

FAQs Artist Live/Work Housing

Arts Habitat

1. What is Arts Habitat, Inc.?

Arts Habitat, a non-profit community organization dedicated to fostering affordable, ecologically responsible living and working spaces for artists, was formed in 1991 in response to the base closure of Fort Ord. That event offered a unique opportunity to remedy the chronic problem hampering growth of the arts in the Central Coast region - lack of affordable space for creating and presenting the arts. Arts Habitat will take responsibility for the artists selection process at East Garrison, coordinate and deliver arts programming services to residential and workspace users, and promote arts activities and events there.

2. What is the East Garrison project?

The East Garrison project is an adaptive reuse of a historic district on the former Ft. Ord military base in Monterey County, California. The pedestrian-friendly development includes 1400 homes, a town center and an arts district. East Garrison is being developed by Union Community Partners.

3. When will the community be ready to move into?

Nearly \$30 million has been invested in the site so far, including half of the infrastructure, but building progress was halted in the summer of 2008 due to the international economic downturn. The actual completion date for construction has not been determined, pending analysis of the real estate market.

4. What is Artspace Projects, Inc.?

Artspace is a national non-profit real estate corporation whose mission is “to create, foster, and preserve affordable space for artists and arts organizations”. Their development activities have included construction/renovation of over 563 units of live/work space for low/moderate income artists. Artspace now owns 18 buildings in nine states; fourteen live/work projects; three working studio buildings and one performing arts center. They will develop and own the live/work buildings.

4. How do I get my name on the list?

Please *contact Arts Habitat* and tell us what you're interested in-- what medium you work in, how much space you need, how many people live in your household, and any other requirements. There is no formal waiting list, only an interested artist list that will enable us to send you progress reports and let you know when we're ready to begin leasing homes.

5. How do you define “artist”?

The guiding principal is that artists recognize other artists. An Artist Peer Review Committee will interview prospective tenants after it has been determined that they meet the qualifications (see *Artist Selection Process*). The committee looks for: 1) a body of work; 2) motivation or vision expressed in the work; 3) dedication to and concentration on creating art work; and 4) we are particularly interested in people who are willing to participate actively in the community. “Artist” is defined as”

- A person who works in, or is skilled in any of the fine arts, including but not limited to, painting, drawing, sculpture, textiles, book arts, printmaking and mixed-media.
- A person who creates imaginative works of aesthetic value, including but not limited to literature, poetry, photography, music composition, choreography, architecture, film, video or new media.
- A person who works in or is skilled in any craft, including but not limited to metal, textiles, paper, wood, ceramic, glass or mixed media plastic objects.
- A performer or theatrical artist, including but not limited to, singers, dancers, musicians, actors, performance artists; costume, lighting, sound, and set designers.
- In all art disciplines, a designer, technician, craftsperson, teacher or administrator who is dedicated to using their expertise within the art community to support, promote, present, and/or teach and propagate their art form through events, activities, performances and classes.

6. What do you mean by “willing to participate actively in the community?”

In a community of working artists, activities that might not be acceptable in other places may occur. Noise and disruption from tools, musical instruments, or dancers’ feet may be common; residents will need to agree on some ground rules. Are you respectful of others’ work requirements? Will you participate in resolving issues? Or, will you volunteer for community events or activities? Or, consider doing work around the buildings to keep costs down? Community involvement could take any or all of these forms.

7. How do you define “affordable,” or low-income?

There are entry-qualifying income guidelines imposed on our projects due to the sources of financing we use. These income guidelines are based on the median family income of the county in which a property is located and can change yearly. You must submit income information annually. You will not be required to move if your income increases, but you may be required to pay a higher rent. This must be your only residence.

8. How is housing going to stay affordable in “perpetuity?”

Artspace owns or co-owns all the buildings it develops, and their real estate portfolio now contains more than \$125 million worth of property. Managing that space on behalf of our artist tenants is the responsibility of the Asset Management department. Each Artspace building is assigned to an asset manager who meets at least quarterly with the building’s tenant organization and handles any problems related to building operation. As a nonprofit, they strive to manage their properties so that they will be well-maintained yet affordable to the artists, especially those of low and moderate income, for whom they were developed in the first place. Revenues in excess of expenses are set aside for preventive maintenance, common area improvements, or building upgrades.

9. Can I buy my unit?

The live/work spaces being developed by Artspace Projects are rentals only. More live/work spaces are being built as part of the larger development and will be for sale at market rates.

10. What about insurance?

Tenants will be encouraged to carry renters’ insurance.

11. What will be provided and what kind of improvements will I need to make?

You will be able to make some modifications to your unit to meet the needs of your discipline. All modifications must meet fire and safety codes and be approved by the property manager.

12. Who will manage the property?

A private property management company will be engaged to oversee general operations and maintenance of the property. On-site managers will live in the live/work complex.

13. Will artists be able to make work, sell work, teach classes and have space open to the public?

The types of financing used to build these live/work spaces strictly limit the activities in them. Your live/work unit is primarily a residence with space for you to make work. It is not a commercial space for selling work or running a storefront business. Events in the common areas, open studios tours, and rehearsals are allowed.

The working studios will offer many opportunities for exhibiting, selling and/or performing at East Garrison. Renovation of the historic buildings on the site will create up to 57,000 square feet of working studio space with rental rates affordable to local artists.

14. Will sustainable materials be used in construction?

The live/work residences are new construction, and will be built in accordance with Artspace's "green" policy: *Sustainability in Practice*. The adaptive reuse of existing buildings, in this case for work space, is a sustainable practice. Modifications to the historic buildings will follow Artspace's "green" guidelines.

15. What about hazardous materials?

Artistic processes that are extremely noisy, require industrial zoning or involve highly flammable, explosive or noxious materials will not be permitted in the live/work units. Welding, blacksmithing, woodworking using large power tools, fiberglass work or glass blowing would not be allowed; jewelry torches and electric kilns could be. Tenants will be expected to store and dispose of all hazardous materials in accordance with California State law and all local ordinances. An on-site program for recycling/disposal of hazardous materials and Health and Safety workshops will be offered to all tenants with safety information available on site.