



**2013 Annual Awards Entry Form**  
(Complete one for each entry.)

Entry Name NSP and Mid City Gardens

Fill out the entry name <i>exactly</i> as you want it listed in the awards program.
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HFA Louisiana Housing Corporation

Submission Contact Anna Dearmon

Phone 225-763-8771

Email [adearmon@lhc.la.gov](mailto:adearmon@lhc.la.gov)

Program Contact Todd Folse

Phone 225-763-8894

Email [tfolse@lhc.la.gov](mailto:tfolse@lhc.la.gov)

Entry form with description, check(s), and visual aids (optional) must be received by NCSHA by **Monday, July 1, 2013.**

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page.

HFA \_\_\_\_\_

Entry Name \_\_\_\_\_

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Report <input type="checkbox"/> Promotional Materials and Newsletters <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Empowering New Buyers <input type="checkbox"/> Home Improvement and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Advocacy <input type="checkbox"/> State Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
<input type="checkbox"/> Multifamily Management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Combating Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Housing for Persons with Special Needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Achievement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

**Background:** Hurricane Katrina, and more recent hurricanes such as Gustav and Ike, has caused tremendous housing loss for residents of the New Orleans and gulf areas – resulting in a mass influx of new residents, and an inevitable shortage of housing, for the Baton Rouge area. Disaster vulnerability research shows that disadvantaged populations are more vulnerable to housing damage from a disaster. These disadvantaged groups are characterized as households with low incomes, low levels of education, female-headed households, racial and ethnic minorities (Cutter, et al., 2003; Laska & Morrow, 2006; Myers et al, 2008). These social characteristics are correlated with living in rental housing, suggesting that rental housing may be a key mechanism by which vulnerability is produced (Fothergill et al, 1999; Fothergill & Peek, 2004). In part, this may be because landlords are slow to repair disaster-related damages or they may rebuild for a higher income market, but it may also be due to lower quality of rental housing and the lack of incentive to make improvements that mitigate disaster-related damage (Comerio, 1997). Those with lower socio-economic status often have less insurance, less savings, fewer personal resources and previous economic problems that impinge on their ability to re-establish permanent housing (Fothergill, Maestas & Darlington, 1999; Fothergill & Peek, 2004). When communities are destroyed by natural disasters, and its residents dislocated into other areas, it creates a vacuum that is typically left vacant, at worst, or filled with upscale housing, at best – neither of which addresses the problem created by the loss of affordable housing.

Using primarily its Neighborhood Stabilization Program, grant allocation, supplemented by HOME and General fund dollars, LHC moved quickly and aggressively to fill this vacuum in preserving and rehabilitating a vacant housing development, the Mid City Gardens, long characterized by community decay, debilitating crime and an overwhelming sense of hopelessness. In its stead has been developed a state-of-the-art affordable housing, which has also functioned as a catalyst for broader community reinvigoration and revitalization of the Mid City neighborhood located in the heart of Baton Rouge.

Mid City Gardens, a 60-unit one-, two- and three-bedroom affordable housing development, was designed not only as a motivator for positive change and further development, but also as a beacon of hope for those who call this community home. Mid City Gardens is comprised of six buildings – an Activity Center and residential buildings A-E - on two separate sites that, combined, replaced 68 abandoned and blighted low-income housing units.

**Is innovative and replicable:** As the owner and developer of the project, LHC took good advantage of the infusion of new, but one-time, NSP1 dollars (coupled with HOME and General Fund) to incorporate several state of the art ,sustainable design features, including: a solar array on the Activity Center roof that generates 11% of the building's energy; a rainwater collection system used for irrigation; LEED-NC certified Activity Center; a shared community garden; shared green space with picnic tables and benches; a vegetated green roof at the upper level of the Activity Center; white reflective roofing on all buildings to limit heat gain; Energy Star appliances; SEER 18 residential HVAC units; average HERS rating of 70 in residential units; integral solar shading and high performance insulated glazing units to limit solar gain at all buildings; thickened, insulated exterior walls with blown cellulose insulation; low or no VOC materials; regional and recycled materials used throughout; rapidly renewable materials used at the Activity Center; no added Urea-formaldehyde; green screens; and covered parking for most residents. Notably, too, the 13,500 square foot, two-story Activity Center was programmed with community input and includes elements such as: fitness/dance classes, laundry facilities, community meeting space, seniors/teens center, a shared courtyard, and administration spaces,

