



Creating & Preserving Affordable Housing

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**USGBC Awards Shinsei Gardens Apartments LEED® Platinum Certification**

**September 22, 2010** – (Berkeley, CA). Today, Shinsei Gardens Apartments, a 39-unit affordable housing development in Alameda, CA was awarded LEED Platinum certification by USGBC for achievement in green homebuilding and design. LEED for Homes is a green home certification program that rewards homes that are designed and built to be energy- and resource-efficient and more healthy and durable for the occupants. LEED-certified homes complete a technically rigorous process that often includes a home energy (HERS) rating and onsite inspections to verify that the home is built to be energy and water efficient, environmentally sound, and a healthier place to live.

Shinsei Gardens is the only LEED Platinum affordable housing development in California to date. The multi-family property was built by Resources for Community Development (RCD), a leader in green building in the affordable housing industry. Green properties often have substantially lower utility bills<sup>1</sup> and may qualify for advantageous financing, lower insurance rates and government incentives. Through their commitment to green homebuilding, RCD is helping to ensure that the highest quality homes are available to those who can least afford it.

“Living in a LEED-certified home not only means you will be saving money and precious resources, it also means that it’s more durable than a non-certified home,” said Nate Kredich, Vice President, Residential Market Development, U.S. Green Building Council. “The quality of the products and the different green strategies used within the home means that its owners will enjoy their high-performing home for years to come.” This is especially important to affordable housing developments which are almost always required by regulatory agreements to last for at least 50 years.

“As a LEED-certified home, Shinsei Gardens serves as a model of greener living for the entire community,” said Linda Mackey, RCD’s Deputy Director. “The development sets the example that we can all live better by reducing our environmental footprint, cutting our utility bills, and coming home to a greener place to live.”

Shinsei Gardens Apartments is a stunning new construction, residential development serving low-income families on former military land in the City of Alameda. Thirty nine apartments comprise four separate, 2-story buildings which are organized around a large central courtyard with passive green space and an active children’s play area. The entire project is designed to provide equal access to all residents and visitors through universal design applications. Residents benefit from a healthful environment through the implementation of green building materials and practices, and enjoy well-integrated indoor and outdoor spaces. In addition to its LEED Platinum certification, Shinsei Gardens is also GreenPoint Rated with 169 points and has earned the following awards: ACTERRA Business Environmental Sustainability Award, AIA East Bay Merit Award for Design, NAHRO Award (City of Alameda), Home Depot Foundation Award of Excellence – Honorable Mention.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ENERGY STAR (2007). *Residential Home Improvement: An Overview of Energy Use and Energy Efficient Opportunities* (August 2007).

**About Resources for Community Development**

RCD is a non-profit organization that develops and provides housing along the entire affordable housing spectrum, from single room occupancy hotels to 4-bedroom family apartments and affordable homeownership. Founded by Berkeley community members in 1984, RCD has built nearly 1,700 units over the last 26 years providing quality affordable housing to over 3,000 individuals and families. RCD's mission is to create and preserve affordable housing for those with the fewest options, to build community and enrich lives.

**About USGBC**

The U.S. Green Building Council is a nonprofit membership organization whose vision is a sustainable built environment within a generation. Since USGBC's founding in 1993, USGBC has grown to more than 18,000 member companies and organizations and a comprehensive suite of LEED green building certification systems. Its membership includes corporations, builders, universities, government agencies, and other nonprofit organizations all sharing USGBC commitment to a prosperous and sustainable future for our nation through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. Visit [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org) for more information.

**About LEED for Homes**

LEED for Homes is a third-party certification system for building and designing high-performance green homes that are energy-and-resource-efficient and healthy for its occupants. Developed and administered by USGBC, LEED for Homes awards points to projects in eight categories of environmental performance: Innovation & Design Process, Location & Linkages, Sustainable Sites, Water Efficiency, Indoor Environmental Quality, Energy & Atmosphere, Materials & Resources, and Awareness & Education. To date, more than 5,000 homes have achieved certification with LEED for Homes program, and over 20,000 have registered and are in process. For more information, visit [www.usgbc.org/homes](http://www.usgbc.org/homes).