

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FINANCE

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READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

From a group of 34 finalists, AHF's readers will
select the top developments of 2015–2016





2016 READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

Each project has a story to tell—presenting bold ideas, overcoming obstacles, and opening doors to those most in need of housing

BY DONNA KIMURA AND CHRISTINE SERLIN

Thirty-four outstanding affordable housing developments have been selected as finalists in AFFORDABLE HOUSING FINANCE'S 12th annual Readers' Choice Awards competition.

Located in 14 states and Guam, the developments include an inspiring community for homeless veterans in Toledo, Ohio; an ambitious project that brings together affordable housing and a charter school in New York City; and a sweeping effort to redevelop public housing across San Francisco using the Rental Assistance Demonstration program.

The finalists were selected from a pool of 87 strong nominees from across the country and were chosen for their impact, creative problem solving,

and innovation. The projects either were completed last year or will be completed this year.

The Readers' Choice Awards program is unique because AHF subscribers choose the winners: You can read about each of the finalists on the following pages and then vote to select the best project in each category, as well as an overall winner.

Longer profiles and slide shows of the projects appear online. Visit www.housingfinance.com to vote. Voting takes place from July 1 to Aug. 1 and is restricted to AHF magazine and newsletter subscribers as of June 30. The winning developments will be announced in September and honored at AHF Live: The 2016 Affordable Housing Developers Summit, Nov. 15–17, at the Hyatt Regency Chicago.

FAMILY FINALISTS



NORTH SANTA FE APARTMENTS

Developer: Community HousingWorks

Architect: Rodriguez Associates Architects & Planners

Major Funders: Union Bank; California Tax Credit Allocation Committee; the city of Vista; the city of Carlsbad

A transit-oriented, affordable housing development has been just the ticket to make the case for higher density in the suburban community of Vista, Calif.

Developer Community HousingWorks (CHW) built the 68-unit North Santa Fe Apartments on city-owned land across the street from a Sprinter light-rail station.

“[The city] had this train for a while, but it took a number of years before they had the courage to take the step to put more density near the downtown village,” says Anne Wilson, senior vice president of housing and real estate development for CHW.

North Santa Fe, which opened in July 2015, serves households earning 30% to 60% of the area median income. Ten units are set aside for underserved young adults ages 18 to 24 who are aging out of foster care, are homeless, or are at risk of homelessness.

“It’s a real opportunity for young adults to connect with families and see what a stable family means,” says Wilson.

CHW offers supportive services to all residents. North County Lifeline also provides services for the young adults.

The development pays tribute to the city’s heritage and includes many nods to trains (acknowledging the Santa Fe Railroad, which began passenger and freight service to Vista in the late 1880s), as well as produce that was traditionally grown in the area. These twin elements help inspire 21st-century healthful practices, including walking, using public transit, eating local produce, and not smoking.

The \$20.3 million development was funded primarily with low-income housing tax credit equity and a permanent loan from Union Bank. —C.S.

Uphams Crossing

Developer: Planning Office for Urban Affairs

Architect: The Architectural Team

Major Funders: Bank of America Merrill Lynch; Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development; Massachusetts Housing Partnership; city of Boston; Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston; Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta

The former St. Kevin’s Parish in the Uphams Corner neighborhood of Dorchester, Mass., continues to help those in need—in its redevelopment as much-needed affordable workforce housing and permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless families.

The 80-unit Uphams Crossing is following in the footsteps of its predecessor, which, prior to its closing, had a long-standing mission of providing support for the homeless.

“The pastor took an active role to see this parish used to continue serving those in need,” says Lisa Alberghini, president of the Planning Office for Urban Affairs, a nonprofit housing



developer affiliated with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston. “It honors the legacy of that work.”

Uphams Crossing, completed in October, consists of three buildings: two new construction and the third an adaptive reuse of the former St. Kevin’s Parish school and church building, in which the developer added a third floor.

More than 3,300 applications were submitted for the 80 units, which serve households earning 30% to 60% of the area median income.

Twenty of the units serve formerly homeless families who came from seven shelters in Boston. A project-based subsidy through the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program has been provided for those units. The 60 workforce units are home to residents employed at over 35 local businesses.

The developer leveraged more than 10 sources of financing for the \$32.3 million project, including 9% and state low-income housing tax credits. —C.S.

TOP: MARK DAVIDSON PHOTOGRAPHY; BOTTOM: YEVYANT PARNAGIAN JR.