

SENIOR HOUSING COMPLEX RISING ON WEST CONGRESS

Teya Vitu | Downtown Tusconan | Posted: August 10, 2011

The new low-income senior housing project is starting to take shape on West Congress Street between the Santa Cruz River and Avenida del Convento.

This will amount to a 143-unit apartment complex with a six-story wing and five-story wing – the largest structure for the near West Side along Congress.

Construction expected to wrap up by September 2012 with senior citizens from the Armory Park Apartments moving in shortly thereafter.

Foundation work started in the first week of June, and now masonry walls are going up.

“My hope and expectation is that this will be a brand new, beautiful building that everyone can be proud of and will fit in with the community and will be an impetus to more development,” said Steve Greenbaum, president of Chicago-based Senior Housing Group, which is building the apartment complex and owns the Armory Park Apartments.

It’s been called New Armory Park, but Greenbaum insists that’s just a working name.

“We will come up with a new name tied to the area,” Greenbaum said.

These apartments are the first phase of a nine-block Mission District development on 14.3 acres of city-owned land for which the Tucson-based Gadsden Company has the development agreement. The apartments will fill the northeastern 1.6-acre plot, or upper right corner of a tic-tac-toe grid, which is called Block G.

Gadsden wants to fill this nine-block Mission District with three residential towers of six and eight stories to house 400 people; 250,000 square feet of retail; a boutique hotel and two more markets to join the recently completed Mercado San Agustin.

Senior Housing bought the land for \$250,000 on May 13 from the city in a three-way escrow closing agreement involving the city and Gadsden.

The three-way deal involves a slew of credits involving affordable housing and Gadsden’s costs to build, a parking garage, a public market and moving a water reclamation line.

The \$17 million apartment complex will have 650-square-foot one-bedroom apartments with each on the upper floor offering a balcony and the ground floor units will be slightly larger, Greenbaum said.

DOWNTOWN TUCSONAN

This project is meant as a one-for-one replacement for the 143-unit Armory Park Apartments, 211 S. Fifth Avenue, where most of the studio apartments measure 412 square feet.

Greenbaum is transferring the its federal Section 8 low-income housing subsidies the new West Side structure and extending the Section 8 status until 2041. He also received a \$2.85 million annual low-income housing tax credit from the Arizona Department of Housing that could ultimately be worth as much as \$28.5 million.

#