MEDIA KIT

PAISANO GREEN COMMUNITY

EL PASO, TEXAS

Wednesday, August 7, 2013

MEDIA CONTACT
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STORY LINES

Technologies so advanced, legislation had to catch up.

Since the project was the first net zero energy community in the Texas, existing utility laws didn’t apply to the development’s energy systems. Jv DeSousa worked closely with the city of El Paso and local utilities company to develop new legislation that applied to technologically advanced projects such as the Paisano Green Community.

An environment too brutal for LEED.

Natural tree shade, a key component of the LEED rating system, would have been unsustainable in El Paso’s incredibly hot and dry climate. Rather than taking a loss to the LEED rating, special circumstances were put in place for the El Paso environment.

Educating the elderly.

Without resident stewardship, the advanced systems at the community could not function to their full capacity. Training programs and incentives were developed to keep the residents involved.

KEY FEATURES

- net-zero energy
- LEED Platinum
- Enterprise Green Communities
- uses no fossil fuels
- Powered by solar photovoltaic panels and wind turbines
- public senior housing
- place-sensitive community
- promotes healthy living
- encourages development of interpersonal relationships
- infill development
- optimal passive solar design
- overhangs and inset window placement
- east and west walls shaded by solar screens
- solar chimney
- operable windows for natural ventilation
- high-performance building shell
- fiberglass windows
- less than 1 air change per 10 hours (<0.1 NACH)
- energy recovery ventilators
- storm water management
- drought tolerant plants
- energy efficient HVAC (mini-split heat pumps)
- solar thermal for domestic hot water and solar photovoltaic, wind turbines
- HERS rating of 10
- renewable energy: first cost $1,220,000; operational savings $3,700,000 (50 Yr), $1,450,000 (30 Yr)
PROJECT BRIEF

An award winning design focused on sustainability and quality of life for senior residents that delivers a highly livable garden centered community in a challenging urban/industrial environment. The project is the first net-zero energy senior public housing project in the USA powered solely by the sun and wind. All electricity consumed on site is generated on site. No fossil fuels are burned on site, giving this project one of the lowest carbon footprints of any affordable housing community in the country. The project achieved LEED Platinum certification and Enterprise Green Communities certification.

The project design is tailored to the environment, climate and context of El Paso to produce a unique solution rooted in the concept of place. The design contains a number of bold, striking design elements and is uncompromisingly contemporary and urban in nature.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

• First NetZero, LEED Platinum affordable senior housing community for seniors in the United States.
• Fossil Fuel Free.
• Buildings placed along the perimeter of the site to form a serene and protected interior oasis for senior residents.
• Located in El Paso's arid high plateau desert adjacent to the U.S. / Mexico border, the design of the project is place sensitive and tuned to both the immediate context and the local environment.
• In compliance with the Buy America Act, the overwhelming majority of construction materials were sourced from U.S.-based companies, with the balance being supplied by companies within NAFTA.

The Paisano Green Community is a model for other multi-family projects. The El Paso community has come to appreciate that place sensitive design, even one in an inhospitable environment, can result in a project where site strategies and building design can promote quality of life and neighborly interaction. The project was fully leased before completion of construction and the Housing Authority maintains a long waiting list for future occupancy.
ARCHITECT’S STATEMENT

“We started with the very simple goal—but also extremely difficult to achieve—of creating a great project. We wanted our project to be as sustainable as possible. We wanted it to be buildable for the budget the Housing Authority had established. We wanted it to be bold and beautiful. And most importantly, we wanted it to be a place that people would really love to live. For WORKSHOP8 the project was not just about housing people, but about creating a place that nurtured people’s hopes and dreams to create a vibrant and vital community.”

- jv DeSousa, Principal in Charge, WORKSHOP8

PROJECT QUOTES

"It's an exciting project all around. Even in the construction, we're looking at a lot less waste and a lot more recycling of materials."

- Shane Griffith, Public Information and Government Relations Officer, HACEP

"I think we've changed the way people look at public housing. It's our jewel."

- Gerald Cichon, CEO, HACEP

"I am thrilled that the most energy-efficient public housing community in the U.S. will be situated here in El Paso."

