

MERIT: AFFORDABLE

Long Wait

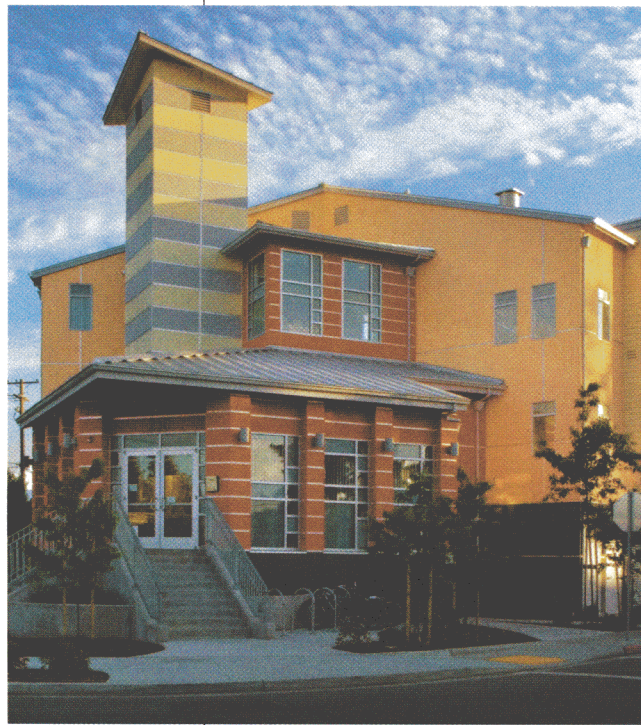
San Antonio Place

It has taken 50 years for a new single-room occupancy project to land in Mountain View, Calif. Much of the credit goes to Charities Housing, which, along with city council members and housing advocates, overcame a long-harbored distrust of the product type to bring the colorful, spunky, 120-unit San Antonio Place to fruition.

The Mountain View City Council identified the need for efficiency studio housing back in 1998 and a year later selected San Jose, Calif.-based Charities Housing to develop the \$22 million project on a city-owned site. At 325 square feet, the units aren't large, but they are a welcome sight to residents who often move from overcrowded or shared living conditions. Monthly rents range from

\$250 to \$700 (affordable to persons earning 20 percent to 45 percent of the area median income). One-third of the units are set aside for special needs households, such as HIV/AIDS patients, survivors of domestic abuse, and the disabled.

The building—designed by Kodama Diseno Architects—provides shelter and a supportive environment with six social service partners, full-time case management services, and weekly edu-



cational workshops. The developer also hires and trains residents to work as the property's desk clerks, allowing them to earn extra income. —R.Z.A.