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For Release:

Federal Certification Brings Hope for Financially Underserved Communities

NeighborWorks Southern Colorado is excited to announce that on December 18, 2021, its subsidiary organization Southern Colorado Community Lending (SCCL) achieved official certification as a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) by the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI Fund).

The designation as a certified CDFI means that Southern Colorado Community Lending will gain access to a unique set of funds that leverage federal dollars with private sector investments to financially support low-economic communities and financially underserved community members. The local non-profit will administer the disbursements of those funds several ways including the development of affordable housing, the creation of jobs and local businesses, and the expansion of community facilities.

Entering their 45th year as an organization, NeighborWorks Southern Colorado has been working toward CDFI certification for six years and is humbled to be the first CDFI based in the community it serves. Since the organization is community-based the staff and board of directors are committed to successfully influence community development in positive ways. As a CDFI they hope to help create jobs, expand businesses, build infrastructure, develop commercial and residential real estate, and finance more homeowners.

With CDFI certification, Southern Colorado Community Lending may now look to help areas such as schools, health care centers, grocery stores, healthy food access, small businesses, financing of affordable housing, and other investments that generate growth in the community.

CEO Ashleigh Winans said of the certification, "We are the first CDFI in our community that is based in our community and dedicated to serve our community. I am so excited and the meaning behind this will make me eternally humble."

According to an infographic on www.cdfifund.gov the "...CDFI Fund invests in Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) to maximize impact in our nation's low-income areas. Through unique programs and tailored resources that leverage federal dollars with private capital, the CDFI Fund supports creating jobs, building businesses, and revitalizing neighborhoods."

The CDFI Fund is a public-private partnership that uses an allocation from a limited federal fund to bring in private sector investments to support low-income communities and encourage financial access and stability.

As a requirement to become a CDFI, Southern Colorado Community Lending is a financial institution that has been deemed an expert in supporting and servicing low-income communities.

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