- Cortney Niland, El Paso City Representative

“Policies, laws, and lifestyles changed with this project”

- jv DeSousa, Principal in Charge, WORKSHOP8

“The HUD team and I were very impressed with the use of architecture and additional passive solar strategies to create green, energy efficient housing. I also think that the site planning was quite inventive in screening out unwanted views and adjacent site uses. Our team has been traveling to quite a few green ARRA projects and the Paisano community is definitely a standout!”

- Roma Campanile, HOPE VI/Choice Neighborhood Grant Manager, HUD/Office of Public Housing Investments
## PROJECT TEAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>WEBSITE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>architect</td>
<td>WORKSHOP8</td>
<td>workshop8.us</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>principal in charge : jv DeSousa</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>project architects : Joseph Vigil and Ali Gidfar</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interior designer : Ulla Lange</td>
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<tr>
<td>owner</td>
<td>Housing Authority of the City of El Paso (HACEP)</td>
<td>hacep.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>contact : Shane Griffith, 915-849-3710</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:sgriffith@hacep.org">sgriffith@hacep.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>builder</td>
<td>Pavilion Construction</td>
<td>pavilionconstruction.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>energy modeler &amp; sustainability</td>
<td>Sustainably Built</td>
<td>sustainablybuilt.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>consultant</td>
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<td>LEED consultant</td>
<td>Progress Building</td>
<td>progressbuilding.net</td>
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<tr>
<td>soils engineer</td>
<td>Raba-Kistner</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rkci.com">http://www.rkci.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>civil engineer</td>
<td>JVA</td>
<td><a href="http://jvajva.com">http://jvajva.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>landscape architect</td>
<td>Desert Element Landscape Design LLC</td>
<td>desertelementslandscape.com</td>
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<td>landscape designer</td>
<td>indigo landscape design</td>
<td>indigolandscapedesign.com</td>
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<td>lighting designer</td>
<td>Clanton &amp; Associates</td>
<td>clantonassociates.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEP</td>
<td>Priest Engineering</td>
<td>pedenver.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>structural engineer</td>
<td>Gebau</td>
<td>gebau.com</td>
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## BUILDING DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>location</strong></th>
<th>El Paso TX</th>
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| **timeline**  | began design May 2010  
began construction January 2011  
completion July 2012 |
| **type**      | multifamily housing for seniors  
dedicated to seniors and disabled residents at 30% AMI or less |
| **units**     | 73 units + community building |
| **size**      | building size: 55,357 SF; site size: 4.2 acres |
| **project cost** | $14.8M |
| **funding**   | ARRA Grant: $8,248,000  
City of El Paso Loan: $500,000  
Unrestricted Reserves: $3,295,487  
CFP Funds: $2,783,715 |
## SUSTAINABLE BUILDING MATERIALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Panelized stick frame construction: Darrell Julian Company</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engineered wood trusses: Darrell Julian Company</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Custom steel superstructure and guardrail systems: Marquez Wrought Iron</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walls and Cladding</th>
<th>Featherlite Building Products: smooth and ground face concrete masonry units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perforated Steel Panel cladding on Canopy Wall: 18 ga. steel, galvanized, 4.2” x 1.0625” corrugation, 1/8” diameter holes, 40% open</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sto Powerwall (scratch and brown) and Powerflex (finish)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>US Metals, US-Flat Lock: flat seam metal roofing, zinc, 1.0mm, white - used as high albedo surface on ledges beneath windows to reflect sunlight into windows for increased daylighting and reduced need for artificial lighting</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Windows</th>
<th>Pella Impervia: fiberglass windows and doors</th>
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<tr>
<th>Doors</th>
<th>Masonite Flush Series, hollow core</th>
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<tr>
<th>Roofing</th>
<th>GAF Everguard, TPO, 60 mil: Energy Star listed, high albedo roof surface for decreased heat island effect</th>
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<tr>
<th>Interior Finishes</th>
<th>Forbo Marmoleum, true linoleum flooring (no vinyl) improved indoor air quality</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sherwin Williams, ProMar 200, Zero VOC Interior Latex Flat (gypsum wallboard)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sherwin Williams, Industrial Enamel, metal systems</td>
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<td>Lanz Cabinets</td>
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<tr>
<th>Plumbing</th>
<th>GE GEH50DNSRSA GeoSpring air-source heat pump water heater, 50 gal., Energy Star Qualified</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mansfield, QuantumOne, 1.0 gpf ultra low water consumption toilet</td>
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<tr>
<th>Landscaping</th>
<th>Landscape Products: drip irrigation products: LP dripline, emitters, couplings, etc.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>sustainable systems</strong></td>
<td>Intertec by Doralco, aluminum sunshades</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Seal Pro 2000 Spray Foam Insulation: foam in place closed cell polyurethane insulation (2” depth inside face of wall sheathing)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Seal Pro 500 Spray Foam Insulation: foam in place open cell polyurethane insulation (10” depth underside of roof sheathing)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>expanded polystyrene rigid board insulation (1” thick exterior face of wall sheathing)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CertainTeed Optima: loose fill fiberglass insulation (3.5” depth inside closed cell foam, cavity insulation)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LG LMU186HV and LMN125HVT, 16 SEER Split System Air Conditioning Units</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Broan HRV90H - energy recovery ventilator</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Siliken SLK60P6L 240W poly-crystalline solar modules - at flats, canopy wall and shade structure roofs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sanyo HIT Double 195 bifacial photovoltaic panels - at community building roof</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SMA Sunny Boy 5000US inverters</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Schletter Windsafe: pv racking system</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Xzeres 442SR: upwind horizontal axis wind turbine</td>
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</table>
The Paisano Green Community is the first NetZero, Fossil Fuels Free, LEED Platinum senior housing community in the U.S. Its 73 super efficient units are redefining affordable housing. The income-qualified residents pay minimal energy bills made possible by highly efficient buildings and the deployment of a large PV array and two wind turbines. The project is solely powered by the sun and the wind and has one of the lowest carbon footprints in the country. It was funded in part by a grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which came with strict Buy American, UFAS, and Enterprise Green Community guidelines. The design focuses on sustainability and quality of life for senior and disabled residents and delivers a highly livable community in a challenging urban environment.

