

ABC 23 BAKERSFIELD

Arvin introduces housing improvement programs for low-income families

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ARVIN, Calif. (KERO) — The City of Arvin is looking to lend a helping hand to homeowners when it comes to making critical repairs to their homes.

BROADCAST TRANSCRIPT:

Homeowners in Arvin now have the opportunity to make critical repairs to their homes that they may not have been able to do otherwise. On Wednesday night, community members came out to the Arvin City Chambers to learn about two key programs being offered to them.

"Currently, we've been invited by the City of Arvin to introduce two programs that we have through the City of Arvin," said Irma Wheeler with Self Help Enterprises, a community development organization.

According to the Wheeler, the ADU Loan Program provides funding for homeowners to build or repair Accessory Dwelling Units. These units allow homeowners to provide a separate living space for a family member or to use as a rental.

Christine Viterelli with the City of Arvin says that this program is an effort to meet the state's Regional Housing Needs Assessment that pushes for housing development.

"The ADU program would increase housing within the city, so it's a win for the city, it's a win for residents," said Viterelli.

Arvin is a growing city that needs more housing. A Housing Unit Survey conducted by the City of Arvin shows that in 2025, the city increased its housing by a total of 14 new units. 10 which were ADU and 4 which were garage attached.

"The ADU program will offer funding and in addition to \$20,000 per ADU, that the city already has set up, they can also apply for additional ADU through Self Help Enterprises," said Viterelli.

Meanwhile, the Housing Rehabilitation Program helps income-eligible homeowners make repairs to their homes such as roofing, plumbing, electrical, and heating and cooling.

Through the program, Wheeler says the city offers homeowners a 30-year loan with a zero percent interest rate to conduct repairs inside their household.

One resident interested in applying to the program is Henry Benavidez who says he and his family moved to Arvin in 1974. He says his mother and uncle reside in Arvin. With both of them being in their 70s, he says he would like to make their home handicap accessible.

"My mom desperately needs a roof," said Benavidez. "With the summers here in Arvin, she has a swamp cooler, so if you know once it hits 100 degrees the swamp cooler is no good."

Also looking to improve her home is Maria Trinidad Hernandez who has been living in Arvin for over 32 years.

"I would like to repair my house. I've had my house for about 30 years now and so I would like to give it an upgrade," said Hernandez.

Those interested in applying to either of the programs are encouraged to contact Wheeler by calling (559) 802-1647 or emailing IrmaW@SelfHelpEnterprises.org.