

# GARFIELD ELEMENTARY WELLNESS CENTER



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Garfield Elementary needed a permanent home for its new Wellness Center which provides Garfield parents and community members needed education, services, and resources, but the five-acre site was at maximum capacity.

The permanent home came in the form of a former Pacific Electric Railway substation at the Garfield site. Built in 1907, it had fallen into disrepair and had been used mostly as a storage facility over the last 70 years since its original service was terminated in 1950. This project transforms a worn national register landmark into a modern and inviting community center while preserving its character and historic details.

Importantly, the renovation happens at a time when a new streetcar system, hubbed in Santa Ana, is under construction. The system creates connections from Santa Ana to the city of Garden Grove and the Regional Transportation Center- increasing connectivity and access to jobs and recreation for the community.

### PROJECT GOALS

1. Provide a welcoming space where students and families can find help and support for critical needs that exist beyond classroom learning.
2. Strengthen SAUSD's commitment to providing a wide variety of resources that drive student success.
3. Maximize functionality, safety, and historic character within a tight budget.
4. Engage families and stakeholders to create a facility that responds to the unique needs of the Garfield community.



## PROJECT OUTCOMES

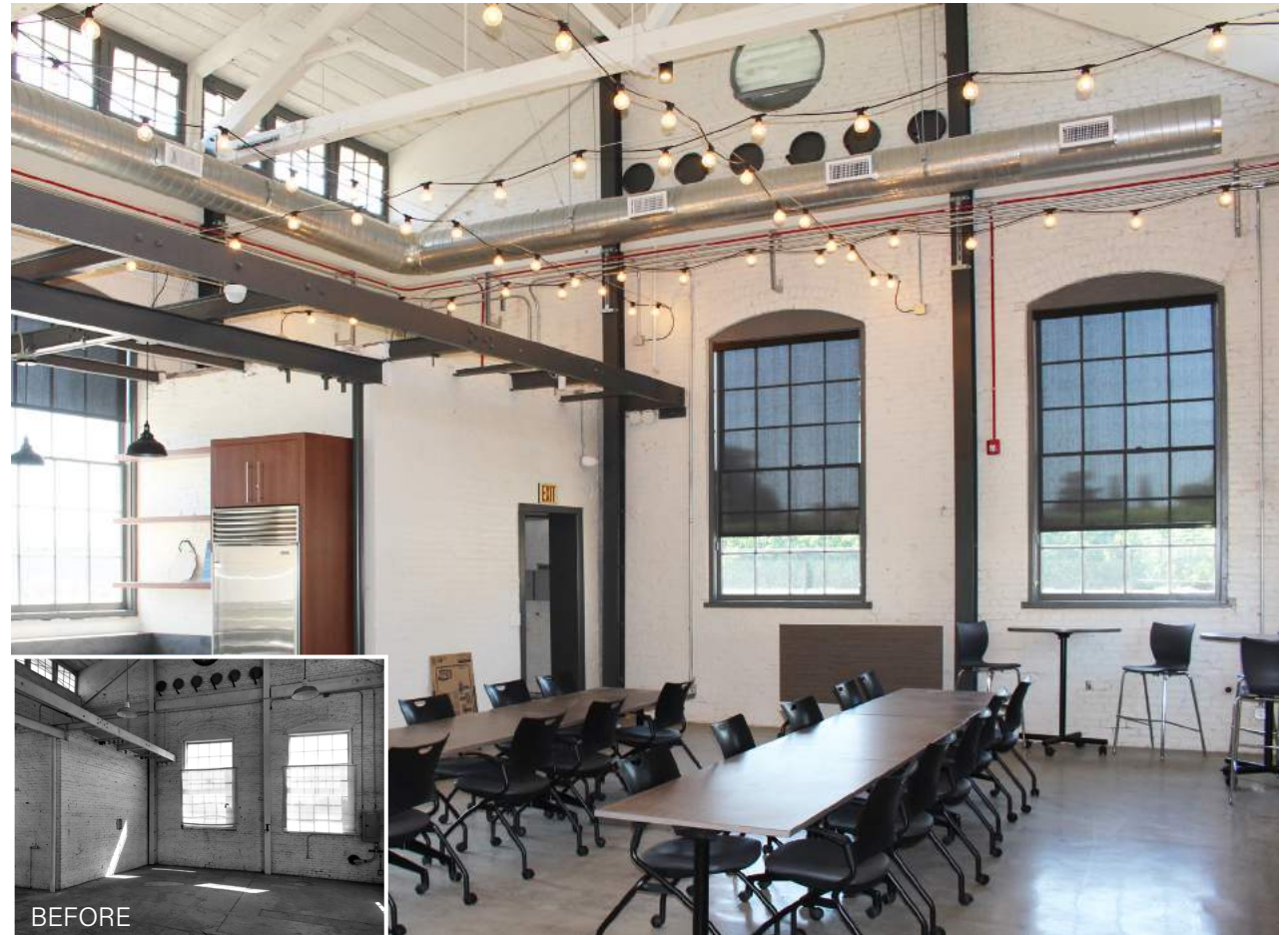
1. Functional and adaptable meeting place for students, families, and community.
2. A stimulating workplace for a dedicated Family and Community Engagement specialist for Garfield Elementary School.
3. A community hub to access classes, nutrition, housing, counseling, and healthcare for the Garfield community.
4. New roof, windows, ramps, infrastructure and finishes to preserve and restore a local cultural resource.
5. Exterior power and utility hook ups for use by a mobile Community Health Access Van provided by a partner organization.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**“The mission of the Wellness Centers is to ensure a well-rounded experience, which allows family and community members to engage, learn, and prepare to support students to be productive citizens, ethical leaders, and positive contributors to our community, country, and global society.”**

