

Other cities in California offer a Right of First Refusal to tenants or non-profit housing providers with the goal of preserving housing as affordable. We ask that the City Council open a discussion of introducing this in Chico. We also understand that the City receives Community Development grant funding that can be used to preserve affordable housing. We ask that the City make a commitment to offer funding to enable the purchase of Panama Springs so we may continue to pay our rent and live here.

Respectfully,

Panama Springs United

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Mayor Andrew Coolidge, Vice Mayor Kasey Reynolds, Councilmembers Alex Brown, Deepika Tandon, Sean Morgan, Michael O'Brian, and Dale Bennett,

We are the tenants of Panama Springs apartments. We are seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, Butte County Behavioral Health clients, public transit riders, mothers, fathers, and grandparents. We have nearly all experienced homelessness before living here. We have very modest means but we support each other in a tight community that we love and cherish. We are all being evicted from our homes.

This summer, our apartments were purchased by a corporation from outside the area called Beck Asset Management LLC. First, they introduced themselves and promised us to maintain "a safe and enjoyable place to live." Soon after, every tenant in the building was issued an eviction notice giving us 30 or 60 days to pack up and leave. We sought legal counsel from our service providers, who informed Beck Asset Management that the notices were illegal. We have now been reissued 90-day eviction notices.

The eviction notices state that terminating our contracts is justified because "the property is being removed from the rental market.. [and] being sold following major renovations."

Since the Camp Fire in 2018, Chico has suffered an extreme shortage of housing, especially for people, like us, with very modest means. Hundreds if not thousands of people like us have become homeless, living in inhumane conditions on the street or in crowded shelters.

We will do anything in our power to stay housed, but options are simply not available to us. If some of us are accepted into low-income apartments in the city, where will the others applying to the same houses go? We have affordable housing now. We are respectful neighbors and cause no problems.

We are requesting help from the City of Chico to prevent us from becoming homeless and to assure the housing crisis is not made worse by real estate speculation. Do not allow corporations to come in to destroy the limited affordable housing our city has.