMPLETELY ERASED AND UNDERMINED."
— ELON ROV



WORLD TALK

THE PROPOSAL PASSES AND ALL THE
LS IN OUR HOUSE GET PAINTED OVER,
WOULD BE LOSING ABOUT 500 PIECES
RTWORK — AND THERE'S A MYTHOS
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CAN REALLY TELL.”
— SHANNON LEVIS

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“PAINTING OVER THESE WALLS WOULD BE
LIKE PAINTING OVER HISTORY AND PAINTING
OVER INSPIRATION, AND I DON'T REALLY SEE
ANY DISTINCT NEEDS FOR DOING THAT.”
— SHANNON LEVIS



OUT OF THE DORMS AND INTO THE SILENCE



Daniela Grinblatt
dgrinblatt@dailycal.org

For most freshmen at UC Berkeley, February was a month filled with Valentine's Day cards, basketball games and DeCal fairs. For me, it was a month of roommate-mediation meetings, apartment tours and box-packing.

Four weeks into the semester, I gathered my belongings and moved from a triple dorm room about the size of a hamster cage to a studio apartment by myself.

My new lodging is farther from campus, located in a 10-unit apartment complex, and overlooks a neglected herb garden that was once cared for by my landlord. The place is essentially a run-down cottage. It is peaceful, no doubt, and cool in that brooding poet type of way.

The day I moved into my new home, I was bubbling with excitement. Independence, tranquility, a private bathroom — they were all finally mine! Out of the dorms and in the real world, I felt mature and sophisticated. But the fact of the matter is, my apartment is fairly isolated and can make even the most vivacious student feel very lonely, very quickly. What I didn't know was that in order to get privacy and independence, I had to trade community.

When I first moved, I noticed that the silence in the apartment was overwhelming to the point of being loud. It made me hyper-aware that there was, in fact, none of that background noise I had grown so accustomed to while living in the dorms.

It took me only a few days to realize the social situation in this apartment complex was quite different than that of the dorms. Doors are shut, voices are hushed and tenants don't really trouble themselves with getting to know the other people on their floor, which was fine — at least at first, when I had my own friends bustling in and out of my apartment, visiting and bringing housewarming gifts. I was busy hanging posters and testing out my new oven. But when all that settled down, I started to hear the silence.

Initially, I thought this lonely feeling was a result of my own lack of sociability. I just needed to be more extroverted! So I went around knocking on doors and introducing myself. I got a lot of smiles and kind words, but never an invitation to come inside. I decided to try harder. I started doing my homework by the herb garden, expecting others to come join me like they used to in the dorm lounges. No one ever came.

I was feeling pretty lonely on one of my first nights in the apartment, eating Frosted Flakes and watching "Breaking Bad." My default reaction, the one I had grown accustomed to in the dorms, was to visit a friend in the building. Braless and in my pajamas, I thought it would be a fine idea to go visit the cute boy who lived a floor below me. When I used to do this in the dorms, it was a casual gesture. I was halfway down the fire escape when I realized I would be unintentionally initiating a booty call. Knocking on the door of a single baseball player at midnight wearing nothing but a tank top and cotton pajamas shorts was a bold move in an apartment.

I didn't make it to the baseball player's room. I hiked back up to my place and listened to the silence around me. I could no longer rely on social reciprocity from others to bring me comfort. I needed to be proactive in my solitude. The privacy, something the dorms couldn't offer, provided me with a space for reflection. I could now write songs, cook meals or play solitaire. Slowly but surely, I adapted to solo living, and surprisingly, I grew to love it.

A month later, I can now report that the silence is far less loud. It is drowned out by creative thoughts and meditative activities. I have developed an appreciation for the tranquility of this apartment. I listen to the meowing of the cat



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RENT BOARD FACTS

21,000

units potentially subject to rent stabilization

Total: 27,700

As of 2010, Berkeley has approximately 27,700 rental units. About 21,000 are subject or potentially subject to rent stabilization



The Rent Stabilization Board has nine commissioners



Five commissioners are up for election this year

Recently passed laws that affect renters:



TOBACCO FREE MULTIUNIT HOUSING

Bans tobacco in all of Berkeley's multiunit housing, takes effect in May



SOFT STORY ORDINANCE

Requires that "soft, weak or open front" buildings with five or more units be retrofitted within the next five years

percentage of Berkeley tenants who are students

45%

SOURCE: BERKELEY RENT STABILIZATION BOARD, BERKELEY BUILDING AND SAFETY

SHARON LIU / DAILY CAL SENIOR STAFF

City board outlines rights and rent rules

By Melissa Wen | Staff
mwen@dailycal.org

Since 1982, the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board has existed to regulate increases in rent, mediate conflicts between landlords and tenants and develop housing legislation.

