



COLLABORATIVE
SOLUTIONS

PERMANENT HOUSING CASE STUDY



Title: Volunteers of America Southeast (VOASE), Bayou La Batre, Alabama, Supportive Housing for Elderly Hurricane Katrina Survivors

Property Name: Creel Place

Basic Description: New construction, 19 one-bedroom units, plus one two-bedroom, onsite manager's unit

Developer: VOASE

Property Management: VOASE

Service Provider: VOASE

Tenant Profile: Extremely low-income, seniors 62 years and older who lost housing during Hurricane Katrina

Service Approach: Nonprofit and faith-based agencies partner to provide a range of services that are often needed among the low-income, rural, senior population. Boat People SOS provides case management, assists tenants with access to mainstream benefits, and provides language translation services. VOASE handles all aspects of property management and compliance for the project, and provides onsite services, including social and education programs and a food bank. St. Margaret's Catholic Church provides limited transportation and Meals on Wheels to tenants requesting assistance with either or both needs.

Project Background:

Bayou La Batre, Alabama, is located on the coast of the Mississippi Sound and on the Gulf of Mexico in South Alabama. This rural community has a population of 2,313 and consists of a diverse population, including a large community of Vietnamese families. When Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005, more than 300 homes were lost in the community. Most residents did not have insurance and could not access FEMA assistance. A year later, the number of low-income seniors living in FEMA trailers remained nearly unchanged. Their homes had been condemned and torn down. Most had limited incomes with no funds for rebuilding. FEMA trailers are not designed to be permanent housing, especially for an aging population with mobility and health issues.

In the Spring of 2006, in coordination with the City of Bayou La Batre and the State of Alabama, a full damage assessment, housing loss inventory and future need plan was undertaken by Woods Research. The findings confirmed that more than 300 housing units were destroyed in Bayou La Batre but there were no plans developed to address the housing needs of low-income, elderly residents. Creel Place was borne out of local developers and partners who specifically set out to create new, supportive housing units for the overlooked population of very low-income, seniors over the age of 62 who lost housing during Hurricane Katrina.

Key Features and Impact:

- Construction guided by Hurricane Katrina lessons learned, including a stormwater drainage system designed for worst-case scenario property flooding – diverts water from higher topographic areas
- Water well was drilled onsite to maintain the 4 acres of landscaping (provides significant cost savings for resident water costs)
- 12 of the original 19 tenants remain stably housed

FINANCING INFORMATION

Development Budget

Funding Source	Amount Received
HUD 202 Capital Advance	\$2,737,186
HUD Predevelopment Grant	\$80,000
Community Foundation	\$25,000
Total	\$2,842,186

DEVELOPER PROFILE

Volunteers of America Southeast (VOASE), a charter member of Volunteers of America, has a significant amount of experience in housing development for vulnerable communities. Across Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi, Volunteers of America Southeast develops and operates affordable housing properties for seniors, persons with disabilities, families, and veterans. These properties are created in partnership with State and local governments as well as Federal entities including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Veterans Administration..

PROJECT PICTURE



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“Connecting Communities at the Intersection of Housing & Health”

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