



Scenic Pacifica  
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## CITY OF PACIFICA

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# PRESS RELEASE

December 15, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## City of Pacifica Announces Need for Demolition of Hazardous Coastal Apartments at 310 Esplanade

### *City's Geotechnical Consultant and Building Official Determine Building Poses Threat to Public Safety*

**Pacifica, Calif. (15 December 2016)** — The City of Pacifica today announced its intent to move forward with the demolition of the coastal apartments at 310 Esplanade. The City's geotechnical consultant and Building Official have recommended the need to demolish the building as soon as possible.

"According to a recent independent analysis and reports of significant bluff erosion by the City's geotechnical consultant, it's confirmed that the vacant building at 310 Esplanade poses a significant risk to public health and safety and needs to be demolished," said Lorie Tinfow, Pacifica City Manager and Director of Emergency Management. "Storm-driven waves have accelerated erosion of the adjacent bluffs presenting a clear danger to residents, and demolishing this structure is the only way to prevent it from crumbling to the beach below."

Built in the 1960s, the building at 310 Esplanade contains hazardous materials that city officials say would present a significant threat to public health should another major storm, earthquake or other destabilizing event force portions of the building to fall. On January 25, 2016, the City of Pacifica determined the apartments at 310 Esplanade Avenue were uninhabitable due to coastal erosion. Pacifica Chief Building Official Mike Cully "yellow-tagged" the apartments and several private residences, meaning residents were allowed to access buildings only to remove belongings. The City worked with the Pacifica Resource Center to provide assistance to residents as they transitioned to other housing. The property is currently vacant.

Since then, the building has been neglected by its owner, Millard Tong, and is at risk of crumbling over the eroding cliff and threatening public safety. Mr. Tong, who is the owner of 310 Esplanade and the previously demolished 320 Esplanade, filed for bankruptcy in 2015 and has largely neglected the buildings.

"We want to make it clear that the property owner, Millard Tong, has been aware of the bluff's deteriorating condition since at least 2010 and had ample opportunity to shore up the cliff beneath his

property,” Tinfow said. “Because the building poses an imminent threat to public safety, the City of Pacifica is stepping in to demolish the structure.”

In 2010, major storms caused the City of Pacifica to evacuate and “red-tag” the 20-unit apartment building at 320 Esplanade and the 12-unit building at 330 Esplanade after progressive coastal erosion forced the City to determine both to be uninhabitable. Both buildings were left vacant, teetering on the edge of a quickly eroding coastal bluff.

The El Nino-related storms in January 2016 led the City to “yellow-tag” the neighboring apartments at 310 Esplanade Ave., declaring those similarly unsafe. Residents were evacuated and the City worked with the Pacifica Resource Center to provide assistance to residents as they transitioned to other housing. The property is currently vacant.

On February 18, 2016, the adjacent, separately-owned 330 Esplanade was demolished by that building’s owner and on March 12, 2016, the City demolished 320 Esplanade.

“It is necessary for the safety of the public to proceed with the demolition as unpredictable weather patterns and high surf continue to threaten the building’s structure,” Tinfow said. “At this point, allowing the building to remain in its current state is too much of a risk according to multiple reports and a review by a geotechnical consultant. Since Mr. Tong has refused to take responsibility for his property to date, the City has no choice but to step in to make sure the building is removed in an organized and safe manner.”

Tong has been given ample warning about the crumbling conditions and could have paid to shore up the cliffs beneath his property— as owners of the nearby Oceanaire Apartment Homes, formerly Land’s End Apartment Homes, and the Bluffs at Pacifica Apartments have done successfully – yet he chose not to.

The owner's attorney has been notified and City staff are working to gain access to the site. The date of the demolition has not yet been set.

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