

# Affordable homes in works

## CHISPA successful with self-build, moderate-income dwellings

By ZACHARY STAHL  
The Salinas Californian

With market-rate homes selling for about \$460,000 in south Monterey County, the region's farm workers and even many teachers and firefighters are priced out of buying a home.

This is why the Community Housing Improvement Systems Planning Association is developing affordable homes for everyone from field hands to middle-class professionals.

"We try to target all of the income levels as much as we can, from very low and low to moderate," said Gabriel Torres, project manager for CHISPA.

The affordable housing developer's newest projects in south county are Walnut Place in Greenfield and the Rancho San Vicente subdivision in Greenfield.

Walnut Place, completed in June, offers 36 single-family homes.

Twenty-four of the units were built through CHISPA's "self-help" program, in which families help build their own homes in exchange for a reduced purchase price.

Twelve units were built for moderate-income families.

The development at Walnut Avenue and 12th Street also will include 40 multi-family rental townhomes.

The variety of housing programs has created a mixed neighborhood that's home to field laborers, hospitality workers from the Monterey Peninsula, nurses and teachers, Torres said.

The development is within walking distance to downtown and an elementary school, he said.

The homes are architecturally basic; some are single-level, others have two stories, Torres said. They range in size from about 1,200 square feet to 1,545 square feet.

They have three or four bedrooms and lot sizes averaging



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The Rancho San Vicente housing project in Soledad was a project of CHISPA (Community Housing Improvement Systems Planning Association).

## CHISPA HOMES IN SOUTH COUNTY

### Rancho San Vicente

- n **LOCATION:** San Vicente Road in Soledad.
- n **UNITS:** 45 "self-help" single-family homes, 37 moderate-income homes.
- n **COMPLETION:** 2005.
- n **PRICE:** \$190,000 to \$235,000; all units affordable.
- n **HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION:** No.
- n **CONTACT:** [www.chispahousing.org](http://www.chispahousing.org), 757-6251.

### Walnut Place

- n **LOCATION:** Walnut Avenue and 12th Street in Greenfield.
- n **UNITS:** 24 "self-help" single-family homes, 12 moderate-income homes. Forty rental townhomes under construction.
- n **COMPLETION:** June.
- n **PRICE:** \$203,000 to \$255,000; all units affordable.
- n **HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION:** No.
- n **CONTACT:** [www.chispahousing.org](http://www.chispahousing.org), 757-6251.

5,000 square feet, Torres said.

The homes sold for as low as \$203,000 for a self-help house to \$255,000 for a moderate-income home, he said.

Since the self-help homes were built simultaneously, neighbors have gotten to know each other well, Torres said.

"It's a very tight-knit commu-

nity," he said.

A similar but larger Soledad development was completed by CHISPA in 2005.

The Rancho San Vicente subdivision near the intersection of Market Street and San Vicente Road has 45 self-help homes and 37 moderate-income units.

Torres said the project is with-

in walking distance of Soledad High School.

Quite a few employees from nearby Scheid Vineyards live in Rancho San Vicente, he said. Some had commuted from Salinas before moving in, Torres said.

He said the development has a well-established neighborhood watch program.

The units' size and architecture are similar to Walnut Place, Torres said, but home prices ranged from \$190,000 to about \$235,000.

CHISPA has two other housing projects in the works in south Monterey County.

The affordable housing builder plans to break ground at Vineyard Green in Greenfield and Valley View in San Lucas before December, said Alfred Diaz-Infante, president and chief executive officer of CHISPA.

Both subdivisions will offer a combination of self-help housing and moderate-income housing, Diaz-Infante said.

Vineyard Green will have a 40-unit apartment complex in addition to single-family homes, he said.

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