The Paisano Green Community is surrounded by inhospitable commercial elements, including the County Coliseum to the east, the truck inspection facility to the west, a busy six lane road to the north, and a waste-water treatment plant to the southeast. Further west lies one of the busiest international port of entries along the U.S./Mexico border. Consequently, the design plan required the creation of an internal, lush, protected environment by distributing the built program along the edges of the site to create a variety of useable outdoor spaces.

The building program includes a community building on the north end of the site, four three-story flats buildings along with the canopy wall connective structure to the west, and a linear two story building along the east edge of the site containing 9 single room occupancies on the ground floor and 9 one bedroom units on the second floor. These structures surround a large internal garden, called the Tapestry Garden, as well as a series of courtyards between the flats buildings. The Tapestry Garden, so named to symbolize the interweaving of the lives of the residents, is an oasis in the center of the project where residents can stroll, chat with neighbors, and invite family over for outdoor reunions. All units are accessible and ADA compliant.

The canopy wall is a steel structure clad with colored perforated metal panels connecting all four flats buildings via walkways, stairs and one elevator. It houses all support facilities such as laundry and trash and recycling center, and it also provides a large area for the installation of photovoltaic panels on its upper set of beams. The perforated metal panels protect the west facade of the flats buildings and the courtyards between them from the setting sun in the afternoons, cold winter winds, and the noise and lights of the adjacent Customs inspection facility. The wall has become an icon for the project, especially after dark when a series of linear LED lights convert the wall into an art installation with its programmed light displays.

The community building is central to the life of the residents. It encourages them to gather on daily visits to pick up their mail, meet with on site mangers, or to attend activities in the two large lounges. Residents are encouraged to use the center's communal kitchen as well as the computer room which doubles as a library. The community center's large roof terrace affords commanding views across Paisano Avenue to the Franklin Mountains to the north and the Tapestry Garden to the south. The terrace is protected by a large, open canopy roof structure clad in perforated metal panels. An outdoor room called the Jewel Box is nestled under the canopy roof in the northwest corner. It is defined by colorful acrylic panels and steel fames sculpted to invoke plains grasses and provides a memorable identity for the project from passersby.