The board is one of just a handful in the state and consists of nine commissioners — five of whom are up for re-election this year.

"We're always working on keeping the population aware that we have rights," said Rent Board Commissioner Pam Webster.

What follows is what several commissioners think student residents ought to know about their rent, rights and representation.

Present projects

Rent Board Commissioner Jesse Townley and Vice Chair Katherine Harr both put ensuring habitability — like heat in housing units and leak-proof roofs — high on their list of priorities. The board is working with Berkeley City Council to allow tenants to make anonymous complaints to their landlords, Harr said.

Townley, who is up for re-election this fall, noted that if tenants sus-

pect problems, they can get a free inspection of their living space.

"We need to really up our game in terms of habitability," Townley said. "What we would love to see is every single unit in the city physically inspected."

Earthquakes are also on the forefront of the board's recent agenda. Commissioners worked with the City Council on an ordinance passed in December that required owners of seismically unsafe buildings with at least five units to retrofit them within the next five years.

Now, according to Townley, a committee of rent board commissioners wants to push more people to use the city's emergency cache program, through which apartment residents can apply for free earthquake supplies. They are also looking to expand the program with a disaster-preparedness training course for apartment residents.

Rights and resources

Harr, also up for re-election, said she hopes renters realize that Berkeley has a tighter law than the rest of the state regarding fees charged to tenants to process their applications and consumer credit reports. Landlords must tell

tenants the maximum charge allowed by state law — \$44.51 — and give back a copy of the credit report, receipt and any unused portion of the fee.

Relief from housing troubles can also be found by calling the rent board, which provides free counseling. According to Webster, the rent board also tables at public events and holds various workshops.

"I think that the most important thing for students to realize is that they have rights, they're pretty extensive, and any information about that is just a phone call away," Harr said.

Students on board

No student has been elected to the rent board since 2004, when two UC Berkeley students, Jason Overman and current Councilmember Jesse Arreguin, were elected.

Candidates who are selected for a slate at the upcoming 2014 Berkeley Tenant Convention have the best chance of being elected.

"It would be amazing if we could get a student or a recent student on the rent board," said James Chang, external affairs vice president at the Berkeley Student Cooperative. "That would take a lot of student engagement." ■

APPLYING: Plan for utilities and the big move-in day

FROM PAGE 2

the apartment after your lease is finished. In some circumstances, however, the landlord may hold it to pay for any damages or cover charges for any late rent payments. To avoid

legal confusion with your landlord, make sure your lease agreement is clear regarding the limits and return policy on your deposit.

Step four: hammering out logistics

Your documents are signed, your roommates and parents are happy, your landlord is significantly richer — now what? Figure out when you'll receive keys to your newfound kingdom and when you will

be permitted to move in. As soon as you move in, you'll need to set up utilities, change your official address on mailing lists and start decorating. Especially if you're living with three or more people, it's a good idea to set up a joint bank account for simple rent payments. Hammering out who does which chores when is never a pleasant task, but it will save you headache down the line. ■

DOWNTOWN: New units aim to meet student needs

FROM PAGE 3

rent, students can look into alternative options to the traditional apartment route. The Open Door Development Group, a real estate development firm that creates co-living communities in cities across the Bay Area, stresses sharing economy practices — like car- and meal-sharing — to reduce residents' living expenses.

Open Door has recently established a space less than a mile west from the Downtown Berkeley BART station called the Farm House. The house, set to open April 1, is currently accepting applications from prospective residents.

"Inspiration, impact and income — that's the purpose of the house," said Jay Standish, co-founder of Open Door. "That's why we started it — to create a platform for people to live together in that inquiry and help each other live lives of significance."

Standish explained that because the house is geared

more toward older generations, it may be more of interest to graduate students than undergraduates.

Whether residents will be students, professionals or families, populations are expected to rise. To combat concerns about crowding and traffic issues, Goree said developers are already thinking in advance for solutions, and a number of the plans include bicycle receptacles and underground garages.

