



# News Release

## Oakland Housing Authority Wins National Excellence Award

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 8 – The Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) has won a national award honoring superior assisted housing and community development programs. The OHA won in the Project Design category for the Mandela Gateway Mixed-Use Housing Development.

The 2006 Award of Excellence comes from the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), and will be officially presented on Oct. 17 at NAHRO's National Conference and Exhibition in Atlanta, Ga. Mandela Gateway is one of 24 programs nationwide to receive the 2006 award, out of an original pool of 265 applicants.

With help from a HOPE VI grant, the OHA was able to tear down Westwood Gardens, the site of 46 distressed public housing units, and replace it with Mandela Gateway, a mixed-use, mixed-income housing development with 168 units. The development covers two blocks and contains both rental flats and townhouses. The East block also has a Town Square with green space and playground equipment, as well as retail space. Retail space was included in the Mandela Gateway plan in order to meet residents' needs and integrate the project into the surrounding area. The common areas are landscaped to provide an inviting, residential environment, and twin entry plazas featuring public artwork mark the intersection of the two blocks as the "gateway" into a revitalized west Oakland community. Mandela Gateway is a transit-oriented development in that it was constructed near the West Oakland BART station, and was developed with "green" concepts such as recycled construction materials, energy-efficient lighting, and water-efficient faucets and showerheads. Mandela Gateway is gaining a reputation for having defined a new strategy for income-sensitive revitalization and redevelopment by providing affordable housing with elite architecture, commercial amenities, transit access and a way for low-income families to be integrated into an increasingly mixed-income neighborhood.

"NAHRO members are consistently on the forefront of innovation in the affordable housing industry," said NAHRO President Donald J. Cameron. "The work of our Awards of Excellence winners helps Americans nationwide turn units into homes, and downtowns into economic engines."

The **National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials** (NAHRO), established in 1933, is a membership organization of 21,700 housing and community development agencies and professionals throughout the United States whose mission is to create affordable housing and safe, viable communities that enhance the quality of life for all Americans, especially those of low- and moderate-income. NAHRO's membership administers more than 3 million housing units for 7.6 million people.

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