



County of San Diego

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The California Endowment
1000 North Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

To Whom It May Concern:

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services (HHSA) Central Region supports the goals of the California Endowment's *Building Healthy Communities* Initiative in City Heights. As the local county health and social services department, we are pleased to partner with residents and other organizations to transform one of our most needy communities in San Diego. In particular, we are encouraged to work with partners towards safer, healthier, and thriving communities by:

- Improving health coverage for children;
- Improving access for children and families to medical homes
- Developing health systems that are family-centered and place priority on prevention
- Working with schools and communities to promote healthy behaviors and serve as a gateway for resources and services.
- Promoting safe and livable communities for children and families.
- Partnering with communities to support healthy youth development.
- Partnering with neighborhood residents and schools to promote healthy behaviors and improved health status.
- Collaborating with partners to address gaps in health for young men and boys of color.
- Supporting community health improvements that are linked to economic development.

The County of San Diego HHSA has been serving the community of City Heights for more than 40 years. Much of our presence in City Heights is exemplified by the many public-private partnerships that are cornerstone in the work of engaging communities to advance the health and well-being of residents. The many partnerships in City Heights are often at least partially supported with County resources. Mid-City CAN's work around prevention of substance and alcohol abuse, HealthLink's partnerships with schools to improve school attendance and reduce community violence, and the Central Region Alliance's continued work to promote health and safety of children and youth are examples of the various partnerships in City Heights.

The types and levels of services have varied over time, but the following examples of public health, child welfare, and family self-sufficiency services are indicative of the work in City Heights. Since 1959, a public health center located at 5202 University Avenue has been providing a variety of services, ranging from health-related information and referrals to immunizations and treatment of communicable diseases. Public Health Nurses (PHN's) have always conducted home visits to community members, focusing on high-risk pregnant women, parents with drug-exposed infants, and post-partum single and teen mothers while addressing domestic violence cases and homelessness.

Child Welfare Services (CWS) has served the City Heights community and surrounding neighborhoods for many years. In 2004, a Mid City Office was set up in the Welfare to Work office on the corner of 54th Street and El Cajon Boulevard to be closer to children and families at-risk in the community. From June 2008 to January 2009 the Mid City CWS office has averaged over 200 referrals per month for child abuse or neglect representing more than 2,800 unduplicated children. Child Protective Social Workers conduct home visits, risk and safety assessments, and family needs and

strengths assessments to protect the safety of children and promote family stability and self-sufficiency. CWS has participated in several community initiatives, including a Safe Start initiative to reduce the level of domestic violence and Anti-Truancy Sweeps with law enforcement and schools to reduce the level of youth violence. Many active partnerships with schools, law enforcement, and community-based organizations serving at-risk children and families are maintained to protect children and improve the safety of homes and neighborhoods in City Heights.

The Northeast Family Resource Center (NEFRC) has been offering services to City Heights residents for almost forty years, providing eligibility services for programs such as CalWORKs, Food Stamps, Medi-Cal, General Relief and Welfare-to-Work as part of the social safety net. More than 30,000 individuals and families are served annually through these programs from its several locations in the City Heights community and surrounding neighborhoods. Additionally, the NEFRC has been a leading innovator of using out-stationed workers in various community locations including at the Urban Village on Fairmount Ave. as well as the use of Electronic Benefit Transfer cards for food stamps at the local farmers' market.

Central Region's Community Action Partnership is the coordinator for the Refugee programs and services in San Diego County and much of this work is accomplished through partnerships in City Heights. Whether the issue is employment, health care access, or mental health, it is through partnerships that much of the work with the various diverse populations in City Heights is accomplished. Residents participate not only as clients receiving services, but also in providing input and advice to the development of local plans that define programmatic goals and priorities for services such as Family Self-Sufficiency, Refugee Employment, Juvenile Diversion, or Homeless and Emergency Assistance.

We look forward to partnering with Mid-City CAN and the other community agencies and residents to develop a health and wellness plan for City Heights that will ultimately help to change both local and statewide policies to improve the lives of California residents.

Sincerely,



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