



NEW DESIGNS COULD BRING HOPE TO STRUGGLING BRONX NEIGHBORHOODS

The much-maligned Bronx has been on a self-improvement kick of late. In one South Bronx area, community members have banded together to prevent their own displacement and are creating new housing and commercial spaces. Meanwhile, close by, the Bronx South Classic Center—a community center geared to teenagers—is on the rise.

A citizens' group called We Stay/Nos Quedamos was formed in

fall. The design, under the leadership of partner-in-charge Magnus Magnusson, AIA, uses a small scale to retain a neighborhood feel. The facades of the houses are multicolored masonry cladding, with a light cast-stone base and two shades of red brick.

Plaza de Los Angeles is the first project in a plan that involves building more than 2,000 new housing units in the area, along with new commercial, community, and health-care centers. The budget includes more than \$500 million in public and private investment.

Nearby, the New York City Housing Authority is building a community center to serve the Jackson, Melrose, and Morrisania Houses.

The diagonal orientation of the plan—created by Agrest and Gandelonas with Wasa Architects and Engineers—refers to the corresponding sites of the various housing projects.

The architects have designed an elliptical gymnasium building, connected to a horizontal bar enclosing offices, classrooms, and other facilities (left). According to the designers, transparent effects—such as the glazing along the length of the bar—were used to avoid a fortresslike effect. Construction of the 20,000-square-foot center should be completed in January 2000. *Soren Larson*



the Melrose neighborhood in 1993 to oppose an urban renewal plan that threatened to raze a 35-square-block section and move out its 6,000 residents. Nos Quedamos hired Larsen Shein Ginsberg Magnusson Architects to create an alternative plan; the first fruit of the collaboration is Plaza de Los Angeles (top), a cluster of three-family homes that broke ground last