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HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS CEDC CELEBRATES THE GRAND OPENING OF RODNEY FERNANDEZ GARDENS – CEDC’s NEWEST AFFORDABLE APARTMENT HOMES IN SANTA PAULA

Ventura, CA – The Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation is pleased to announce that it will celebrate the grand opening of its newest affordable home development in Santa Paula on Friday, December 9 and Saturday, December 10 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The two celebrations will start with a formal program from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. The Rodney Fernandez Gardens, formerly known as Paseo Santa Barbara, are located at 210 W. Santa Barbara Street in Santa Paula.

Rodney Fernandez Gardens features 90 affordable rental homes which benefit low-income individuals and families, and enhance housing choices for Santa Paula residents by increasing the availability of rental housing affordable to Santa Paula’s working families, including agricultural workers. Forty-one of the 90 units have been set aside as farmworker rentals and tenants pay no more than 30 percent of their income. Section 8 is also accepted at the development, which also has a 30 percent income guideline.

Features of the new development include 11, two-story, Craftsman-style apartment buildings on the 6.48-acre site, including 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom apartments. In the middle of the complex is a community park, including playground equipment and a basketball court, and property management offices. Residential parking spaces encircle the perimeter of the development

A community center is also located in the center of the property, where residents can attend meetings, classes, and after-school programs such as homework clubs, tutoring and leadership development classes, including programs and services for local youth service organizations.

The new development increases the child care capacity in the community with the addition of a new child care center that will serve as many as 40 children. The child care center will be operated by Ventura County Head Start and Child Development Resources administrators, and plans to open in September 2012. The .3 acre child care center is located near Rodney Fernandez Gardens at 141 Dean Drive.

During the ceremony, CEDC will be formally dedicating the Community Center in the name of Jess Victoria, a Santa Paula advocate who passed away a few years ago. Mr. Victoria is known for having a tireless commitment to serving the low-income citizens and small business

proprietors of Santa Paula through advocacy and civic engagement. CEDC is pleased to honor the memory of Jess Victoria through this special commemoration.

CEDC will also dedicate the Child Care Center to Bob Borrego, a long-time civic leader in SP who has served his community in education, recreation, community services, affordable housing, and civic engagement.

The entire community will be dedicated to Rodney Fernandez, the Founding Executive Director of the Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation. Rodney, who is retiring at the end of December, is being honored by the commemoration of this neighborhood to honor his more than 35 years of service and contributions to the Ventura County community. This development exemplifies his unbridled passion, visionary leadership and fearless commitment to improving the quality of life for working families.

“I am humbled by the gesture of our Board of Directors and Senior Management Team in dedicating this beautiful, new community in my name,” says Rodney Fernandez. “Few accomplishments have given me more joy in my life than seeing families live and thrive in a community such as this. Time and time again, I have gotten thank you letters from youth and children living at CEDC communities telling me that they have gone on to college, or have become a working professional, and they never would have succeeded without having had a safe, affordable home. Homes like these make a world of difference to families and communities.”

In addition to serving low-income residents of the Santa Paula area, the Rodney Fernandez Gardens development served the City with an economic stimulus that is much-needed in Ventura County’s current economy with a total economic investment of \$35 million. The building of the development provided jobs to local building professionals and craftsmen and women, and subcontractors.

The development will serve to reduce overcrowding in the City of Santa Paula, because CEDC agreed to work with prospective residents to identify existing substandard or overcrowded housing that they may have been living in before moving into the Rodney Fernandez Gardens. Subsequently, the City could ensure that substandard housing is brought up to code and overcrowded housing conditions are not perpetuated. CEDC has successfully conducted this type of effort in other jurisdictions.

“Seeing families have new affordable homes, especially during the holidays, is heartwarming,” says Bernardo Perez, a Real Estate Development Project Manager at CEDC who oversaw the building of the community. “We appreciate the partnership that we were able to forge with the City of Santa Paula, and many other partners, in helping to make it happen.”

CEDC is a private non-profit affordable home and community development corporation that provides comprehensive housing services, through a community building approach, in Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties, and the Santa Maria area. Since its incorporation in 1981, CEDC has built more than 1,490 units of affordable for-sale and multi-family rental homes, manages 805 affordable rental units, and has assisted more than 8,000 individuals and families with homeownership education, counseling and lending services. CEDC is a chartered member of NeighborWorks®, a national network of more than 230

community development and affordable home developers. This year marks CEDC's 30th year of operation.

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