

THE SUN GAZETTE

Self-Help makes affordable housing more common in Goshen

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By: Staff

Self-Help Enterprises holds grand opening for Sequoia Commons, a 66-unit affordable housing project

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GOSHEN – Tulare County remains among the most affordable counties for housing, yet rental prices continue to increase at three times the rate of wages. That's not true for families in Goshen who now have the option of living in a new affordable rental community following the completion of Sequoia Commons.



Self-Help Enterprises Sequoia Commons in Goshen will provide 66-units of affordable housing to families at or below 50% of Tulare County's median income with rents ranging between \$248 and \$810 per month.

Self-Help Enterprises (SHE), the nonprofit developer of the project, joyously gathered with partners, local dignitaries and residents to celebrate the grand opening of the multi-family housing complex located at 31161 Florence St. in Goshen.

The 66-unit rental community includes one, two and three-bedroom units as well as a an outdoor common area with playground, barbecue pit, picnic tables, basketball court and a 3,072 square feet community room equipped with a kitchen, bathrooms, laundry facility, computer lab and separate management office.

"We're proud of our latest effort to provide quality housing options to Goshen area residents, a community that is transforming before our eyes into one with local job opportunities as well as access to healthcare, recreation, education, and transportation," said Tom Collishaw, CEO of Self-Help Enterprises. "Accessible affordable housing such as Sequoia Commons is the answer to our housing crisis."

The project is highly energy efficient and transit-friendly with sustainable features including solar PV. The project's solar panel system will offset the power used in the common area, residential loads, and community center, making Sequoia Commons 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. Monthly net rents, ranging from \$331 to \$766, are determined based on unit size and resident incomes. These below market monthly rents mean that Self-Help Enterprises is providing an affordable housing opportunity to local residents.

"Affordable housing is just one of many components to the Central Valley's growth and prosperity, said Eddie Valero, District Four Tulare County Supervisor. "At a time when housing scarcity is high, I am thankful that we have a leader in Self Help Enterprises who is committed to filling the gap in this area. With the help of SHE, we are investing in our economy, collaborating across sectors, creating jobs, and providing beautiful spaces where families can call these spaces home."

In addition, Self-Help Enterprises will provide a robust program of on-site resident services, including exercise, nutrition and health education, financial planning and literacy, ESL, computer classes, and other services based on the needs of the residents. Together, these services and resources will ensure residents remain active and engaged in the community.

"Sequoia Commons is an excellent example of how thoughtful investments in affordable housing can meet the specific needs of rural, inland communities while saving energy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and increasing transportation options and access to outdoor space for residents and the broader community," said Louise Bedsworth, Executive Director of California Strategic Growth Council.

Sequoia Commons is the third affordable rental community built by Self-Help Enterprises in Goshen, and is among 35 affordable apartment rental communities serving 1,572 families throughout the San Joaquin Valley.

Sequoia Commons is funded by: California Strategic Growth Council's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC), a California Climate Investments program (cap-and-trade dollars at work) administered with the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD); HCD's HOME program; Red Stone Equity Partners, Aetna, a CVS Health Company, and Pacific Western Bank. Funding for the project also included a grant from San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, to support efforts to integrate vanpool and other improvements to promote non-motorized transit, with the goal of reducing priority pollutants and improving air quality in Tulare County. The design team consisted of Mogavero Architects and 4Creeks Civil Engineering.

"Sequoia Commons is a great example of how affordable housing, combined with supportive services, can truly have an impact on the lives of those in the community," said Kristen Miranda, California Market President for Aetna, a CVS Health company. "We are proud to not only help fund the development of Sequoia Commons, but also to work with community organizations to help provide support for residents that can help put them on a path to better health."