

VISALIA TIMES DELTA

Neighborhood Village opens to provide housing, opportunities for Tulare County homeless

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A grand opening celebration for The Neighborhood Village, a permanent supportive housing community for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, was held at its new Goshen location on Sept. 26.

Salt + Light, a Visalia-based nonprofit dedicated to addressing homelessness, partnered on the project with [Self-Help Enterprises](#), a community development organization that works with low-income families to create and sustain healthy homes and communities.

The [new 53-unit community](#) includes: furnished modular homes with amenities, a coffee shop, marketplace, park, memorial garden and columbarium, dog park, library, chapel, organic garden, outdoor eating area, and community kitchen.



'We are creating a space of true transformation'

On-site programs and services include resident care, dignified income opportunities, job training and workforce development, mental and physical health services, coordination of benefits and case management, wellness and financial literacy classes, and Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings.

"This grand opening is such a milestone and not just for Salt + Light and Self Help Enterprises, but for this entire community," Salt + Light CEO Adrienne Hillman said at the event. "When I founded Salt + Light five years ago, we had no money, no donors, no volunteers, just a lot of faith and the hope and belief that we can do something really major here. And here we are, just weeks shy of our fifth birthday, and we're in Goshen.

Hillman said the neighborhood village is more than just a housing project.

"It's a place where those who experience homelessness can rebuild their lives with dignity and support with wraparound services, job opportunities, and most importantly, a relational community," she said. "We are creating a space of true transformation. There's nothing like this in the state of California. This is not just housing. This is about human belonging, purpose, and hope."

The program also included remarks from: President/CEO of Self-Help Enterprises Tom Collishaw, Tulare County Supervisors Eddie Valero and Amy Shuklian, Gustavo F. Velasquez, director of the California Department of Housing & Community Development, and other key supporters of the project.

Providing an insider's perspective of what the Neighborhood Village means to unhoused community members was a new resident introduced as "our friend Patrick" who expressed his gratitude before talking about his 30-year drug addiction.

"When my mom passed away, my world fell apart," Patrick said. "I had no one to turn to, no support, and I ended up on the streets, living in my car. My situation got worse when my car got stolen in Earlimart. I had lost everything and I had nowhere to go. I was left on the streets with no hope.

"Thankfully, my uncle gave me a ride back to Visalia, dropped me off at Kaweah Delta Hospital," he continued. "I was assessed and ended up staying there for seven days. After that, I found myself at the Good Samaritan Healing Center, trying to rebuild my life from scratch.

It was at Good Samaritan on his 100th day of sobriety that he met Julie Jimenez from Salt + Light, Patrick said.

"It was a blessing," he said. "Meeting her changed everything for me."

"Julie didn't just help me with paperwork or finding resources," he continued. "She was a consistent source of encouragement. She visited me regularly, listened to my concerns, suggested ways for me to stay on track, like staying busy, taking walks, going to meetings. Her support kept it going when things felt impossible."

Patrick now has a place he calls home.

During the program, Hillman announced a new partnership "for the ages" with Adventist Health, resulting in the renamed Adventist Health Hope & Purpose Room.

After the program, the standing-room-only crowd explored the community, including a sample residence. A ribbon-cutting ceremony with more than 100 participants also followed the program.