

THE SENTINEL

Public housing development offers affordable options in north Hanford

January 23, 2024

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Construction continues on the Northstar Courts, a multifamily housing development project being built in Hanford.

Vice-President of Self-Help Enterprises, Betsy McGovern Garcia, and Jessica Hoff Berzac, co-founder and principal of UPholdings, are both delighted and grateful to have Northstar Courts in Hanford.

“This development is a result of strong partnerships and a shared vision for a more inclusive and equitable Hanford,” McGovern Garcia said. “I look forward to the positive impact Northstar Courts will have on the lives of its residents and the surrounding community.”

Northstar Courts is co-developed and owned by UPholdings and Self-Help Enterprises.

Primary funding is through the California Debt Limit Allocation Committee, California Tax Credit Allocation Committee, California Department of Housing and Community Development, City of Hanford, Kings County, Walker Dunlop, and Key Bank.

Grant programs include the Permanent Local Housing Allocation Program, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, the Department of Housing and Community Development, Whole Person Care Pilot, and Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Grant Program.

The Butterfly Gardens project in Clovis and the Finca Serena project in Porterville are two examples of the collaboration between Northstar Courts co-developers and owners.

"We are dedicated to creating a welcoming and supportive environment for our future residents and look forward to hearing the stories of lives transformed by having a safe and secure place to call home," Hoff Berzac said.

UPholdings issued a statement recently providing a status update ahead of the anticipated April completion date.



According to the release, leasing applications are currently being accepted.

Due to eligibility and income restrictions, all units are limited to households making at or below 60% of the Area Median Income, which is somewhere between \$60,000 and \$72,000.

Based on the National Low Income Housing Coalition calculations, to afford a modest one-bedroom rental home at fair market rent, a renter must earn at least \$15.50 per hour and work 88 hours a week.

The report also found that California's fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$2,197. To afford this, a renter must earn \$7,322 per month or \$87,877 annually.

"The lack of affordable, safe housing across the state is no secret in California. All the agencies and partners we've worked with, from local government up to the state level, are aware of this issue and want to make a dent in it," according to a UPholdings spokesperson. "There are of course administrative hurdles and due diligence that slow the process down, but in general the state of California has worked to make affordable housing much easier to develop and finance over the past few years, which is true both at the local and county level as well."

The news release indicated wraparound services like educational training, case management, mental health care, physical health care, and employment services are some of the wraparound services offered to the Northstar households.

The Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance Coordinated Entry System provides referrals for people exiting homelessness. Other target households are farmworkers and people living with disabilities.

The project was designed by Central Valley architect RL Davidson and built by Central Valley-based BJ Perch Construction.

Northstar offers 72 units and features one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments with several amenities, including onsite management, a large community room, playground, dishwashers, and proximity to public transportation.