

East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation

Swan's Marketplace – now home to over 39 families, the Museum of Children's Art, art galleries, other arts-related businesses, retail shops, restaurants, the historic Old Housewives Fresh Foods Market, and offices – was nearly torn down. This graceful old building, situated in the heart of downtown Oakland, now reflects and includes the best of Oakland because of a concerted effort led by The East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC). This four-year-in-the-making project supports small local and minority business owners who were being forced out of their previous places of business, provides full-time jobs for over 75 neighborhood residents, and reunites communities that were physically isolated and divided by freeway construction and a new convention center.

EBALDC, whose first project converted a rundown warehouse into a community facility, used every community development tool in the book and relied on the support of community residents, funders and housing advocates to realize the new Swan's Market renovation. "We did a capital campaign, used historic tax

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credits and housing tax credits, and raised money from individual donors. It was a labor of love," says EBALDC Executive Director and James A. Johnson Community Fellow Lynette Jung Lee.

Lee describes comprehensive community development as "a slow building process, one that doesn't always let you see immediate results." One of the challenges that Lee and her 75-person staff face is rising land costs and increased competition with private developers and even other nonprofits for site acquisition. In

2000, EBALDC and its nonprofit partner, Oakland Community Housing, Inc., completed a 71-unit homeownership development across the street from the Jack London Gateway, a West Oakland shopping center that EBALDC is also developing. Although EBALDC continues its focus on Oakland communities, it is moving out to work in the nearby cities of Richmond, San Pablo and Alameda where land acquisition costs are still relatively affordable.

A strong believer in the collaborative process, EBALDC is also working with a group of 23 partners to promote homeownership and small business ownership by creating Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). IDAs are special savings accounts in which individuals' savings for down payments to purchase their own homes or other investments are matched at least dollar for dollar by public and private institutions. A Bay Area-wide collaborative has set up IDAs for 450 families so far. Through a HOPE VI grant, EBALDC will be using IDAS to



East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC), Oakland, CA: Heron works with partners over the long term, e.g., providing a seven-year senior loan to EBALDC to finance the development of commercial real estate to create and preserve jobs.

Organization mission: To improve the quality of life for the East Bay, particularly low-income residents and Asian/Pacific Islander populations, through development of physical, human and economic assets.

Type of organization: Community development corporation.

Geographic scope: Three neighborhoods in Oakland, CA.

Population served: 45,000 Oakland residents; 2,275 directly served; 39% Asian & Pacific Islander, 39% African American; 9% Latino/a, 8% European American.

Year founded: 1975

Primary activities: Affordable housing and mixed use development, including commercial real estate; property management; community organizing and planning.

CEO: Lynette Jung Lee

Staff size: 75 FTE

Annual budget: \$2.7 MM operating

Current Heron support: \$75,000 general support grant; \$400,000 program-related investment.

help Section 8 tenants who live in Oakland Housing Authority units move into homeownership.

EBALDC sees tremendous opportunities for making connections with area residents and the many programs and activities that it carries out. According to Lee, "Community development can be an integrative system for helping people to take control of their lives. What's challenging and exciting are the amazing effects that can be created."