

Santa Monica, California

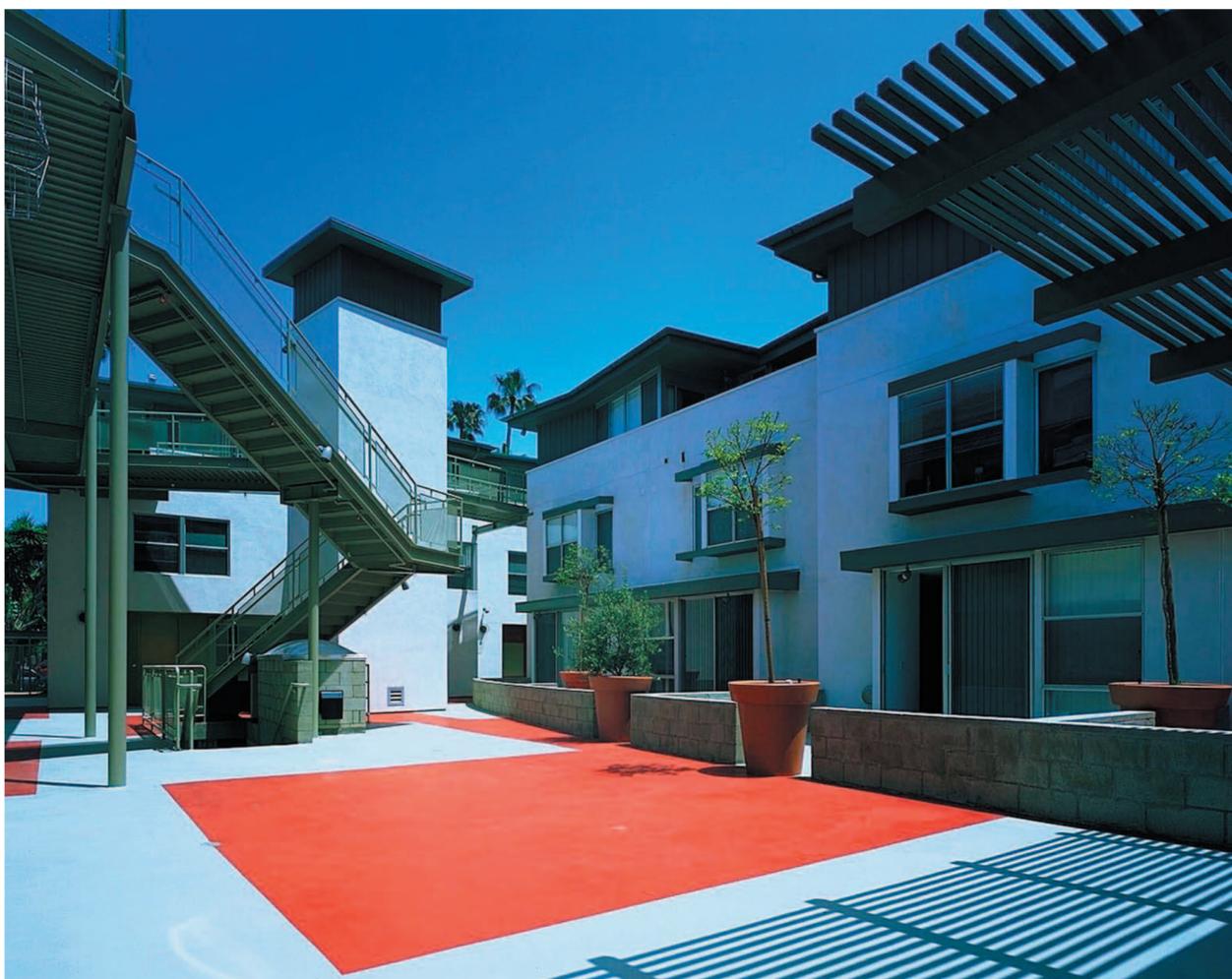
Work Force Housing Today

5th Street Family Housing, Koning Eizenberg

5th Street Family Housing is a 32 unit lowrise apartment building in Santa Monica, California. The units are organized in an unusual configuration: ground level 2 story duplexes with floor-through apartments above on the third level, half of which are fitted for full handicapped access. Koning Eizenberg Architecture devised this configuration by taking advantage of the need for an elevator to service the underground parking to also service the handicapped accessible units on the third floor. The apartment above the duplex configuration had other advantages as well. The small footprint of the two-level duplex maximized the number of units on the site with on-grade courtyards. It required only one upper level walkway rather than two. And because the footprint of the third level apartments was significantly smaller than the levels below, large outside decks could be provided.

The buildings are arranged around two major communal spaces - a walkstreet and a courtyard. The configuration of the apartment above the duplex had other advantages as well. The smaller size of the apartment allowed for a large decks for these units. The configuration also allows for cross-ventilation for all units (there is no air-conditioning). In addition, units with handicap accessibility are located, rather than on the ground, on the upper floor. A laundry and a small play area are located in the courtyard allowing parents to attend to chores while their children play safely.

Architectural visual interest is achieved through use of simple but bold articulated forms and saturated color. The change in building massing accomplished by the smaller footprint of the 3rd level flats compared with the levels below allowed for a freer hand in form-making that takes its lead from an adjacent lozenge-shaped bank building. The result is an unconventional configuration for affordable family housing, introducing architectural vitality through carefully organized social spaces, theatrical scale and color, and high-flying bridges.



Project Data

Owner Client:	Community Corporation of Santa Monica
Project Cost:	\$108 per square foot
Project Type:	Courtyard Housing
On-site Amenities:	Community Center and Laundry room, Courtyard play area
Date of Completion:	1998
Number of Units:	32 Units: 8 two bedroom, 22 three bedroom, 2 four bedroom
Site Area / Density:	0.7 Acres/ 48 D.U.A.