City Heights Urban Village: A Dynamic Project with Important, Convenient Services for Residents

Welcome to the City Heights Urban Village, an exciting redevelopment project that brings important City services to City Heights residents and citizens of surrounding neighborhoods.

The City Heights Urban Village has recreated the core of the community, establishing a pedestrian-friendly town square with important City facilities and centers of learning. This dynamic, town-within-a-town serves a multi-ethnic community with a large population. City Heights is being redeveloped by the City to improve economic development, safety, and quality of life.

A vast array of services are provided at the Urban Village's convenient facilities. The library complex includes a community service center, performance stage, Head Start program, and the City Heights Town Council. The recreation center includes a swimming pool, tennis courts, tot swim and play areas, multi-purpose playing fields, and activity rooms. The police substation and the community gym share a building that creates a haven of safety and togetherness.

Education plays a strong role in the Urban Village. The resources of the library and recreation center are only a short walk away from Rosa Parks Elementary School. The San Diego Community College is building a continuing education center to provide adults an opportunity for higher learning.

City Heights residents have been part of the Urban Village project from the beginning. Through community meetings and the formation of the City Heights Town Council, local residents and business owners have helped the City determine everything from architecture and landscaping to the types of services needed in the area.

The City Heights Urban Village is a magnificent example of what can happen when people work together for a common goal, and the project will have a positive effect on the community and the residents it serves for many years to come.

Urban Village Brings New Life to an Old Community

The dream of creating the City Heights Urban Village began with philanthropist and businessman Sol Price. His vision became an ambitious partnership between the City's Redevelopment Agency, the City of San Diego, San Diego Foundation, and CityLink Investment Corp.

Although the Urban Village is a new development, it has a long history. The City Heights area was incorporated as the City of East San Diego in 1913. The area was annexed by the City of San Diego in 1925.

Today City Heights is home to a very diverse ethnic population. More than 100 languages and dialects are spoken among the more than 70,000 residents.

The new City Heights Urban Village not only offers local residents a multitude of services, but will also lead in continued revitalization of the area.
Combining Police, Recreation and Civic Activities Helps Reduce Crime with Community Outreach

It's a common sight to see off-duty police officers shooting baskets in the new Mid-City Community Gymnasium alongside kids from the neighborhood. This interaction between police and City Heights residents is a special phenomenon made possible because the gym and the Mid-City Police Substation share the same building. The substation and gym opened in 1996 as the first phase of the City Heights Urban Village.

The attractive, dual-use facility is a former supermarket that was extensively remodeled and renovated. Combining the substation and gym is an innovative approach to reducing crime by bringing police, recreation and civic activities together in one place. The Mid-City substation is the City's newest and

has helped police officers more effectively integrate its Neighborhood Policing Program in City Heights and the surrounding neighborhoods. More than 200 officers and other police personnel work out of the substation.

The increase in interaction between police and City Heights residents, and the higher profile of police in the neighborhood, has had a very positive effect. Since the station opened, crime in City Heights has decreased significantly. For 1997, the first full year after the station opened, violent crime dropped by 6.7 percent, and property crime dropped 6.1 percent. Overall crime in the area continues to decrease.

The Community Gym, operated by the City's Park and Recreation Department, is open to the public and offers basketball, volleyball, table tennis, and other sports. The gym hosts both men's and women's basketball leagues, dance clubs, and youth groups.

The Mid-City Police Substation, at 4310 Landis St, is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Call 516-3000 for information. The Community Gym, at 4302 Landis St, is open Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday, 1 to 9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Sunday noon to 4 p.m. For information about programs at the gym, call 516-3082.
Library Houses a Variety of City Heights Facilities

The library complex is home to more than just the library. Other organizations utilizing the building include:

Mid-City Community Service Center – The City’s Community Service Centers offer citizens convenient access to a wide range of City services, from paying a water bill to getting building permits to obtaining information on community events and starting a business. The experienced staff is knowledgeable about the Mid-City area and provides assistance to citizens. The center is open Monday through Thursday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and closed 1 to 2 p.m. On Friday it’s open from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. For information, call 641-6120.

City Heights Town Council – The City Heights Town Council helps raise money for community endeavors, ensures community input concerning local projects, promotes volunteerism in City Heights, and supports neighborhood organizations. The Town Council’s office is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For information, call 563-0671.

Head Start – Head Start is a federally-funded child care program that provides full day child care free to income eligible families. The City Heights Head Start facility was designed and built as a licensed child care center to serve 80 preschool-aged children 3 to 5 years old in the day, and 40 children at night. This program helps meet a tremendous need for affordable child care in the community. For information call 284-3209.

Public and Private Funds Financed Creation of the Urban Village

The City facilities in the Urban Village cost more than $24 million to build, and the funding came from a variety of sources, including the state and federal governments, and private donations.

Price Charities donated $5.25 million for the construction of the library complex. A state Transnet loan of more than $3.69 million went toward making Wightman Street a landscaped promenade.

The uniqueness of the project attracted national attention. Vice President Al Gore and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Andrew Cuomo presented the City with HUD loans totaling $11.21 million for the police substation, gym and park. A Head Start/Enterprise Community Grant helped fund the Head Start Program.

Other important funding sources include a Community Development Block Grant of $2.2 million, an Economic Development Incentive Grant of $1 million, San Diego Unified School District funds of $309,000, and a City Park and Recreation matching grant of $78,000.

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