



SAN DIEGO
HOUSING
COMMISSION

News Release

March 23, 2015

Media Contact:
Maria Velasquez, Senior Vice President
Communications & Legislative Affairs
619-578-7560
mariav@sdhc.org

148 AFFORDABLE APARTMENTS FOR LOW-INCOME SENIORS OPEN IN MASTER-PLANNED CIVITA DEVELOPMENT IN SAN DIEGO'S MISSION VALLEY

Thirty residents using federal Housing Choice Vouchers for rental assistance are among the inaugural tenants, program administered by San Diego Housing Commission

SAN DIEGO, CA—An apartment complex with 148 units for low-income seniors is the first affordable housing to open in the master-planned Civita development in Mission Valley under the City of San Diego's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. The units will remain affordable for 55 years.

Versa at Civita (Versa), commemorated today with a grand opening, was developed by Chelsea Investment Corporation. Its apartments are restricted to low-income renters who are 55 or older. These studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments are the first of the total of 478 affordable housing units that will be included among the 4,780 residences in Civita, a 230-acre community under development located in San Diego's Mission Valley. ([Watch the video.](#))

The San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC), which administers the City of San Diego's (City) Inclusionary Housing Fund, reviewed the Versa proposal in 2011. The purpose of the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance is to bring about a balanced community that can be home to all income levels.

"We're always trying to help to create affordable housing opportunities in major projects," said Frank Urtasun, a member of the SDHC Board of Commissioners and Regional Vice President of External Relations for San Diego Gas & Electric Company. "This is the model project. It's just an absolute gorgeous project."

In addition, about 30 renters with federal Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) are among the first low-income seniors who qualified to live at Versa. SDHC administers the HCV program on behalf of the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development in which participants pay 30 percent of their income toward the rent.

Jim Schmid, CEO of Chelsea Investment, said Versa is 50 percent occupied and 100 percent leased, with about 1,000 additional names on a waiting list.

San Diego City Councilmember Todd Gloria noted affordable housing is especially important for senior citizens living on fixed incomes. Versa "is a beautiful project, subsidized or not, that anybody would be proud to live in, certainly be proud to have in their city," Gloria said.

The City's inclusionary affordable housing regulations for residential development outside the North City Future Urbanizing Area require developers to dedicate 10 percent of their housing units as affordable housing for households with incomes at or below 65 percent of the San Diego Area Median Income (AMI).

The affordability mix at Versa ranges from 30 percent of AMI, which was \$16,600 for an individual in 2014, to 60 percent AMI, which was \$37,920 for a two-person household in 2014.

The land for Versa was donated to Chelsea Investment by Sudberry Properties, the master developer of Civita. Marco Sessa, Sudberry Senior Vice President–Land Development/Residential, said Versa is “the very beginning of fulfilling a lot of commitments that we have made in developing this master plan,” which will include a 17-acre public park adjacent to Versa.

Versa also includes: a community clubhouse and computer center; laundry centers on each floor; and community-wide high-speed Internet.

Robert Laing, executive director of Pacific Southwest Development Corporation, a nonprofit partner in the development, said services offered to Versa residents will include computer classes, English as a Second Language classes, art instruction, financial education workshops and a senior companion program to provide assistance with everyday tasks.

“We believe that we need to promote an active lifestyle,” Laing said.

In addition to 148 affordable apartments, Versa has two manager's units.

For more information about SDHC, please visit www.sdhc.org.

###