

CAMAS GARDENS SUPPORTED HOUSING

LOCATION

Victoria, British Columbia

SIZE

Four storey, wood-frame development covering 3,166 m²

CAPACITY

44 units

ARCHITECT

Chow Low Hammond Architects Inc..

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

LADR Landscape Architects

CONTRACTOR

Ledcor Group

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Read Jones Christoffersen

MECHANICAL ENGINEER

Hirschfield Williams Timmins Ltd.

DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT

CitySpaces Consulting

PROJECT OWNER

Pacifica Housing Advisory Association

B.C. GOVERNMENT MINISTRY

BC Housing

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Award-winning Camas Gardens near downtown Victoria proves that government-funded housing can be low cost without sacrificing quality and beauty. Opened in 2011, elegant use of western red cedar in the façade and landscaping delivers appearance and environmental benefits, and is a warm addition to the neighbourhood.

Camas Gardens Supported Housing, managed by the non-profit Pacifica Housing Advisory Association, replaced an older 14-unit social housing development. The mix of three- and four-storey wood-frame construction made better use of the site, with 44 units and integrated services for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

One of the main urban design considerations was to configure the building to address the street and pedestrian experience. An internal courtyard offers a visual extension of the public boulevard, transitioning gradually from public to private space. Large windows around ground-floor common areas provide natural light, safety and security, and a connection to the community at large.

Achieving LEED NC-Canada Gold certification, Camas Gardens won the 2011 Victoria Commercial Building Design Award, and the 2012 Wood WORKS! BC Wood Design Award and 2012 International Properties Award in the multi-family category.



Photo by Destrube Photography, courtesy of Chow Low Hammond Architects

“We responded to the diversity of architectural typologies in the neighbourhood with a solution that is durable and welcoming, restores an important piece of the city fabric, and conveys a sense of warmth and optimism.”

Paul Hammond, Architect, Chow Low Hammond Architects Inc.

WOOD FEATURES

NATURAL CHOICE, CLEAR BENEFITS – Light wood-frame construction is ideal for Camas Gardens because wood is an economical construction material with long-term durability. Building the exterior wood-frame walls off site reduced construction waste and construction time.

IMPROVED SAFETY: FIRE AND SEISMIC – A wood-frame double wall with fire-rated gypsum board provides a durable firewall system while delivering acoustic separation. Double-sided plywood walls provide controlled resistance to the shear loads within the building, offering protection from earthquakes.

WOOD VENEER CABINETS: DURABLE, HIGH-QUALITY
The millwork in each suite and administration area is finished in a warm birch wood veneer. Research shows wood interiors reduce stress by creating a comforting and supportive environment, making it an excellent choice for supportive housing.

SOUND-ABSORBING COMPOSITE FLOOR – The hybrid floor system with wood framing, gypsum wall board on resilient metal channels in the ceiling, and concrete topping with radiant floor heating coils, absorbs vibration.

A BEAUTIFUL ADDITION TO NEIGHBOURHOOD – The quality western red cedar tongue-and-groove wood cladding and soffits that wrap the exterior façade on the second and third levels look great, and offer a contrast to the masonry and fibre cement board cladding, concrete topping with radiant floor heating coils, absorbs vibration.



Photos by Destrube Photography, courtesy of Chow Low Hammond Architects

FOR MORE INFORMATION

This profile is published by Forestry Innovation Investment, the Government of British Columbia's market development agency for forest products.

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