



SAN DIEGO  
HOUSING  
COMMISSION

**News Release**

October 16, 2017

## **SAN DIEGO HOUSING COMMISSION PRESIDENT & CEO RICHARD C. GENTRY RECEIVES NATIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING ASSOCIATION'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS AWARD**

**SAN DIEGO, CA** — San Diego Housing Commission President & Chief Executive Officer Richard C. Gentry has received the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials' (NAHRO) highest and most prestigious award, which recognizes outstanding contributions “to the nation's effort to provide ‘a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.’”

“I am honored to receive this recognition. Over the years, I have had the privilege of working with outstanding people across the country and here in San Diego who share my commitment to innovative solutions that help struggling families find a place to call home that they can afford. This award reflects the impact of our collaborative efforts,” Mr. Gentry said.

Fueled by a desire to serve others throughout his 45-year career in affordable housing and community development, Mr. Gentry fosters innovation and excellence in the creation of affordable housing opportunities for low-income and homeless individuals and families.

Mr. Gentry has carried forward and expanded a vision for affordable housing that puts people first.

“The people of the City of San Diego are fortunate to have a leader of Mr. Gentry's caliber at the helm of the San Diego Housing Commission. This honor is well-deserved and a long time in coming,” said San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) Chairman of the Board Frank Urtasun.

Mr. Gentry leads an agency that provides federal rental assistance to more than 15,000 low-income families who live in the City of San Diego. Including its nonprofit affiliate, SDHC also owns and/or manages more than 3,500 affordable rental housing units.

SDHC's real estate portfolio includes 1,366 former public housing units that transferred to SDHC ownership in 2007 through the largest public housing conversion at the time. Within his first year at SDHC, Mr. Gentry led SDHC to implement an innovative Finance Plan in 2009 that leveraged the equity from this portfolio to create [810 additional affordable housing units](#).

In addition, SDHC is an affordable housing developer, investor, and lender to other affordable housing developers. SDHC has directed more than \$1 billion in loans and bond financing since 1981 toward the creation of more than 17,000 affordable housing units.

Under Mr. Gentry's leadership, SDHC also developed the report, [Addressing the Housing Affordability Crisis: San Diego Housing Production Objectives 2018-2028](#), in collaboration with City Councilmembers Scott Sherman and David Alvarez, Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, of the City Council's Smart Growth & Land Use Committee.

Released on September 21, 2017, this report provides important data that will help the City of San Diego establish realistic and achievable housing production goals. It is the next step in a process that SDHC started nearly two years ago when it published its report, [\*Addressing the Housing Affordability Crisis: An Action Plan for San Diego\*](#), which included 11 recommended actions at the local, state and federal level to reduce costs and increase housing production. To date, action has been taken on nine of those 11 recommendations.

[\*\*HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO\*\*](#), SDHC’s landmark homelessness action plan, which was announced on November 12, 2014, was developed and implemented under Mr. Gentry’s direction. The Housing Our Heroes initiative, a collaboration with the City of San Diego to provide permanent housing opportunities for 1,000 homeless Veterans, was launched on March 1, 2016, as part of HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO. Programs in the first three years of HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO are on target to impact the lives of close to 3,000 homeless San Diegans, and the next phase of this action plan will provide permanent housing opportunities for an additional 3,000 homeless individuals and families over the next three fiscal years (2018-20).

Mr. Gentry also re-established SDHC as a federal “[Moving to Work](#)” (MTW) agency, which is essential to creating innovative programs to address homelessness and to guide Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance recipients toward financial self-reliance. MTW status provides SDHC the flexibility to implement new programs to provide housing assistance in the City of San Diego. SDHC is one of only 39 public housing authorities, out of 3,400 nationwide, to receive an MTW designation from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Mr. Gentry serves on the national MTW Steering Committee.

Federal, State and City lawmakers also have turned to Mr. Gentry for his expertise in affordable housing. For example, he testified twice before Congressional subcommittees in 2016 ([May 12](#) and [September 21](#)); provided a Congressional staff briefing on the state of affordable housing on [February 21, 2017](#); and participated in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus’ National Housing Forum on September 8, 2017.

Mr. Gentry’s experience before joining SDHC included CEO positions with the Housing Authority of the City of Austin and the Richmond (Virginia) Redevelopment and Housing Authority, both of which received national recognition under Mr. Gentry’s leadership.

In addition, Mr. Gentry has been actively involved with NAHRO and its affiliated organizations for more than 40 years, including serving as President of NAHRO from 1995-1997.

NAHRO will present the M. Justin Herman Memorial Award to Mr. Gentry at the association’s National Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, October 27-29, 2017.

For more information about SDHC, visit [www.sdhc.org](http://www.sdhc.org)

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