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NEWS FROM: Smith Consulting Architects

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**SMITH CONSULTING ARCHITECTS-DESIGNED BUILDING REUSE PROJECT
FOR DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO SENIOR CENTER ACHIEVES LEED GOLD**

SAN DIEGO, Calif. – (April 18, 2011) – The new Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center, which was adapted from a former 17,460-square-foot auto dealership originally built in 1927, has officially received LEED-NC Gold Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). Located at the northeast corner of Fourth Avenue and Beech Street at 1525 Fourth Avenue, the once vacant building was fully restored to bring vibrant purpose to downtown San Diego, serving the region's growing senior population.

Smith Consulting Architects, based in Carmel Valley, provided full design services for the \$2.4 million remodeling project. Senior Community Centers, in partnership with HomeAid San Diego, is the developer. Ledcor Construction, Inc. served as the general contractor.

The new Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center replaced the Senior Community Centers' former downtown facility at Ninth and Broadway, and provides a state-of-the-art, one-stop health and wellness hub for low-income seniors. The new facility serves as a model for healthy aging that can be replicated in other cities across the United States. Its design and construction were made possible through a lead gift of \$3 million from the Gary and Mary West Foundation.

"The Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center provides the support that older adults need to be active, engaged and healthy so they can remain in their homes and communities as long as possible," said Paul Downey, president/CEO of Senior Community Centers. "We're very proud of the fact that the facility stands as a model for excellence in sustainable design."

Located a few blocks from the heart of downtown San Diego, the Gary and Mary West Wellness Center is in close proximity to several senior high-rise apartments and smaller hotel-type of buildings. A modern, uplifting design incorporating an abundance of natural light and a

palette of warm, inviting colors serve to welcome senior clients while providing a safe, comfortable environment.

The building remodel consisted of a seismic retrofit of a 4,500-square-foot second floor addition, and complete retrofit of the building exterior. The project also involved design and installation of all new mechanical, plumbing and electrical systems.

The first floor of the new facility encompasses a spacious main lobby with ample seating; a "living room" area for socialization and reading; an activity room for cards, chess and other board games; and an "enrichment center" for lectures, art and exercise classes, demonstrations, job and volunteer training, and other group activities. The Cyber Cafe serves as an enjoyable place for seniors to learn and develop computer skills, use the Internet, send emails to friends and family, and interact with youth from nearby high schools who volunteer to serve as teachers and mentors. The kitchen and dining room area of the new facility is nearly double the size of the Senior Community Centers' former facility, and offers nutritious breakfasts and lunches served daily, 365 days a year.

The second floor of the facility accommodates the Center for Healthy Aging, where clinical staff and collaborative partners provide a full range of health assessments, interventions, case management, and activities designed to promote optimum health and well being to benefit mind, body and spirit. Partnerships with leading San Diego healthcare, social service, legal and educational organizations enable Senior Community Centers to offer a wide spectrum of activities and innovative programs to improve the self-efficacy of a growing and potentially more discerning senior client base.

Smith Consulting Architects was tapped by Senior Community Centers for the project based largely on the design firm's green building knowledge and past achievements. At the onset, Scott Cairns, LEED AP, who served as lead architect for Smith Consulting Architects, led a LEED design charette to help fully commit the project team to the goal of achieving LEED Gold Certification. Sustainable priorities included reuse of the existing building, and recycling demolition waste to keep materials out of landfills.

To accomplish the sustainable goals, the building shell includes urethane spray foam roof insulation, PPG insulated glass at all exterior windows, and 22 Solatube and Sun Optic daylighting skylights that flood the interior space with natural light. High efficiency T-8 lighting with motion- and light-sensors further reduces energy consumption by 27 percent. High efficiency mechanical units with economizers circulate outside air and work well in the mild San Diego climate.

"An energy management system monitors the building's energy consumption," explained Cairns. "Overall, the building uses approximately 25 percent less energy than current California energy code requirements. With ultra-low-flow plumbing fixtures and faucets, the Center also uses about 51 percent less water, compared to a typical building of this type."

Healthy interior environments, said Cairns, were achieved with low-VOC finish materials. The materials were also selected based on their high degree of recycled content, with the carpet containing almost 35 percent recycled material and the ceiling tiles, 40 percent. Built-in recycling bins enable the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center to recycle paper, glass, metal, cardboard and plastics.

HomeAid San Diego, through its contacts with local and national suppliers and builders, worked with Smith Consulting Architects, Ledcor Construction and IPM Construction Managers to solicit donations of in-kind material and labor to help defray the cost of construction for the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center. In turn, Senior Community Centers is able to expand the scope of services it provides to San Diego's low-income senior population.

Supporting Cairns for Smith Consulting Architects were Gary Baker, Vice President Design, LEED AP, Jaime Ramirez, LEED AP, as project manager and Erica Hutchinson, LEED AP, as interior designer. Russell Hamilton was principal-in-charge for Ledcor Construction, with Michael Strangman as senior estimator, Rob Campbell as project manager, and Jerold Yoder as superintendent. Ron Sutliff was principal-in-charge for IPM, with Kevin Kearn acting as senior project manager. Alexis Parker was the HomeAid project lead and Tom Lunneberg served as LEED Commissioning Authority.

Subcontractors included RCP Block & Brick, Brian Cox Mechanical, Inc., Edward Shedly Concrete & Masonry, Fullerton Glass Company, Industrial Fire Sprinkler Co., McBride Electric, Casper Construction Company, Saber Plumbing Company, East County Tile, and DA Whitacre Construction, Inc.

HomeAid San Diego is the local chapter of HomeAid America, a national organization that is the largest builder of transitional housing for the temporarily homeless in the United States. Its mission is to build dignified housing where homeless families and individuals can rebuild their lives. The organization partners with other nonprofits, such as Senior Community Centers, to help them build facilities that provide social services to the temporarily homeless to help restore their self-worth and become productive members of society.

Founded in 1988 by Cheryl (Dennie) Smith, Smith Consulting Architects is a multi-discipline design firm providing full-service planning, architecture and interior design. In addition to corporate headquarters and office facilities, the company has specialized expertise in R&D, life science, complex manufacturing, and industrial facilities. Smith Consulting Architects is a member of the U.S. Green Building Council, with extensive expertise in sustainable design. Smith Consulting Architects is comprised of 21 design and support professionals, with offices located in San Diego and Palm Desert, Calif. More information about the firm can be found on the Web at www.sca-sd.com.

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