*Martha Rivera, SAUSD  
FACE Coordinator*



## SCOPE OF WORK & BUDGET

Renovation and repair of a 1,600 SF former Pacific Electric Railway power substation built in 1907 for use as an elementary school wellness center for Santa Ana USD.

- Site improvements including landscape, parking, fencing, ramp, and paving
- New roof and insulation
- Clean and repair existing brick exterior
- Repair existing doors and windows
- New restroom
- Health access van utility connections

- New serving kitchen
- New interior finishes
- New lights
- New HVAC system
- New power and data
- Repair of existing structure

- Total project budget | \$1,000,000

- Total project cost | \$950,000



## SCHOOL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Garfield Wellness Center serves students' families and the community who have a variety of needs that may become barriers to learning. The resources and services provided through the Center help to address these needs and provide critical support for the success of Garfield students. Types of services include parenting classes, health services, exercise classes, food assistance, shelter assistance and English language classes.





**723**

GARFIELD  
ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL STUDENTS



**92%**

OF GARFIELD STUDENTS  
SOCIOECONOMICALLY  
DISADVANTAGED



**59%**

OF GARFIELD  
STUDENTS ARE  
ENGLISH LEARNERS



**4%**

OF GARFIELD  
STUDENTS EXPERIENCE  
HOMELESSNESS



**10**

COMMUNITY AND  
STAKEHOLDER GROUPS  
PARTICIPATED IN  
PLANNING PROCESS



**54,900**

PEOPLE LIVE WITHIN  
WALKING DISTANCE OF  
THE CENTER

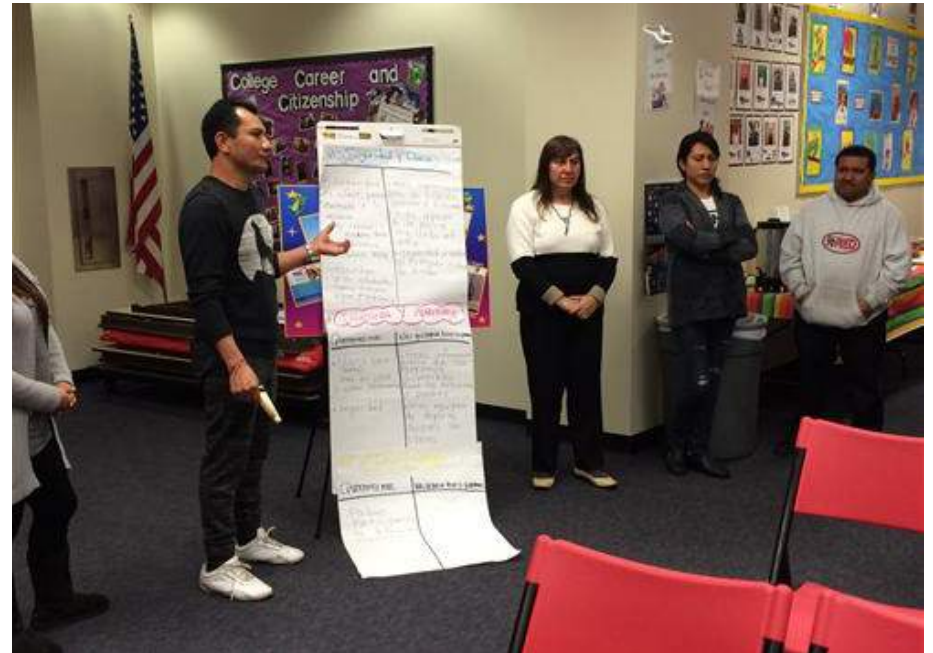


**98%**

OF GARFIELD  
STUDENTS ARE  
LATINO

Many informal and formal planning meetings were held with the community and the service-provider stakeholders to determine what services were most needed, how they would be delivered, and what facility features were most important to support these needs.

Dr. Kerri Braun, the Principal of Garfield Elementary, was actively involved with the process as were SAUSD's Family and Community Engagement Team (FACE), SAUSD's Facilities and Governmental Relations team, parent advisory groups, SAUSD Leadership, St Joseph Hospital, St Jude Health Center, Santa Ana College, and the City of Santa Ana Historic Resources Commission, among other important partners.





Some of the challenges encountered in this process were lack of available space at the school and a lack of construction funds to provide the needed repairs which was overcome by accessing a variety of funding sources including grants, maintenance and local bond funds. Assets in the process included the commitment of SAUSD staff, the enthusiasm of Garfield parents, and the underutilized and historically significant former Pacific Electric substation building adjacent to the Garfield Elementary School campus.

