



The Paul Robeson Community Wellness Center



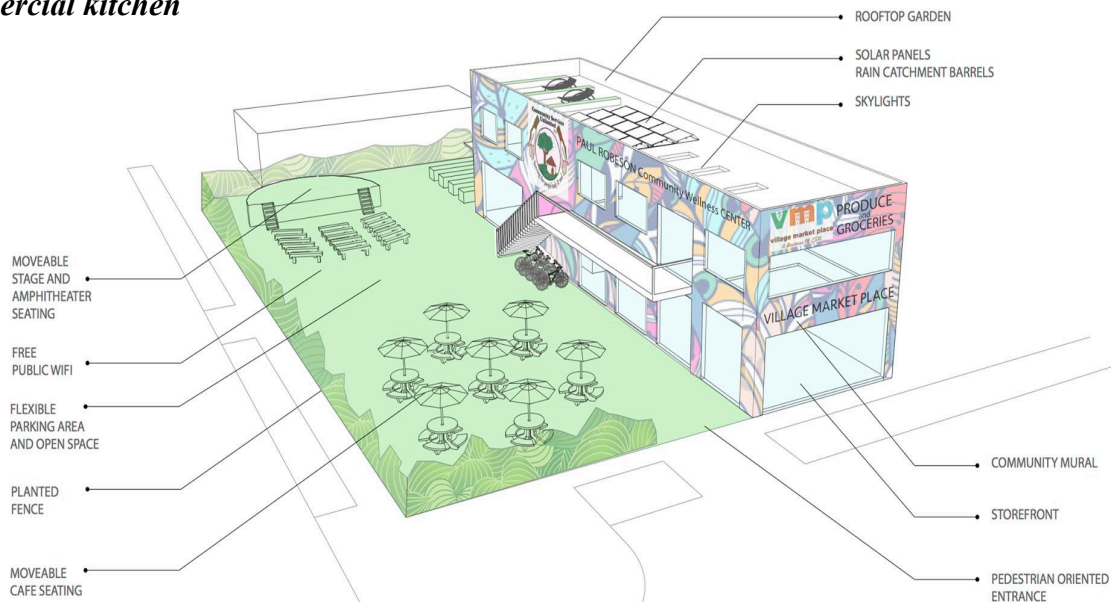
South LA's 1st Organic Produce Market

In summer 2015 CSU purchased the Paul Robeson Center, a 5,000 sq. foot building on a 10,000 square ft. lot where we will be opening ***South Los Angeles's first Organic Produce Market***. The VMP produce market will allow the VMP to meet residents' demands for daily access to fresh produce and healthy foods. Along with the market, the Center will include a commercial kitchen and facilities to support the VMP's full range of operations at a central site. This improved and dedicated infrastructure will allow the existing VMP business activities to operate at a greater capacity and with greater efficiency – allowing the business to serve more customers, create more jobs and increase revenue – enabling the business can meet its full potential for benefiting the community on many levels.

Produce Market & Café

The VMP market will be open 7-days a week to serve customers and have as its central offering locally grown seasonal produce. The market will accept EBT (food stamps) and stock a wide range of healthy culturally appropriate foods. The market will include a café that will sell coffee, healthy cold drinks and a variety of prepared foods that can be taken to go or eaten in the indoor or outdoor seating area which will feature free wi-fi. The full range of market offerings will include:

- ***Seasonal local beyond organic produce***
- ***Canned and packaged items***
- ***Healthy bulk items***
- ***Café***
- ***Commercial kitchen***



A Model for Environmental Sustainability Unmatched in South Los Angeles

Installing and modeling the use of sustainable practices will be a cornerstone and central design element of the remodel and build out of the Paul Robeson Community Wellness Center, which will house the VMP Market & Café and CSU's headquarters. The stylish and modern space will be unmatched in South LA. At the core of CSU's design principle is to build a market and community space that is inviting, welcoming and engaging for all community residents. Elements of sustainability to be included are:

- **Solar Power**
- **Water Conservation and Catchment**
- **Composting**
- **High Density Urban Agriculture:** Methods to be used include: containers and raised bed, aquaponics, vertical planting, roof top farming, raising poultry and small livestock and beekeeping.
- **Reduced Energy Use:** Windows and skylights will allow for natural light.
- **Recycled and Reused Construction Materials**
- **Promotion of Pedestrian and Bike Access**
- **Compostable, Recyclable and Reusable Food Packaging**

The Village Market Place

The Village Market Place (VMP) is a wholesale and retail food business focused on increasing access to high quality, locally grown, beyond organic, fresh produce and other healthy foods at affordable prices to residents of South Central Los Angeles and other underserved areas of Los Angeles, and creating jobs and training opportunities for community residents. The VMP was launched in 2007 to market fresh produce grown at CSU's urban mini-farms and from regional small family farmers to consumers in CSU's community of South Central Los Angeles through ***pop-up produce stands, a produce bag subscription program, wholesale produce distribution, catering, and the production of value-added products.*** In its first year the VMP served 90 families, by 2014 nearly 8000 households were accessing fresh, healthy, local food through the VMP social enterprise. We now distribute over 100,000 pounds of local beyond organic produce annually to households and businesses across South Los Angeles.

Community Services Unlimited Inc. (CSU) is a Community Development Corporation whose mission is to foster the creation of communities actively working to address the inequalities and systemic barriers that make sustainable and self-reliant life-styles unattainable in our community. We are committed to supporting and creating justice-driven community-based programs and educational initiatives, which seek to foster dialogue, create awareness of food justice issues and foster critical consciousness. We envision equitable, healthful and sustainable communities that are self-reliant, inter-relating, and where every individual has the support and resources needed to develop to their fullest capacity.

CSU works to increase community health and self-reliance through the Community Food Village project (CFV). The CFV is made up of an interconnected web of programs that include: urban farming; nutrition and agricultural education; youth training and leadership development; and community economic development. Through the CFV, CSU is working to create a community based food system in South Central Los Angeles, where healthy food is grown, processed, marketed, purchased and consumed within the community; incorporating training and educational programs; and creating jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities. CSU's social enterprise, the ***Village Market Place***, is point of convergence for CSU's education and urban farming programs.

Learn More

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