

Arrowhead Grove Revitalization Project – a decade-long vision to transform a community through affordable housing

By Maryjoy Duncan - September 26, 2018



IECN photo Maryjoy Duncan: Community leaders convened at Olive Meadows of the Arrowhead Grove Revitalization Project on Friday, Sept. 21 to celebrate the completion of the first two phases and funding in the amount of \$76.8 million for the third phase. Pictured from left San Bernardino City Mayor Carey Davis; Assemblymember Eloise Gomez Reyes; Dr. Louise Bedsworth, Executive Director Strategic Growth Council; Senator Connie Leyva; SB County 5th District Supervisor Josie Gonzales; Steve PonTell, President and CEO, National CORE; SB Councilmembers James Mulvihill, Virginia Marquez and Fred Shorett.

Those who suffer homelessness, overcrowding or unstable living conditions are at increased risk of poor school attendance among school-aged children, and mental and physical health issues for adults. The importance of providing safe and affordable housing is critical in transforming a community by elevating the quality of life and providing opportunities.

Through public and private partnerships and extensive collaboration between different levels of government, the City of San Bernardino proved it possible to transform the former crime-ridden Waterman Gardens public housing development into a safe and thriving neighborhood through the Arrowhead Grove Neighborhood Revitalization Project.

Two initial phases of the redevelopment – Valencia Vista and Olive Meadow – have been completed, earning recognition from the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, the Affordable Housing Tax Credit Coalition and others for the transformative impact the project is having on lives and the community at large.



IECN photo Maryjoy Duncan: Safe Routes to School has been

“This is more than just housing, this is about reinventing a community and revitalizing San Bernardino, to ensure the safety of everyone in the community,” announced Rep. Pete Aguilar (D. San Bernardino). “Here is an opportunity to raise a family in a safe community and a place to call home.”

established from Arrowhead Grove to E. Neal Roberts Elementary School; pictured are students who performed prior to the event.

As traditional funding sources have become sparse, this project represents a public-private partnership that is redefining how the state, cities, developers, and health institutions together can create affordable and workforce housing. Partners include the City of San Bernardino, the County of San Bernardino, Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino; National Community Renaissance and the Clancy Company.

Community leaders convened at Olive Meadow on Friday to celebrate the success of the first two phases and funding for the third phase – public funding of \$8.2 million from the Housing Authority of San Bernardino County, County of San Bernardino and City of San Bernardino; \$20 million from the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Community program; and a \$1.2 million loan from Dignity Health.

“Community housing and the health of the people we serve are inseparable issues,” said June Collison, president, Community Hospital of San Bernardino. “People who live in homes they can afford are better able to support their families with healthy food and important preventive health services. In turn, this brings down the cost of care overall by reducing acute care and emergency room admissions.”

Safe Routes to School has been established from Arrowhead Grove to E. Neal Roberts Elementary School, and social services are delivered on-site to provide residents the tools and support they need to move toward financial independence.

Dr. Louise Bedsworth, Executive Director of the Strategic Growth Council, explained the organization supports the development of healthy, vibrant and resilient communities across the state, and over half of the \$1 billion spent that past year was used to support low income and disadvantaged communities.

“(Arrowhead Grove) is a representative project because of its level of community engagement and partnerships, and the integration of transportation, safe routes to school, transit passes, childcare and workforce development,” Bedsworth commended.

When completed, the neighborhood revitalization project will include approximately 400 units of affordable housing, 20 percent of which will be designated market-rate housing (the first to be built in the city for families), and community amenities – such as a community center, swimming pool, children’s play area – upgraded infrastructure and an educational village space designed to foster integrated learning for children in the community.

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