the latter of which will provide offices for the Baton Rouge Housing Authority and a local HUD 811 project. Still another distinctive feature of this preservation and rehabilitation initiative is that it is a gated community, contributing to the area's safety and security.

As noted above, landlords are less likely to redevelop affordable housing in areas affected by natural disasters due to the difficulty of gaining enough funds to make the project financially feasible. In addition, many landowners take advantage of the lands "clean slate" status to rebuild higher priced housing units. With its Mid City Gardens development, LHC has proven that not only can affordable housing be built through the cost-effective measures and strategic aggregation of resources but also lends evidence to high-quality, environmentally-friendly/energy efficient developments being a viable affordable housing option that can be easily replicated throughout the country.

***Demonstrates measureable benefits to HFA targeted customers:*** A recent *Wall Street Journal* article entitled "Housing Helps Businesses Rebuild," noted that "Improvements in the [construction] sector could help broad tracts of the economy by creating jobs, improving consumer confidence, and boosting property tax receipts for municipalities." Already LHC's development of Mid City Gardens has boosted real estate values in the area, stabilized community safety, created jobs in the construction and administration of the development, increased—and most immediately and critically—introduced environmentally friendly/energy efficient housing units for a population that might otherwise not have been able to afford them. Further economic development gains for the Mid City community will be realized as the project fully rents up and the multiplier effect derived from housing development is realized.

***Has a proven track record of success in the marketplace:*** With 43 years of experience, and especially as a result of the state's recent reorganization and consolidation of state housing programs under its umbrella, LHC had the expertise to assume an atypical role for housing finance agencies as developer and owner of a project presenting as many challenges as Mid City Gardens in the midst of a crisis spawned by two hurricanes. The impact of LHC leadership here is readily evident. Within 18 months of assuming the roles of developer and owner, construction had been completed and units were ready for occupancy by households displaced by the storms. When Mid City Gardens was ready for lease up, the one bedroom units were occupied within six months, the three bedroom units were occupied within five months and there are only eight, two bedroom units currently available. It is anticipated that all 60 units will be occupied by August 2013.

***Provides benefits that outweigh costs:*** As catalyst for broad-based revitalization and reinvigoration of an economically distressed downtown area of Baton Rouge, the return on investment of the \$14 million committed by LHC was felt immediately by the new construction and project administration jobs created, then further multiplied when the units were completed and occupied by displaced residents living in shelters or in doubled-up situations, and, moving forward in the coming months and years, as a stimulus for attracting new residents and businesses to the area.

***Demonstrates effective use of resources:*** LHC recognized the opportunity presented by NSP1 dollars and their saliency to the needs presented by the vacant development, which met all of the complex criteria of that funding program. By utilizing NSP funding for the vast majority

of project funding (\$13 million out of the \$14 million in project costs), LHC was able to preserve more limited HOME and General Fund resources for the other manifest affordable housing needs facing Louisiana in the wake of the two hurricanes. Indeed, Mid City Gardens is just one of 20 NSP-funded programs successfully administered by LHC.

***Effectively employs partnerships:*** As the developer and owner of Mid City Gardens, LHC worked closely and cooperatively with HUD in assuring that the project met all NSP criteria and then assuring that all of the complex requirements of this funding program were followed from start to finish.

