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2018 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR

Santa Fe Civic Housing Authority

Since our last housing summit in 2016, this affordable housing developer has been very busy. The agency constructed two- \$20 million developments totaling 120 units and rehabilitated another 98 units. This year, they began work on two- \$15 million projects, both of which are rehabs on senior housing complexes. And if that's not enough, they were awarded 2018 tax credits on another new project that is about to break ground.

With this kind of production, it is not surprising that MFA's 2018 Affordable Housing Developer of the Year award goes to the X Santa Fe Civic Housing Authority.

It's impossible to talk about the Santa Fe Civic Housing Authority without talking about its executive director, Ed Romero. X Ed became the ED in 2003, but he had worked with the authority since 1988 as a contractor doing accounting and computer consulting work for them. He said that when he took the position it was "just a job," and that he didn't expect to stay very long.

It's not surprising that Ed felt that way. X At that time, the Santa Fe Housing Authority had 461 public housing units on seven sites that were 40 to 50-years-old. They weren't built that well to start with, and many had been approved for demolition by HUD. X The sites had a total of about \$91 million in deferred maintenance. On a good year, the authority got about \$500,000 for maintenance. X Needless to say, the buildings and units were in terrible shape. No one lived there longer than they absolutely had to, which was an average of six months.

The situation wasn't unique to Santa Fe. X Public housing authorities across the country were facing the same issues, and many made the decision to just walk away. At one point, HUD was losing 10- 30,000 units every month across the country.

But Ed wasn't getting off quite that easily. And it was his kids' fault. **X** Every day when he drove them to school, they had to drive past one of the worst of Santa Fe's public housing projects. Ed's kids would say: "Is that your building, dad?" "Are you in charge of that?"

So instead of walking away, in 2008, **X** Ed decided to fix things. Combining HUD's RAD program with tax credits and other funding from MFA, **X** Santa Fe Housing rehabbed every public housing unit in Santa Fe – **X every unit in Santa Fe** – and converted them to Project-Based Section 8 vouchers. **X** They also built 78 new units on those properties. **X** And those numbers are in addition to all the work we mentioned earlier that the authority has been doing the last two years.

X The Santa Fe Civic Housing Authority now administers programs in five counties and has doubled the number of affordable units it owns or controls. **X** It has acted as the developer and general partner in eight Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects in the last eight years. **X** The developments have received LEED Platinum certification, one of which was a net-zero site, which means energy production on the site equals what is used by its residents.

X The authority has received HUD "high performer" status, received competitive HUD green development grants and **X** received national awards for the community centers that operate within the sites. **X** Residents now live an average of five to six years in their homes, which brings crucial stability and security to families.

X The authority's staff of 29 are passionate about their mission. This is a photo of some of the staff when they were briefed on the concept and design for one of their projects, **X** Villa Alegre. This work matters to them.

Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Santa Fe Civic Housing Authority, please welcome executive director, Ed Romero. **X**