



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PRESS RELEASE

CEDC RECEIVES CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY FOR 18 FARMWORKER APARTMENTS IN OXNARD

"Farmworker apartments are a much-needed part of the County's housing stock."

Ventura, CA—The Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation announced that it has received "certificates of occupancy" from the City of Oxnard for its newest affordable, apartment community for farmworkers, Camino Gonzalez. The \$9.5 million project, located on a one-acre parcel at 471 and 481 W. Gonzales Road in Oxnard, is a rental townhome community for Oxnard individuals and families employed in the agricultural sector.

Representatives of the families who will be moving into the property later this month will gather at the new community this evening at 6:00 p.m. for an orientation meeting and tour.

The development features 18 one-, two-, and three-bedroom rental homes. The apartments are constructed as attached townhomes with a modern Spanish/Mediterranean-style design with some flats. The project incorporates green and sustainable features that meet the Green Point Rated Multifamily Housing Guidelines certification program. The development includes modern kitchens, Energy Star-rated appliances, a clothes washer and a dryer inside each unit, refrigerators, dishwashers, and ample storage space. Each home has a private car garage, and a private patio or balcony. The architecture, massing, and placement of the buildings is complementary to the existing environment of the area. The townhomes provide a superior level of privacy for each resident.

The Camino Gonzalez development addresses the need for more farmworker housing within the City as expressed by the City of Oxnard Housing Department that helped CEDC to develop the final site design.

“Farmworker apartments are a much-needed part of the County’s housing stock,” says Miguel Garcia, Project Manager for the Camino Gonzalez Project and a member of CEDC’s Real Estate Development team. “At the end of the day, 18 hard-working families are going to enjoy living an easier life within a CEDC community.”

The community will be managed by part-time property manager, part of CEDC’s Property and Asset Management team. The property manager also will manage another community located adjacent to Camino Gonzalez, which is called Paseo de Luz. Paseo de Luz is a 25-unit HUD 811 special needs development. Paseo de Luz is scheduled to be completed at the end of March.

Outdoor amenities include a basketball court and a community courtyard. A large community room is also located on-site and will be used for educational classes, computer classes, social events, and other community events. A sense of community within the interior of the development is anchored by a central courtyard.

There are many conveniences in close proximity to the property that are within walking distance or easily accessible by bus (Gold Coast Transit). Smart & Final grocery store, Curren Elementary School, Orchard Public Park, Community Memorial Hospital and Family Care Clinic are all within walking distance. Saint John's Hospital is a large medical facility and is easily accessible through public transportation.

Resident services provided by CEDC’s Community and Neighborhood Revitalization Department. Examples include ESL, Parenting Classes, Nutrition Classes, Finance Classes, Legal Aid, Health Clinic, etc.

This is one of six CEDC communities which is completely, or partly, occupied by farmworker residents. Whenever the Ventura County community at large is informed that CEDC has just completed a new farmworker apartment community, people always are happy to know the community is providing homes for local, hard-working agricultural workers. However, some people inevitably have questions about the residency status of the individuals. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), which provides some of the funding for the development, requires U.S. citizenship of the farmworker residents who will reside in the apartments.

“This is a much misunderstood myth associated with the residency status of individuals living at affordable farmworker developments,” says Nancy Conk, CEDC’s Chief Executive Officer. “Eligibility to live in a CEDC-built development is dictated by the funding sources we use to build farmworker homes.” These sources require that a head of household is legally authorized to work in the U.S. To make housing affordable to extremely low-income individuals including farmworkers, a combination of funding sources is usually necessary to build affordable homes including city and county funding, federal money, USDA Rural Development funds, State of California Farm Worker Housing grant funds and other funding sources.

All residents living at CEDC's farmworker homes pay 30% of their monthly income for rent. The apartment homes at Camino Gonzalez will rent from \$411 to \$1,007. Rents are set for each family based on their income and size of apartment.

According to a recent article in the *Ventura County Star*, agriculture supports as many as 47,000 jobs in Ventura County, more than any other sector of the economy except services. It is responsible for nearly five percent of the region's total economic activity, spinning off nearly \$2 billion a year. Today, Ventura County farmers ship lemons to Japan and truck fresh strawberries to Manhattan. They grow nursery stock, oranges and avocados, peppers, field greens and celery -- more than 100 crops in all, from artichokes to orchids, arugula to zucchini.

The Ventura County farmworker population includes migrant, seasonal and year-round workers. Therefore, farmworkers need a mix of affordable housing options including permanent housing.

"We are diligently completing the finishing touches on the Camino Gonzalez project, but we are also in the process of finishing another farmworker project in Piru as well," says Garcia. "Valle Naranjal will provide another 66 homes for farmworkers in the County."

Valle Naranjal is a rental community currently under construction which will provide farmworker family housing in Ventura County's Santa Clara River Valley. The development is situated on a former farmworker labor campsite built in the 1950's. The project includes an exhibit documenting the history of the labor camp and the agricultural legacy of the area.

Homes at Valle Naranjal are being constructed with modern kitchens, energy-efficient appliances, and outdoor amenities such as a recreational soccer field. Very low-income and low-income farmworker families will be served by the development. A resident manager will live in one of the 66 new affordable rental homes. The community is scheduled for completion in April 2012.

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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. Since its incorporation in 1981, CEDC has built more than 1,465 units of affordable for-sale and multi-family rental homes, manages 804 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 31st year of operation. See what else CEDC is doing by visiting <http://www.cabrilloedc.org/>.