

San Francisco Business Times - March 30, 2009  
</sanfrancisco/stories/2009/03/30/focus28.html>

# SAN FRANCISCO Business Times

Friday, March 27, 2009

## Finalist: Villa Vasconcellos

San Francisco Business Times - by [Blanca Torres](#)

Villa Vasconcellos brought a bright and modern housing alternative for cash-strapped seniors in Walnut Creek.

“There’s never enough housing that the lowest, lowest income seniors can afford,” said Linda Mackey of Resources for Community Development, the Berkeley-based developer behind the project. “In Walnut Creek, there’s not that many choices.”

The building, designed by Rick Williams and David Brown of Van Meter Williams Pollack, incorporates natural light into every section to take away the “institutional feel” of multi-unit complexes. The challenge for the project was to create an affordable housing project that defies the stereotype of affordable housing shoe-horned into ugly, boxy buildings.

The development caters to seniors at 20 percent to 50 percent of median income, and 25 units were set apart for seniors with disabilities. Rents range from \$263 to \$734 per month. The site is within walking distance of stores and BART and is near Interstate 680, giving residents easy access to transportation.

“The idea is to give seniors the opportunity to live as independently as possible for as long as possible,” Mackey said.

The project was also built green with solar energy systems to keep expenses low, natural ventilation to improve indoor air quality and community gardens.

### Villa Vasconcellos

Location: 1515 Geary Road, Walnut Creek.

Size: 70 units.

Cost: \$20.7 million.

Tenants: Low- to very-low-income seniors.

Developer: Resources for Community Development.

Architect: Van Meter Williams Pollack.

Contractor: [Segue Construction](#).

*All contents of this site © American City Business Journals Inc. All rights reserved.*