

Tri-Valley Mayors Address McNerney

• Leaders ask Congressman to find funding to aid residents facing foreclosure

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Tri-Valley town leaders took their ideas to Washington, D.C., this week, along with a request for money to start a home foreclosure-prevention program they say could be the first of its kind in the nation.

The mayors of Danville, Dublin, Pleasanton, San Ramon and Livermore's vice mayor discussed with Congressman Jerry McNerney, D-Pleasanton, the creation of anti-foreclosure programs at the Tri-Valley Housing Opportunity Center.

The mayors requested \$2.6 million in federal funds, Danville Mayor Candace Anderson said Wednesday in a telephone interview from Washington.

The money would be used to help Tri-Valley families learn more about preventing foreclosure, and it also would aid families on the verge of losing their homes by funding a program to work with lenders and families in an effort to help keep them in their homes.

"This would be the prototype for all the cities in the United States," said San Ramon Mayor H. Abram Wilson

The Tri-Valley Housing Opportunity Center offers programs and help for first-time homeowners and residents looking for affordable homes in the area. Anderson said that of the 70 families the two-year-old center has helped find affordable housing, none of them are facing foreclosure.

"Education is a big part of it," Anderson said.

McNerney said he hopes to talk about the project this morning with Rep. Charles Rangel, D-New York, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

"(He) is looking for stimulation in the economy. This is the perfect way to do it," McNerney said.

Joining Anderson and Wilson were Dublin Mayor Janet Lockhart, Pleasanton Mayor Jennifer Hosterman, Livermore Vice Mayor John Marchand and Bill McCammon, the interim executive director of the East Bay Regional Communications System, a project that would allow first responders in Alameda and Contra Costa counties to talk and coordinate with each other.

The communications project, which is estimated to cost about \$70 million to build, received about \$808,000 previously from the federal government. The Tri-Valley delegation asked for \$3 million this time around. McCammon said the program has secured about \$33 million in grants for the project so far.

Other issues discussed:

- The delegation requested additional funding for an HOV/HOT lane on eastbound Interstate 580. The project is expected to break ground this year, Hosterman said.
- Layoffs at the Livermore Lab: McNerney said he wants to maintain the level of funding so lab management can make future plans without having to lay off more employees.
- McNerney said he wants the Livermore Veterans Hospital to remain under the control of the Veterans Administration, and he hopes to use the site for treatment of returning soldiers with post-traumatic stress syndrome.

The mayors said they band together to lobby for regional projects with hopes of accomplishing bigger projects to benefit everyone living in the Tri-Valley area.

"The next year will be a real challenge with the state and local economies," Lockhart said. "It's more important for us to think regionally and help each other."

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