

# PASO PEOPLE

## Phase One of Oak Park Redevelopment is Underway

By Bob Chute

The Paso Robles Housing Authority celebrated the Oak Park Project Ground Breaking on February 12 with a giant excavator tearing down one of the deteriorated public housing units that has served residents since 1942.

"This began 10 years ago, when the Paso Robles Housing Authority, along with the assistance of a team from Cal Poly University, applied for a grant from the Bank of America Affordable Housing Challenge and won first place," said current Housing Authority Chairman Dick Willhoit during the onsite program. "That was a stepping stone to the future for the Paso Robles Housing Authority, a quasi-city independent organization. "Oak Park was projected for redevelopment by the City of Paso Robles in 2006 and later included as a portion of the City's Uptown Center Project but our plans for Oak Park were ahead of that effort. The Monterey County Housing Authority became involved in 2008 to assist in the complicated funding of the project."

"The Housing Development Consulting Corporation (HDC) provides services to other communities for redevelopment of these type projects," said Starla Warren, CEO of Monterey County Housing Authority. "It's been a hard road to get to this point but we're here and the next



Paso Robles Housing Authority Board of Commissioners participating in the official ground breaking, below, of Phase 1 of the Oak Park Project include, from left: tenant commissioner Sherryl Bragg, commissioners Cliff Smith, Chairman Dick Willhoit, Steve Sylvester, Bob Fonarow, Sheri Goforth, Executive Director Armando Corella, Project Manager Dave Cooke, and CEO of the Monterey County Housing Authority Starla Warren.

three phases will be easier."

Phase 1 of the Oak Park Apartments, at 28th and 30th Streets between Park and Railroad Streets in Paso Robles, will provide an 80 unit multifamily rental housing development, affordable to low-income families. The project will target families with incomes between 30 and 60 percent of AMI; 32 of the units will be for rental Section 8 project-based voucher assisted households; and 20 will be provided to farmworker families. The units will include central air, refrigerator, stove/oven, dishwasher, disposal, w/d hookups, patio/balcony, blinds, walk-in closet and more.

Oak Park I is the first of a four-

phase project totaling over 300 affordable housing units and will replace the 148 units currently existing on the 5.52 acre parcel. The apartments in Oak Park were built in 1942 as housing for enlisted men and women and their families serving at Camp Roberts. During the 1950s the apartments were converted to low-income housing to serve the needs of families in Paso Robles and the surrounding area.

The project developer and general partner is the Housing Development Consulting Corporation (HDC), a 501 (c)(3) non profit organization, with funders including the City of Paso Robles, Alliant, Rabobank, USDA,

County of San Luis Obispo and PR LLC. The Development Team includes the Paul Davis Partnership and ROEM ICON.

The grounds will include an on-site manager along with a laundry room, community room, picnic area, playground, basketball and volleyball. The Housing Authority co-sponsors an After-School Program, a Co-Ed Soccer Program for children 3-14, an All-Girls Soccer Program up to 15 years of age, and an Academic Club Team for boys ages 13-14. Other services on-site include a preschool, California Rural Legal Assistance, and a Brown-Bag food program.