



Contact: Bronwyn Hogan, senior communications manager
(510) 874-1563 or bhogan@oakha.org

Oakland Housing Authority's Mandela Gateway Graces Cover of National Publication

*OHA's Award Winning Property Featured
In NAHRO's Journal of Housing and Community Development*

OAKLAND, Calif., April 19, 2007 - The Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) is proud that Mandela Gateway, the award winning West Oakland development, is gracing the cover of the March/April 2007 National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials' (NAHRO) Journal of Housing and Community Development, and its award-winning project design is described in a lead article along with five other national housing developments. Mandela Gateway was the recipient of NAHRO's 2006 National Award of Excellence, given to innovative housing and community development programs throughout the country, and had previously won NAHRO's 2006 Award of Merit in the project design category.

"Mandela Gateway was designed by Michael Willis Architects to be bold and thoughtful," said Jon Gresley, executive director for the Oakland Housing Authority. "This mixed-use development bridges the gap between an older, mostly low-income Victorian-influenced community, and a cutting-edge transit oriented development."

In 2004, OHA tore down the distressed and crime-ridden Westwood Gardens, a 46-unit public housing site built in the 1960s. In its place, and with the help of a HOPE VI grant, OHA partnered with BRIDGE Housing, Michael Willis Architects, Robert-Obayashi General Contractors and the City of Oakland to build Mandela Gateway. The site covers two city blocks, has 168 units, and offers street level retail space, rental townhomes with porches and landscaped front lawns, playgrounds, and common areas. Mandela Gateway is conveniently located near the West Oakland BART station and is considered a "green" building as it was built using recycled construction materials, and uses energy-efficient lighting and water efficient faucets and showerheads.

"Mandela Gateway is viewed as a model for beautiful and affordable housing with commercial amenities, easy access to public transportation, and integrates low-income families into a mixed-income neighborhood," added Gresley. "We are proud of the national recognition this site has received, as we believe it shows that strong

community and private partnerships can be forged to construct beautiful buildings and create new directions for public housing.”

The Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) is the City of Oakland’s state-chartered and federally funded agency to promote the availability of quality housing for low-income persons. OHA works to promote the civic involvement and economic self-sufficiency of its residents and to further the expansion of affordable housing within Oakland. The Authority is currently helping to house 14,000 of the city’s lowest income families. (www.oakha.org)

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