SUMMER 2026

THE DWELLING DIGEST

Empowering people in our community through affordable housing and self-sufficiency opportunities

Casitas Del Camino Breaks Ground!

The Albuquerque Housing Authority has officially broken ground on Casitas Del Camino, marking a major milestone in the city's ongoing effort to expand high-quality, affordable housing options for local residents. Located in a key residential corridor, this brand-new development will deliver modern housing designed to offer long-term stability, comfort, and independence for working families, seniors, and individuals across Albuquerque.

Beyond simply adding units, Casitas Del Camino places a strong emphasis on sustainability and vibrant community living. The development will feature accessible floor plans, energy-efficient appliances, and climate-conscious landscaping tailored for New Mexico's high-desert environment. Future residents will also enjoy dedicated shared spaces, play areas, and convenient access to local public transit routes and nearby community services.

City officials, housing advocates, and local neighbors recently gathered at the site to celebrate the strategic collaboration driving the project forward. Event speakers highlighted how Casitas Del Camino directly reflects the housing authority's core mission to foster safe, dignified, and sustainable neighborhoods.

Closing the Gap on Food Insecurity

To protect residents during federal SNAP uncertainties, the Albuquerque Housing Authority launched an Emergency Food Program funded by the Albuquerque Community Foundation. Recognizing that housing stability requires food security, AHA's Service Coordination team stepped into a direct-service role to supply emergency nutrition to families in high-need food deserts like the International District.

Staff hand-assembles boxes with shelf-stable proteins, grains, and essential cooking staples, then delivers them directly to residents' doors to bypass local transit barriers. Beyond delivering food, this door-to-door approach allows staff to conduct vital wellness checks, ensuring vulnerable seniors and families receive both immediate nutritional support and hands-on community care.

International District Celebrates Art Installations

The International District Choice Neighborhoods initiative is bringing vibrant, community-driven placemaking projects to life through its Early Action Activities. Designed to deliver immediate, visible enhancements while long-term revitalization moves forward, these initiatives are transforming local public housing properties and surrounding neighborhood streets into colorful reflections of resident pride. The festivities kicked off on April 15 at Wainwright Manor, where residents, city leaders, and housing advocates gathered to celebrate the official installation of custom artwork panels across the property.

Building on that artistic momentum, the initiative brought creative flair directly to the pavement with two dynamic asphalt mural installations. The first asphalt mural was painted at the intersection of Kentucky Street and Kathryn Avenue in late May, followed by a second installation at Southern Avenue and Grove Street in mid-June. Community members came together once again on June 17 at Grove to celebrate these striking street transformations, which enhance neighborhood aesthetics and foster a deeper sense of connection.

The physical transformation of the district is continuing as the focus expands to functional outdoor living spaces. Contracts have officially been signed with vendors to construct brand-new seating areas and planter beds, with installation expected in August to build inviting gathering spots for residents. Together, these early action projects highlight how the Albuquerque Housing Authority and its partners are actively honoring resident voices and laying a vibrant foundation for the future of the International District.

STAFF HIGHLIGHT: SHAWN WATSON

The Albuquerque Housing Authority is proud to recognize Shawn Watson as the recipient of the First Quarter 2026 Core Value Employee Award. Having served with AHA since February 2022, Shawn was selected for her outstanding leadership, quiet diligence, and embodiment of AHA's core values: service, accountability, compassion, integrity, and stewardship. Shawn received high praise across the agency for spearheading the multi-year Choice Neighborhoods initiative. In addition to writing the initial planning grant and coordinating extensive resident, community, and stakeholder meetings, her eye for detail was instrumental in guiding housing plans and editing the final Transformation Plan submitted in February 2026. Beyond driving the Choice Neighborhoods project and procuring its early action activities, Shawn seamlessly balanced her regular duties—managing project-based vouchers, environmental reviews, and construction loan draws—while stepping up to prepare board reports and assist the department during a search for a new Housing Development Director. From building key relationships with city leadership to assisting colleagues with last-minute grant proposals, Shawn's collaborative spirit continues to make a lasting impact on AHA and the community.