LHC also forged strong local partnerships with public sector officials including most prominently Mayor President Kip Holden, Councilwoman Tara Wicker, the Downtown Development District (DDD), and the East Baton Rouge Re-Development Authority (EBRRDA), BREC; and with a design team consisting of local firm Post Architects and affordable housing experts out of Nashville, EOA Architects; Structural Engineer - Ragland, Aderman & Assoc., Inc.; Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing and Fire Protection Engineers - Assaf, Simoneaux, Tauzin & Assoc., Inc.; Landscape Architect – McKnight Landscape Architects; Civil Engineer - GOTECH; Geotechnical Engineer - Ardaman & Assoc.; Solar Engineer - Lightwave Solar Electric, LLC; Signage Designer - Tolleson McCoy; Hardware Consultant - Vernon Landry; and Roofing Consultant - Patrick Heil.

***Achieves strategic objectives:*** The strategic objectives of the Mid City Gardens project were two-fold: 1) Utilize NSP funds, a notoriously difficult program to qualify for and comply with due to strict and complicated regulations, to revitalize 68 abandoned and blighted units previously used for low income housing; and, 2) Create a safe and affordable energy efficient/environmentally friendly housing environment that can be easily and affordably replicated throughout the country. The Mid City Gardens achieved both of these goals when it cut the ribbon at its opening ceremony in May 2013.

### Program Summary:

To provide safe, sustainable, affordable housing and a community center in a struggling neighborhood that will act as a beacon of hope, and spark redevelopment.

### Program Statement:

Located in a struggling mid-city neighborhood, this 60-unit affordable housing development was designed to replace abandoned, blighted, low-income housing and act as a catalyst for surrounding redevelopment. The Owner set a lofty goal of high sustainability and an impactful design that will, “turn heads.” The project is comprised of six buildings, an Activity Center and Residential Buildings ‘A’ through ‘E’ on two separate, but nearby sites. The residential component uses two repeated design templates both three-stories each, but very different in scale. Buildings ‘A’ and ‘B’ are 15,500sf each w/1BR adaptable, efficiencies on the ground level and 3BR townhomes on the upper levels. Buildings ‘C,’ ‘D’ and ‘E’ are 7,700sf each with 1BR accessible units on the ground level and 2BR units on the upper levels. All residential buildings include covered parking. The 13,500sf, two-story Activity Center was programmed with community input and includes such elements as: Fitness, Dance, Tenant/Retail space, Laundry, Community Meeting, Seniors, Teens and Administration spaces along with a shared Courtyard and an upper level vegetated Green Roof. The Activity Center will achieve LEED-NC certification – targeted Platinum level (one of the first in the State), pending review of construction credits.

## A-215.01

Building Area: (sf)

**13,500sf Activity Center**

**54,100sf Residential**

Cost per Square Foot:

**~\$125/sf Residential**

**~\$257/sf Activity Center**

Construction Cost

**\$11,957,000**

Date of Completion:

**December 2012**



# A-215.02

## BEFORE

The existing conditions on the proposed sites included 68 low-income residential units with walk-up style apartment buildings and surface parking. The sites did not have existing green space or any neighborhood amenities. The buildings were vacant for years and in varying degrees of disrepair.

The blighted area was in desperate need for local amenities, neighborhood green space, safe affordable housing options and an overall boost to it's spirit.

## SITE

The master plan is comprised of six building components. Included on the site are five residential buildings with multiple unit types and configurations.

The public Activity Center is placed on a highly active street corner anchoring the development and making it the visible identity for the development and overall neighborhood.





Cedar slats form enclosures around each upper balcony which provide much needed **solar shading** for windows and exterior balconies.



Sloped white membrane roofs were designed to collect roof water for the underground **rain water collection** system. Roof water is used for site irrigation.



Local and inexpensive materials were selected such as split-face CMU, cementitious siding and cedar slats.

Building 'B'

## A-215.02

### RESIDENTIAL

Residential Buildings 'A' and 'B' are comprised of adaptable ground floor units with two-story townhouses above.

