



'A mini-urban miracle,' new Berkeley homeless housing could be model for the state

By Emilie Raguso, *Berkeleyside*, July 10, 2020

"On Thursday night, the city's Zoning Adjustments Board unanimously approved a new project from Panoramic Interests for a [39-unit complex](#) made from modular construction to house people who were formerly homeless. [Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency](#) (BOSS), a 49-year-old Berkeley nonprofit, will run the operation, which could open within a year, barring delays.

"Commissioner Denise Pinkston said it was 'nothing short of a mini-urban miracle' to see what is essentially a market-rate building provide homeless housing.

Panoramic's business development director Michael Thomas said the complex at 1367 University is the first of its kind for Panoramic, which is looking to replicate the model at other sites in the Bay Area and around the state if it can secure the investment needed to proceed.

"Project architect David Trachtenberg, of Berkeley's Trachtenberg Architects, said 1367 University could establish a prototype for addressing homelessness on small sites across the state.

"Zoning board members said they too hope to see the model gain traction with other developers in Berkeley and elsewhere.

"The new complex is set to cost 30%-40% less than buildings using the traditional approach to construction, said Patrick Kennedy, Panoramic's founder. Construction is slated to take 14 weeks and could begin by September.

"Commissioner Igor Tregub said he wished there had been more neighborhood outreach but also noted that the project complies with the state's Housing Accountability Act, meaning that the board is legally required to approve it without substantive changes.

"'It is absolutely crucial that we do everything we can to support transitional housing for folks transitioning out of homelessness,' Tregub said."

Read the full article [here](#).