

Thompson | Dorfman Partners Development Wins ULI Workforce Housing Award

Casa del Maestro in Santa Clara, CA has received ULI's 2009 Jack Kemp Workforce Housing Models of Excellence Award. Casa del Maestro, which provides affordable, high quality workforce housing in order to recruit and retain staff in the school district, was developed by Thompson | Dorfman Partners and designed by KTG Y Group .

November 11, 2009 (FPRC) -- OAKLAND, CALIF. – The Urban Land Institute's (ULI) Terwilliger Center for Workforce Housing has named Casa del Maestro in Santa Clara, Calif., as a recipient of the 2009 Jack Kemp Workforce Housing Models of Excellence Award. The award, which is named after former U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and U.S. Representative Jack Kemp who died in May 2009, was presented to Casa del Maestro's developer Thompson | Dorfman Partners, LLC of Mill Valley, Calif. by former HUD Secretaries Steve Preston and Henry Cisneros at the recent ULI Fall Meeting in San Francisco, Calif. Casa del Maestro was honored for its quality design, innovative financing structure, strong public/private partnership, and ability to be replicated in other areas of the country with high housing costs. Casa del Maestro was designed by KTG Y Group in Oakland, Calif.

Thompson | Dorfman Partners is an award-winning developer best known for its luxury residential development. The 10-year-old firm has developed more than \$1.7 billion in projects throughout California. Earlier this year, Thompson | Dorfman completed 555YVR, Downtown Walnut Creek's first transit-oriented luxury residential community oriented towards young professionals. 555YVR is a stylish, amenity-rich, green development located within walking distance to BART and Downtown's shopping and entertainment district. KTG Y served as the project architect for 555YVR.

"This is a great way for Thompson | Dorfman Partners to give back to the areas in which we develop," said Bruce Dorfman, co-founder of Thompson | Dorfman. "Providing high quality, affordable housing for teachers benefits the entire community." Thompson | Dorfman formed a non-profit affiliate, Education Housing Partners (EHP) to assist public agencies and school districts in providing affordable, high quality workforce housing in order to recruit and retain staff in areas with prohibitively high housing costs.

Located in one of the nation's most expensive housing markets, Casa del Maestro (Spanish for "house of the teacher") was the first teacher housing development in California built, owned, and operated by a public school district. Prior to the completion of Casa del Maestro Phase I in 2002, high housing costs in the area had increased the attrition rate of teachers by 300 percent in the five years prior to this venture, and estimates suggest it costs the district upwards of \$50,000 just to recruit and train new teachers. Since Casa del Maestro's completion, the attrition rate for young teachers in the Santa Clara Unified School District has decreased by 75 percent compared to teachers of similar tenure who did not receive this housing benefit.

Most importantly, the students in the district are benefiting as proficiency levels on standardized tests have increased by as much as 30 percent since the introduction of this housing. Although this test score improvement is due to a number of factors, district administration feels that a large part of the improvement can be directly attributed to its housing programs which have resulted in lower staff

turnover and the hiring of higher quality employees.

With the outstanding success of Phase I, an additional 30 units were added to bring the total number of units to 70. The apartment layouts are varied, upscale and comparable to most newly-built luxury apartments in the Silicon Valley. All units have large floorplans, modern kitchens, air conditioning, decks or patios and private garages – 50 percent of which have direct access to a unit, a security feature commended particularly by the faculty's women teachers. The size and layouts of the residences in Phase II include 18 one-bedroom units ranging in size from 702-787 square feet; six one-bedroom plus den units ranging from 829-1,029 square feet; and six two-bedroom, two-bath units totaling 1,122 square feet. Rents range from \$980 per month for a one-bedroom unit to \$1,400 per month for a two-bedroom which is about 50 percent less than similar quality market-rate units in Santa Clara County.

