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## Parkside Adds 77 Units to Downtown's Affordable Housing Mix

BY MARK LARSON

Efforts to increase affordable housing in downtown San Diego are stepping up with yet another apartment complex under construction, the six-story, 170,000-square-foot Parkside.

The East Village project is one of a handful being helped by funding from the city's downtown redevelopment agency, the Centre City Development Corp., which is seeking to provide more low-income housing options for families in the downtown district.

"One of our goals is to reduce homelessness downtown," says CCDC spokeswoman Jamee Lynn Smith.

The \$29.8 million Parkside project, due for completion in winter 2009, will offer 77 units of affordable housing, and is set back from the East Village Community Church being redeveloped on the same block, the north side of Island Avenue between 13th and 14th streets. It will have two levels of underground parking.

American Baptist Churches of the Pacific Southwest owns the entire property. The Parkside parcel is being purchased from American Baptist Churches, which currently leases the site to East Village Community Church. The church is paying for its own renovation, but the price for that project was not immediately available.

"We are totally excited about this project," says Ken Sauder, president and chief executive officer of Wakeland Housing and Development Corp., a San Diego-based nonprofit that develops and renovates affordable housing statewide. "It's a unique marriage of two projects on one site. In the end, the community and affordable housing are really the winners. The church said what they needed and the architect was able to come up with a design that works for the church and Parkside."

### Family Housing

Parkside is aimed at providing space for families with lower incomes, which amount to half the local median income of \$72,100. Studios will rent for \$587 per month and three-bedroom units will be \$1,036 monthly. Affordable units include 28 studios, 15 one-bedroom units, 28 two-bedroom units and five three-bedroom units.

The project is being funded through a mix of bank loans, tax credits, tax-exempt bonds and a long-term \$13.8 million loan from CCDC. Pooling those sources are necessary so that low rents can be offered, says Sauder.

Randall Bohl and Richard Benson of Benson & Bohl Architects Inc., the architects who created the Parkside and church designs, say this was their first mixed-use project that combines affordable housing and a church, but they've done plenty of other mixed-use designs.

The technical challenge of the project, says Benson, was to give the church its own identity.

To do that, he says, "We had to pull the residential units back from the corner."  
"We put a rooftop deck on the church, giving it an exterior patio overlooking the park," adds Bohl.

That park is a planned 60,000-square-foot East Village City Park to be located on 14th Street. Green features were planned into the Parkside building, including the use of environmentally friendly paint and furniture. And a solar-energy system will provide power for public spaces of the building such as hallways and common areas, says Bohl. Public art in the form of a stylized tree with 3-D branches rising from street level to the fifth story by artist Nina Karavasiles will be at 13th and Island. The tree-like branches extending over 40 feet will cast shadows on the building.

Eri Kameyama, the CCDC's project manager for the Parkside project, says in past years most affordable housing projects in the CCDC's boundaries offered small dwellings: studios and one-bedroom apartments.

### **Stream Of Projects**

Now, the CCDC is trying to foster affordable housing that can accommodate families, she says, noting Lillian Place, a 74-unit apartment completed in East Village last year. It offered two- and three-bedroom units.

Another affordable housing breakthrough for the CCDC — the biggest ever in San Diego — is **Ten Fifty B**, a planned 23-story building that was originally to be a condo project but was switched to one offering low-income rental housing for families. Groundbreaking just took place in the East Village for the \$89 million project, which will offer 225 low-income units, most of them two and three bedrooms. It is scheduled for completion in 2010.

Other affordable housing projects on CCDC's list include the Cedar Gateway project on Cedar Street between Fifth and Sixth avenues near Interstate 5. Construction on the five-story, \$32.2 million project is targeted for this autumn. It is planned to have 65 low-income rental units, including 23 for those with special needs due to mental illness or former homelessness. The CCDC is contributing \$8.9 million to the cost of the project, which will also have public parking and ground-floor space, likely for offices and a restaurant, says Kameyama.

In its 33 years of existence, the CCDC says it has helped fund development of 15,800 dwelling units in the downtown area. Last year alone, said CCDC spokeswoman Smith, it helped fund 2,647 new low-income housing units in the downtown area.

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