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Plaza Manuel Ortega Grand Opening!



On September 16, 2003 and under 100 degree weather, the National Farm Workers Service Center, Inc. (NFWSC) celebrated the Grand Opening of Plaza Manuel Ortega. Plaza Manuel Ortega is located in the small

City of El Mirage, 25 miles west of Phoenix, Arizona. Plaza Manuel Ortega consists of 80 apartment units serving low-income families ranging from 30% to 50% of the area median income. The apartments are 1, 2, and 3 bed-

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Letter from the Vice President

Beginning in September, and continuing for the rest of the year, the NFWSC will be quietly rejoicing in the completion of several significant milestones. Plaza Manuel Ortega is our first completed new construction tax credit project in Arizona and we are very excited about this success. Construction was completed in July, and already we have 100% occupancy. Also in September, we will complete Phase I at Vista del Monte in San Francisco, CA and Phase III of Casas San Miguel in Fresno, CA.

ple. 100% completion is expected in November. Lease up has begun and we expect 100% occupancy by the end of the year.

No later than November we will begin the construction of 81 units in Somerton, Arizona. Our Somerton project has been in the pipeline since 1999 and getting it to construction is incredibly satisfying. In late November or early December we will begin construction of 200 units in Pharr, Texas. Not only is this project further solidifying our presence in Texas, but it is our first project in the Rio Grande Valley, a place that holds a special meaning for us.

In Texas, we are nearing 100% construction completion of Village at Meadowbend in Tem-

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Plaza Manuel Ortega Grand Opening! (cont)

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room units. Rents begin at \$267 for a two bedroom and \$370 for a three bedroom apartment. Amenities include a clubhouse, pool, central laundry facility and playground. The majority of the families who reside at Plaza Manuel Ortega were specifically chosen from the City of El Mirage.

Plaza Manuel Ortega is named after Manuel Luis Ortega who was born on September 18, 1969 to Edward and Evangelina Ortega in Phoenix, AZ. At the age of 16, he started a mobile DJ business to earn his way through college. His reputation as an entertainer of the Latino community became so well established that he was recognized as the "loco" local mobile DJ for all occasions. In 1992, Manuel participated in the ASU Hispanic Convocation, which presented Cesar Chavez with an Honorary Doctorate Degree. Cesar would later ask Manuel to be his personal assistant. He was at Cesar's side for about one year before returning to Arizona to direct the "La Union Del Pueblo Entero" union membership office in Chandler. Manuel passed away on July 14, 1998 in Albuquerque, NM. At the Grand Opening, Ms. Sally Ortega, Manuel Ortega's older sister, received a picture frame of the 2003 Commemorative Limited Edition Postal Stamp of Cesar E. Chavez signed by Helen Chavez.

In attendance at the event was Elizabeth Moore from Bank of America. Bank of America provided the construction and permanent financing for this project and presented a \$10,000 check at the event to the NFWSC to support its operations in Arizona. Kevin Kilbane represented Apollo Housing Capital who provided \$4,500,000 in equity. Also present were El Mirage Mayor Robert L. Robles, El Mirage Fire Chief Roy Levenda, Sheila Harris from the Arizona Department of Commerce and other public officials. Our joint venture partner Englewood Development was represented by Mike Surak.

Paul F. Chavez, President of NFWSC, spoke at the event proclaiming that "Plaza Manuel Ortega not only firmly establishes the presence of the NFWSC in Arizona but most importantly it is our first contribution to the Arizona affordable housing stock. It is our hope and expectation that the NFWSC will continue to contribute to the State of Arizona's housing needs".

Radio Campesina, the highest ranked radio station in Arizona, and affiliate of the NFWSC, was a major contributor to the party. Los Rams de la Sierra, a local group, played while people enjoyed delicious food catered especially by Las Mañanitas Food Catering.

Letter from the Vice President (cont.)

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Also in December we will complete the purchase of 20 acres in Shafter, CA. The site will accommodate 81 units of rental housing and approximately 45 single family homes. Finally, In late December we expect to begin construction of La Estancia, a 53-unit single family subdivision in Fresno.

After years of work, and months of organizational structuring, we are beginning to experience the fruits of our labor. Financing is being secured; construction is beginning; units are being completed; and most importantly, low income working families are being given opportunities to raise their families in decent affordable homes .

I am very excited about what we have accomplished thus far. Productivity and impact are a direct result of our commitment to our work, the dedicated staff that have joined us to do the work and the support of our many development partners.

It is my expectation that our impact will only increase in the years to come. I look forward to working with you along the way.

Sincerely,



Plaza Manuel Ortega: Tenant Profile

In order to comprehend the importance and impact of our work we have to magnify and explore the usually invisible life experiences of our tenants. Marie Perraza, one of our residents, has refocused her life goals and is ready for a fresh start thanks to her new apartment at Plaza Manuel Ortega.

