

East P.A. to celebrate affordable housing success

■ City one of two in County to achieve state housing goals

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EAST PALO ALTO — City officials will celebrate the city's housing accomplishments with a "State of Housing in East Palo Alto" address tonight by Housing and Community Development Director Lisa Hamburger.

When the City Council adopted the 2002 Housing Element last December, it made a commitment to provide semi-annual reports to the community, Hamburger said, and today's will be the first.

In the first six months of this year, the

city was able to leverage more than \$13 million to support development of affordable housing. The Planning Commission has, so far, approved 90 new housing units, 46 of which are defined as affordable, and 13 new affordable units were completed in this time.

Mayor Duane Bay said the city needs to increase property values while fighting economic displacement, and rent control and construction of housing that is permanently affordable are crucial.

City Councilwoman Sharifa Wilson said she is "pleased and proud of East Palo Alto's continued efforts to ensure housing opportunities for all members of our community."

Councilwoman Donna Rutherford

said tonight's address is an important way to educate the community and provide a forum.

The city won an award earlier this year for achieving cultural diversity in its affordable housing programs, given by the National Black Caucus of Locally Elected Officials. East Palo Alto was the only city in the County to make the Housing Honor Roll in an affordable-housing study conducted recently by several nonprofit organizations. And it was one of only two cities in the County to have its housing element completed and certified on time by the state.

Today's event will be from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the council chamber at City Hall, 2415 University