

2015 HUD SECRETARY DESIGN AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

California and Vermont affordable housing developments cited as national models

WASHINGTON – Two model affordable housing developments in California and Vermont are the recipients of the [2015 HUD Secretary's Housing and Community Design Award](#), each recognized for excellence in affordable housing design. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the American Institute of Architects (AIA) selected *Step Up on 5th* in Santa Monica, California; and *Co-Op Plaza Redevelopment* in Brattleboro, Vermont as national affordable housing models.

"Affordable housing represents a gateway to greater opportunity. These two projects are a powerful reminder that bold vision and innovative design can shape communities of promise," said HUD Secretary Julián Castro. "I congratulate these winners on their achievements and I'm proud to honor them for their commitment to inclusive development."

The new HUD Secretary's Housing and Community Design Award recipients are:

Excellence in Affordable Housing Design Award – *This award recognizes architecture that demonstrates overall excellence in terms of design in response to both the needs and constraints of affordable housing.*



Step Up on 5th
Santa Monica, California.
Brooks + Scarpa Architects

Step Up on 5th (Step Up) is a bright new spot in downtown Santa Monica. The new building provides a home, support services, and rehabilitation for the homeless and mentally disabled population, with 46 studio apartments of permanent affordable housing and ground level commercial/retail space and underground parking. Step Up incorporates energy efficient measures that exceed standard practice, optimize building performance, and reduce energy use during construction and occupancy. Planning and design of Step Up employed passive design strategies that make the building 50 percent more efficient than a conventionally designed structure.

In addition, the building is loaded with energy saving and environmentally benign devices. Materials conservation and recycling employed during construction, requiring that waste be hauled to a transfer station for recycling, achieved a 71percent recycling rate. Carpet, insulation, and concrete with a recycled content and use of all natural linoleum flooring added to resource conservation. Throughout the building compact fluorescent lighting and double pane windows with a low-E coating are used. Each apartment is equipped with water-saving low flow toilets and a high-efficiency hydronic system for heat. While California has the most stringent energy efficiency requirements in the United States, Step Up incorporates numerous sustainable features that exceed state-mandated Title 24 energy measures by 26 percent. The project has followed the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification process making it equivalent to LEED Gold.

Custom water jet anodized aluminum panels on the main façade create a dramatic screen that sparkles in the sun and glows at night, while providing sun protection and privacy. The material reappears as a strategic arrangement of screens on east and south facing walls, contributing a subtle pattern to the exterior walkways and stairs. South facing walls filter direct sunlight with symmetrical horizontal openings that create a sense of security for the emotionally sensitive residents.

Creating Community Connection Award – *This award recognizes projects that incorporate housing within other community amenities for the purpose of either revitalization or planned growth.*



Co-op Plaza Redevelopment

Brattleboro, Vermont

Gossens Bachman Architects

Co-op Plaza, a public-private partnership, is contributing to the revitalization of a key section of downtown Brattleboro. When the Brattleboro Food Co-op needed a major expansion the Co-op membership decided to forgo the easy and cheaper option to move to an outlying location and committed to staying downtown. As part of their mission, the members partnered with a local nonprofit to provide much needed affordable housing downtown. The first two floors of the new four-story

building house the co-op grocery store and administrative offices, a bakery, and commercial space for local vendors. The extended roof on the first floor connects to an accessible green roof. The upper two floors are designed for 24 affordable apartments. The new parking areas, pedestrian walkways, outside seating, and café and market areas provide a sense of community and place for chance meetings.

The building is a model of energy efficiency, using both conventional and innovative systems, such as heating the entire building with reclaimed waste heat from the store refrigeration system. The collaborative design process was a critical factor in making the project a model for responsible building practice and smart growth. The site, previously contaminated by a dry cleaning facility, was cleaned up. The building was moved away from the nearby brook to protect the water from pollution and the building from flooding. Storm water runoff is treated and filtered by a green roof, permeable surfaces in the parking lot, and a 20-foot buffer strip in the new public park created along the Whetstone Brook.

Energy efficiency was achieved through active, passive, and innovative systems. Recycled heat generated by the Co-op's refrigerators heats the store and the apartments and provides hot water. The design includes natural light throughout and the use of louvers in the second-floor offices.

Lighting is adjusted automatically with timers. Construction materials include locally harvested and milled flooring and slate siding manufactured in Vermont. The apartments have continuous fresh air ventilation with heat recovery and the Co-op uses a solar photovoltaic system to generate electricity. These features have cut per-square-foot energy costs by approximately 50 percent, which helps keep the apartments affordable and saves 21 tons of CO2 emissions a year.

The jury for the AIA/HUD Secretary Awards include: Stephen Schreiber, FAIA, (Chair) University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Claire Desjardins, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Jon Dick, AIA, Archaeo Architects; Kathy Dixon, AIA, K. Dixon Architecture; Clair Enlow, Freelance Writer; Jody Mcguire, AIA, SALA Architects and Madlyn Wohlman-Rodriguez, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.