

# ABC 23 BAKERSFIELD

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## Bakersfield announces lottery for new low-income homes in land trust program

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By: Ruby Rivera



BAKERSFIELD, Calif. (KERO) — The Bakersfield Community Land Trust and Self-Help Enterprises are launching a lottery for two affordable homes designed solely for first time home buyers in the low to moderate income families.

Empty lots can be found all throughout the city, but now, local officials are working to turn the spaces into forever homes. Two sites have already been built on the southwest side of town, designed solely for first time home buyers.

“We as a city and as a community ought to do more to help encourage first time home buyers to purchase homes and to also create the opportunities for people to actually compete in a very competitive housing market,” said Bakersfield council member Andrae Gonzales.

Gonzales says it’s this exact reason why the Bakersfield Community Land Trust organization was created.

Being Chairman of the board, Gonzales says though Bakersfield used to be known as an affordable place to live, that just isn’t the case anymore.

“Other neighborhoods, you know home ownership is 9% when the state averages 3-4 times higher than that. So we know that this is a significant problem in some of our neighborhoods,” said Gonzales.

Gonzales says with the city and Self Help Enterprises, two homes have already been built on the Southwest side of town, and in this first wave, they plan on constructing a total of roughly 15 homes.

However, these homes won't just be available for anyone, being specifically reserved for first time home buyers in the low to moderate income level.

"Individuals must be at 80% area median income or below. The mortgage that residents are going to pay when they purchase a unit through the land trust will be roughly 30% of their income on housing costs," said Vice President of Self Help Enterprises Betsy McGovern Garcia.

Gonzales says the project was made available through \$6.5 million in ARPA funding.

Applications are currently available online in English, Spanish, and Punjabi. In order to ensure a fair chance for everyone, future homeowners will be chosen through a lottery system.

"I want to see families able to own their home and live in safe neighborhoods and I want to see the neighborhood cohesion that we used to see decades ago. I want to see that come back and we can do that, this is just one way," said Gonzales.

The lottery runs from July 1 through August 8 with winners being chosen on August 13 at the next land trust meeting, [click here](#) to apply.