



## SHOWCASE PROJECT: LINC HOUSING: CITY GARDENS APARTMENTS

### SOLUTION OVERVIEW

City Gardens consists of 274 apartments in 27 two-story, “garden style” buildings spread across 11.9 acres in a densely-populated area of Orange County, California. Each building contains a mix of studio, one- and two- bedroom apartments serving low-income residents. City Gardens was constructed in 1969 and underwent a major rehabilitation when LINC purchased the property in 1996. This project began in July of 2012, with most improvements completed within one year. SEED Partners, LINC’s mission-driven energy company, managed the entire green retrofit process.

LINC took advantage of the fact that it is significantly easier to implement green retrofits on a property at the time of purchase, refinance, or rehabilitation given that financing options may be available. In 2012, SEED began to pursue a comprehensive retrofit using proceeds from a Fannie Mae Green Refinance Plus loan, the first loan of its kind in the country. In addition, LINC partnered with the utilities and other government-funded programs take advantage of a suite of no-cost and subsidized measures to improve energy and water efficiency.

### SECTOR TYPE

Multifamily

### LOCATION

Santa Ana, California

### PROJECT SIZE

290,000 Square Feet

### FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Project Cost: \$715,000

### SOLUTIONS

A detailed Green Physical Needs Assessment report identified cost-effective methods to significantly reducing operating costs through energy and water savings. The Fannie Mae Green Refinance Plus loan provided the necessary capital to support general property renovations as well as green retrofits aimed at reducing energy and water utility costs and reducing the property’s carbon footprint. City Gardens also participated in the ARRA-funded Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) and the utility-funded Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP) to cover the full costs of several measures. The implementation of measures such as a solar domestic hot water system resulted in immediate savings on the property’s master-metered gas bill.

Improvements already undertaken or planned at City Gardens include the following:

- ENERGY STAR<sup>®</sup> lighting retrofits (exterior, interior, and pools)
- Occupancy sensors
- Solar domestic hot water system
- Solar photovoltaic system generating energy for common area
- Variable-speed pool pumps
- ENERGY STAR<sup>®</sup> ceiling fans
- On-demand recirculation pumps
- Weatherization of apartment units
- Low-flow fixtures (showerheads, faucet aerators)
- Electronic igniters for gas furnaces
- Outlet gaskets
- Improvements to landscaping and irrigation

## **OTHER BENEFITS**

SEED Partners' coordinated efforts with utility providers and other organizations enabled City Gardens to take advantage of a broad spectrum of energy and water efficiency measures that minimized burdens on residents and management staff. To complement the green efforts taking place at City Gardens, LINC Housing's Resident Services Studio, LINC Cares, continues to host green education events and incorporates sustainable living into its after-school programs and senior health programs.

Since 2013, residents are seeing on average 11% savings on their overall electricity consumption and costs. LINC Cares continues to explore new ways to tie in sustainable living lessons with general health and well being information and fun family events so that residents buy into community norms and values about being "green" while overcoming barriers to energy and water conservation.

## Annual Energy Use

Baseline(2011)



Actual(2013)



**Energy Savings**

**14%**

## Annual Energy Cost

Baseline(2011)



Actual(2013)



**Cost Savings**

**\$22,876**



City Gardens Apartments walkway



City Gardens Apartments garden area