"Issues that you never could have thought of are going to come up, and they're going to have to be solved," he said. "Nothing is going to be completely smooth." ■



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GENTRIFICATION: Vertical construction could solve the problem FROM PAGE 3

Aha! So that's what this is really all about — all of this gentrification stuff that's been in the news is just because of tech and the Google buses and so on.

Not so fast. Gentrification and the displacement of the Bay Area's poorest has been happening for decades now. After World War II, the passage of the Housing Act of 1949 enabled the federal government to engage in "slum clearing" and pass exclusionary zoning laws, which in effect devalued and demolished urban neighborhoods predominantly populated by people of color.

Hutson said the Bay Area was "hit hard by urban renewal."

"In West Oakland, you've had the construction of BART, the USPS Distribution Center, the freeway — they all wiped out the old Victorian homes that used

to be in West Oakland," Hutson said. "In San Francisco, urban renewal policies destroyed the Fillmore district, which was historically an African American area."

Okay, but what about today? If the influx of wealth and capital into these neighborhoods is happening, what can we do about it to keep housing costs down? And what can tech do to help fix the problem?

There are a number of options that leaders, communities and policymakers are pursuing to deal with the problems that come with gentrification.

In Berkeley, the municipal body that deals with issues related to housing and affordable rents is the Rent Stabilization Board. Commissioner Katherine Harr said in an email the city "has one of the strongest tenant protection ordinances in the state."

Berkeley residents have some protections from evictions and sudden increases in rent, Harr said, pointing to how the board "requires landlords register their rents, and tracks them, sending out letters each year to inform landlords and tenants of the allowable maximum rent."

For San Francisco, some argue the issue is a lack of vertical development. They believe that if the city, which is a 7-by-7 mile peninsula with few open spaces, were to increase available housing units, it should do so by building upwards. For decades, San Francisco zoning laws have stymied vertical construction, which critics argue have artificially inflated the cost of housing.

Others propose that San Francisco needs a land tax whereby property owners pay more in taxes as the value of their land increases over time with the revenue generated set aside for the poor and the middle class. It's also worth noting that a number of different cities are experimenting with new methods of tackling gentrification-related displacement, such as adjustments to property taxes for longtime homeowners.

Still, some of these ideas are flawed. It may be impossible to build vertically out of poverty. Additionally, if the tech boom is actually a bubble, using a land tax to tether revenue designated for anti-poverty measures to bubble-induced price spikes may have long-term budget consequences, should land values fall significantly in a "tech bust."

MOVING: Sister and ample space create warm living environment FROM PAGE 3

heard me sing Rihanna's "Stay," and instead of asking me to stop hurting her ears, joined me with her own awful voice and complete ineptitude of carrying a tune. In this apartment, I can walk into someone else's closet and wear whatever I feel like, and I can have whole conversa-

tions by yelling across walls. Best of all: We have space. We have so much space that we keep trying to come up with ways we can fill up the apartment, and we have so many bare walls that we can cover them up with every single Mumford and Sons poster there is, and we'd still have room left over. I have my own bathroom, people. Let that sink in.

Sure, it's kind of far from campus, but biking is a great way to lose that weight you've put on from Ici and CREAM. And yeah, our neighborhood is kind of scary, and my friend did get mugged right outside the day we

moved in, but hey, that's what pepper spray is for. Living in an apartment makes you feel like an adult; unlike living in a dorm, where "decorating" means buying one poster and hoping it doesn't offend your two roommates, living in an apartment means you can get that huge, ornate mirror you've always secretly wanted and you can have friends over for home-cooked meals. You can tell who steals your cheesecake. And, when you have a roommate as awesome as mine, you never have to do laundry or wash dishes.

But don't get any ideas. She's all mine. ■

DORMS: Living alone brings peace and independence FROM PAGE 5

that sometimes wanders through the backyard, and I am overcome with a feeling of serenity. I write poetry, I take bubble

baths, and I actually spend time folding my clothes — things I never could have done in the dorms. On campus, I practice being extroverted and social, and I am much more inclined to engage with friends instead of doing something alone. There are more lunch dates, study groups and lecture buddies throughout the day.

I look forward to

returning to my run-down cottage retreat. It is an escape from the excitement of campus life and provides an ideal framework for reflection and relaxation. Moving to an apartment showed me that this is something you need in the context of a busy college social life. I study in the herb garden daily, and I secretly hope that no one comes to join me. ■

DESCRIPTION: Greek houses provide social community FROM PAGE 2

or cook. If it's not broken, don't fix it, right? If you agree, the land of meal points and transitioning adulthood await you. Campus housing is a way to meet and bond with other students while brushing your teeth or covering up the chalkboard in the study lounge with that pesky Math 16B problem. There's also a support system intact — resident assistants can act as a mediator in tough situations. Online housing applications for dorms require a \$20 non-refundable application fee. Some on-campus housing options such as the Maximo Martinez Commons offer apartments as well as dorm rooms.

