



The Episcopal Diocese of Northern California

Dear Sacramento Bee,

Thank you for your story on Affordable Housing in Rocklin published on April 22, 2026. I am writing to share additional context regarding St. Augustine's Episcopal Church and our decision to sell a portion of our property for the development of new workforce housing.

St. Augustine's has a long history of serving the local community. In alignment with our faith's call to love God and actively love our neighbors, we chose to use this land to address the community's urgent need for housing, supporting the blessing of allowing people who work in Rocklin to *live* in Rocklin. The project, Sierra Wilds Apartments by Pacific West Communities, will provide 120 units of workforce housing for people such as teachers, first responders, service workers, seniors, and veterans. When reviewing offers, we intentionally rejected incompatible proposals for a self-storage unit company, a Quick Quack repair shop, and a warehouse out of concern for the children of the Maria Montessori Charter Academy (MMCA).

The facts concerning the property are clear. In 2009, the church leased 6,000 square feet of the property to MMCA for a community garden, happily having the school as its neighbor. The lease required MMCA to pay \$1 annual rent and name the church as an additional insured on its liability insurance policy, and it expired on June 30, 2019. The church can find no record that MMCA ever paid the agreed rent or provided proof of insurance. Before entering into contract with Pacific West in June 2024, the church reached out to the school first, but after waiting 18 months for MMCA to purchase more of the land, the church had to seek other options. The church allowed the school to continue using the garden after the lease expired even though it had no legal obligation to do so.

While the builder's plan does not allow the garden to remain in its original location, the buyer and the church recognize the value of green spaces to the school and community. We are working proactively with the City of Rocklin to explore relocating the garden directly behind the school to parkland. If the garden is relocated, it will benefit not just MMCA but the entire community. St. Augustine's and Placer People of Faith desire to help move the garden to its new location so that school children can continue to enjoy it.

We are compassionate about the health and safety of both the children at the school and the fragile elders in our community. We want to reassure the community that the most disruptive construction phase, involving heavy equipment like a tractor, will last for only a short period of three weeks. We remain committed to prioritizing safety throughout this project and being communicative and neighborly throughout the process.

Sincerely,

Bishop Megan Traquair

OUR MISSION:

The Mission of The Episcopal Diocese of Northern California is to make disciples, raise up saints and transform communities for Christ in Northern California.

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