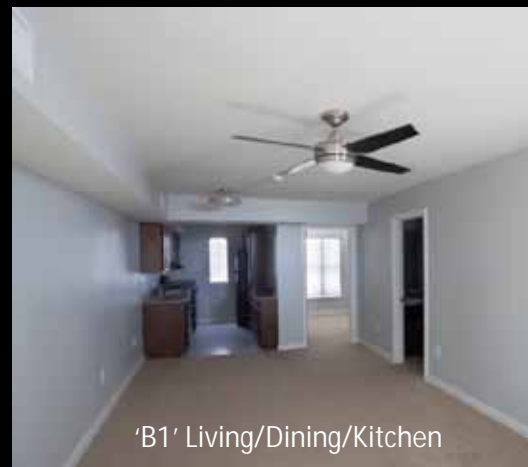
To lower costs the adjoining stairs were moved between units and are open-air with sloped translucent coverings. As an exterior feature, green screen panels cover the front of each stair for flowering vines which will be a 'Green' feature at the façade.

Each unit has covered parking which is accessible from a central drive.

Outdoor balconies were also a social and security feature that the design team thought were important to this development and neighborhood.

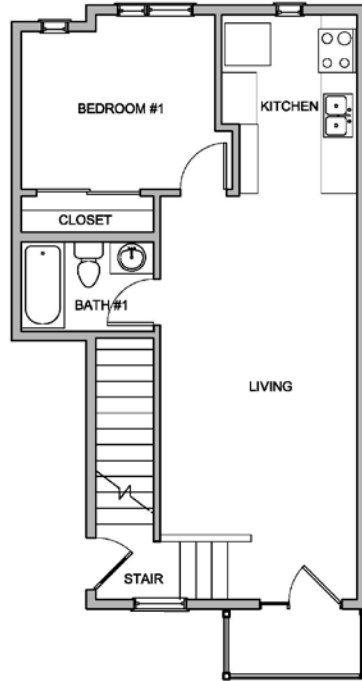
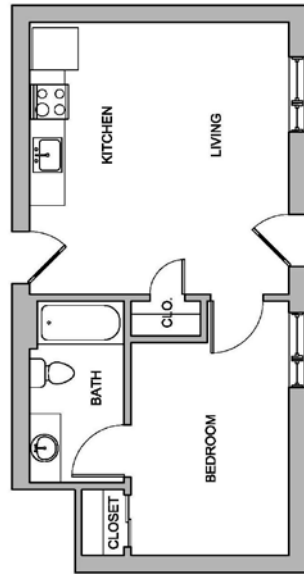


'B1' Living/Dining/Kitchen

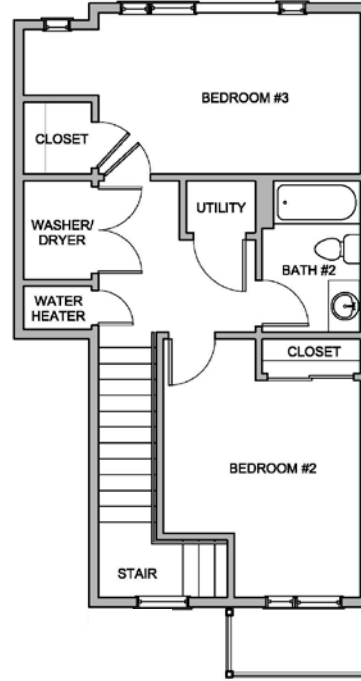


'B1' Living/Dining/Kitchen

Unit Type 'A' 1BR  
Efficiency (Adaptable)