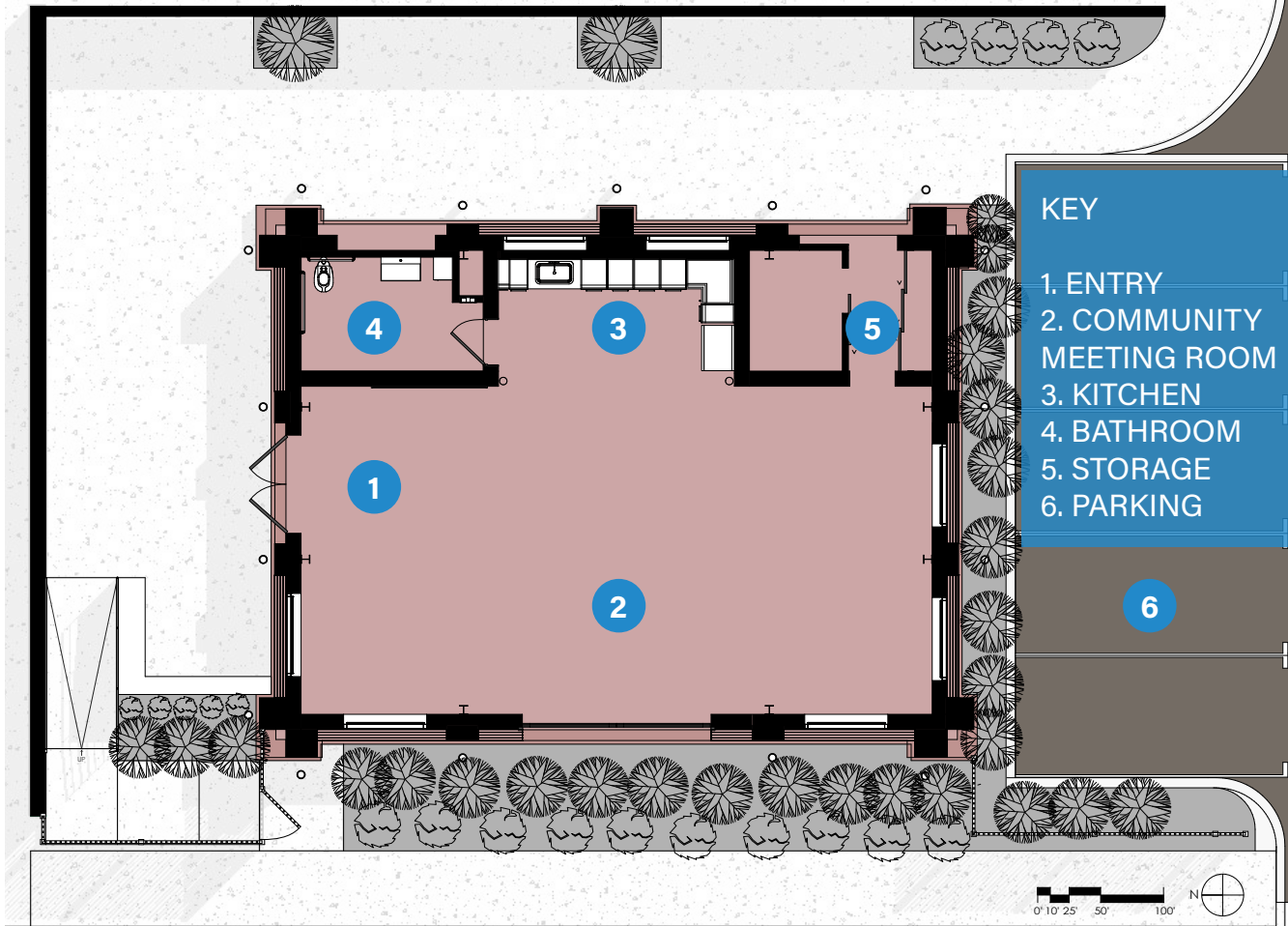
The planning process was critical to determine which features were most important for the Center. These include flexibility of use, a food serving area, dedicated bathroom facility, storage, climate control, visibility, and community access during and after school hours. The process was also valuable in defining which services were most needed by the community and how they could best be delivered.



## EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The vision for the Garfield Elementary School Wellness Center is to support student success by working collaboratively with parents and the community to strengthen the students' learning environment and outcomes. This has resulted in spaces that are welcoming and accessible, and flexible to serve a variety of learning, collaboration and service activities.

The building is free-standing and self-contained with a dedicated entry and directly adjacent to the school. It is a recognized community landmark that is on the street, very visible and accessible to parents accompanying their children before and after school. Adjacent parking provides convenient access to stakeholder service providers and families.





