



## N E W S R E L E A S E

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Media Contact: Holly Ferris, Ferris Communications, (562) 746-8461, [holly@ferriscomm.com](mailto:holly@ferriscomm.com)

### **LINC Housing Transforms Vacant Motel Into 24 Affordable Homes for Low-Income Families and Former Foster Youth** **Renovated Building Seeks LEED Platinum Certification**

HUNTINGTON PARK, Calif., March 5, 2014 - Today, Huntington Park's mayor and the director of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) joined LINC Housing, development partners, residents, and neighbors to celebrate the completion of construction at Mosaic Gardens at Huntington Park. The development team transformed a former, gated up 55-room motel into 24 affordable apartments for low-income families, including transitional age youth - ages 18-24.

"This has been a year in the making, and today the community of Huntington Park receives an addition of socially conscious housing for our residents," said Huntington Park Mayor Mario Gomez. "By providing secure, affordable housing to often marginalized sectors of our community, like limited-income families and transitional age youth, we raise the rate of success for these families, and we improve the quality of life here in Huntington Park."

Fifteen of the homes are for transitional age youth, including former foster youth, who are currently being served by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. The goal is to give these individuals stable, healthy homes so they can continue to move forward with their education, employment or whatever path to independence they've chosen. These homes are the first in Huntington Park for these underserved neighbors.

Shonn, age 23, moved into his new apartment on February 1 after being homeless off and on for several years. He says he's grateful to have a stable home he can afford. "It feels too good to be true," he said. "I lay in bed at night, afraid that someone is going to come in and take my keys away." Shonn, an aspiring artist who paints, draws, writes short stories and composes music, recently started job training to become a peer advocate. He wants to help other young people who face the same challenges he's experienced.

"I am very pleased to see this tangible demonstration of what true community partnership can achieve," said Dr. Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W., director, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. "A community is judged by how it treats its most vulnerable residents. Huntington Park has stepped forward and made Mosaic Gardens a beautiful home for persons with mental illness who had been homeless. Los Angeles County is proud to be a part of such a constructive effort."

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The renovated complex, located at 6337 Middleton St. in Huntington Park, includes 10 studios, 6 one-bedroom, 4 two-bedroom, and 4 three-bedroom apartments, including a two-bedroom manager's unit. Each home features appliances, carpeted bedrooms, and central air conditioning. The former layout of the motel included a parking lot that was partially under the building and partially exposed. The construction team created a courtyard on an elevated deck above the parking area. The courtyard includes a playground, landscaping, benches, and a barbeque, providing a comfortable area for residents to relax and connect. A community room, private counseling rooms, and a computer lab provide the space for residents to participate in social, education and skill building opportunities.

In addition to providing much-needed housing, Mosaic Gardens at Huntington Park was also built with sustainability in mind. The new community has been registered with the U.S. Green Building Council and is pursuing a LEED Platinum certification. "Green" features include:

- A solar hot water system preheats water for the property
- Dual-pane low-e windows throughout
- A cool roof reduces the heat island effect
- High-efficiency Energy Star-rated appliances are installed in all units to reduce energy use
- High-efficiency toilets, lavatory faucets, and shower heads reduce indoor water usage
- Energy- and water-efficient clothes washers
- Located in a high transit corridor to encourage public transportation
- Located within ½ mile of community resources including schools, healthcare, library, parks, banking, daycare, and entertainment
- Erosion control measures were implemented during construction to minimize impact to neighboring sites
- More than 90 percent of the landscaping is drought tolerant, with no invasive plant species
- Water-efficient irrigation, including drip irrigation, minimizes outdoor water demand
- Light-colored paving materials temper the outdoor environment and reduce cooling loads
- Durable exterior construction materials and components
- Walls, doors, insulation and driveways contain recycled materials
- 75 percent of the waste generated during construction was diverted from landfills
- Secure bike racks are provided for tenant use to encourage alternative transit methods

"LINC Housing is committed to bringing healthy, beautiful, sustainable, and stable homes to people who need them most," said Hunter L. Johnson, LINC's president and CEO. "This public-private partnership is a model for how we can come together to develop a community that not only serves the local residents by providing housing but also contributes to the neighborhood overall by beautifying an abandoned building that is now this vibrant community we celebrate today."

An on-site resident services program, designed to meet the specific needs of the residents, is also an important part of the community. The program is facilitated by LINC's resident services group, LINC Cares. A Resident Services Coordinator facilitates programs to address common educational and economic needs of the residents. The types of programs that are anticipated include an after-school program, exercise classes, nutrition workshops, and community engagement activities. The service provider contracted by LACDMH will provide services with 24/7 staff availability to help individuals address emotional, housing, physical health, transportation, and other needs so they can function independently in the community.

The majority of the apartments are for families earning less than 30 to 50 percent of the area median income for Los Angeles County, as established by HUD. Rents range from \$443 to \$1,096, based on unit size and resident income. Property management screens all applicants, including the MHPA qualified residents. All residents must meet income qualifications and pass criminal background and credit checks.

Funding for the \$10-million development comes from a number of sources including the City of Huntington Park, Los Angeles County General Fund/Homeless Service Center Funds, Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles Project Based Vouchers, the Los Angeles County and California Departments of Mental Health through the Mental Health Services Act program, the Federal Home Loan Bank's Affordable Housing Program, a construction loan from U.S. Bank, tax credit equity from Raymond James Tax Credit Funds Inc., and a grant from the Ahmanson Foundation. Funding for the acquisition of the site was also made possible by generous support from The California Endowment, Enterprise Community Partners, and the JPMorgan Chase Foundation.

Construction began in January 2013. Residents started moving in Feb. 1, 2014. The general contractor is Advent Companies, and the building was designed by Killefer Flammang Architects. The property is now fully occupied. Anyone interested in being placed on the waiting list can call the on-site leasing company at (323) 588-1832.

#### About LINC Housing Corporation

LINC Housing, one of California's most productive nonprofit developers of affordable housing, has helped create more than 7,500 homes in 65 communities throughout the state. The organization's properties are known for excellent design, outstanding management and life-enhancing services for its residents. LINC has 30 years of service to families, seniors, and local governments helping to create sustainable communities via new construction, acquisition and rehabilitation, and historic preservation. Visit [www.linchoosing.org](http://www.linchoosing.org) for more information.