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Housing affordability crisis requires radical change in policy, book says

***Rebuilding a Dream* looks at status of cities 50 years after 1960s' riots**

Review: "A great book all members of Congress should read."

A new book from veteran journalist Andre Shashaty makes a bold call for a renewed commitment to housing and urban revitalization as the nation nears another important election, and, in 2015, the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Department of Housing and Urban Development amid widespread urban unrest.

"Rebuilding a Dream" picks up where previous coverage of the foreclosure crisis left off to put the nation's housing and urban problems in perspective, and show how the gap between what housing costs and what most Americans can afford to pay keeps growing, with no end in sight.

"This book is not a wake-up call. It is a tsunami warning about the shortage of affordable housing and the corrosive effective of the new American slums left by the foreclosure crisis," said Andre Shashaty, author of the book and president of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities®. PSC is a national nonprofit organization based in San Rafael, Calif. Shashaty has written about housing and urban policy for the last 34 years, and was publisher of *Affordable Housing Finance* magazine and related media and events for 15 years.

"I think this is a great book and every member of Congress, every governor, and every state legislator should read it," said Dr. Laverne Joseph, president and CEO of Retirement Housing Foundation

This book is the most comprehensive and readable analysis of our housing problems in decades. It looks back at what government programs have achieved since the tumultuous days of the 1960s, and describes some of the most notable successes, including the low-income housing tax credit program.

"Rebuilding a Dream" explains why we must decide now whether we wish to keep moving forward with programs that work, or accede to the budget cutting fever in Washington, and let homelessness and concentrated poverty continue to increase. It has a very pro-housing message, and PSC recommends that advocates buy copies not only for themselves, but to send to elected officials and policymakers.

Books written about the causes of the foreclosure crisis focused on Wall Street and banking industry. This is the first to tell the deeper truth about the crisis – that it was caused by the ever-increasing "housing affordability gap," and the failure of government at all levels to deal with it.

"Rebuilding a Dream" tells why the housing crisis did not end when foreclosure filings abated. It explains the ongoing impact, and what it means to the future of our cities and ultimately, to the question of growing inequality in America. This book is on sale now at the Sustainability Bookstore <http://www.sustainabilitystore.org/>

Read the reviews here:

http://www.p4sc.org/Rebuilding_A_Dream/#reviews

You can read selected excerpts, here: <http://www.p4sc.org/articles/all/excerpts%2CRAD>

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All proceeds from sale go to support the Partnership for Sustainable Communities (PSC), a nonprofit organization based in San Rafael, Calif. PSC is dedicated to promoting land use reform, including higher density zoning, infill transit-oriented development and the availability of affordable housing near jobs and transit. More info: www.p4sc.org

EDITORS: To receive a free review copy of "Rebuilding a Dream," or arrange an interview with author Andre Shashaty, call Carol, 415-453-2100 ext 302.

SUMMARY of *Rebuilding a Dream*

The year 2015 will mark the 50th anniversary of the beginning of an extraordinary series of events in American history. In August of 1965, the black residents of Watts in Los Angeles rebelled against a mayor and a police force many considered to be racist. The fires and the violence raged for six days, resulting in 34 deaths and the destruction, damage, or looting of 1,000 buildings.

After more rioting in 1966 and 1967, a presidential commission on urban problems was convened and Congress enacted a series of programs to provide affordable housing and revitalize cities. In 1968, equal access to housing regardless of race became the law of the land.

Rebuilding a Dream looks at what's been achieved since then, and how we are now falling short in providing affordable housing and ensuring urban vitality. It explains how our government's commitment to housing and cities has waned in recent years. The decline in funding and elimination of certain key programs could not have come at a worse time, after foreclosures devastated lower-income communities and economic stagnation continued without relief.

The book explains how, at the same time, there has been a powerful backlash among mostly white communities against federal efforts to enforce the laws intended to ensure nondiscrimination in housing and provision of credit.

Rebuilding a Dream examines the failure of federal and state governments to maintain sound policies and address the growing problems of runaway housing costs and renewed decay of our cities in the wake of economic decline and foreclosures. It talks about why the shortage of affordable housing will get worse, how homeownership is increasingly out of reach for many Americans, and what we can do about these problems.

Finally, this book focuses on the good news about positive steps forward that we can build on, if we can find the political will to do so. It busts the negative mythology perpetuated by political opponents of housing programs and NIMBYs. It celebrates success stories of housing and urban development programs, highlights exemplary developments, and explains the promising ideas for getting more good results in the future.