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## **DEVELOPMENT PROJECT MANAGER SPEAKS ABOUT WORKING WITH CONTRACTORS ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

LOS ANGELES—Outlining alternative bidding processes for finding and hiring contractors, and addressing concerns emerging from recent natural disasters, Sean L. Leonard, founder of Camarillo-based development project management firm S.L. Leonard & Associates, recently spoke at the Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing's 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Housing Conference.

“Right now, it's a seller's market for contractors,” Leonard said. “They are busy with public education and health care projects, as well as the downtown L.A. condominium boom, so they can afford to be choosy. Owners need to make projects more attractive to contractors by sharing risk, changing payment terms and entering into more collaborative partnerships.”

Leonard also discussed the issues facing the development of affordable housing in Southern California due to hurricanes Katrina and Rita, including recent spikes in material prices due to material shortages and panic buying. He noted that the price of PVC pipe is up 80 percent from its normal cost. In some cases, suppliers are only guaranteeing pricing on the day of delivery and backing out of signed purchase orders, claiming circumstances beyond their control. The recent diversion of materials and labor to the south for hurricane recovery has further stretched resources, Leonard said.

S.L. Leonard & Associates is a comprehensive development project management firm that is also working on the construction of the California Endowment Offices and Community Conference and Resource Center, the Camarillo Public Library, The University of Judaism Library and Chapel expansion, American Cancer Society Hope Lodge in Los Angeles, Fuller Lofts and Pacific Court Housing. The firm just recently completed work on the City of Hope Helford Clinical Research Hospital. For more information about the company, call (805) 445-4668 or visit [www.slleonard.com](http://www.slleonard.com).

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