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COMMUNITY BRIDGES
PUENTES DE LA COMUNIDAD

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Beach Flats community rallies together in the face of vandalism

Santa Cruz, Calif. — Last night, the City of Santa Cruz hosted an open forum at Nueva Vista Community Resources' Beach Flats Community Center site to discuss the vandalism of the remaining piece of a 23-year-old community mural.

Thanks to a collaboration of local artists, community leaders and public officials, the mural will be restored this weekend.

“The vandalism of the mural was a deliberate attempt to attack the cultural heritage of this neighborhood, and clearly a criminal act,” said Martín Bernal, City Manager of the City of Santa Cruz. “Our Police Department is conducting a thorough investigation to find the perpetrators and our Parks and Recreation Department is working with the community to restore the murals.”

Community Bridges donated funds to purchase supplies, and solicited further donations for the project from generous community partners Palace Art Supply, Lenz Arts, and Art Supplies Ink.

“It’s inspiring to see the community unite and bounce back from this senseless vandalism,” said Raymon Cancino, Chief Executive Officer of Community Bridges, which operates Nueva Vista Community Resources and nine other human services programs throughout Santa Cruz County. “This mural was cherished as a way to document and preserve the shared history of the Beach Flats community, and we’re happy to help provide and acquire the supplies necessary to restore it to its original form.”

Lead volunteer artists Marciano Cruz, Irene O’Connell, and Nikos de las Rosa anticipate completing the restoration by Sunday. Reyna Ruiz, formerly of Santa Cruz Barrios Unidos, is organizing volunteers, permits and outreach.

A community dialogue will take place at Beach Flats park on Friday to discuss the vision and plan for how the family portrait should be recreated.

Police are asking for anyone who has information on the vandalism to contact the Police Department's investigations unit at (831) 420-5820.