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The Desert Sun

MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025 | DESERTSUN.COM

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PALM DESERT



Wave of new houses, apartments popping up along I-10

Tom Coulter Palm Springs Desert Sun | USA TODAY NETWORK

It’s hard to miss the construction underway in north Palm Desert while driving along Interstate 10. But what exactly is coming there? • The city’s fast-growing north end is seeing a wave of new housing, including single-family homes and both market-rate and income-restricted apartments. North of Frank Sinatra Drive, more than 4,000 housing units have either recently started construction, gained city approval or begun entitlement review at city hall.

The growth, which includes some communities that have already opened, is particularly evident near Dinah Shore and Gerald Ford drives.

On Dick Kelly Drive, a new 175-unit affordable apartment complex, **The Crossings at Palm Desert**, is under construction and expected to open in September 2025, per its website. The project, which is being developed by Blieu Companies, broke ground in February 2024.

Next to its rising buildings is another project called **Sage** that has approval for 111 single-family homes. It’s being built just north of The Gallery. Under development by D.R. Horton, several homes have already been purchased in the Sage neighborhood.

Just a couple blocks away, a stretch of Gerald Ford Drive also features hundreds of homes under

See **HOUSING**, Page 4A



ABOVE AND TOP: Workers construct new homes on Tubman Street in one of several new housing developments in the University Park neighborhood in north Palm Desert on Aug. 12.
PHOTOS BY TAYA GRAY/THE DESERT SUN

Palm Springs faces police officer shortage, a national challenge

Sam Morgen
Palm Springs Desert Sun | USA TODAY NETWORK

Less than two years ago, then-Mayor Grace Garner stood in the Annenberg Theater at the Palm Springs Art Museum for the annual State of the City address and boasted the city’s police department had achieved full staffing levels after years of attempts to increase officer numbers.

It was hailed as an accomplishment, largely due to the City Council authorizing higher salaries for officers. But two years later, the department finds itself back where it started.

There are currently around 10 open officer positions at the Palm Springs Police Department. That’s about

9% of the total sworn positions, which number 113. Chief Andy Mills attributes the staffing gap to retirements, transfers to other agencies and injuries. He noted that the older population in Palm Springs and some nearby cities makes it difficult to fill vacancies.

“I always get concerned with the exhaustion of our employees. It’s not easy to work in 115-degree heat in 30 pounds of gear,” he said, adding that officers have had to work overtime to fill shifts that would have been covered if the department was at full employment. “It can be something that I get very concerned about.”

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‘We can’t even go to work comfortably’

Undocumented renters caught between fire, ICE in CA burn zone

Rachel Parsons
THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION

LOS ANGELES – Blanca and her family fled a deadly wildfire in January that devastated her Los Angeles area neighborhood and burned the clothing alterations business she owned for six years to the ground.

Her rented apartment in Altadena, California, was spared but uninhabitable, with no gas, electricity or hot water, and contaminated with toxic ash and soot.

But she was ineligible for federal assistance for her business or her home because she is undocumented. Now 48, she came from Mexico more than 20 years ago with one child.

After the fire, she and her family lived in temporary housing while she and her neighbors battled with the apartment building manager to clean and repair their ruined homes.

President Donald Trump ordered a crackdown on undocumented immigrants in late January when he took office.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents then descended on Los Angeles, making thousands of arrests in the following months.

While ICE initially was not rounding up residents in burn zones, that has changed.

In June, ICE agents raided a burned property in Altadena, targeting the construction crew, and they have conducted random traffic stops and used racial profiling to apprehend people throughout the county.

See **UNDOCUMENTED**, Page 2A


Texas detention center alarms critics

INSIDE, 5A

JEFF DUNHAM

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