

For Immediate Release

June 23, 2017

CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OPENS IN COMPTON

Neighborhood Housing Services of Los Angeles County, Pacific Coast Regional Small Business Development Corporation and Metro Community Development Corps celebrate the Grand Opening with five events over the course of a week.



NHS CEO Lori Gay speaks on a panel with Metro CDC CEO Mike Herman and PCR Small Business Development Center Director Constance Anderson.

Compton, CA- Neighborhood Housing Services of Los Angeles County (NHS), along with partners Metro Community Development Corporation and Pacific Coast Regional Small Business Development Corporation, celebrated the Grand Opening of the new Center for Sustainable Communities (CSC) this past week. Located in the heart of Compton at 1051 West Rosecrans Avenue, the CSC is part of the NHS *Sustainable Communities Initiative*-a comprehensive push towards holistic and sustainable place making and community development.

The CSC project began in early 2014 when NHS was first shown the abandoned grocery store shell nestled in the space between Gonzalez Park, Compton Fire Station no. 3, St. Philip Lutheran Church and the South Bay Retirement Residence, and just around the corner from Washington Elementary School. In the building's tired walls, NHS saw the chance to fill in the final piece of the puzzle. We envisioned a place that put health, housing, employment, conservation, entrepreneurship and public safety resources all under one roof. We imagined a building in bright colors, surrounded by green space and gardens where folks could simply come pick the food they needed. Two and a half years later, that vision has become a reality: "This is a place for the community. It's a place for them to bring their families, get the help they need, and then, go out

and share it with someone else. The Center provides the answer to what makes a neighborhood great and sustainable,” says NHS president and CEO Lori Gay

Grand Opening festivities kicked off with two concurrent events on Saturday, May 20. Compton Neighborhood Pride Day saw 150 volunteers and LA Conservation Corps members landscape, paint and plant trees and garden beds at three local residences, while back at the Center for Sustainable Communities, NHS hosted “Home Matters,” a quarterly slate of workshops designed to help community members buy homes, fix their homes, avoid foreclosure and manage their finances.

The CSC is set apart by its comprehensive community development service offerings. The “one-stop shop” for community empowerment will eventually host a Community Conservation Center, Community Technology Center, Financial Empowerment Center, health clinic, healthy living café, job training for youth and adults, organic garden, public safety and enforcement drop in site, senior and afterschool programs, and a vision clinic & 3D classroom. It currently hosts the NHS Financial Empowerment Center, PCR Small Business Development Center, and Metro CDC youth development, education and gardening programs.

NHS has actively pursued sustainability in the construction process: the new center is an adaptive reuse of the original store structure, is built with recycled materials wherever possible (paint, tile, bathroom stalls, etc.), and uses LED lighting and low water use toilets to minimize electricity and water consumption. The structure is surrounded by drought tolerant landscaping and flanked on one side by raised planting beds (built and managed by CSC partner Metro CDC) to be used for gardening workshops and health education.

Special thanks to title sponsor City National Bank and other donors like Citi, Weingart Foundation, NeighborWorks America and Pacific Western Bank. More thanks to 2011 American Idol finalist Jacob Lusk and *On Tour* for musical entertainment, and KJLH radio’s Guy Black and The Wave radio’s Pat Prescott for hosting the Community Leader’s Breakfast and Corporate Luncheon, respectively.

About Neighborhood Housing Services of Los Angeles County

Since 1984, NHS has developed and rehabilitated over 21,000 housing and commercial units, placed 4.4 million families on the road to homeownership, created 225 block clubs, employed 228 neighborhood youth, and created 56,500 jobs. NHS is the largest non-profit affordable homeownership provider in Southern California.

