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CEDC'S AZAHAR PLACE RECEIVES LEED PLATINUM FOR HOMES RATING – FIRST IN THE CITY OF VENTURA

Ventura, CA – The Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) announced that it successfully achieved the **LEED®** for Homes Platinum level of certification established by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) for achievement in green homebuilding and design, for its newest affordable home development in the City of Ventura called Azahar Place. LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a green home certification program that rewards homes that are designed and built to be energy- and resource-efficient, and more healthy and durable for the occupants. LEED-certified homes complete a technically rigorous process that often includes a home energy (HERS) rating and onsite inspections to verify that the home is built to be energy and water efficient, environmentally sound, and a healthier place to live.

Azahar Place, located at 11370 Mimosa Street in east Ventura, is the first LEED for HOMES certified development in the City of Ventura. This 60-apartment complex for low-income families, some of which are designated for farmworkers, was completed in June by CEDC.

“As a LEED-certified development, Azahar Place serves as a model of greener living for the entire community,” said Nate Kredich, Vice President of Residential Market Development for the USGBC. “Azahar Place sets the example that we can all live better by reducing our environmental footprint, cutting our utility bills, and coming home to a greener place to live.”

Green features are incorporated throughout the site as well as in each home and building, of which there are 19 total. Green features include, but are not limited to: Site landscaping and irrigation that meet LEED platinum standards, energy star rated roof, hardscape with a high solar reflectance index, surface water management controls, compact development, water efficiency, optimized energy performance, environmentally preferable materials recycling and waste management, energy star rated appliances, and indoor air quality features in each unit. Additionally, each building has a photovoltaic system that directly offsets each home's energy consumption. The property is being registered to the WegoWise network, an online tool for tracking energy and water consumption. This will be used to measure the actual energy offset after the first year of operation.

“Congratulations to CEDC for the Azahar Place Project being recognized as the first LEED for HOMES Platinum certified development in the City of Ventura,” says Brian Brennan, Ventura

City Councilman. "We are fortunate to have a community-development corporation right here in Ventura that is committed to the highest level of sustainable building standards that can be used as a model for future development in the City."

The greening of Azahar Place will conclude with the implementation of a "Healthy Homes" training for residents and the installation of the 4,000 square foot onsite community garden. A group of residents participated in the first community garden workshop on October 13th and have started to prepare the plots for planting, with the assistance of City Corps and Oxnard-based Community Roots Garden. Residents also eagerly await completion of a public park approximately 2.4 acres in size adjacent to the property. CEDC expects that park construction will be complete by the end of November 2012. The park will include Kompan play equipment, a basketball court, BBQ and picnic areas, and a junior size soccer field.

"When my family and I moved to Azahar, I was EXTRA happy to know these homes were not only beautiful, but were also healthy to live in and energy efficient," says Glenda Arevalo, a new resident at Azahar Place. "It helps in the amount of energy we use thanks to the great lighting and windows that we have. This has made my utility bills lower than I've EVER had them. [Living at Azahar also] benefits my daughter Arlene, 14, who has lived with asthma since she was 12 months old. Since we moved in, she has not had an asthma attack or even used her inhaler. I know living in a 'green' home has helped her since green homes use non-toxic materials and have no mildew or mold which help eliminate her asthma issue from poor air quality that we had in other older homes we lived in before. My daughter [used to go to] the urgent care often, especially in the summer time suffering from her respiratory problems, but now her breathing is much better. It's great having natural ventilation and not the stale indoor air we used to have."

As a result of incorporating energy saving products and technologies, Azahar Place has achieved the highest award offered – the Platinum certification which requires a minimum of 90 points on the Home Energy Rating System score. Homes must achieve a minimum score of 86 – on a 100 point scale – to be deemed "ENERGY STAR" qualified.

"Achieving the LEED for Homes Platinum certification is a tremendous accomplishment by our Real Estate Development and Construction team," says Nancy Conk, CEDC's Chief Executive Officer. "This designation is difficult to achieve, but we are proud to have earned the ranking and it underscores CEDC's commitment to green-building, reducing our carbon footprint wherever possible and providing energy-efficient homes for the low-income individuals who live in our state-of-the-art apartment homes."

Azahar Place also secured "green" certifications from Enterprise Green Communities, National Association of Home Builders' (NAHB) Green Building Standard, Department of Energy Builders' Challenge, Energy Star, and the "Build it Green" Green-Point Rated program.

"This accomplishment would not have been possible without the leadership and commitment of our CEDC construction team, our Board of Directors, public and private partners, design consultants, green building consultants, and our subcontractors many of whom are local," says Veronica Garcia, CEDC Project Manager. "During the Community Garden kick-off, I had the opportunity to meet many of the families and young children who live at Azahar Place. As a young mother myself, it is very gratifying to know that these beautiful young children have a safe, affordable, and healthy home to sleep in at night."

Azhar Place is professionally managed on-site by CEDC's Property and Asset Management Division, which manages each of the CEDC's 21 other apartment communities. CEDC's Community Building and Neighborhood Revitalization Division will also facilitate community enrichment activities for the residents, and the formation of a tenant council. A no-smoking policy is enforced throughout the apartment complex.

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About CEDC

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 1,634 units of affordable for-sale and multi-family rental homes, and manages 973 affordable rental units. CEDC's NeighborWorks® HomeOwnership Center has assisted more than 817 families into home ownership through education, counseling, and lending services since 2004. This includes more than \$110 million in first and second mortgage financing and down payment assistance. 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.

About USGBC

The U.S. Green Building Council is a nonprofit membership organization whose vision is a sustainable built environment within a generation. Since USGBC's founding in 1993, USGBC has grown to more than 18,000 member companies and organizations and a comprehensive suite of LEED green building certification systems. Its membership includes corporations, builders, universities, government agencies, and other nonprofit organizations all sharing USGBC commitment to a prosperous and sustainable future for our nation through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. Visit www.usgbc.org for more information.

About LEED for Homes

LEED for Homes is a third-party certification system for building and designing high-performance green homes that are energy-and-resource-efficient and healthy for its occupants. Developed and administered by USGBC, LEED for Homes awards points to projects in eight categories of environmental performance: Innovation & Design Process, Location & Linkages, Sustainable Sites, Water Efficiency, Indoor Environmental Quality, Energy & Atmosphere, Materials & Resources, and Awareness & Education. To date, more than 18,000 units have achieved certification with LEED for Homes program, and over 75,000 have registered and are in process. For more information, visit www.usgbc.org/homes.

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