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GRAND OPENINGS SET FOR NEW AFFORDABLE APARTMENT COMMUNITIES IN OXNARD

CEDC celebrates the completion of a new farmworker community and another for individuals with chronic mental illness.

Ventura, CA – The Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) will host a grand opening event at 11 am on Saturday, July 14th, and Wednesday, July 18th for its two adjoining affordable home apartment communities in Oxnard. The communities, called Camino Gonzalez and Paseo De Luz, are located at West Gonzales Road, and were completed in February and April under the supervision of CEDC’s expert construction team (for Camino Gonzalez) and Oxnard-based McCarthy Companies (for Paseo De Luz). The new developments are now home to 18 farmworker families and 25 adults with chronic mental illness.

The Paseo De Luz development is now home to 24 adults with mental health disabilities and one on-site manager. Each rental home in the community has a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, living and dining area. All of the rental homes at Paseo De Luz have modern kitchens with Energy Star rated appliances, including a refrigerator and washer and dryer.

Paseo De Luz is Cabrillo’s first HUD 811 project which provides special Federal financing to build homes for adults with disabilities. CEDC partnered closely with Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) which recommended individuals to CEDC’s Property Management Division for residency in the community. VCBH is providing services and working closely with residents at the property. The profile of individuals living at the site is, according to VCBH, “extremely low-income, homeless and at-risk-of-homelessness adults with a psychiatric disability including transition-age youth and older adults.”

There is a vital support services program on-site, provided by VCBH. The main goal of the program is to support residents in retaining tenancy by helping them to “succeed in their wellness, reduce hospitalizations, reduce incarcerations, increase employment,

and successfully re-integrate into the community,” according to VCBH. VCBH support staff, including psychiatrists, nurses, social workers, consumers, and personal service communicators, will be continually available to all tenants. Although these services are all voluntary, according to VCBH, “assertive engagement focusing on developing relationships and trust shall be provided to those individuals who decline services.”

“Paseo De Luz is critical to providing opportunities for individuals to have a place to call their own,” says Jodie Solorio, Project Manager for CEDC, and team lead on the Paseo De Luz project. “It is astonishing to reflect on the number of individuals that it takes to complete a project like Paseo De Luz. From the complex financing, to the unique design, the construction and finally the move-in of the residents, all of the people involved from city, county, State, and Federal agencies, we were all united by the common goal of providing housing to people in need of homes. Together we have provided a great service to the community and hopefully to the individuals who now live at Paseo De Luz.”

Camino Gonzalez, the adjoining development to Paseo De Luz, has 18 apartments for farmworkers. Its Spanish/Mediterranean architecture is different from Paseo De Luz, though complimentary in design and color. Each rental home ranges in size from one to three bedrooms. Each apartment has its own kitchen, living and dining area, bathroom, garage, and patio/balcony. The modern kitchens include Energy Star rated appliances, a washer and dryer, refrigerators, dishwashers, and ample storage space. In addition, a large community room is available to all residents for educational classes, social events, and other community events, including the grand opening celebration.

“The agriculture sector is a large portion of our County’s economy and it is very important to provide quality homes for our farmworker families,” says Miguel Garcia, Project Manager for CEDC, and team leader for the Camino Gonzalez project.

In one year, a farmworker who harvests and packs produce generally makes less than \$10,000, according to the National Agricultural Workers Survey by the United States Department of Labor, making it extremely difficult for a farmworker to rent an apartment in Ventura County. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, a renter household needs an annual income of \$37,960 for a two-bedroom rental apartment to be affordable.

For more information about Paseo De Luz or Camino Gonzalez or to schedule interviews, please call Jennifer Gordon, CEDC’s Communications Manager, at: 805-672-2575.

CEDC is a private non-profit 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 1,634 units of affordable for-

sale and multi-family rental homes, manages 823 affordable rental units, and has assisted more than 400 families into home ownership through education, counseling, and lending services. CEDC is a chartered member of NeighborWorks®, a national network of more than 235 community development and affordable housing organizations. This year marks CEDC's 31st year of operation.

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