Shortly after Plaza Manuel Ortega opened this Summer, Marie Perazza moved into her brand new three-bed, two-bathroom, 1100 square feet apartment.

Marie is a single mother of two young girls, Sarah age 15 and Valerie age 18. Valerie is the mother of eight-month old baby Alyssa. All together, this household makes \$1,500 per month.

Sarah, Marie's youngest daughter, is currently a ninth grader at Dysart High School. Valerie is a stay home mom, but will soon go back to work.

Plaza Manuel Ortega welcomed the family after a very difficult housing situation. Marie, her daughters and granddaughter were homeless and poverty stricken with no place to go. They ultimately found a place to stay, but the only place they could find and afford was a one bedroom apartment. The apartment was too small for her family. A few months later, a very generous woman from the El Mirage CAP office offered her and her family a place to stay, while her unit was ready.

Marie credits workers at Plaza Manuel Ortega property management with helping get her and her family out of homelessness and into a wonderful home

Marie has kept a positive outlook amidst hard times. She alone has supported her family for the last 21 years. Marie works as a Certified Nursing Assistant at a Rehabilitation Senior Home in El Mirage, Arizona. Although they have faced many struggles, Marie feels fortunate to have secure, affordable housing.

Marie says she finally feels a sense of community. Her neighbors are very friendly and the property management staff is wonderful. She often takes them lunch.

Now that she does not have to worry about her housing situation, Marie has two goals. These goals are to continue her education at Estrella Community College and obtain an LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse) license. Her second goal is to become a homeowner in the future. Living in the safe, healthy and clean environment at Plaza Manuel Ortega has encouraged Marie to pursue her goals more ardently.

Initially Marie decided to go back to school when her older daughter was expecting a child. They both went to school together. When the baby was born it was difficult to find suitable child care, let alone afford it. The challenges of having a newborn baby were too much and an education for both Marie and her daughter was postponed. Now that they are living at Plaza Manuel Ortega, Marie is determined to continue her education. She states, "My daughters are very excited that I'm continuing my education, my daughters assist me with my assignments from time to time." Additionally, Marie notes that the computer room and social service provider referrals on-site are great resources to her.

Now that Marie pays affordable rent, she can afford to start saving to purchase a home.

Marie feels that if people want to find quality affordable housing like Plaza Manuel Ortega, one has to be persistent and resourceful.



Ms. Marie Perraza was the resident representative speaker at the Plaza Manuel Ortega's Grand Opening celebration.

Si Se Puede!

New Homeowners!



In March 2003, the construction of Casas San Miguel Phase 3 (CSM3) began. CSM3 consists of nine three-bed, two-bath single family homes. The homes are located in the southwest part of the City of Fresno and are adjacent to Casa San Miguel I.

CSM3 will respond to a growing need for affordable owner-occupied housing in the Fresno area. According to the City of Fresno 2001-2004 Consolidated Plan, 61% of households in the 51%-80% MFI group have housing problems. The homes in this project will sell at the anticipated market prices. However, the families will only need to qualify for mortgages of approximately \$80,000 for a 3-bedroom house. The subsidies will allow the NFWSC to target families that earn 65% of the median income in Fresno, and will maintain the cost of housing at 36% of income. The homes are being sold to first time homebuyers.

The site is near to schools, churches and transportation. The marketing plan included advertisement in the *Fresno Bee* and *Vida* bilingual Newspaper which circulates the City of Fresno. Since marketing began in mid-July, we pre-qualified at least 28 applications. From those 28, nine families will be selected and escrows are expected to close in late October.

The City of Fresno provided a construction loan in the amount of \$715,410. The Redevelopment Agency of the City of Fresno (RDA) provided funding for CSM3 in a form of a \$184,000 grant. In addition, the Low Income Investment Fund provided funding for construction draws. The NFWSC has also obtained a \$135,000 AHP grant that will be distributed \$15,000 per home to each first time home owner.

Francisco Ventura, one of the pre-qualified buyers expressed his enthusiasm and joy of being one of the selected families because "the opportunity to buy a house came through with the help of the National Farm Workers Service Center—Finally achieving the American Dream."

Bakersfield

The NFWSC, Inc.'s latest development plans are for the southern central valley of California in the City of Bakersfield. Comunidad 16 de Septiembre, 1965 (whose name comes from the date that the young National Farm Workers Association, the predecessor to the UFW, began the historic grape boycott in the central valley of California) will be a strategic development that will incorporate new construction of 150 multi-family units, 28 single-family homes and 20,000 sq ft of commercial space.

Currently, the site is an abandoned 21 acre cotton-gin facility once used to produce cotton seed oil. Once a heavy manufacturing center of Kern County, just outside of the City of Bakersfield's limits. It sits at the southwest corner of California Avenue and Washington Avenue, with Potomac Street to the south and the railroad tracts to the west. Over the years the City of Bakersfield has grown and the area that surrounds the site has become a predominately lower income community with an older single-family housing stock.

