

## NEW HOPE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

New Hope Housing has a big job: shattering the negative **stereotypes** of **affordable housing**. Its tool-the newly opened **Brays Crossing** with 500' of frontage on I-45.



New Hope took advantage of the **former Houtex Inn's** visibility to give affordable housing a fresh, **artsy** look. We snapped artist **Kim Clark Renteria**, New Hope ED **Joy Horak-Brown**, Glassman Shoemake Maldonado Architects' **Ernesto Maldonado**, artist **Carmen Lomas Garza**, and New Hope director of fund development **Nicole Cassier** in front of one of Carmen's **steel murals**. There are four 14' x 48' murals covering the **47k SF** property's sound wall that reflect the East End's Hispanic community and artistic tradition. Another **aesthetic** feature: Kim's stained glass in the entrance.



There are **149** private-efficiency units. Eight are **ADA** suitable and two are designed for the **hearing impaired**. The property consists of **seven buildings** set around two major courtyards. It's outfitted with a public meeting room, library, business center, outdoor volleyball court, and private offices for residents' use. Nicole says it's always a design challenge to **renovate** existing buildings (plus the Houtex Inn had become a **certified public nuisance**). New Hope prefers to build from the ground-up. And that's ironic, given that Nicole's background is in **historic renovations**.



New Hope has a number of elements **common** to all properties, like fountains. Ernesto is especially proud of the design above, executed by **converting** an abandoned and filled-in **pool**. (It also provides **white noise** to mask the highway.) **Connectivity** throughout the complex and an entirely **wheelchair-accessible** first floor are necessary. The Brays Crossing project was the **largest purchase of treks** in the nation (1/2 acre). All properties have **end-to-end transparency** and an **open design** to foster community, one of New Hope's priorities. All have only **one entrance/exit** for security purposes. The property opened to residents this spring and is **50% occupied**. New Hope is working with METRO to install a stop along the frontage road.



Property manager **Joe Martinez** joins Ernesto in displaying "before" pictures. New Hope has **four** existing properties (two **downtown** and two in the **East End**). Two more are opening this year, the **57-unit** unit **historic hotel** turned SRO (**single-room occupancy**) on 1414 Congress and the **166-unit** Sakowitz Apartments in the Fifth Ward, which will be Houston's first **LEED-certified** supportive multifamily property. New Hope's goal is to house **1k** adults, and this year it will jump from **319 to 634** SRO. Nicole says it's on track to reach its goal by **2015** and then might extend its reach (perhaps housing for single moms?). The design team includes **Camden Builders**, Glassman Shoemake Maldonado Architects' **Ernesto Maldonado**, and interior designer **Mary McDaniel**.