

## President's Message

If I had to pick one word that best describes the birth, growth, operation and impetus behind PEP Housing, that word would be community.

Born during a weekly coffee klatch composed of the pastors of several Petaluma area churches, Petaluma Ecumenical Projects responded to the need of friends, neighbors, and congregants whose retirement planning could not keep up with the cost of living in the Northbay. Rather than lose long-time contributing members of the community, the founders decided to take action.

With help from local developers and the sponsorship of the City of Petaluma, PEP Housing would build and warm residential communities for senior citizens, taking advantage of a multiplicity of programs that support the acquisition, construction and maintenance through direct grants, loans, and rent subsidies. Reliance on outside funding and changes in the law have required PEP Housing to comply with many rules, regulations, and procedures. And so what began as a relatively informal group (where board members were likely to get phone calls to come correct a plumbing problem in the middle of the night), we are now a professionally-managed and maintained property management and development company; but the importance of community has never changed.

It is a sense of responsibility to our community that has made it easy for PEP Housing to attract a diverse and skilled Board of Directors. It was recognition of what PEP Housing does for the community that lead me to accept the Presidency of the Board, and that has moved PEP Housing to the head of my list of outside interests. It is the common sense of community that developed around PEPHousing in Petaluma that has consistently transcended the changing winds of local politics and that has united our diverse City Council. And it is the warm sense of community and a belief in what they are doing that has given PEP Housing the most gifted and committed staff in the business.

Most importantly, it is the sense of community that our residents enjoy with each other that provides a barometer for how we are doing. PEP Housing builds communities that enrich all of us. That is why PEP Housing is the leading provider of affordable senior housing in Northern California.

David Schmidt  
President, Board of Directors