



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

**Entry Name** Owe'neh Bupingeh Preservation Project

**HFA** New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA)

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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 New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA)

Entry Name Owe'neh Bupingeh Preservation Project

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Special Achievement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

## ENTRY DESCRIPTION

### Owe'neh Bupingeh Preservation Project

NCSHA 2013 Annual Awards for Program Excellence

Special Achievement Category

Submitted by New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA)

#### Important State Need

New Mexico has one of the highest percentages (9.4 percent, 2010 U.S. Census) of American Indians in the United States, second only to Alaska. Tribal lands in New Mexico include the Navajo reservation, the Mescalero Apache and Jicarilla Apache reservations, and 19 Pueblo nations. Over the decades, MFA has hired staff with specialized tribal expertise, developed custom products and worked closely with tribes and tribal housing authorities to meet the unique needs and challenges associated with housing on tribal lands.

MFA has the unique privilege to fund and partner with Ohkay Owingeh, a pueblo located in northern New Mexico. The entire pueblo, previously known as San Juan Pueblo, is on the U.S. Register of Historic Places. The pueblo was also home to the first Spanish capital of New Mexico, San Gabriel de Yunge-Ouinge, which is a Historic National Landmark.

MFA believes that Ohkay Owingeh's **Owe'neh Bupingeh Preservation Project** is the most innovative tribal housing project in the nation. The project is named after the Ohkay Owingeh's village center, which has been continually occupied for 700 years. Owe'neh Bupingeh is comprised of four plazas, similar to town squares, which were once surrounded by more than 150 homes. By 2005, only 60 homes remained. Most were abandoned and less than half were in daily use. Ironically, this situation coexisted with a serious housing shortage at Ohkay Owingeh, a growing pueblo with a large population and small land base.

The story of Ohkay Owingeh's traditional village is a familiar one in New Mexico's pueblos, where multi-storied connected house blocks made from local materials like adobe, terrone, and rock have deteriorated, causing the homes to fall into disuse. This occurred while mainstream housing, built pursuant to HUD standards, encouraged families to move apart from each other into stick-built, single family homes on the outskirts of the community. Similar changes took place in New Mexico's traditional Hispanic villages, which also consisted of earthen, multi-storied structures arranged around central plazas. Aerial photography over the decades shows a radical transformation from traditional village life in high-density plazas to dispersed settlements scattered over farmlands.

These changes to traditional housing have far-reaching impacts. Deterioration of historic village structures leads to the loss of pueblo history and culture, which holds great significance for the pueblo people, the state of New Mexico and the United States as a whole. In terms of sustainability, dispersed housing occupies more land for less housing, converts productive farmland into residential use, and requires longer trips between homes and the economic and civic centers of the community that once coexisted in traditional plazas. Cultural and social impacts are equally profound. In the pueblos, traditional, connected house blocks represent the cohesive social structure of the families and clans of the tribe, and the village's rounded forms and earthen materials embody a larger world view of a living culture with strong connections to nature. As traditional villages fall into disuse, this traditional social fabric and cultural continuity erode.

### **Innovative Approach**

Ohkay Owingeh is the first tribe in the nation to develop a comprehensive preservation plan. The plan allows the pueblo to address its severe housing shortage, sustainability and cultural concerns by restoring its traditional village. The Owe'neh Bupingeh Preservation Project is an act of self-determination to develop culturally appropriate housing and reestablish a vibrant, thriving community at the cultural heart of the pueblo.

After preservation of the historic village became the pueblo's top priority in the 2004 Ohkay Owingeh Comprehensive Master Plan, the pueblo obtained a small grant from the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office to train six Ohkay Owingeh high school students in preservation and documentation. The students interviewed tribal elders about traditional life in the village and indexed more than 400 historical photographs, the first dating to 1877. In 2008, the National Park Service and the National Trust for Historic Preservation funded an inventory and preliminary plan for more than 100 structures in the traditional village. These tasks were enormous undertakings because no known architectural studies had been conducted at Ohkay Owingeh since the 1920s, and because the village was inhabited a full five centuries before the invention of photography.

Early documentation and planning culminated in the 2010 Owe'neh Bupingeh Preservation Plan, which became the blueprint for the Owe'neh Bupingeh Preservation Project. The 2010 plan included inspections and mapping by Atkin Olshin Schade Architects on deterioration, use and housing quality in the historic village. Project goals, priorities and design standards were developed through dozens of community meetings and extensive discussions with the tribal council, cultural leaders and village residents. While restoration to historic conditions was not possible or desirable, the plan successfully balanced preservation with functional renovations of homes, permitting contemporary life and cultural traditions to coexist. For example, design standards called for removal of cement stucco and restoration of earthen plaster. Second-story additions were also encouraged to mirror the historic, multi-storied homes of the original plaza.

