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## The Unity Council and BRIDGE Housing Break Ground on 181-Unit Casa Sueños in Oakland

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OAKLAND, August 26, 2021—Today, state and local dignitaries and the Oakland community will join nonprofit co-developers The Unity Council and BRIDGE Housing to celebrate the groundbreaking of Casa Sueños, which will provide 181 affordable homes for families along the bustling commercial corridor in Fruitvale Village. Casa Sueños is the third stage of the award-winning mixed-income, mixed-use, transit-oriented development of the Fruitvale Transit Village by The Unity Council.

Though the site was originally planned as a market-rate housing development, The Unity Council responded to the urgent community need and forged a path forward with City, County and transit partners to develop affordable homes for working families.

Casa Sueños will provide studios, one-, two, and three-bedroom apartments for families earning 20-80% of area median income (AMI). Forty-six of the homes are set aside for households earning up to 20% of AMI, targeting people who have experienced chronic homelessness, with permanent supportive services provided by Lifelong Medical Care and funded by Alameda County.

“Located near amenities and public transit, these 181 affordable units will serve Oakland families and unhoused residents so they can stay rooted in the city they know and love,” said Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf. “Casa Sueños is a testament to the power of partnerships and this is a proud moment for Fruitvale and the entire City of Oakland.”

“We are thrilled to break ground on the third phase of the nationally recognized Fruitvale Village. Casa Sueños will bring much-needed affordable housing to the essential workers who kept us going throughout the pandemic. We recognize our responsibility to develop housing for them. The housing crisis will not end until we provide housing for the critical members of our society who keep our economy moving, those who do not have the luxury to work from home,” said Chris Iglesias, Chief Executive Officer, The Unity Council.

“In this third phase of transformative transit-oriented development that began with the Fruitvale Village, we’re excited to bring 181 affordable homes for families adjacent to BART and in the heart of the neighborhood, including 46 apartments reserved for people who have experienced homelessness,” said Smitha Seshadri, Executive Vice President of BRIDGE Housing. “Casa Sueños is a great example of how public- and private-sector partners can work together to strengthen communities.”



Casa Sueños also includes 7,500 square feet of affordable commercial retail space for a local nonprofit organization that serves the community. Located in Oakland's Fruitvale neighborhood, the development is steps away from the Fruitvale BART station, a major AC Transit hub and a major bus line connecting East Oakland to downtown.

"Casa Sueños exemplifies the goals of the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC) to create affordable housing solutions connected to jobs and vital services accessible by transit and active transportation options," said Jessica Buendia, Acting Executive Director of the California Strategic Growth Council, which awarded nearly \$30M through its AHSC program to Casa Sueños. "Congratulations to BRIDGE Housing, The Unity Council, and all the project partners."

"Located within walking distance to the BART station, Casa Sueños will provide residents, including people who have experienced homelessness, with an affordable place to live, as well as access to a variety of amenities," said Cecile Chalifour, West Division Manager, Community Development Banking, Chase. "We're committed to investing in Oakland and the greater Bay Area and continue to work with local industry leaders like The Unity Council and BRIDGE Housing to help create and preserve affordable housing opportunities for the community."

Financial partners for Casa Sueños include the City of Oakland; Oakland Housing Authority; Alameda County; California Department of Housing and Community Development TOD Housing Program; California Climate Investments (funded through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund) Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program through the Strategic Growth Council and the California Department of Housing and Community Development; National Affordable Housing Trust; Lument; JPMorgan Chase; California Tax Credit Allocation Committee; California Debt Limit Allocation Committee. The architect is SVA Architects and the general contractor is J.H. Fitzmaurice.