

# EL POPULAR

## Groundbreaking ceremony celebrates launch of affordable homes in Bakersfield

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By: El Popular Contributor



**BAKERSFIELD, CA (August 6, 2025)** – On Wednesday morning, local leaders and community members gathered at 346 S. Owens Street to celebrate a milestone for affordable housing in Bakersfield. The Bakersfield Community Land Trust (BCLT), in partnership with the City of Bakersfield and Self-Help Enterprises (SHE), hosted a groundbreaking ceremony marking the official start of construction on 14 new homes that will be sold to first-time, low- and moderate-income buyers.

The event drew support from city officials, housing advocates, and neighbors committed to expanding access to homeownership for local families.

“Everyone wants a safe, affordable place to call home,” said Karen Goh, Mayor of the City of Bakersfield. “Today’s groundbreaking marks a critical step towards realizing that vision in our community. The Bakersfield City Council’s formation of the Bakersfield Community Land Trust offers more residents a sustainable pathway to homeownership. It creates opportunities for families to build equity and generational wealth. This milestone represents the City’s continued

efforts to support the American dream, protect long-term residents, and preserve the rich cultural fabric of our neighborhoods.”

“We are proud to bring new affordable homes to Bakersfield families who have been waiting for the opportunity to own a home,” said Betsy McGovern-Garcia, Executive Director of the BCLT and Vice President at Self-Help Enterprises. “This project reflects the power of partnership and commitment to creating housing that lasts and supports strong, thriving communities for generations.”

Councilmember Andrae Gonzales, Chairman of the BCLT Board of Directors, added, “This groundbreaking marks a new chapter for southeast Bakersfield, rooted in equity, opportunity, and progress. The Bakersfield Community Land Trust isn’t just building new homes, we are helping families build stability and generational wealth. And the entire community will benefit. With new construction and new homeowners in Southeast Bakersfield, we are strengthening the foundation of community health and safety. This project is a long-overdue investment to a community full of potential and promise but has long been underserved.”

Although Ward 4 Councilmember Bob Smith was unable to attend the event, he shared the following statement: “Affordable housing is the key for the future economic prosperity of Bakersfield. This project and all the ones that follow in the years to come will provide an economic boost to the families purchasing the homes and the community at large. I’m proud to be a part of this important step for the families and economy of Bakersfield.”

The new homes are being developed across lots in Bakersfield and reflect the BCLT’s mission to make homeownership possible for households who are often priced out of the market. These homes will offer modern designs, energy-efficient features, and access to homeownership counseling services tailored to the needs of first-time, low-income homebuyers. The land trust model keeps homes permanently affordable by separating ownership of the home from the land. Buyers own and build equity in their home, while leasing the land through a long-term, renewable agreement. This approach ensures housing stays affordable not just for the first buyer, but for generations to come.

The first two homes, located at 7021 and 7033 Sunchase Drive, will be available through a public lottery. Applications opened July 1, 2025, and will close on September 10, 2025. A lottery drawing will be held on September 17, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. at 1600 Truxtun Avenue to select homebuyers.

To participate, applicants must submit a pre-application, provide a mortgage pre-approval for at least \$110,000, and meet eligibility criteria. Full information, including downloadable materials, is available at [www.bakersfieldclt.org](http://www.bakersfieldclt.org). Prospective buyers can also contact Self-Help Enterprises at (559) 651-1000 or email [info@bakersfieldclt.org](mailto:info@bakersfieldclt.org) to join the interest list and begin the process.

Preference will be given to current Bakersfield residents. Those needing support with budgeting, credit repair, or general readiness are encouraged to enroll in Self-Help Enterprises’ [Gateway Program](#), which offers free homeownership counseling and education.