Phase II also incorporated numerous design and construction upgrades to improve environmental sustainability in order to meet LEED Silver guidelines, including: site plan maximized solar exposure for units, lower parking ratios and reduced foot print to provide more open space; energy standards that are 15 percent more efficient than State mandate; bioswales and retention facilities to collect and treat storm water; drought tolerant planting; use of low VOC paints and sealants; recycling program for construction waste; and use of recycled building materials.

The sustainable design and close proximity to employment, services, and education further increase affordability and benefits for residents who have few affordable housing options. There are over a dozen district campuses, public transit, and retail, restaurants, and services located in neighboring commercial centers.

"Casa del Maestro is a prime example of a self-sustaining community -- environmentally, socially and also economically. Because of the financing structure no district funds were used for the improvements and the rents cover operating costs, reserves and debt service. Even with a softening residential market, home prices and rental rates are still well beyond what most starting teachers can afford in metropolitan areas in California so this type of workforce housing is as vital as ever," said Dorfman. Dorfman added that he believes despite budget restraints, many school districts around the state and the country still have the capacity to follow Santa Clara's lead. Thompson | Dorfman provided complete design/build contracting services at cost for the development of Casa del Maestro.

For example, the San Mateo County Community College District, working with Education Housing Partners and KTGy, completed College Vista in 2006, an award-winning 44-unit apartment community built on a 2.3-acre parking lot owned by the district. Similar to Casa del Maestro, College Vista's below-market rents and incentives for eventual home purchase have successfully reduced attrition of its staff and provided a beneficial recruiting tool. Presently, Education Housing Partners and KTGy are under construction on Canada Vista, an additional 60-unit apartment community on behalf of the San Mateo County Community College District, which is scheduled for completion in 2010.

"Casa del Maestro and College Vista serve as a model for not only other public school districts, but also public and private employers throughout the country. The development structure, financing and design serve as a prototype to address the problem of affordable housing for moderate-income, service-based employees in cost-prohibitive markets in the U.S.," said KTGy's Chairman Stan Braden, AIA. "The outstanding success of both the Santa Clara Unified School District and San

Mateo County Community College District using the same public-private partnership and financial model, further supports the quality of the concept and its ability to be reproduced.”

About Thompson | Dorfman Partners, LLC

Thompson | Dorfman Partners, LLC is a real estate development and investment company. Formed in 1999 by Will Thompson and Bruce Dorfman, Thompson | Dorfman focuses on multi-family residential development, with particular emphasis on well-sited, urban infill and mixed-use properties located in high growth, technology-driven markets in California. The principals of Thompson | Dorfman have more than 25 years experience in the industry and Thompson | Dorfman have collectively developed 10,000 multifamily homes in 40 California apartment and condominium communities. In 2004 they formed Education Housing Partners, a California non-profit public benefit corporation, in order to facilitate school districts and public agencies to build workforce housing for their employees. For more information, please visit www.thompsondorfman.com.

About Santa Clara Unified School District

Santa Clara Unified School District (SCUSD) is in the heart of Silicon Valley and includes most of the City of Santa Clara, part of north San Jose and the eastern portion of the City of Sunnyvale. SCUSD includes grades kindergarten through twelfth grade and has an award winning adult education program as well as a strong preschool and day care component. The district educates 14,250 students and has a teaching force of 775 teachers. For more information about SCUSD, go to www.santaclarausd.org.

About Urban Land Institute (ULI)

The Urban Land Institute is a nonprofit education and research institute supported by its members. Its mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. Established in 1936, the Institute has more than 40,000 members. For more information, please visit www.uli.org.

About KTG Y Group, Inc.

Established in 1991, KTG Y Group, Inc., Architecture and Planning, provides comprehensive planning and award-winning architectural design services for residential communities, retail, hospitality, mixed-use and related specialty developments. KTG Y delivers innovative solutions that reflect clear understanding of development, marketing and financial performance and takes particular pride in its highly motivated and principal led studios. Serving clients worldwide, KTG Y maintains offices in Irvine, Oakland and Santa Monica, and in Denver. See www.ktgy.com.

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