

## **2007 AGENCY AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE WINNERS**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE INNOVATION**

#### **LANDLORD DIRECT DEPOSIT AND ELECTRONIC STATEMENTS**

The Tulsa Housing Authority (THA) makes monthly payments to over 1400 landlords who participate in the Housing Choice Voucher program. THA analyzed various ways to reduce the costs of this function. THA elected to implement a mandatory Direct Deposit program with the landlords. In conjunction with the electronic bank payments, an electronic payment statement is emailed to each landlord. This change in how payments are processed has reduced the time spent and money spent by the Housing Authority.

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#### **PAY CARD PROGRAM**

The Arlington Housing Authority established a Pay Card system to benefit its Housing Choice Voucher Program participants and to reduce the Housing Authority operating costs. The Pay Card initiative enables the Arlington Housing Authority to issue Utility Reimbursement Payments to eligible Housing Choice Voucher Program participants without the costs and time associated with processing and mailing paper checks. The Pay Card acts like a debit card that can be used by the participant at retail outlets for purchases, or used to withdraw cash, making the card very convenient for participants. Utility Reimbursement Payments are applied to the Pay Card monthly.

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## **PROGRAM INNOVATION – COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION**

### **HISTORIC WILSON HOTEL**

The Wilson Hotel, constructed in 1890 with a major addition in 1926, is one of the largest and most prominent structures in Anacortes. The upper floors had been vacant for over 20 years and the building was in a visible state of deterioration when in 2004, the Anacortes Housing Authority (AHA) stepped in to purchase and rehabilitate it. The \$6.4 million project, the largest ever undertaken by AHA, increases the supply of affordable housing in the downtown core, improves the appearance of the community, and preserves an irreplaceable link to Anacortes' historic past.

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### **BREMERTON URBAN RENEWAL**

After businesses left downtown for a Mall, Bremerton tried for decades to revitalize. But small cities don't have resources for major renewal projects. A regional effort was needed. KCCHA stepped in, changing state law, and persuading all levels of government to develop, finance, or support \$300 million in development. The first project was regional - an office building housing local, state and federal agencies. We created an innovative financing model - the nation's first government condominium. Results: 8 new restaurants, 27 new businesses, 144 condos under construction, 8 renovated buildings, 700 new employees, tenfold increase in revenue growth rate.

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## **SMART CORNER: NEW HEADQUARTERS MODELS SMART GROWTH**

The San Diego Housing Commission desperately needed a new headquarters building. Since 1984, the agency's main office was located in a converted warehouse. Parking was scarce, public transit was blocks away, client interviews lacked privacy, and building systems had deteriorated. Today, the agency's new headquarters serves as the anchor of a unique project, aptly named "Smart Corner," that embodies all elements of smart growth: housing, retail and offices on one site; high housing density; diversity of housing prices; and a public/private partnership. Most notable, the transit-oriented development will be diagonally bisected and serviced by the San Diego Trolley.

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## **HAGERSTOWN WEST-END RENOVATION**

Hagerstown's West End was in a state of extreme decay. Local governments were at odds and financially strapped. The Authority leveraged HOPE VI funds with local government land donations, CDBG funds, difficult acquisitions, in-kind services, the first HUD-approved endowment trust and a unique neighborhood beautification project. The project was completed within time/cost budgets and provided resources to assist local business development. The project features a self-sufficient community center, Habitat for Humanity homes, work force homeownership and renovations to private homes. The result: 352 new homes, commercial revitalization, agency/government unification, and community pride.

### **Mr. Ted Shankle**

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## **PROGRAM INNOVATION – AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

### **OPPORTUNITY CENTER OF THE MIDPENINSULA**

Our County, like others is struggling to meet the HUD required 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. There are many obstacles, including the scarcity and high costs of land in California (and Palo Alto in particular), public and political will, gaining trust of chronically homeless clients, and more. Creating the Opportunity Center required almost ten years of discussion, fund raising, memoranda of agreement, and more fund raising, but the result is a state of the art facility which we believe is a model for future developments. It is also serving as impetus to plan another local project to house homeless families.