Apartments and houses Face down on your futon, you hear Ella Fitzgerald's voice from the depths of Spotify on your speakers as your pasta boils on the stove. This is your space — your very own apartment. You have the luxury of a private bathroom, and you can fill your fridge with the latest produce from Berkeley Bowl — hello, Swedish Gruyere — or from Trader Joe's — cookie butter, anyone? The lack of community presence can make you feel isolated, but living in an apartment teaches you to be independent and allows you to be fully in control of your surroundings. You can find your ideal apartment by walking around, asking graduating seniors for their apartments or using sites such as Craigslist, PadMapper or even the UC Berkeley housing group on Facebook. You can also round up a group of friends and rent a house for the year. Without neighbors shar-

ing your walls and halls, a house provides a freer atmosphere. You don't have to worry about being too loud, and you typically have more common spaces.

Fraternities and sororities If your ideal college experience involves exchanges with the house across the street, rush events, large mansion-style houses and an extended family of sisters or brothers, sorority or fraternity housing may be a good fit for you. Conveniently located around Piedmont Avenue, 12 sororities and 29 fraternities offer housing options. Overall costs — including rent, meals, cleaning services, membership dues and others — add up to about \$8,000 to \$10,000 annually. Greek housing offers its residents a strong friend base and networking community of alumni. ■



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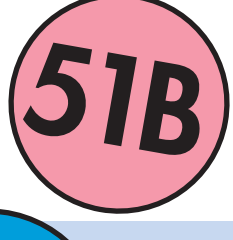
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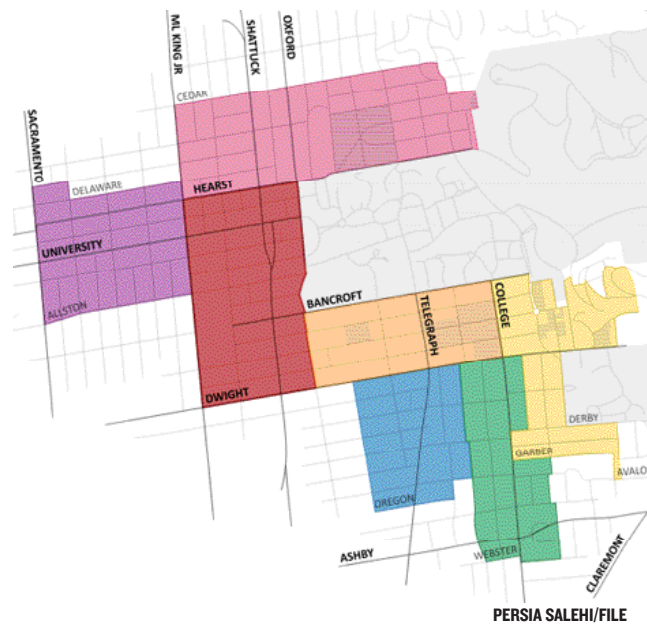
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Splicing up Berkeley: an insider’s peek into the culture of each neighborhood

A guide to the hot spots and eccentricities of residential areas



PIEDMONTFRAT ROW

Known as “Frat Row,” this neighborhood is saturated with students. The area is home to most of the campus’s fraternities and sororities, as well as a few cooperatives. The prevalence of Greek culture and the area’s proximity to dorms and other campus institutions make it an exuberant hub for social activity and nightlife. Farther down Piedmont Avenue, the party scene dims as you wander into a more residential neighborhood, consisting mostly of apartment complexes and houses. Buses that go to and from Piedmont Avenue, however, come less frequently than in busier neighborhoods. The area also doesn’t have as many eateries, so when in search of food, Piedmont residents usually hit College or Southside. ■

ELMWOOD

Home to Ici Ice Cream and Lululemon Athletica, the ritzy and lively Elmwood area combines mom-and-pop shops with extravagant chain stores. Students in search of lodging in this shopping-heavy district can expect higher average rent prices than most areas — similar to Northside, but with closer proximity to Southside social life. The Rockridge BART station is easily accessible on everyone’s favorite 51B line, and the walk to campus isn’t terrible.