To address sustainability issues related to energy consumption, place sensitive site planning and building design strategies became integral to the design solution as they relate to solar orientation. The buildings’ architectural expression provides deep over hangs for large south facing glazing, limits north and east facing windows, and eliminates west facing glazing entirely. All living units are oriented in a manner that allows south and north facing windows to be opened to take advantage of natural cooling breezes. The buildings are detailed to have very tight envelopes, allowing less than 0.1 natural air changes per hour with insulation factors of R-30 for roofs and R-28 for walls. These basic passive strategies reduce power demands on the project’s electric generation equipment.

Since El Paso’s climate requires significant levels of heating and cooling, the project uses ductless mini-split heat pump systems. Water heating is provided by air-source heat pump water-heaters that pull energy from the ambient air within the unit, inject that energy into the water, and exhausts cooler air back into the unit. They are three times more efficient than a standard electric resistance water heater and reduce the energy requirements for space cooling for each unit. All of the units are equipped with Energy Recovery Ventilator (ERV) heat exchange units to economically capture energy in air being exhausted and transfer it to incoming fresh air. These energy efficient systems, combined with the passive conservation design strategies, result in the minimal deployment of PV panels toward the attainment of NetZero status. In sum, all of these strategies translate to greatest degree of comfort for the residents at the lowest operating and maintenance costs as possible.

Energy modeling of the project shows that a typical one-bedroom unit will consume 4.3 MMBtu/yr. The same unit constructed to IECC 2009 standards would consume 29.8 MMBtu/yr. This represents an 85% reduction in energy use over current code mandated standards.
This low energy use is achieved in part through an extremely tight and well-insulated building envelope. Exterior walls have R-23 cavity insulation with R-5 continuous exterior insulation to eliminate thermal bridging. Roofs and suspended floors have R-30 cavity insulation. Actual NACH of the units vary between 0.09 and 0.15.

In terms of its acceptance in the marketplace, it is too early to present the true extent of Paisano Green Community’s impact, as it has been occupied for less than one year. That said, the property has attracted hundreds of visitors from across the City in the business, construction, government, and military sectors. It has been prominently featured in a variety of local and national media outlets, and is considered the new definition of affordable housing within the public housing realm. Fort Bliss, the second largest military installation in the U.S., has taken multiple tours of this property to generate financing, design, and construction ideas for their NetZero residential neighborhood. Likewise, the engineering students at the University of Texas at El Paso and El Paso Community College toured this property to generate ideas for the biennial Solar Decathlon Competition hosted by the U.S. Department of Energy in 2013. The community center’s large, flat, pitched roof is the predominant design idea incorporated into Team Texas’s concept.

Paisano Green Community was presented as a case study at HUD’s “Going Green” conference in the summer of 2011, generating much interest from housing authorities from around the country. Both nationally and at the local level, the project has perpetuated the thought that it is wiser to invest a larger amount of money upfront into great design and ultra-conserving technologies so that the buildings last longer, cost less to operate and maintain, and have a much smaller carbon footprint than conventional construction strategies.

Sustainability and energy self-sufficiency were integral components of the design of the project. These components have attracted as much attention as the unusual design of the project in the local and national media. It is hoped that this project will serve as a model to be emulated by public and private developers who develop projects for long-term ownership.

**development costs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARRA Grant:</td>
<td>$8,248,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of El Paso Loan:</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unrestricted Reserves:</td>
<td>$3,295,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFP Funds:</td>
<td>$2,783,715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Project Cost:</td>
<td>$14,830,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Unit Cost (73 units):</td>
<td>$203,153</td>
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</table>

The unit costs in this project are approximately twice those of a typical inexpensively constructed affordable housing unit in the El Paso market. The additional capital committed to this project represents an investment to create future cost savings by reducing energy and water consumption, minimizing maintenance costs, and extending the property’s operational lifetime. The project team has undertaken a life cycle cost analysis comparing the units at Paisano to a typical affordable housing unit built at $110,000. The analysis factored energy and water costs, operations/maintenance and repair costs, and renovation costs over a 50-year lifespan for both units. Energy and water cost escalation of 6% a year and other inflation rates of 3% a year were used. A 4% cost of capital was used for discounting future dollars. The Paisano units are expected to go through their 50-year lifespan without major renovation. The low-cost units were conservatively estimated to need only a partial renovation at year 25. The lifecycle cost analysis showed that the Paisano units, while costing almost twice as much to build today, have a 20% lower life cycle cost in today's dollars when compared to an inexpensively constructed affordable housing unit.