Unit Type 'B'  
3BR Townhome

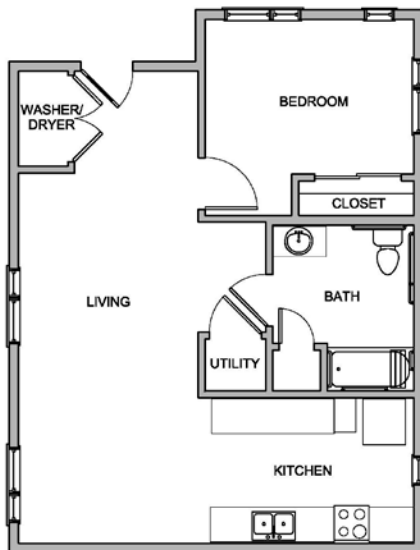


# A-215.02

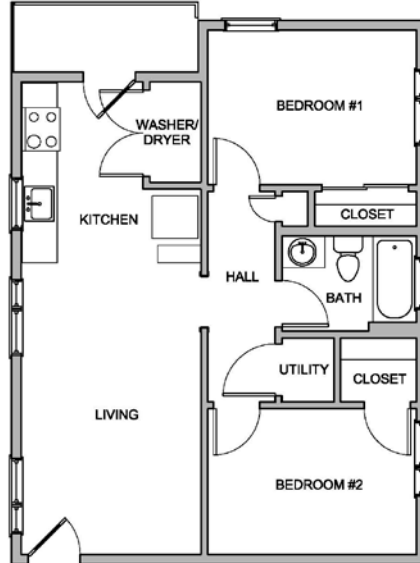
## RESIDENTIAL UNIT PLANS

Residential buildings 'A' and 'B' have (5) each 1-Bedroom efficiencies (adaptable) on the ground level and (10) each 3-Bedroom townhomes on the upper levels.

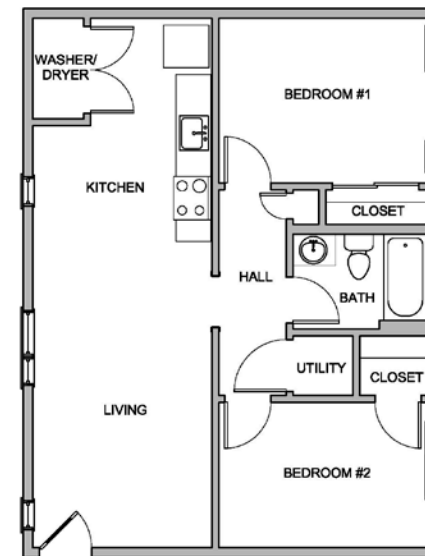
Unit Type 'C' 1BR (Accessible)



Unit Type 'D' 2BR, Balcony



Unit Type 'E' 2BR, No Balcony



Buildings 'C', 'D', and 'E' contain (2) each 1-Bedroom units (accessible) on the ground level and (8) each 2-Bedroom units on the second and third levels, reached by open stairs.



# A-215.02

## RESIDENTIAL

Buildings 'C', 'D' and 'E' are comprised of one bedroom accessible flats on the ground level and two bedroom flats accessed by open air stairs. 'Tuck-under' covered parking is available for a majority of the units underneath the buildings.

Integral solar shading is achieved by extended eaves on the center portion of the south facade with cementitious siding. Metal roofs are transitioned from roof to façade along the outside 'wings' of the south façade. The metal veneer at these 'wings' is off-set from the exterior wall to provide deep recesses around southern windows for additional solar shading.



Building 'E'  
(Building 'A', Activity Center Beyond)



Building 'D'



Building 'C'

# A-215.09

## RESIDENTIAL

**Sustainable Features** in the residential units include:

- HER's score of 70 (average)
- SEER 18 mechanical units
- Fluorescent lighting
- High efficiency windows
- Cellulose insulation
- Low VOC
- No added UF
- Regional materials
- Recycled materials
- Integral exterior solar shading
- Green screens at stairs
- Roof water collection
- White membrane roofs
- Covered parking (majority)
- Mixed-Income Diverse Community
- Community Garden (for food production)



Building 'A'  
(Activity Center Beyond)



Before



# A-215.02

## ACTIVITY CENTER

The Activity Center will be a LEED-NC Certified Building, with a target of Platinum Level. If achieved, it will be one of the first in the State. Final certification is pending review of construction credits.

