One of the fastest growing populations experiencing housing challenges in Santa Cruz County are seniors. As the result of an innovative collaboration with the faith based community, St. Stephens Senior Housing responds to this need by providing 40 new affordable apartment homes to low-income seniors, including senior veterans and frail elderly, in Santa Cruz’s Live Oak neighborhood. St. Stephens began construction in spring 2016 and will welcome residents in spring 2017.

In 2010, through their work with COPA (Community Organized for Relational Power and Action), St. Stephen’s Lutheran Church identified the need to provide affordable housing for seniors in the Santa Cruz community. The following year the Church agreed to ground lease a portion of their property for affordable senior housing. Perfectly positioned along the Soquel Avenue corridor just a block from the Santa Cruz city limits, St. Stephens is in close proximity to many amenities and community services, including bus lines, a public park, supermarkets, pharmacies, the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, and Dominican Hospital.

MidPen Resident Services Corporation will provide on-site services staff to offer health and wellness services, educational programming, and targeted case management. Five units will be reserved for senior veterans and another five units for frail elderly, and extensive supportive services will be provided to those residents in collaboration with the VA Palo Alto Healthcare System HUD-VASH Program and the Health Projects Center. All services and supports are designed to help the senior residents age in place and live healthy, independent lives.