**The Paisano project's capital costs were increased due to the following:**

- 165 kW solar photovoltaic array
- Two 10kW wind turbines
- High efficiency building envelope construction:
  - walls contain a hybridized system of three types of insulation producing an R-26 wall with no thermal bridging.
  - exterior walls and roof are extremely tight construction to reduce infiltration losses and achieve NACH<.1/hr.
  - radiant barriers to protect west facing wall surfaces
• Air-to-air heat exchange water heaters are four times as costly as a typical electric water heater, but they are three
times more efficient at heating water. They also reduce indoor space conditioning loads by taking heat out of the air
within the units and moving it to the water in the tank.
• Energy Recovery Ventilator units to capture energy in exhaust air and transfer it to incoming fresh air.
• High efficiency fixtures and LED lighting
• Ultra low-flow plumbing fixtures
• Extensive water saving irrigation systems including subsurface drip irrigation for turf

**site statistics**

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<tr>
<th>Site Size</th>
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<tr>
<td>Office Space</td>
<td>2,600 square feet enclosed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100% leased to HACEP property management team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Family Units</td>
<td>73 public housing units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100% leased to very low-income seniors</td>
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</table>

Total square footage of enclosed living space is 49,195.

Flats: 12 1-bedroom units on first floor @ 655 square feet each;
32 1-bedroom units on second and third floors @ 636 square feet each;
8 2-bedroom units @ 875 square feet each;
3 courtyard units @ 701 square feet each;
Townhomes: 9 single room occupancy units @ 555 square feet each;
9 1-bedroom units @ 765 square feet each.

Open Space
- Total area of site = 183,725 s.f.
- Total hard-scape area (drives, parking, paths) = 81,225 s.f.
- Total footprint of buildings = 17,100 s.f.
- Total open space (soft-scape) = 85,400 s.f.

Buildings:
- Total square footage of residential units is 59,787.
- Total square footage of enclosed living space is 49,195, of which building footprints measure 17,100 s.f.
- Area of site covered with buildings is 9.3%.

Streets/Surface Parking
There are 64 parking spaces, which along with drive lanes cover an area of 38,700 s.f.

Open Space/Landscaping
- Total open space on site measures 85,400 s.f., of which 21,500 s.f. is generously landscaped with the remainder covered
  with xeriscape landscaping.

Total
- Total site area is 183,750 s.f.

**resident education**

A critical component of achieving NetZero is educating residents to minimize their energy use. This is achieved in repeated
training that clearly teaches them correct use of the advanced mechanical systems deployed in their units, as well as best
practices in personal behavior to minimize energy use. Monthly education sessions in support of the NetZero goal of the
project, as well as a variety of health and wellness events and programs, are carried out in the main gathering space of the
community building.
civic role

The Paisano Green Community reinvigorates a former brown field site, playing a critical role in helping to revitalize the declining neighboring community.

Its location directly across from the city zoo provides a welcome foreground to visitors to that facility. Plans are in the works to provide educational on-site trips to the zoo’s visiting student groups, providing educational information on sustainable design and power generation strategies.

Public transportation connects the site to downtown El Paso to the west and shopping venues to the east.

project timeline

Date Acquired
The competitive funds of the American Recovery Act were awarded and disbursed to HACEP on September 18, 2009.

Date Started
Asbestos abatement and demolition both started in November 2010. Actual construction was started March 2011.