Sustainable features on the exterior include:

- Bicycle racks
- On-street parking
- Rain-water collection system
- Rain screen system
- High efficiency glazing
- Integral solar shading
- 32% building efficiency
- On-Site renewable energy
- 35% water reduction
- Day lighting to 90% of spaces
- Views for 90% of spaces
- Recycling Center (public)
- White membrane roofing
- Recycled materials
- Vegetated green roof
- Roof top solar array



Entry Porch

Heat island reduction includes white membrane roofing and green roof system

Metal rain screen system at all facades with high efficiency window and skylight systems  
32% building efficiency

34 KW Solar PV System: 11% Renewable Energy



Solar Array



Community courtyard includes planters, shade trees, white pavers and community benches.

# A-215.02

## ACTIVITY CENTER GROUND LEVEL PLAN

The programmatic elements were determined with the neighborhood through a series of community charrettes.

The Ground Level includes:

- Dance
- Fitness
- Café
- Laundry
- Tenant/Retail
- Recycling
- Administration

Parti elements include a covered front porch/entry along with a breezeway reminiscent of traditional Louisiana architecture.



Ground Level



Lobby



Upper Lobby



Meeting

# A-215.02

## ACTIVITY CENTER

### Sustainable Interior Features:

- Bamboo flooring & cabinets (rapidly renewable materials)
- Pressed paper countertops
- Low VOC materials
- 50% FSC certified wood
- No added UF
- 30% Recycled materials (includes sports floor made of recycled tires)
- 30% Regional materials
- High efficiency lighting
- Low flow plumbing fixtures



## A-215.02

### ACTIVITY CENTER

Programmed amenities with community input include Dance and Fitness areas on the Ground Level.

The Fitness area looks out to the shared Courtyard space behind the Activity Center.



Dance



Fitness



# A-215.02

## ACTIVITY CENTER UPPER LEVEL PLAN

The upper level includes:

- Meeting
- Kitchen
- Seniors
- Teens
- Administration
- Double-height Lobby
- Vegetated Green Roof



Upper Level



# A-215.02

## ACTIVITY CENTER

Additional sustainable features for the Activity Center include:

- Landscaped Courtyard
- 95% construction waste diverted from the landfill
- Light Pollution Reduction
- Day lighting to occupied spaces
- Views to exterior



3,077 square foot vegetated green roof contributes to open space and storm water management.



Light shelves at the south wall bounce light to extend day lighting into interior spaces

Kitchen



## A-215.09

### ACTIVITY CENTER

The green roof design provides a shade canopy using durable FSC cedar planks for users to enjoy lunch or read a book. Meeting and Seniors spaces have direct access to the roof garden. The Kitchen also overlooks the green space.



The two-story 13,500 square foot Activity Center anchors a visible corner of the existing neighborhood and will be a gateway to the new development and an amenity for the surrounding community.

Project Name:  
Mid City Gardens Residential & Activity  
Center

Photographer:  
Chad Chenier

**A-215.x**

Credit Slide

Project Location:  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Owner/Client:  
Louisiana Housing Corporation

Architect(s) of Record:

Post Architects  
12032 Bricksome Ave  
Baton Rouge, LA 70816

EOA Architects  
400 Fourth Avenue South  
Nashville, TN 37201

Project Team:

Landscape Architect:  
McKnight Landscape Architects

Consultants:  
MEP: Assaf, Simoneaux ,Tauzin & Assoc.  
Structural: Ragland Aderman & Associates  
Civil: Gotech, Inc.- Consulting Engineers

General Contractor:  
D. Honore Construction