The NFWSC's mission to provide housing for lower income families will help turn this eyesore property into a cornerstone development that will bring much needed housing, complementing the City's and County's future redevelopment plans. A well-designed project contributes to the community at large and is a great place to live for its residents. Our vision is to provide a pedestrian friendly development which creates a neighborhood that will serve as a catalyst for future better, planned and designed neighborhoods like ours.

Comunidad 16 de Septiembre, 1965 will sit on 12 acres and include 150 total units of service-enriched affordable housing. The project consists of 58 two-bedroom units at 850-900 square feet each, three-bedroom units at 1100-1200 square feet each and 16 four-bedroom units at 1,400 square feet each.

The project's amenities include three separate laundry facilities located no more than 300 feet from any building, a community/multi-purpose building for neighborhood meetings, support groups, and child/holiday activities.

The common areas will contain seating under shade trees, a basketball court, tot-lot play areas, BBQs in multiple locations, and an open general gathering area. The landscaping is made up of both hardscape and softscape. The hardscape will be paved by the use of stamped concrete, while the softscape will be achieved through various mixtures of deciduous and evergreen trees.

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The future development of the site includes 7 acres for the development 28 single-family homes to be offered at a very affordable rate for lower income families. 2 acres will also be dedicated to the development of 20,000 square feet of commercial space that will front California Avenue (a major east west axis through the City).

The NFWSC purchased the property in mid-July of this year with an Acquisition loan from the Low Income Investment Fund. We plan to finance the development of the multi-family units through California Tax Credit proceeds, the use of \$1.6 million in federal HOME funds from Kern County Community and Economic Development Department, and through the Affordable Housing Program.

The Village of Meadowbend



Late last year we began construction of The Village at Meadowbend. The Village at Meadowbend is a 138 unit apartment complex in Temple, Texas. Despite 45 days of rain delays construction is nearing completion. In early September the first 36 units became available. With Capstone Management having done an excellent job pre-leasing, all 36 units were occupied on Friday September 5th.

As of mid-September, the construction was 84% complete. Waves of units are expected to become available every other week, with 100% completion expected by the end of October. We expect to have 100% lease up by the end of the year.

The property will ultimately consist of 11 one bedroom units, 81 two bedroom units and 46 three bedroom units. 52 units are set aside for families at or below 50% of area median income and 52 units are set aside for families earning at or below 60% of area median income. The remaining 34 units will be rented at the market rate. A celebration is scheduled for November 13th.

Casa Aguila Apartments

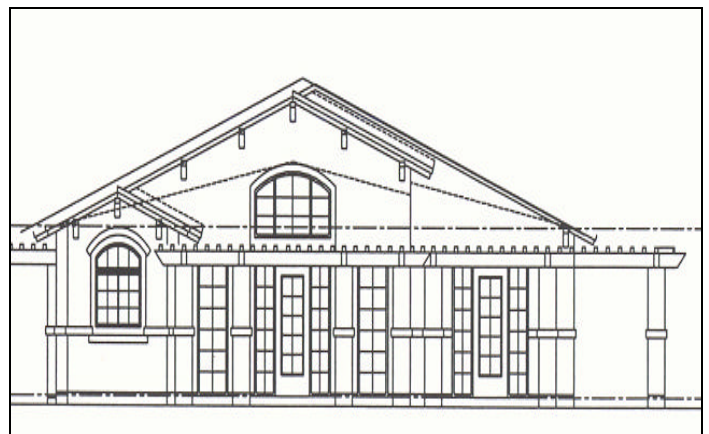
In late July, Rufino Contreras Affordable Housing Corporation, Inc. (RCAHC), the Texas subsidiary of the NFWSC, was awarded Low Income Housing Tax Credits by the State of Texas to develop 200 units of affordable housing in Pharr, Texas.

Currently being designed by Rodriguez and Simon Architects, the property will consist of 100 two bedroom apartments and 100 three bedroom apartments. 32 of the apartments will be set aside for families earning at or below 30% of Area Median Income. 16 of the apartments will be set aside for families earning at or below 40% of Area Median Income. 32 of the apartments will be set aside for families earning at or below 50% of Area Median Income and 80 of the apartments will be set aside for families earning at or below 60% of Area Median Income. The remaining 40 units will be rented at market rate.

The Development will be constructed with four single story units per building and will offer the feel of a single family home. La Union Del Pueblo Entero, a sister organization in the Farmworker Movement, will provide extensive community support services.

The development team also includes The Encinas Group of Texas, as a Special Limited Partner. Additionally, The Related Capital Company has been selected as the Tax Credit Syndicator for this property. As of the writing of this newsletter, both the Construction and Permanent financing are being negotiated with several lenders.

With plans already more than 60% done, our goal is to begin construction by late November or early December.





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You can read past newsletters, learn about our staff and Board of Directors, as well as view our past and present accomplishments. It's a great site! Please visit us there soon!

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