



Perris News

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Dyed Lawns Attract the Interest of National News

The ABC News program "Nightline" featured in a prominent story this week that highlighted the City's efforts to revitalize distressed properties and make funds available to senior citizens, first-time homebuyers and other deserving residents who want to improve their houses.

The segment, which aired Tuesday, contrasted the efforts of Perris, which have drawn international news media coverage, with the situation in Victorville, where homes under construction are being torn down because the market there is so terrible.

An ABC News crew, including correspondent Mike Von Fremd, a producer, camera operator and sound technician, spent two day in Perris in April documenting the City's ongoing efforts in response to the foreclosure crisis.

The crew interviewed Perris City Councilman Al Landers at length and accompanied City officials as they presented the keys to a home purchased by Leo and Olga Gutierrez with the help of Perris Homebuyers Assistance Program.

The "Nightline" presentation included comments from Landers, Mayor Daryl Busch, Assistant Planner Sabrina Chavez, who is the point person for the HAP program, as well as the Gutierrez couple. Olga Gutierrez said that without the \$11,000 received to help with closing costs and the down payment, she and her husband and two children could not have afforded a home of their own.

The segment also included interviews with residents taking advantage of the Substantial Rehabilitation Program and the Senior Home Repair Program.

"You have a great story to tell," Von Fremd said to City officials and elected leaders. "You have been nothing but gracious during our visit."

The nationally broadcasted program spent five minutes discussing the Perris approach to foreclosed properties, a long segment for television. The program also featured a look at the City's continuing lawn rejuvenation program, in which a contractor applies an environmentally friendly green dye on brown lawns to approve the curb appeal of foreclosed homes.

Several residences where the dye has been applied have been sold or are in escrow. The lawn rejuvenation program has drawn media interest from the Los Angeles Times, French and German television, British television and National Geographic.

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ABC Nightline Clip



Perris City Councilman Al Landers talks to ABC News correspondent Mike Von Fremd while a camera operator records the conversation.



Associate Planner Sabrina Chavez explains the City's Substantial Rehabilitation Program.