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What's Needed to Enable Affordable Development?

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“Both federal and state financing sources such as redevelopment and other forms of funding have either gone away or been reduced, creating an even greater challenge for affordable housing developers.”

IRVINE, CA—The current [affordable-housing](#) situation demands a lot more **public/private partnership** between local governments and **developers** to secure land and funding, **Jamboree Housing’s** director of business development **Roger Kinoshita** tells GlobeSt.com. The firm recently expanded Kinoshita’s business-development team with the addition of [Scott Riordan](#), former economic development manager for the **City of Buena Park**; **Helen Cameron**, who moves to business development as an analyst from **Jamboree’s Resident Services Group** and will utilize her extensive experience providing housing for people with special needs to research, analyze and pursue supportive housing opportunities; and **Brandon Pyle**, a graduate of **California State University, San Marcos**, who will serve as the **development, financial analyst**, providing financial perspective and input to the business-development team on structuring new housing opportunities including requests for proposals. We spoke exclusively with Kinoshita about changes in the business-development area of affordable housing.

GlobeSt.com: What are the biggest challenges to business development in the affordable sector?

Kinoshita: The biggest challenge is finding land, especially in urban areas, that is developable and within the cost parameters that make affordable housing feasible. With the growing scarcity of land in Orange County for any development, coupled with stiff competition from market-rate builders, affordable-housing developers are finding it increasingly difficult to secure land for affordable housing, including workforce and **senior housing**, as well as housing for veterans and people who are homeless.

Compounding the land situation is lack of funding for affordable-housing development. Both federal and state financing sources such as **redevelopment** and other forms of funding have either gone away or been reduced, creating an even greater challenge for affordable-housing developers. The current situation demands a lot more **public/private partnership** between local governments and developers to secure land and funding.

Even with these challenges, Jamboree currently has four affordable-housing properties under development in Orange County and five in various stages of **predevelopment**. Statewide, we have \$320 million in our development pipeline.

GlobeSt.com: What changes do you see happening in this sector?

Kinoshita: With the competition for land and funding, today it's more important than ever for affordable-housing developers such as Jamboree to be in constant contact with local governments and housing agencies, as well as market-rate developers who are required to provide affordable housing as part of their projects. There's an old saying about being out of sight is being out of mind, and in this day and age we want to be top of mind when cities are thinking about affordable-housing development or when market-rate builders are seeking to partner with an affordable-housing developer. Although more scarce, some cities do have land and funding available for affordable housing, and we want to make sure we are front and center when either public agencies or market-rate builders are seeking an affordable-housing developer to build their projects.

GlobeSt.com: How would you characterize residents' and other stakeholders' views on affordable development—are they changing at all?

Kinoshita: They are changing for the better. As the design and quality of affordable housing in Orange County and elsewhere are becoming more and more like market-rate housing, local officials and other stakeholders are increasingly receptive to affordable housing developments in their communities and neighborhoods. This is especially true in cities such as Irvine that have inclusionary zoning ordinances under which affordable and market-rate housing are adjacent, such as Jamboree's **Doria Apartment Homes** in Irvine's **Stonegate** community. To ensure quality design, we retain top-tier architects and landscape architects who work on many of the county's high-profile, market-rate projects. The better the curb appeal, the more receptive communities are to our properties and less opposition there will be for subsequent projects that we build in a community—what we call the ripple effect.

GlobeSt.com: What else should our readers know about affordable development?

Kinoshita: There is a significant shortage of affordable housing in Orange County, and it's getting worse. The supply is tens of thousands of units short of demand, and only a few hundred new units are added annually to the inventory of affordable housing. This shortage not only affects lower-income families and individuals; it also impacts young people such as new college graduates who can't earn enough to pay for renting an **apartment**, let alone buying their first house. According to the **Orange County Business Council**, our county is losing many of its young professionals who are moving to places where they can find a good-paying job and can afford the housing. Although we may never build enough affordable housing to satisfy demand, we need to build a lot more than we are now. One way to achieve that could be a strategic collaboration of county and city governments partnering with the business community as well as schools, universities, churches, hospitals and other public/private entities and organizations to create a path forward with funding, land and other critical resources for increasing the development of affordable housing.