Created to inspire an active lifestyle for families, build community, and promote pride of place, Casitas de Colores is a distinct assembly of mixed-income apartments located within an emerging downtown community — making its location ideal and walkable.

**ACTIVE DESIGN STRATEGIES / THEMES**

- **Walking** is an important component of an active lifestyle. To encourage brief walks and interaction, community areas are distributed throughout the site. Artfully decorated and naturally lit walkways with sitting areas also make for a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

- **Staircases** are open with views to the interior courtyards and outer downtown cityscape. They connect all three levels at primary paths of travel, and are more prominent than the **reduced-speed elevators**, to encourage residents to climb the stairs when possible.

- An **exercise facility**, **outdoor play structures**, and **bicycle storage** allow adults and children alike to be active and healthy.

- **Covered balconies and patios** provide additional outdoor space. They also buffer buildings from sidewalks so residents feel safely separated from passersby.

**Location**

**ALBUQUERQUE, NM**

**Size**

71 UNITS

**Project Completion**

2014
Casitas de Colores has brought much needed affordable housing for families to downtown Albuquerque. With a walkscore.com rating of 94/100, it has been recognized as an important project for supporting activity in the downtown area. Since its opening in 2014, Casitas de Colores has helped transform the neighborhood from one of limited services and neglect to a vibrant, active, and family-friendly neighborhood within the downtown core.

**PROJECT OUTCOMES + IMPACT**

- Active design strategies improve resident wellbeing
- Promotes a walkable and culturally diverse neighborhood in the downtown core with nearby amenities and transit
- Increases opportunities for social interaction
- Includes programs and spaces to support children's growth, health, and development
- Celebrates community
- Connects residents to nature with outdoor spaces and views
- Enhances safety through visibility
- Offers convenience for daily activities through on-site laundry rooms, a 24-hour fitness room, and proximity to downtown amenities
- Supports downtown revitalization by providing essential housing, with 70% affordable units
- Achieved LEED Platinum on infill site with underground cistern and rooftop photovoltaic arrays

**AWARDS**

- 2017 ULI Jack Kemp Excellence in Affordable and Workforce Housing Award, Finalist
- 2016 Center for Active Design, Excellence Award
- 2016 Jeff Harnar Award, Honorable Mention
- 2016 AIA Albuquerque, Honor Award
- 2015 NAIOP New Mexico Eagle Award of Excellence, Residential / Multifamily
- 2014 New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority Design Award
- Triple LEED Platinum, U.S. Green Building Council
- LEED Gold, U.S. Green Building Council