THE PORTERVILLE RECORDER

Affordable housing build begins in Lindsay

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By: The Recorder

Palm Terrace-This artists rendering shows the planned design for the 50-unit affordable apartment rental community planned on the southeast corner of Hermosa Street and Westwood Avenue in Lindsay. Photo Credit: Sonia Sanchez

Self-Help Enterprises project will have 50 units

Construction crews have begun preparing the site for a new 50-unit affordable apartment rental community on the southeast corner of Hermosa Street and Westwood Avenue in Lindsay.

The rental project, known as Palm Terrace, is being built by Self-Help Enterprises (SHE) and is projected to be completed by fall 2018, said Sonia Sanchez, communication and outreach specialist with SHE.

Sanchez said Palm Terrace is a highly energy-efficient and transit-friendly project. Sustainable features include solar PV, graywater recycling system, water conservation measures, and a vanpool program in partnership with the California Vanpool Authority that will transport residents from Palm Terrace and the surrounding community to and from work.

The project's solar PV system will offset the power used in the common area, residential loads, and community center, making Palm Terrace a grid-neutral Zero Net Energy project.

"This will result in reduced utility bills for residents and the property, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution," Sanchez said.

Lindsay City Manager Bill Zigler is extremely pleased with the partnership the City of Lindsay has with SHE.

"Together we are developing an attractive, affordable, and highly energy-efficient apartment complex for our residents in conjunction with a traffic-calming roundabout to enhance pedestrian safety for our youth attending a nearby school," Zigler said. "With a project like this, everybody wins."

In addition to securing $4.4 million of Cap-and-Trade Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) funding for the housing project, Sanchez said SHE secured $1.4 million in grant funding for the City of Lindsay to construct a roundabout, sidewalks and bike lanes at the intersection of Westwood Avenue and Hermosa Street. The roundabout will calm traffic and improve the safety for students accessing Jefferson Elementary School, which is located north of the site.

The intersection is a documented safety concern in the community, and she noted that the improvements will promote non-motorized transit to access the school, shopping center and bus stop, which are all located within a quarter mile of the site.

"As a result of receiving Cap-and-Trade funding from the Strategic Growth Council, we are able to partner with the City of Lindsay to address a major safety concern at the intersection of Westwood and Hermosa," said Tom Collishaw, president and CEO of SHE. "This project will provide high-quality affordable housing, while creating a safe environment for families to walk and bike to school and other essential services."

Palm Terrace will supply much-needed affordable housing to the city.

"Palm Terrace will provide its residents and the City of Lindsay with energy-efficient affordable housing, safer streets for bicycles and pedestrians, and access to clean and shared transportation options that reduce greenhouse gas emissions," said Randall Winston, the executive director of the Strategic Growth Council. "This development is an

excellent example of the local innovation that the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program strives to support."

More than just a roof over the head, Sanchez said Palm Terrace will include one-, two- and three-bedroom units, with a community building, laundry facility, playground, community garden, and open space for residents. The community building will include a computer lab, which will be available to adults and children for schoolwork and educational activities.

Resident service programs will also be offered to enhance the everyday lives and futures of the residents. These programs, she said, include financial fitness classes, computer literacy classes, nutrition classes, English as a second language (ESL) classes, and adult fitness classes.

Sanchez said monthly net rents, ranging from $310 to $720, are determined based on unit size and income.

"By offering low monthly rents to working families at or below 50 percent of Area Median Income, SHE is providing an affordable-housing opportunity that will serve the needs of these families," Sanchez said.

Sanchez said Palm Terrace is financed through a combination of AHSC program funds, Multifamily Housing Program (MHP) funding, low-income housing tax credits, and Affordable Housing Program (AHP) funds through the San Francisco Federal Home Loan Bank, sponsored by Wells Fargo Bank.

Sanchez said construction loan financing is provided by JP Morgan Chase. Tax credit equity is being provided through the National Equity Fund, with Morgan Stanley as the primary investor.

"Thanks to the leadership of the Legislature and Governor, California's Cap-and-Trade program has been extended to the year 2030, meaning more developments like Palm Terrace will receive vital funding from the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program," said Ben Metcalf, director of the California Department of Housing and Community Development. "In addition to facilitating affordable housing, our funding will create greatly needed sidewalks and bike paths, so residents can safely walk and bike, drive less, and reduce greenhouse gases in communities like Lindsay and beyond."

Sanchez said Palm Terrace is the first affordable rental community built by SHE in the City of Lindsay. In addition to the construction of Palm Terrace, the second phase of the project will include a 54-unit affordable apartment rental expected to be completed in the fall of 2019. The project will include Energy-star appliances, a playground, community room, computer lab, and resident services.

"Once completed, Palm Terrace will be among 30 affordable apartment rental communities serving 1,441 families throughout the San Joaquin Valley," Sanchez said.