

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 16, 2008

**CONTACT: Amelia Medina**

213-744-9099

**LOS ANGELES RECEIVES \$1,436,658 OTS GRANT  
FOR TRAFFIC SAFETY EDUCATION PROJECT**

The City of Los Angeles Community Development Department was awarded a \$1,436,658 grant by the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to expand access to traffic safety education for City of Los Angeles residents. The program will utilize the City's network of Youth and Family Centers as the conduit to provide needed traffic safety classes to the community.

Through the OTS-funded initiative, this multi-phased project called, "Safety for Parents and their Children," will make possible traffic safety educational presentations, hands-on workshops and other activities. The main focus of the classes will be to educate parents and families on the safe and correct usage of child passenger seats as well as to provide information that will assist them in selecting the correct car seat for their child. Other classes include bicycle and pedestrian safety. Parents who successfully complete the required instruction will be eligible for free safety items, such as child safety seats and helmets.

"Wearing a seat belt is the simplest act a driver or vehicle occupant can do to save a life," said OTS Director Christopher J. Murphy. "Kids rely on the parents and caregivers for their lives when it comes to properly installing and using correct safety seats."

As the designated Community Action Agency for the City of Los Angeles, the CDD will work with the Youth and Family Centers (YFCs) that are located in low-income areas of the city.

The YFCs house non-profit agencies that provide services to assist youth, individuals, and families to move toward economic sustainability.

"This is a win-win program and partnership for the people who are served by our Youth and Family Centers," said Community Development Department General Manager Richard Benbow. "Our department has Youth and Family Centers in neighborhoods where there is a significant need for programs that assist residents with strengthening their families. The OTS program is another way to help parents ensure the safety of their children."

\*\*\*more\*\*\*

2-2-2

The cooperative relationships that the YFCs have with the community will greatly improve the traffic safety education program. The program will enhance the City's push to improve behaviors, which can lead to traffic collisions, fatalities and injuries, including those to pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Community Development Department has been providing traffic safety education to the residents of the City since 2001. It received a statewide Traffic Safety Achievement Award in 2005 for outstanding efforts and dedication toward a safer Los Angeles. More than 20,000 families have been trained in the first seven years. The two-year program is targeting 7,000 more.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

###