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Green Dream: Students Plan Electricity-Free Homes for Homeless

Posted By: Will Frampton ■ 1 day ago

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SACRAMENTO, CA - Few people would consider it a work of inspiration. There are no windows and no features that make it stand out. But when Cassie Hilder looks at the building on the northwest corner of 7th and H streets in downtown Sacramento currently used by the Sacramento police, she sees something great in its place.

"We hope it's going to be developed into single room occupancy housing," Hilder said of the plan to build a home for the homeless.

The police building would be demolished, making way for a new structure with a rooftop patio, parking garage, 24-hour security and 160 rooms.

And it wouldn't need any [electricity](#).

"It has the possibility to run solely on wind and solar power," said Hilder. "Completely off the power grid."

Hilder is part of a five-member graduate student team from UC Davis that entered a regional contest to design innovative low-income housing.

After winning the contest, the group focused on getting their vision for the property built. Plans call for solar panels on top and turbines generating wind power underneath the panels.

"The (students) were able to really pull together a feasible proposal looking at the site, and the constraints of building on about a half a city block, yet coming forward with a proposal of over 160 units," said Chris Glaudel of Mercy Housing.

Glaudel helped the students develop the proposal, but said they did nearly all the work. Mercy Housing plans to use their concepts when they make a proposal to city leaders, perhaps next month.

Glaudel said he didn't see any reason why this green dream can't become reality.

"We'll see how it turns out, but we do feel like we've got a big head start with the work the UC Davis students have completed," Glaudel said.

The project has a long way to go before the building's foundation could be laid. The Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency has to give its approval, along with several other agencies, including Sacramento's city council, city planning commission, and Downtown Partnership.

Glaudel said Mercy Housing would be happy to have the building complete within four years.

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UC Davis students have a plan for new Sacramento homeless housing -- and it wouldn't need electricity.



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tinshaker wrote:

Hmm, I had this idea seven years ago...but once again, someone takes a good idea and makes it impractical. Homeless people who are generally in a desperate situation do not need a rooftop patio, and 99.9% of them in the city do not need parking garages either. What is the point of the rooftop patio, so we don't have to see them on ground level unless one of them jumps?

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