

Wood WORKS! BC



2012 WOOD DESIGN AWARDS - WINNER

Multi-Unit Residential

Paul Hammond, Chow Low Hammond Architects
Camas Gardens Supportive Housing, Victoria



The jury noted the architect's efforts resulted in a strong statement, with a project that fits into the neighbourhood in a very elegant way.

High resolution images available. Please e-mail mmclaughlin@wood-works.ca

Located in a neighbourhood described as a dichotomy of architectural languages and typologies, the designers of Camas Gardens sought to translate the diversity of architectural languages within the neighbouring context by offering a solution that is contemporary, durable and restores a piece of the city fabric. They set out to challenge a pre-conception about government-funded housing that it visually reflect "low cost", by exceeding the expected quality of space and material, yet meeting the project budget; aiding in the rehabilitation of the inhabitants while contributing to the greater urban context of the built environment. The designers stated that the use of wood on the façade and soffit in the building structure and surrounding landscaping is an important contribution to the quality of experience and the sustainable goals set

for this project. Designed to LEED Gold standards, the building is a mix of three and four storey wood-frame construction with the main entrance punctuated by a one-storey common room that partially encloses a south-facing courtyard. The internal layering of the building weaves around this courtyard, at once embracing the residents within, and gesturing to the neighbourhood a sense of openness. This warming to the community is achieved through the elegant use of Western red cedar, emphasizing the creation of shared courtyard space, while addressing the street and enhancing the neighbourhood. The wood ribbon becomes a beacon on the residential street as well as from within the building and is symbolic of the human primordial affinity to nature.