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New Affordable Housing Development in Southwest Atlanta

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A significant new affordable housing project, Sylvan Hills II, is set to transform southwest Atlanta with 233 apartments and townhomes on the site of the former Sylvan Circle Apartments. This development follows a 184-unit project for older residents that opened nearby two years ago, marking another step in addressing the city's housing challenges.

Soaring property prices and gentrification are pushing long-standing Atlanta residents out of their neighbourhoods. Affordable housing initiatives like Sylvan Hills II aim to anchor communities, offering stability for those struggling to keep pace with rising costs.

The Sylvan Hills II development will offer a mix of unit types, from studio “efficiencies” to three-bedroom layouts, catering to diverse household needs. In a recent interview at the groundbreaking event, Alan Ferguson, chief housing and real estate officer for Atlanta Housing, highlighted the collaborative effort behind the project. “What you see here today is a result of shared values, a common vision, and innovation,” Ferguson said, noting the project’s funding through a public-private partnership. Rents will range from \$1,200 to \$2,200, designed to accommodate varying income levels:

24 units are reserved for two-income households earning approximately \$47,733, or 50% of Atlanta’s area median income (AMI).

93 units will house tenants earning 60% of the AMI (\$57,333).

116 units are designated for those earning 80% of the AMI (\$76,400).

Sylvan Hills, a predominantly Black neighbourhood, is bordered by Langford Parkway to the south, Lee Street to the west, the Downtown Connector to the east, and Deckner Avenue to the north. The area has faced economic pressures, making projects like this vital for preserving community cohesion.

Mayor Andre Dickens has set an ambitious target of preserving or building 20,000 affordable housing units by 2030. To date, 6,800 units have been completed, with another 5,000 under construction or funded. Initiatives such as density bonus schemes and rapid housing projects are being leveraged to accelerate progress, though some question whether these measures will keep up with demand in a city grappling with growth.

Council Member Antonio Lewis, who represents the area, underscored the project’s importance for social mobility. “There simply aren’t enough words to express my gratitude for these public-private partnerships,” Lewis said. “At the heart of these efforts is the truth that everyone deserves a decent place to live and grow.”

Construction is expected to take 20 months, with units available for rent by late 2026. While the project offers hope for affordable living, concerns remain about the broader affordability crisis and whether such initiatives can scale fast enough to meet Atlanta’s growing needs.