DOUBLE HEIGHT  
CEILING

KITCHEN FOR EVENT  
FOOD SERVICE

ACCESS TO NATURAL  
DAYLIGHTING

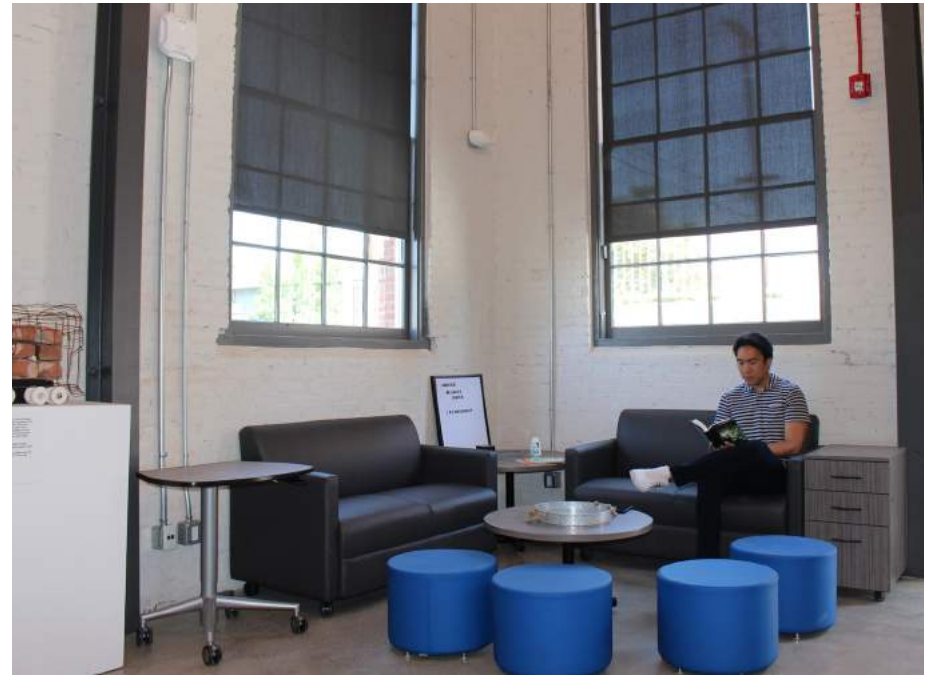
MOVEABLE, STACKABLE  
FURNITURE - VARIOUS  
CONFIGURATIONS

LARGE FLEXIBLE  
GATHERING SPACE

EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The building is brick and wood with high windows and a double height ceiling offering lots of natural daylight and a warm and inviting environment, preserving the charm of the period details as well as providing modern features like video projection, Wi-Fi, new utilities, and a new heating and cooling system. With exposed beams, ducts and electrical conduit the design reflects the building's industrial origin and offers learning opportunities about its history and construction. Historic plaques document the building's history and importance to the community. A local artist was commissioned to use some of the original construction materials in a new sculpture on display in the community room to tell the story of the Pacific Electric Railway and its connection to the building and the community.

The community room is large enough for classes and group events and moveable, stackable furniture provides for small group activities, and one-on-one interactions, as well as individual work. Smaller meeting rooms and offices were avoided to allow maximum flexibility. A new food serving area provides a valuable feature that is an important part of many community events and activities at the Center. With its own parking and restroom, and dedicated HVAC system, programs can be offered before, during, and after school without conflicting with daily school activities.





EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

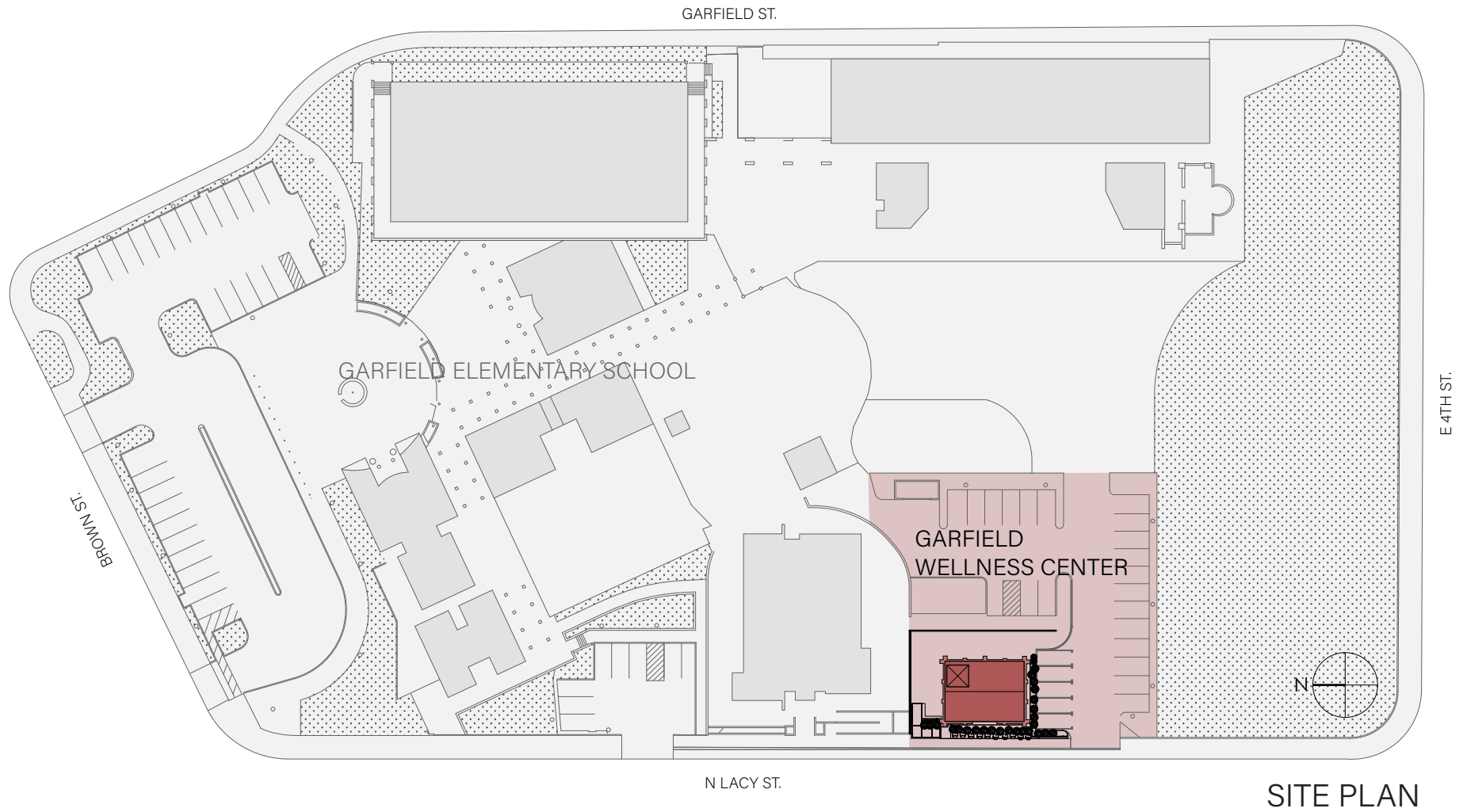
Three primary goals shaped the physical environment of the Garfield Wellness Center:

- 1** To provide a facility that is flexible, adaptable, and engaging to support the function of the Wellness Center and goals of SAUSD.
- 2** To cost effectively rebuild and upgrade building systems that have been minimally maintained over the last 70 years.
- 3** To protect and restore a 113-year-old facility that is recognized as a local and national cultural resource.

This has resulted in an environment that has a comfortable and inviting ambiance that celebrates its industrial roots, craftsmanship, character and imperfections of 113 years of utilitarian use and offers modern features that perfectly suit its new life as an important community center.



Sustainability features include an energy efficient HVAC system, new insulated glass in existing window frames, water conserving plumbing fixtures, and a water-conserving landscape and irrigation system. Choosing adaptive reuse of an existing building is highly sustainable by avoiding the waste generated by demolition and avoiding significant greenhouse gas emission that would have been generated by building a new facility.



PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

SITE PLAN

RECONSTRUCTION OF ORIGINAL COOLING  
TOWER TO HOUSE HVAC SYSTEM

NEW ROOF

PRESERVATION OF INSULATOR AND WALL  
OPENINGS FOR OVERHEAD CABLES THAT  
POWERED LOCAL PACIFIC ELECTRIC RED CARS

RESTORATION OF  
BRICK STRUCTURE  
AND FACADE

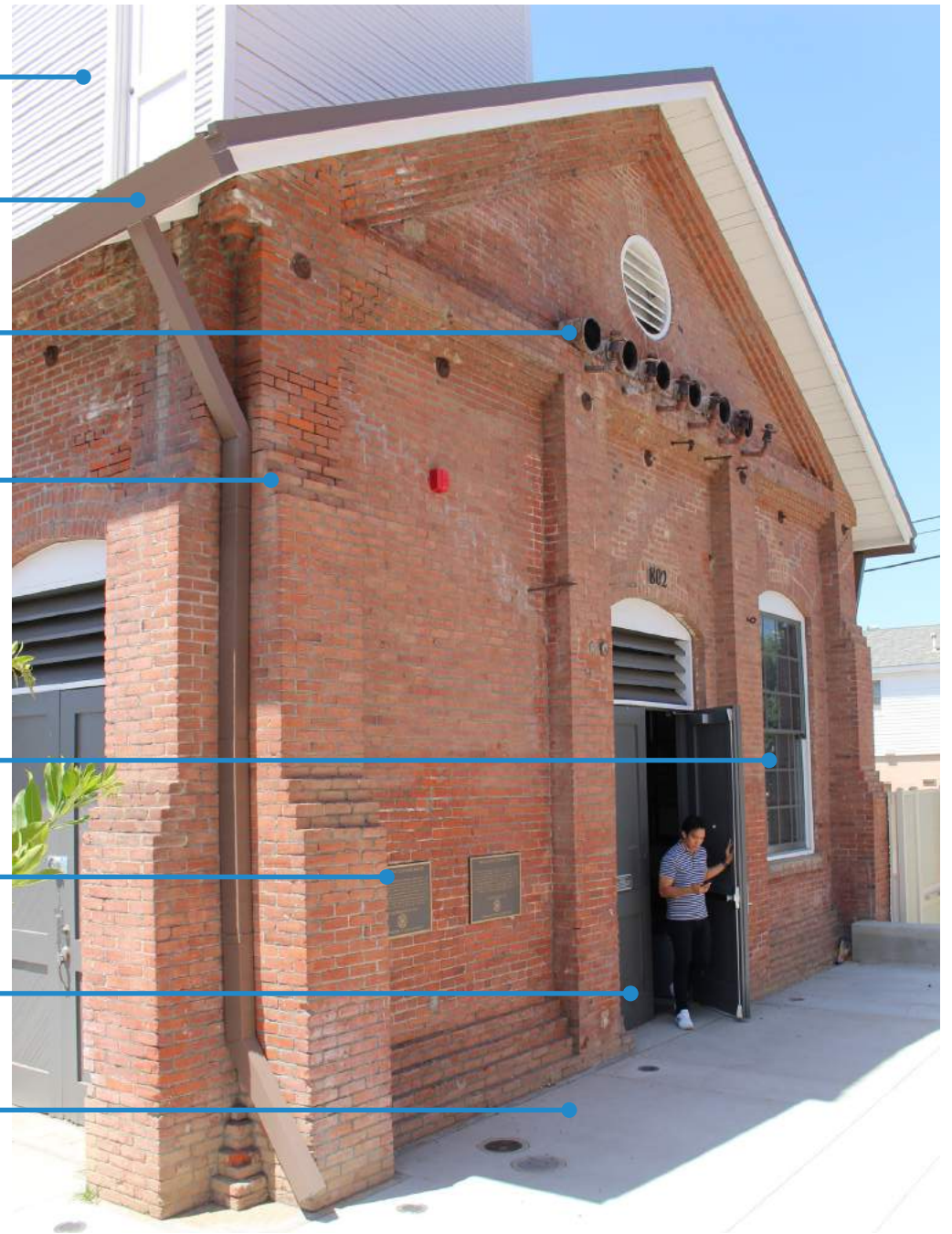
NEW WINDOW GLAZING

NEW NATIONAL REGISTER PLAQUES

ORIGINAL DOORS RESTORED

NEW CONCRETE PAVING

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT





## RESULTS OF THE PROCESS & PROJECT

The project has been praised by Garfield parents as a new neighborhood hub and place to grow new community leaders and serves as a model for similar centers across southern California.

Two new healthcare provider partners are providing medical and mental health services as a result of the new facility's capabilities.

An unintended benefit of the project is the restoration and preservation of a 113-year-old landmark of the region's transportation and commercial past and the opportunity to educate those who visit the Wellness Center about it and the unique history of their community. Landmark plaques on the exterior of the building and artwork inside enrich this experience.

With its ideal location and own dedicated facility, the Center will easily be able to grow its programs and services 2-3 times beyond its previous level of service. This will help Garfield students achieve success and strengthen the community.





**“In order for our students to be successful we have to have engagement from their families”**

*Valerie Amezcua SAUSD Board Vice President*