

ABC30 ACTION NEWS

Housing Watch: Affordable single-family homes being built in southwest Fresno

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By: Jessica Harrington



FRESNO, Calif. (KFSN) -- In Housing Watch, construction has begun on new affordable single-family homes in southwest Fresno.

Just across the street from Edison High School sits an empty plot of land on the corner of E. Florence and S. Walnut Avenue.

"This parcel has been vacant for decades and has been a historical problem for the neighborhood," Fresno City Councilmember Miguel Arias said.

But now, Arias says things are about to change.

After four years of planning, construction is underway on affordable single-family homes.

"We want to give individuals the opportunity to rent and to own without having to leave their neighborhood," Arias said.

The homes will be 3 to 4 bedrooms.

Construction will happen in three phase with 14 homes in the first phase, 25 in the second, and 100 in the third.

The first two phases will be affordable housing and are expected to be complete within two years. The rest of the homes will be sold at market rate.

With assistance from Self-Help Enterprises -- a non-profit for community development -- families who make less than 80 percent of the area median income will have the opportunity of becoming homeowners.

"It is a tried and true method to build generational wealth and when people are left out of the homeownership market they just don't get that opportunity," President & CEO of Self-Help Enterprises Tom Collishaw.

Collishaw says more than two dozen families have gone through necessary counseling and home buyer education program as they prepare to qualify for a mortgage.

The new construction will also benefit homes already in the area that are prone to flooding.

The area will now be connected to the flood control system, something that wasn't done previously.

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Debbie Darden, a chair for the Golden Westside Planning Committee, says she's excited to see plans moving forward.

"To be able to see these vacant areas be developed to the potential that they have, it will change our community." Darden said.

Darden hopes the new housing will encourage businesses, like a grocery store, to come to the area.

You can learn more about the new homes by contacting Self-Help Enterprises or the Fresno Housing Authority.