



CITY OF BALDWIN PARK

PRESS RELEASE

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City unveils newest affordable housing complex

Metro Village nestled within Baldwin Park's hub, public transportation outlet

BALDWIN PARK, Calif. (October 20, 2016) – Alicia Rodriguez, 30, celebrated her new home recently as city officials formally debuted the new apartment complex near Baldwin Park's downtown area. The single mother of two was joined by several fellow residents and project associates who turned out for a special grand opening to unveil a \$27 million housing project, dubbed Metro Village, in Baldwin Park.

“Getting to live in a place like this is amazing,” said Rodriguez. “Had I been anywhere else, this would not have been possible.”

Rodriguez, who relocated to Metro Village after renting an apartment in South Los Angeles for some time, added that her new apartment unit offers a safer and more convenient environment for herself and her two children. She and her two children moved in to the complex in June.

Metro Village, at 14428 E. Ramona Blvd., is one of the city's most recent efforts toward affordable housing. Associates with Baldwin Park and ROEM Development Corporation, which spearheaded the development, broke ground on the site in March 2015. They added that 4-story complex has been an undertaking for Baldwin Park since 2011, however.

“We had the single vision to produce high-quality housing and provide an ‘economic stimulus’ to this community,” Alex Sanchez, ROEM executive vice president, said during Metro Village's unveiling ceremony.

The recent grand opening celebration included a project overview and access to the new, mixed-use complex, which features 69 tenant units. The one-acre property also includes 5,500 square feet of floor space for potential businesses, as well as various amenities – such as an entertainment room, fitness room, learning center and patio – for apartment residents.

Metro Village's contemporary design and location are also a perk for Rodriguez, who balances work and school amid parenting. "Everything is so nice and it makes you really feel at home," she said. "It's so close to stores, to the park, and to everything my kids and I need.

"I never thought I could afford a place like this."

Affordable housing – and its availability to Baldwin Park residents – has been a priority for elected officials for some time, according to Mayor Manuel Lozano. Lozano said interest in Metro Village was high, as an estimated 3,000 people applied for a stake in the new apartment community earlier this year.

"There is a necessity for housing throughout Southern California," Lozano said during the grand opening event. "In Baldwin Park, this is just the beginning of this type of project because we need to continue to invest and provide this type of housing to our community."

Officials noted that Metro Village was funded through federal and private loans, as well as tax credits. Securing such resources was integral to the development's success, especially since Baldwin Park has a reported unemployment rate of 11 percent. Councilman Ricardo Pacheco said that figure has been the highest in the San Gabriel Valley. It also rests above the state's unemployment figures, estimated at 7.8 percent, he added.

As a Section 8 complex, Metro Village offers one-, two-, or three-bedroom units to families who make 60 percent or less of the county's median income. Rates for each apartment unit vary and are contingent on residents' family size and earnings.

City officials expressed the promise Metro Village represents as a residential community flanked by major thoroughfares and the local police station. The apartments are also nestled within walking distance to Baldwin Park's Metrolink station, making the development a "catalyst that will remake our downtown area into the vibrant and dynamic center piece to our city that we all envisioned it could be," according to the mayor.

"The Metro Village represents the beginning of a new era in the history of Baldwin Park," said the mayor. "Already you can see the positive impacts of this project, including the

entertainment of new businesses and developers seeking to establish other projects in this area that will continue to propel this transformation and soon will serve as an example of what can be accomplished through focused long-term planning and collaboration.”

Metro Village is an environmentally sustainable project, according to ROEM associates. In fact, officials are pursuing a Gold certification through the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, program for housing. The USGBC's web site states that LEED-certified buildings are resource efficient, as they use less water and energy, and, therefore, save money for communities.

About Baldwin Park

The City of Baldwin Park is one of eighty-eight cities located within Los Angeles County with a population of more than 75,000 residents. For additional information, please call (626) 813-5201.