

County breaks ground on Redlands housing community

By Kristina Hernandez, Staff Writer Redlands Daily Facts

Posted:

RedlandsDailyFacts.com

REDLANDS - Wielding shovels and sporting hard hats, representatives from the County Housing Authority broke ground on the Valencia Grove housing project on Thursday.

The project will replace 70-year-old rental homes at the corner of Orange Street and Lugonia Avenue with a more modern, energy efficient community comprising starter homes and townhouse apartments.

The project will bring with it a 228 mixed-income unit community, a multi-use recreation center with a pool and three playground areas for children.

The Housing Authority of the county of San Bernardino and Housing Partners I, Inc. are spearheading the project.

"Today's groundbreaking marks really a historic moment going forward, and also a historic moment going backwards. There was public housing built throughout the United States, almost a million units, right near World War II. These units are small, not very viable for the future, but also have a great history for the past 70 years," said Daniel Nackerman, president of the County Housing Authority. "We have had great families who have lived here."

Among the audience were Assemblyman Mike Morrell, R-Rancho Cucamonga and state Sen. Bob Dutton, R-Rancho Cucamonga. Both men presented the housing authority with certificates of recognition for the project.

"I love when communities can get better and grow, and bring good projects to our town," said Morrell.

Representatives from Rep. Gary Miller, R-Brea, and Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., were in attendance, along with Third District Supervisor Neil Derry, and Redlands Councilman Jon Harrison and Mayor Pete Aguilar.

"We feel this is an incredibly strong project that will really integrate the community and that community spirit into this location," said Aguilar.

Construction on the project will be done in three phases, with work being completed on- and off-site with the help of Clayton Homes, using a modular construction format.

The first phase will take place on the block of Lugonia and Orange, up to Sixth Street and Delaware Avenue, and could take 16 to 18 months to complete.

Other phases will follow.

Demolition of the buildings will be in the next few weeks, as construction crews are working to salvage materials from the vacated homes.

The project does not have an estimated date of completion, but could cost the housing authority up to \$50 million.

Those who lived in the housing community prior to the groundbreaking have moved to other homes with the assistance of the housing authority and the U.S. Housing and Urban Development, said Ana Gamiz, director of policy and community affairs for the County Housing Authority, prior to the groundbreaking.

She added that after each phase of construction is complete, families will be able to move back in, and they will have their first pick of residences.

kristina.hernandez@inlandnewspapers.com

Reach Kristina via email, or call her at 909-793-3221, or find her on Twitter @TheFactsKris.