Though less popular than Southside and the Piedmont area, you’ll still find some students milling about at night, going to the movie theater on the corner of College and Ashby avenues or grabbing chicken kebabs from La Mediterranee. The tree-lined streets are peaceful with a small-town feel. Housing options range from apartment complexes to large, multifloor homes. ■

NORTHSIDE

The quieter side of campus, Northside contains a degree of charm and sophistication that Southside leaves to be desired. The calm atmosphere, quaint cafes and safe environment are reflected in generally higher rental rates compared to those of Southside. The students who live here are, on average, older than those across campus because there are fewer residence halls. Many co-ops — including the two largest — are situated on Northside and lend the area a small amount of social life. Those drawn to the Greek-style party scene, however, are better suited for Southside.

Within reach of Codornices Park, the Berkeley Rose Garden and Tilden Park, Northside has retained more of its natural environment throughout the years than other areas of the city. Although there are fewer public transportation options, most necessities are just a stone’s throw away. A handful of cafes and coffee shops line Euclid Avenue, though none stay open late. An easy walk westward down the hill leads to the Gourmet Ghetto, home to Cheeseboard, Philz Coffee and other delectable, if expensive, treats. ■

DOWNTOWN

Downtown Berkeley lies on the west side of campus and is centered along Shattuck Avenue. The neighborhood consists of a bustling area with myriad restaurants, cafes, yoga studios, movie theaters, used bookshops and other stores littered among residential apartments and houses. Whether you’re looking for brunch, fast food or a romantic dinner venue, you’ll find it here. Restaurants and cafes in the area usually close about 9 or 10 p.m., but go farther down to University Avenue, and you’ll find Au Coquelet Cafe and People’s Cafe — hot study spots that close at 2 a.m. and midnight, respectively. Venture a few blocks west of Shattuck, and you’ll find a quieter residential neighborhood. The commute from Downtown is little far, and parking can be scarce, but the area’s extensive AC Transit network and proximity to the Downtown Berkeley BART station easily makes up for it. ■

UNIVERSITY

University Avenue and its surrounding streets bring you to the intersection of commercialized space and residential living. UC Berkeley students and families with small children live side-by-side in this pocket of the city. Because of its relative distance from campus, housing on Westside tends to be more affordable. The farther west you live, the more you’ll rely on the 51B and 52 AC Transit lines. Neighborhoods around University Avenue consist of quirky single-family homes interspersed with apartment complexes.

Because undergraduate students are not generally drawn to Westside, the area maintains a quiet vibe apart from the usual city buzz. Along Hearst Avenue, you’ll find Ohlone Park, a long strip of fields, playgrounds and basketball courts. Eating and shopping options are plentiful here, and this sector of the city is also home to Trader Joe’s — the beloved, quirky grocery store with staff outfitted in Hawaiian shirts. A jaunt over to San Pablo Avenue will take you to a bustling bar and music scene. ■

SOUTHSIDE

Hectic, vibrant and brimming with life, Southside is perhaps the most densely populated and student-heavy neighborhood around campus. The area’s close proximity to the southern side of campus and campus housing means public transportation is easily accessible, and students usually dominate the neighborhood. That being said, you’ll also see your fair share of tourists and locals going in and out of the various shops and eateries and stopping at the many street vendors strewn across Telegraph Avenue. The famous Asian Ghetto, located on Durant Avenue, is open late and provides a diverse range of food options from Italian to Vietnamese cuisine. The neighborhood also has many cafes — some of which stay open until midnight — making it a central location for study sessions and group meetups. While housing is plentiful on Southside, its proximity to campus means the prices are usually higher than that of other neighborhoods. ■

TELEGRAPH

The student-heavy bubble of Southside spills down Telegraph Avenue past Dwight Way, where you’ll find relatively affordable apartment complexes, duplexes and an assortment of single-family homes. Although there are some minor safety concerns in the area, students living here will never grow bored. Whole Foods, Willard Park and Buffalo Exchange provide endless organic treats, recreation and affordable clothing.

Take the 1 line on AC Transit or ride a bike for easy movement up and down Telegraph. Going south along the avenue, you’ll notice the area becoming less eccentric and more urban as Berkeley blends into Oakland. Students living farther down Telegraph will likely develop sharper city smarts and a better understanding of the East Bay than their counterparts in the Berkeley student bubble. ■

— Jessie Lau & Kimberly Veklerov



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