

Action Alameda Brief



Action Alameda

A grassroots voice in the community

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www.actionalameda.org



Letter to AUSD Board

We've read Mike McMahon's web page on redevelopment and AUSD, and we understand the agreement with the Community Improvement Commission from 1991 talks about using redevelopment funds to build housing. www.mikemcmahon.info/redevelopment.htm#a That money supposedly goes into a "district housing fund" (which we can't yet identify on 3-years worth of AUSD budgets.) State law does NOT restrict the use of redevelopment funds ONLY to housing. As we've explained to Mike, state law provides for

redevelopment funds to be used for constructing, equipping, remodeling, renovating etc. "educational facilities" which include academic buildings, classrooms, administration buildings, laboratories, etc. as well as dormitories and "housing." You can see some of the details in our newsletter here: www.actionalameda.org/Media/february-2008-newsletter.pdf

There's nothing preventing the AUSD board (except the political will) from going back to the

CIC/ARRA and asking for a new agreement to pass-through funds to maintain our classrooms and academic buildings - without impacting the revenue limit. It looks to us that AUSD hasn't gone and asked the CIC for any money since, what, 1991? It seems that AUSD could have raised SOME money this way to offset the \$63 million Measure C bond issue in 2004 - the ballot wording describes the same things ("upgrade classrooms, facilities, and sites") as the state statutes regarding the use of redevelopment funds.

Maybe Luz can confirm—but we presume the bond re-payments come from the AUSD general fund. Assuming that's true, using pass-through funds for maintaining our schools, and reducing the amount of future bond issues would reduce the drain on the general fund to repay those bonds.

Will the AUSD board stand up and go back to CIC/ARRA/Alameda City Council and ask for new pass-through agreements for redevelopment funds to support our schools?

Letter to Alameda Parents & Residents

It's time for the members of the school board to take their head out of the sand on redevelopment in Alameda. We addressed the board on this issue about a year ago, but I have yet to see them do anything about it. What's 'redevelopment' got to do with the current funding crisis you may ask? Well, it was reported that one school board member is talking about raising taxes, and another is encouraging us to look "within our own community and ourselves, to keep the school system we have." Alameda residents might be interested to know that while the school board talks about tax increases, over the past 3 years, \$30 million of their tax dollars have been redirected away from Alameda's General Fund and into the City of Alameda's redevelopment agency, while very little of that

money has been passed through to the school district.

Redevelopment money - your tax dollars - doesn't go to the schools. Rather, it pays for things like oversized parking garages and new movie multiplexes in the time of YouTube and AT&T's U-Verse. Roughly \$12 million each year of our tax dollars are siphoned off by Alameda's redevelopment agency, and \$3 million to \$4 million each year are consumed just to run the agency. The administrative expenses alone would probably cover the reported loss of \$4 million in revenue for AUSD. Further, the local redevelopment agency rakes in roughly \$10 million in revenue from leases at Alameda Point, none of which reaches our schools.

Ah, but the education funding problem lies in Sacramento, you

say. So does the redevelopment problem. But redevelopment has roots here in town as well. Alameda has already amassed \$285 million in redevelopment debt, and that number is sure to grow as city council, sitting as the Alameda Reuse and Redevelopment Authority board, makes more giveaways to whichever developer ultimately breaks ground at Alameda Point. Additionally, a member of the City's Development Services staff sits on the board of directors of the California Redevelopment Association, a powerful Sacramento lobby dedicated to ensuring that the trough is always full of taxpayer dollars for their developer backers. You can find them online at <http://www.calredevelop.org/> Although separate from City Hall, the AUSD board is part of the overall Alameda power

structure that furthers the waste of our tax dollars through redevelopment. Given the drastic cuts we're facing, it's simply unacceptable to hear them speak of tax increases while our current tax remittances - which could erase the AUSD deficit - subsidize redevelopment projects like the parking garage, the multiplex, and the Bridge-side Shopping Center. AUSD board members need to stand up to Alameda City Council and demand a greater share of the tax dollars sucked into redevelopment. And Alameda parents need to call on them to do it.

You can read about redevelopment in more detail at www.actionalameda.org

