



SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

As low to moderate income communities continue to address ongoing blight and strive towards long-term post-foreclosure neighborhood stabilization, NHS is deepening its focus on the environmental, social, health, and economic impacts of divestment on families and communities in low income neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles County. Of primary concern is how to address the growing challenges among low to moderate income (LMI) communities in targeted neighborhoods regarding lack of affordable housing, reduced capital access for small business development, chronic underemployment, the ongoing threat of food insecurity, substandard transit options, educational disparities, and youth disengagement. Decades of studies confirm that these problems disproportionately impact LMI communities. The current surge in home purchase and rental costs means housing now consumes over 60% of average median income in LMI communities. Add to that consistently high unemployment (15%), a nearly 3 to 1 ratio in loan denial rates, and limited access to mass transit and healthy food - which has been proven to impact employment and educational performance – and the need for greater resources becomes evident.

In response, NHS is launching a *Sustainable Communities Initiative* to help neighborhoods transition into a sustainable future. The vision driving our overall Sustainable Communities Initiative involves addressing a broad spectrum of issues, and at the center of this focus is the commitment to promote strategies that create systemic, transformative change in underserved neighborhoods. The need to tie community health to housing, place, business, and lifestyle is critical to sustainable community life. The Initiative will serve as a catalyst for broader goals to help low-to-moderate income families achieve economic prosperity, secure affordable housing, broaden access to resources, and incorporate green living. These goals include:

- Blight mitigation and comprehensive neighborhood revitalization in targeted communities;
- Provision of affordable housing and homeownership, along with increasing neighborhood investment and small business capital in specific transit oriented development (TOD) neighborhoods to connect LMI residents to economic opportunity;
- Developing greener mixed-use residential and commercial development in TOD's through partnerships, acquiring additional blighted properties through land banking, and increasing access to lending and financing resources for sustainability projects and rehabilitation of blighted and foreclosed homes;
- Expanding our current volunteer Neighborhood Pride Days program to include community garden projects at homes/businesses, transforming public sidewalks and roadside breezeways into green space and urban gardens, and supporting projects through creative financing which help with the elimination of food deserts and promote increased volunteerism in underserved neighborhoods;
- Implement our Neighborhood Training Institute (NTI) model for creating and supporting resident empowerment and leadership through grassroots organizing training;
- Leveraging federal and local government, commercial investors, foundations, workforce funds, donors, and other capital sources to best serve surrounding communities and build community equity;
- Launch *Centers for Sustainable Communities* as collaborative partnerships with local municipalities, corporations, employers and regional non-profits to deliver specialized services and act as a catalyst for the Initiative.



Center for Sustainable Communities

Utilizing the development model of "What Makes Community?" as our overall planning paradigm, the *Center for Sustainable Communities* (CSC) will be a diverse, multi-use facility designed to provide specialized services, information and access to resources that make communities stronger, more viable, and sustainable. As a cornerstone of our Sustainable Communities Initiative, the CSC will help low-to-moderate income residents and families access a full range of services and programming related to regional housing, transit, economic development, environmental stewardship, job training, skills development, and healthy living. Specific features include a business incubator, Homeownership & Financial Opportunity Center, health clinic services, fitness rooms, Computer Training and Technology Center, free community meeting space, senior and afterschool programming, a free library, youth job training, a Community Conservation Center, Healthy Living Cafe, and organic urban gardens. The Center will serve as a hub for coordinating ongoing resident education and empowerment workshops as a part of NHS' Neighborhood Training Institute. NHS plans to house up to five non-profit groups in each Center and to provide space for municipal enforcement, disaster and emergency response teams as needed (e.g. CHP, fire/paramedic, Building & Safety). At least 50% of our tenants will be service-driven. In addition to meeting crucial resource access needs for LMI families, the CSC will allow NHS and its partners to utilize and share sustainability concepts that drive planning approaches in other impacted communities throughout the County.

Each Center will serve thousands of families annually in a region that has endured the worst impacts of the economic downturn and decades of blight. CSC partners will be able to share sustainability concepts that drive planning approaches in other impacted communities throughout South Los Angeles and LA County.

The first CSC is scheduled to open in Compton in 2015 with partners that include City of Compton, METRO CDC, and the Pacific Coast Regional SBDC. NHS is in the process of formalizing arrangements with the Los Angeles Conservation Corps, LA County Department of Health, LA Food Policy Council, Community Services Unlimited, and other regional groups to provide technical and training opportunities, along with cross-collaborative projects through the Center. As the Compton Creek project evolves, we expect that the Center will be a regional green hub for community engagement and involvement.

Tying employment, housing, place, business, and lifestyle is a cornerstone to building sustainability, and the *Center for Sustainable Communities* will serve as a catalyst for achieving broader community and personal empowerment goals that will help low income families most adversely impacted by economic divestment.

Center for Sustainable Communities

1051 W. Rosecrans Blvd., Compton, CA 90220



What is the Center for Sustainable Communities?

NHS' Center for Sustainable Communities is a 28,000 sq. ft. multi-use facility in Compton, CA that will offer services to help communities that are still struggling to create job opportunities and healthy communities.

The Center will host:

- ◆ Small Business Incubator
- ◆ Financial Opportunity Center
- ◆ Healthy Living Café
- ◆ Health Clinic
- ◆ Fitness Workshops
- ◆ Job Training for Youth and Adults
- ◆ Community Conservation Center
- ◆ Organic Garden
- ◆ Community Technology Center
- ◆ Senior & Afterschool Programs
- ◆ Public Safety & Enforcement Drop-in Site

PARKING CALCULATION
 COMPTON MUNICIPAL CODE (TABLE 30-21A)
 COMMERCIAL USE - GENERAL RETAIL, SERVICE AND OFFICE = 1 SPACE / 250 GFA
 REQUIRED (PHASE 1): 14,825 GFA / 250 GFA = 58.5 (59)
 PROVIDED: 80 SPACES
 - 38 STANDARD
 - 18 COMPACT (30%)
 - 4 ACCESSIBLE (1 VAN)

