

THE SUN-GAZETTE

State forks over funding for Goshen supportive housing community

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Self Help Enterprises receives \$4 million in state funding to continue the construction of housing units for those experiencing trying to recover from homelessness

GOSHEN – Self Help Enterprises and Salt + Light received funding that will go toward the construction of the first-ever permanent supportive housing community in Goshen.

On Oct. 12, Gov. Gavin Newsom awarded Self Help Enterprises (SHE) with a little over \$4 million to fund the construction of housing units for those battling chronic homelessness. The funding will go toward the Neighborhood Village project that SHE is working on alongside nonprofit Salt + Light, a public benefit organization, according to program director Betsy McGovern-Garcia. The Neighborhood Village project will construct 52 housing units, among other amenities, and the funding from Newsom will go toward 36 of these housing units.

“In the spirit of changing the landscape of Tulare County for the better forever, I ask the Central Valley Community to trust Salt + Light by supporting us and allowing us to continue this important work of addressing homelessness,” Adrienne Hillman, founder and CEO of Salt + Light, said in a statement.

The Neighborhood Village will provide fully furnished 11 by 30-foot modular homes, primarily one bedroom, for individuals considered chronically homeless, meaning they have been experiencing homelessness for more than six consecutive months. The Neighborhood Village is the first of its kind in California, and will be located on 6.5 acres next to SHE’s Sequoia Commons multifamily housing

project, at Road 76 and Avenue 310 south of Florence Ave. in Goshen, adjacent to the city of Visalia.

The village will have amenities on site including, wrap around mental and physical health services, coordination of benefits and case management, wellness and financial literacy classes as well as alcoholics anonymous and narcotics anonymous meetings. There will also be job training and workforce development , social enterprise and dignified income opportunities as well as a coffee shop and marketplace.

The individuals who wish to live at the village must be 18 and older and residents are required to pay rent, which will be calculated at 30% of the average median income in Tulare County, divided by twelve months. The neighborhood is open to all and they won't turn anyone away up front because of reasons such as drug or alcohol addiction.

"It is not required that someone be clean and sober to come to The Neighborhood," the salt and light website stated. "It is extraordinarily difficult for a human being still being traumatized by a daily life without regular food, sleep or shelter to recover successfully before coming into our village."

Hillman said the life span of an individual experiencing chronic homelessness is shortened due to the trauma experienced. She said individuals living on the streets are also incredibly disconnected from humanity, and the memorial garden is to be "a beacon of hope for the living." Hillman's goal is to recreate a sense of family in this community because she said, the greatest cause of homelessness is profound catastrophic loss of family.