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### **EL CARRILLO – A PLACE TO CALL HOME FOR THE HOMELESS**

Santa Barbara is a community of 90,000 located 95 miles northwest of Los Angeles. Market rate housing is virtually unattainable for low-income households. The median single-family home sale price is \$1,200,000 and the median rent for 2-bedroom apartments is \$1,550 per month. Despite the City's impressive record on producing affordable housing (13% of the housing stock), demand far exceeds supply. The homeless population has virtually no option other than to live on the street. The goal through this development was to provide, the first of its kind, permanent supportive housing to Santa Barbara's homeless based on the Housing First model.

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## **PRESERVING HISTORY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Older, garden style apartment buildings often fall victim to the wrecking ball as the inner suburbs surrounding Washington, DC revitalize. An unlikely alliance of affordable housing advocates and historic preservationists, who teamed up with the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County, Maryland (HOC), were able to change this paradigm. Together they preserved 132 units of affordable housing and historic authenticity in a highly desirable downtown area of Silver Spring, Maryland, which is being revitalized.

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## **FAIRBANKS RIDGE: A BALANCED COMMUNITIES MODEL**

Fourteen years ago - anticipating the region's looming housing crisis - the San Diego Housing Commission helped the City of San Diego create an inclusionary zoning program for a broad expanse of undeveloped land. The reasoning? Plan ahead for future housing needs with a balanced array of housing types and prices. The plan worked. Today, the city's North City inclusionary program has spawned the development of 1,271 affordable units in neighborhoods where million dollar homes are commonplace. And Fairbanks Ridge - an attractively designed, environmentally-friendly affordable rental complex - is a shining example of this approach.

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## **PROGRAM INNOVATION – PROJECT DESIGN**

### **ROOSEVELT COMMONS APARTMENTS**

The Roosevelt Commons Apartments affordable housing project involved the restoration and rehabilitation of eight historic buildings originally constructed in the 1920's, and new construction of five buildings. The project scope made up an entire city block in downtown Phoenix within the Roosevelt Historic District. The buildings had been fenced and boarded up for years, creating a serious blight in this historic and desirable neighborhood. The finished product included restoration of the eight historic buildings, plus newly-constructed apartment buildings, clubhouse and two pavilions for the entire community - a total of 48 affordable apartments.

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### **NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCE CENTER**

The Phoenix intersection of 24th Street and East Broadway had a notorious history for crime and urban decay. Residents and civic leaders approached this challenge by creating the South Phoenix Village Neighborhood Initiative Area. The comprehensive revitalization strategy included creation of a vibrant, multi-cultural, commercial 'gateway' at this intersection, known as the 'Four Corners.' In December 2006, Four Corners was inaugurated with completion of the beautifully designed Neighborhood Resource Center, containing a 24/7 neighborhood police unit and Neighborhood Services office and meeting spaces. The project creates a dramatic architectural statement transforming area character and framing the vision for Four Corners.

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## **HAGERSTOWN WEST-END RENOVATION**

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## **LION CREEK CROSSINGS MIXED INCOME HOUSING**

Lion Creek Crossings Phase 1 is the first phase in a multi-phase, mixed-income, transit-oriented housing development that is itself the initial element of a redevelopment plan developed jointly between OHA, the City of Oakland, and the Bay Area Rapid Transit Authority (BART). The redevelopment plan intends to replace a dilapidated public housing project and underutilized industrial properties with high-density housing, retail and office space around the Coliseum Airport BART station. Phase 1 includes 115 affordable apartments, 45 of which are floating public housing units. The units were completed and occupied in the spring of 2006.

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## **NEW COLUMBIA'S DESIGN FOR TRANSFORMATION**

The revitalization of New Columbia transformed an isolated 82-acre public housing development into a mixed-income, mixed-use community, elegantly blending into its neighborhood. The street layout was entirely redesigned, connecting to adjacent street grids. Housing density almost doubled, and housing types are so integrated that it is hard to differentiate between subsidized and market-rate, rental and owner-occupied. 'Main Street on Trenton' offers shops, an elementary school, Boys and Girls Club, community college classrooms and other amenities. Parks, gardens and public art adorn the landscape. The project, which energetically adopted 'green,' sustainable design and construction practices, finished before schedule and on budget.