Date Opened
July 2012

Date Completed
All finishing work was completed in August 2012

site history

This property was originally built in 1952, named Paisano Place, and later expanded to include 300 units of public housing for low income families. In the 1990s, the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDoT) evoked eminent domain and captured all but 4.2 acres and 46 units of the original parcel to construct its truck inspection facility as part of the newly-constructed Cordova Bridge that connects El Paso to Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. This border crossing has since become the second busiest international ports of entry along the U.S.-Mexico border. Eventually, the 46 remaining units fell into disrepair and were vacated in the early 2000’s. Once evacuated, the site was used by HACEP maintenance for approximately 10 years to store heavy machinery and landscape materials.
IMAGES additional images can be seen on W8’s Facebook and Pinterest.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

TV and media coverage

July 2013 — Paisano Green Community / GreenSource, The Magazine of Sustainable Design
May 2013 — These Senior are Living Green / Builder and Developer Magazine
3 May 2013 — NetZero Living and Climate / edcimag.com
2013 — Paisano Green Community Senior Housing / Architizer
29 March 2013 — WORKSHOP8: Boulder architects design net-zero housing project in El Paso / Boulder County Business Report
26 March 2013 — A Green Community Comes to Town / GreenBuildTV.com
January / February 2013 — The New Model for Affordable Housing / green building & design magazine
20 December 2012 — Paisano Green Community is the First NetZero Senior Housing Project in the US / Tyson and Billy
29 October 2012 — Gray Goes Green: First U.S. Net Zero Senior Community Opens in TX / Clean Technicz
20 September 2012 — Paisano Green Community / archdaily.com
31 August 2012 — The Paisano Green Community – Redefining Affordable Housing in the United States / YouTube
25 October 2011 — Paisano Green Community is the First NetZero Housing Project in the US / inhabitat
25 October 2011 — Paisano Green Community (designed using Vectorworks and Sketchup Pro) / AECCafe.com
18 October 2011 — 73-Unit Public Housing Community for Seniors Generates 100% of Energy On-Site / University of St. Thomas
11 October 2011 — Eco-friendly Housing Project Paisano Green Community 1st of its Kind / El Paso Times
September 2011 — Cutting-Edge Green Affordable Housing in El Paso, TX / HUD.gov
Paisano Green Community on Facebook, Pinterest, and W8’s Website

Project Awards

2013 — National Award of Merit in Program Innovation – Project Design / National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
2012 — Citation Award for Built Architecture / American Institute of Architects (AIA) Colorado
WORKSHOP8 PROFILE

W8 VALUES

ARTISTRY

Formed in March 2010, WORKSHOP8 is a multidisciplinary, team-based collaborative architecture, planning and design studio based in Boulder, Colorado. Our diverse, award-winning team is lead by five dynamic principals — three licensed architects, an interior designer, and a managing partner. Our highly-qualified architects and designers share a dedication to providing elegant solutions and creative problem solving for a variety of projects large and small. Our partnership is a strategic alliance allowing us to combine many years of project experience into a cohesive and extensive portfolio of work.

Though our team members’ backgrounds are defined by different perspectives, our shared goal is to integrate art, architecture and design as a viable way to connect humanity. W8’s partners coalesced around a shared passion for sustainability, social involvement and the belief that high quality design can make a difference in the lives of the people who occupy our buildings and spaces. We strongly believe that art and design can be used as an educational tool that celebrates our historical past while forming the way we look to the future. Our philosophy embraces the design process as an opportunity to create built environments as a means to improve the world we live in.
WORKSHOP8 PRINCIPALS

Ali Gidfar, AIA architect / partner

Ali has over 25 years of experience in the field of architecture, with built projects in Asia and the United States. He has acted as design leader and project manager for a number of buildings, ranging in construction cost from $1 million to $600 million.

C. Joseph Vigil IV, AIA architect / founding partner

Joseph is an expert in high-performance architecture and design. He is Green Advantage Certified and his forward-thinking approach lends itself to projects with lasting appeal and comfort; his construction trades background ensures he creates designs that are efficient to build.

jv DeSousa, AIA architect / founding partner

jv is a registered architect in Colorado and California, with over 21 years experience in residential, multi-family, entertainment/hospitality, commercial, and institutional design, with built projects in the US and Australia.

Ulla Lange, LEED HM, Assoc. AIA interior designer / founding partner

Ulla is an interior designer with Fine Arts and Architecture degrees, she has over 20 years of experience in the fields of product and interior design, both in residential and commercial projects across the US and Europe.

V. Brandy LeMae, LEED AP, Assoc. AIA managing partner

Brandy is responsible for the daily operations and marketing of WORKSHOP8. She is an accomplished artist and enjoys meeting new people. She has worked in arts and design management for over 15 years.
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