Concurrent with the Preservation Plan, the Ohkay Owingeh Housing Authority began to secure funding for actual rehabilitation work. As federal funding became a significant component, it became clear that the project could not proceed without strict enforcement of federal regulations. Therefore, a programmatic agreement was signed among MFA, the Ohkay Owingeh Housing Authority, the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The agreement clarified requirements and standards—including income limits, proof of ownership, and compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties—and provided a level of flexibility requested by the Tribe. The programmatic agreement was an innovative and groundbreaking approach to accomplish Ohkay Owingeh's goal of culturally appropriate housing within the parameters of federal regulations.

### **Results**

The multi-phased Owe'neh Bupingeh Preservation Project calls for preservation and rehabilitation of up to 60 homes in the traditional village. The first 20 homes were completed in 2012 and nine additional homes are currently under construction. All of these homes provide long-term affordability for low- to moderate income Ohkay Owingeh families. Many homes have been purchased by families that were affected by the pueblo's housing shortage and were without housing or were living in overcrowded conditions. Finally, the project has ensured the preservation of Ohkay Owingeh's traditional village and its historic structures.

Less tangible but more important to Ohkay Owingeh are the cultural and social impacts of the project. More than 40 Ohkay Owingeh families are now living in the traditional village, reestablishing a vibrant, thriving community through culturally appropriate, affordable housing. The experience has energized a discussion of larger cultural preservation issues and increased the value placed on cultural continuity. One example is the training that village homeowners received in earthen construction. Not only has this training allowed residents to maintain their homes, but it has also revived traditional mud plastering techniques and time-honored forms of family and community cooperation.

The Ohkay Owingeh community has also realized benefits from the construction aspect of the project. Avanyu Construction, a native and woman-owned enterprise from a neighboring pueblo, serves as the general contractor. Avanyu hired one-half of the project's workforce from Ohkay Owingeh. This approach developed capacity in the community by training tribal members in construction and preservation, and kept approximately \$1 million in salaries in the community.

### **Benefits and Costs**

Funding to restore and preserve 29 of the 60 village homes at Ohkay Owingeh is estimated to cost \$5.3 million, or approximately \$183,000 per home. Funding sources include HOME funds from MFA; Rural Housing & Economic Development (RHED); Indian Housing Block Grant funds, including a \$2 million allocation from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2008; as well as matching funds from the Ohkay Owingeh Housing Authority and Ohkay Owingeh's Native American Community Development Financial Institution, Cha Piyeh, Inc.

Benefits have clearly outweighed costs for the Owe'neh Bupingeh Preservation Project in that Ohkay Owingeh achieved the following results and benefits for approximately the same cost as constructing an equal number of new single family homes:

- **Historic Preservation:** Restoration/preservation of 29 historically significant homes in the traditional village to date
- **Community Revitalization:** Re-habitation of the traditional village with Ohkay Owingeh families that either needed housing, lived elsewhere on the Pueblo, or moved back to the Pueblo from outside communities as a result of the project
- **Long-Term Affordability:** Provision of 29 homes with long-term affordability for low and moderate income Pueblo families
- **Construction Salaries:** Retention of \$1 million in construction salaries in the community
- **Capacity Building:** Training of Ohkay Owingeh tribal members in documentation, preservation, construction and maintenance
- **National Model:** Development of a successful and innovative model for tribal self-determination that addresses community needs in culturally appropriate ways. Most of the other pueblo nations have visited Owe'neh Bupingeh to learn how cultural values were integrated into the project.

**VISUAL AID**

**Owe'neh Bupingeh Preservation Project**

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A short video of the Owe'neh Bupingeh Preservation Plan and Project can be viewed at:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sn3pd11BB8Q&list=UU8J5WXnXgoN4wBGvdELbrNw&index=8>



*Schematic of the Owe'neh Bupingeh renovation with new residences and rehabilitations shown in yellow*



*Groundbreaking ceremony with tribal elder Herman Agoyo , Ohkay Owingeh Governor Joe Garcia, Ohkay Owingeh Housing Authority Director Tomasita Duran and Jamie Blosser of Atkin Olshin Schade Architects*



*Exterior renovation work begins in Owe'neh Bupingeh*





*Preserving the vigas (exposed roof beams) and ceiling is a high priority*



*Workers use new mud and old adobes*

New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority  
Owe'neh Bupingeh Preservation Project



*Rebuilding a vibrant community*