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## **SPRINGWOOD YOUTH CENTER**

The Springwood Youth Center was created by a partnership of the King County Housing Authority and three nonprofit agencies to address the need for community infrastructure and program development in the fastest-growing center of poverty in the region. The \$3.4 million, two-story, 10,800 square foot facility - located in the heart of KCHA's 321-unit Springwood Apartments public housing complex - features a gym, computer lab, classrooms for homework assistance, an arts and crafts room, a recreation room and a commercial kitchen. The Center offers a variety of programs and activities and serves more than 1,200 middle and high-school-aged youth.

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## **PROGRAM INNOVATION – RESIDENT AND CLIENT SERVICES**

### **HOUSING ASSISTANCE RENTAL PROGRAM (HARP)**

The Housing Assistance Rental Program (HARP) provides homeless individuals leaving the jail, residential treatment, or youth aging out of foster care with case management and housing under a "Housing First" model. A coalition of agencies have come together to provide services, including the Housing Authority of the County of Salt Lake, Wasatch Homeless Health Care, State Department of Workforce Services, County Government, and LDS Humanitarian Services. Equally important partners are landlords, who have committed to keeping participants in housing. Nearly 80% of the individuals in HARP have remained in housing or transitioned to other permanent housing.

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### **TENANT EDUCATION FOR WATER AND ENERGY SAVINGS**

Distribution of tenant education “goody bags” containing items to encourage water and energy savings as a component of the King County Housing Authority's (KCHA) Energy Services Company (ESCO) project. About 2,550 bags were distributed to all residents in developments undergoing energy/water retrofits as part of the ESCO project. The goody bag project was replicated for new tenants moving into the first phase of housing (Seola Crossing) for the KCHA Greenbridge/HOPE VI project. About 190 bags were distributed to residents at Seola Crossing.

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## **SOUTH SHORE POLAR EXPRESS**

Our agency and staff was faced with a problem - what could we do to expand our fund raising activity? These important funds were needed to secure financing for existing social and education opportunities for elders, children, and FSS participants living in public and assisted housing. We discovered an innovative method by partnering with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority in creating a reenactment of the Polar Express. It resulted with a new intergovernmental cooperation, ninety H.S. volunteers and tremendous community support. Nearly 2,000 adults and children took a magical ride to the North Pole via the MBTA train system.

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## **DON'T LET HIM TAKE YOUR MIND**

Those of us in abusive relationships rarely exhibit positive growth. Yet, we do not know how to get out of these relationships. Therefore, we become unproductive, robbing ourselves of our self-esteem, success, happiness, and well-being. Don't Let Him Take Your Mind (DLHTYM pronounced delete 'em) purports to reduce the incidents of depression, poor mental health, poverty, unemployment, child abuse, and domestic violence by freeing the mind of confusion, chaos, and clutter, making room for healthy thoughts and productive reasoning. Strengthening of some relationships and dissolution of others result in noticeably healthier individuals and a more valuable sense of success.

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## **MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE TRANSITIONAL CENTER**

The Mary McLeod Bethune Transitional Center for Homeless Students Center is a state-of-the-art educational site financed with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the Los Angeles County Community Development Commission (CDC). The Center assesses the current language, arts and math proficiency levels of homeless children, ages 5 through 18, to ensure their appropriate placement when they return to the public school system. In addition, the Center provides mental health services, access to medical support, enrichment activities, and school supplies, and facilitates a gentle and safe back-to-school transition for over 400 homeless children per year.

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## **CLUB TECH PROGRAM**

Computers and the Internet have dramatically changed how people live, work and play. Information access is faster, easier and less expensive - but only for those who can take advantage of these powerful tools. We approached Boys & Girls Clubs of America and the Beaumont Foundation of America with a grant application that included a comprehensive and strategic plan to obtain technology equipment. As a result, we received the equipment and have incorporated basic computer skill programs, web page design, internet safety and photo illustration for hundreds of youth and adults.

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