

## Renovations in progress for San Bernardino public housing

Andrew Edwards, Staff Writer

Posted: 06/28/2010 04:30:09 PM PDT

SAN BERNARDINO - Public housing officials have hired about 80 construction workers to transform the hundreds of apartments near Medical Center Drive into a more welcoming environment.

Angela Musgrove, a 31-year-old medical biller, lives with her three children in one of the apartments that as of Friday, was covered in a gray coating showing that renovations were obviously still in progress.

"It was a little dilapidated," Musgrove said before breaking into laughter while describing the way her apartment looked when she moved in about one year ago.

"I think it's an improvement," she said of the Housing Authority's work.

Musgrove is one of the about 1,100 tenants who live in the Medical Center area.



Victor Ramirez, 45, of Leo's AC Inc., applies colored stucco to an apartment last week on West Temple Street at Medical Center apartments. The Housing Authority of the San Bernardino County is doing a \$10 million exterior renovation at the San Bernardino complex. (Al Cuizon/Staff Photographer)

The Housing Authority of San Bernardino County is spending roughly \$10 million for exterior renovations and energy-efficiency upgrades throughout the the 296 apartment units of the agency's Medical Center complex.

Housing officials have pooled financing from various sources, including about \$3.4 million authorized under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Housing Authority spokeswoman Ana Gamiz said.

"Most of our efforts actually, are to increase the curb appeal. Not just for residents but the broader neighborhood," said Gus Joslin, deputy executive director of the Housing Authority's real estate development office.

"They're very much institutional and always have been, and we're trying to make it look more like a neighborhood," Joslin continued.

The Medical Center apartments, known in the neighborhood as simply "The Projects," date back to the Truman Era. The first tenants moved in circa 1951 to buildings that still reflect that "institutional" aesthetic that Joslin described.

Perhaps the most dominant feature in the single-story apartments' old look is their concrete block construction. One of the changes that construction workers are implementing throughout the Medical Center neighborhood is to cover the walls with a layer of stucco that conceals the lines showing the outline of each block.

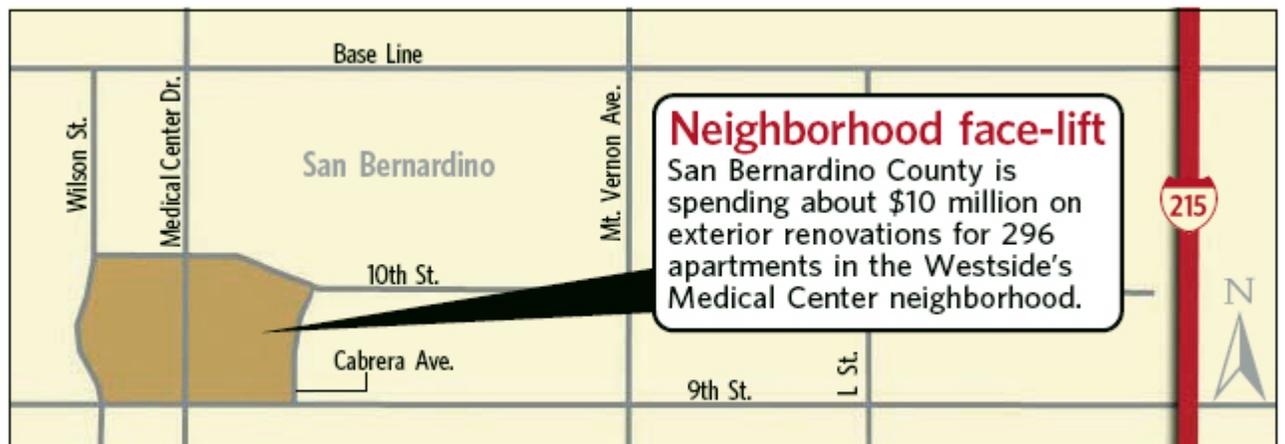
The added stucco also provides some insulation to each building, project manager Maurice Camp said.

The project also includes new paint, windows, security screens, water and sewer laterals, improved air-cooling systems and new roofing.

The neighborhood's apartments are in various stages of renovations. Some look as if the process is just beginning, others are covered in a gray coating while awaiting final stucco work and there are other buildings where the work looks to be just about complete.

Some of the buildings where work has progressed the furthest were painted in eggshell and beige colors. There are five color variations to be employed across the neighborhood, Camp said.

The job scheduled calls for renovations to be completed in December, but construction crews may be able to finish around the end of October, he said.



Google Earth; staff graphic

Read more: [http://www.sbsun.com/ci\\_15395991?IADID=Search-www.sbsun.com-www.sbsun.com#ixzz0sNBmkWS6](http://www.sbsun.com/ci_15395991?IADID=Search-www.sbsun.com-www.sbsun.com#ixzz0sNBmkWS6)