A Celebration of Service to Los Angeles County

The Community Development Commission (CDC) and the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA) are celebrating a major milestone. It has been 35 years since the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors merged three entities – HACoLA, the Community Development Department, and the Redevelopment Agency – to form the CDC.

For over three decades, the two agencies have worked together to ensure families secure stable and affordable housing, increase employment opportunities, and provide access to safe, public spaces in the community. To commemorate the substantial impact on the County and the lives of its residents, the CDC and HACoLA were recognized by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on December 12, 2017.

Although the CDC and HACoLA have had to overcome obstacles throughout the years, the two entities are stronger together, and look forward to continuing to fulfill the agency’s mission to Build Better Lives and Better Neighborhoods.
December was a busy month for the County’s RENOVATE Program (RENOVATE), which celebrated the completion of its two inaugural business façade projects. On December 2, 2017, First District Supervisor Hilda L. Solis joined the CDC and community residents to celebrate the grand re-opening of Pellissier Market and La Placita del Pueblo Plaza (Pellisier). The market has been serving the community for 61 years, establishing itself as a community staple. With the help of RENOVATE, Pellissier received $182,000 for significant façade improvements and enhancement of the adjoining 560 square-foot plaza. Among the improvements is a new ramp along the main entry with a landing surface and railings for better accessibility, replacement of the existing roof, and mounting of outdoor entry lights.

On December 16, 2017, Second District Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas helped celebrate the grand re-opening of the Casa Honduras Restaurant (Casa Honduras). The CDC provided a RENOVATE grant of over $207,000 for the restaurant’s exterior façade improvements, which included new windows, doors, painting, lighting, signage, and a new accessible ramp. The CDC also designed a new patio area for festive gatherings. Not only will this enable Casa Honduras to expand its clientele, but will also provide an upgraded sit-down dining experience to benefit the adjacent neighborhood.

Renovating the County One Project at a Time

On November 22, 2017, the Community Resource Center’s (CRC) Homework Assistance Program (HAP) held its first annual Goodness of Giving Family Dinner. Leading up to the event, the HAP students created invitations for their parents and made placemats and decorations for the dinner tables.

Beginning four days prior to the dinner, they put their baking and cooking skills to the test, prepping the supplies to make 12 homemade pies, cranberries, stuffing, fresh yams, green beans, mashed potatoes, and of course, turkeys. On the date of the event, the Teen Leadership Club helped the younger students serve 57 plated meals to their parents and family members.

The dinner taught the students the value of giving, and provided a warm atmosphere where guests engaged in conversation and built new relationships within the CRC family.
In October 2017, HACoLA kicked off its partnership with the Foster Grandparent Program, an exceptional program that brings volunteers to the Carmelitos Public Housing Development. The program is designed for seniors who wish to give back to the community by becoming tutors, mentors, and more importantly, friends to low-income and at-risk youth.

Youth at the Carmelitos Family Learning Center are fortunate to have two amazing volunteer foster grandmas that bring nothing but enthusiasm day in and day out. These volunteers have forged strong bonds with the kids, whom they now see as part of an extended family, and each log about 80 to 90 hours each month. Guillermina Rubio (pictured), the first Foster Grandparent Program volunteer, is affectionately referred to as “granny.”

On December 8, 2017, the CDC joined in the grand opening celebration of the new 10,850 square-foot Artesia Library. City residents now have access to increased library programming and educational and community-oriented services. The CDC managed the development of the $12.2 million project, funded by the office of Fourth District Supervisor Janice Hahn.

Artesia Library includes adult, teen, and children’s reading areas, early childhood and family areas, programming space, a homework center, two group study rooms, and a teen study room. The new facility features a 100-seat community meeting room with audio-visual system and kitchenette, public restrooms, and parking for 45 vehicles. In line with modern technology, the library offers express-service checkout machines at the lobby, laptop vending machines, information service pods, public access computers, and Wi-Fi access.

The library was designed to achieve a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver Rating, and contains many sustainable features such as permeable paving, high-reflective roof, bicycle storage, and drought-tolerant landscaping. A photovoltaic system is carefully integrated providing an alternative onsite energy source.

Artesia Library: Bigger and Better
Each year, the CDC and HACoLA enlist the help of local partners, staff, and volunteers to help make the holidays a little merrier for hundreds of Los Angeles County residents.

On December 20, 2017, the CRC in South Whittier was bustling with holiday cheer during its 21st Annual Holiday Basket and Toy Giveaway. Boxes filled with all the trimmings for a holiday meal were distributed to approximately 200 pre-registered families, along with gifts for over 600 children. More than 50 volunteers from Los Angeles County Fire Department’s “Spark of Love” program, Sheriff’s Department–Norwalk Station, Shelter Partnership, the California Highway Patrol, and local Girl and Boy Scout troops, dedicated hours of their time to bring this wonderful event to life.

Additionally, during December, HACoLA hosted a series of holiday events at its public housing developments, as well as at its administrative offices in the Cities of Alhambra and Palmdale, where over 200 Section 8 Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program families and 400 youth were treated to food, games, music, and pictures with Santa to keep as a memento. Nearly 1,200 public housing youth throughout the County received holiday gifts, and over 500 public housing families received food baskets.

The CDC and HACoLA was happy to help spread the holiday spirit!