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Temporary House Opens for Elk Grove's Homeless

"The Grace House," a transitional homeless house in Old Town Elk Grove, held a grand opening Saturday after volunteers spent months on renovations.

By [Cody Kitaura](#) [Email the author](#) March 26, 2013

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Credit [Cody Kitaura](#)

It's hard to make a good impression at a job interview after sleeping in a field the night before.

That's what Fred Bremerman, a volunteer mentor with Elk Grove PATH (People Assisting the Homeless), said Saturday at the grand opening for a transitional home for Elk Grove's homeless.

The five-bedroom, Old Town Elk Grove home, dubbed "The Grace House," will provide temporary shelter for a few people at a time while they look for work and more permanent housing.

"We're uniting around serving people and helping people to transition and get off the streets and into a home and back with their normal life," Elk Grove Mayor Gary Davis said.

The city purchased the house and [an army of volunteers overhauled it](#); the home will be overseen by [Sacramento Self-Help Housing](#), and the first year of operating costs are being paid for by [Impact Community Church](#).

Barry Smith, a senior pastor at Impact Community Church, said the operating costs are coming from a building fund earmarked for the church itself.

"We don't want to be selfish and think just of us," Smith said. "We want it [the church's building fund] to be changing lives."

The church has also provided funding for a year of Friday operations at the Elk Grove Food Bank, and will fund the first year of operation for [Serve Elk Grove](#).

John Foley, the Executive Director of Sacramento Self-Help Housing, said his organization has seen similar transitional houses in Sacramento make an impact in the lives of the down-and-out looking for work.

"Having a chance to be someplace rather than 'catch us when you can' gives people a chance to work on stabilizing their life," Foley said.

[Sacramento Self-Help Housing](#) will screen potential residents before allowing them to move into the house; a caseworker estimated the house would be full within a week.

Stan Sala examined a bedroom at the Grace House and [marveled at the renovations performed by volunteers](#). He said he and a friend were laid off when an Elk Grove AAA center closed, and said the closure sent his friend into a spiral that ended with that man becoming homeless.

The friend is now on a list of potential future residents of the home, and Sala said he's excited about the opportunity.

"He's coming back into society and this is going to be a great launching point for him."

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