

Applicant Submission



07.06.2021

Rundle Manor Affordable Housing re: DTR1 Response

The following pages provide several key points of information and aspects of this project for your review and approval. Considerations such as how the project fits with the surrounding context, our rationale for parking stall variations from the relevant City of Calgary policies and further rationale are outlined below.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Rundle Manor Affordable Housing is a Calgary Housing Corporation mixed income affordable housing development that will replace 75 existing affordable housing townhomes on the site. Located within the northeast community of Rundle that is mostly comprised of single-family homes. The site is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of 26th Avenue NE and Rundelawn Road NE and is zoned as an MC-1d100 with an area of 14,530 m². To the south, the neighbouring properties are also zoned MC-1d100 and RC-2. To the east is the St Rupert School site and a regional pedestrian and bicycle path; to the north, the site has a 162.82 m frontage along 26th Ave NE; and to the west, the site has a frontage of 89.17 m on Rundelawn Rd NE. A 5.1 m wide [±16'-8"] utility right-of-way runs along the west property line. The utility right-of-way limits the types of planting material to sod, ornamental grasses, and perennial flowers.

The project is composed of 135 residential units [34 1-bedroom, 64 2-bedroom, 31 3-bedroom and 6 4-bedroom]. All the units are apartment styled units within a 3-storey building. A total of 30 [22%] accessible units will be provided throughout the project. These accessible units are provided in all four unit sizes to meet the current affordable housing demands.

Parking will be provided at a ratio of 1.0 [135 stalls] for residents and .15 for visitors [21 stalls]. The total parking stall count is 156 stalls.

PROJECT DESIGN

During the initial site analysis stages of the project, it was evident that the number of units required to make the project finances work, the by-law required landscape area, the number of parking stalls, and the building height would require careful balance and consideration. A wide range of site and building configurations were tested which led the design team and client to focus on the following aspects of the project and to carefully approach the requested relaxations outlined in the next section of this document.



SITE AS QUILT

The site is broken down into a quilt of modules designed to accommodate a variety of functions such as parking, planting, play areas, seating areas, a shed, community gardens, walkways, bike parking, etc. The modularity and flexibility afforded by the quilt allows integration of green pockets throughout the parking area. The green pockets break down the 'Walmart parking lot effect' into smaller parking areas that are pedestrian-friendly and appropriate for a neighbourhood dominated by single-family homes.

At the courtyards and along the frontage of the buildings, the quilt provides a framework to define openings of space for private patios, walkways, play areas and outdoor seating areas. This variety of private and public spaces creates a series of 'outdoor rooms' at a scale that is comfortable for a range of group sizes to utilize and activate. Along the project street frontage, the quilt creates areas for private patios while breaking down the length of frontage along 26th Ave NE and Rundelawn Rd NE.

BUILDING TO DEFINE URBAN ROOMS

The buildings on site is made up of a single large building that folds and bends along the edge of the site. This single building is arranged on the site to reduce the mass and scale of the project on the surrounding neighbourhood, to define urban outdoor spaces and to reduce the 'Walmart parking lot effect.' It is mainly focused along the two street frontages and the middle of the site where it has the greatest distance from neighbouring single family homes. In the middle of the site, the 3 storey massing cuts back from the street frontage along 26th Ave NE and creates a 'U' shaped building mass. The effect along 26th is that of two separate, smaller buildings instead of a single large building. The building folds around and delineates two outdoor public courtyards. The south side of the courtyards has been left open to maximize southern sun exposure while the buildings provide protection from the winter prevailing winds. Storm water collecting gardens are situated to the south of the courtyards further delineating these two courtyards. The courtyards are kept clear of cars and vehicular circulation and have been designed as outdoor urban rooms / amenity areas for tenants and the greater neighbourhood to enjoy.

The shape and position of the buildings also helps to breakdown the visual impact of 157 parking stalls on the site. This is accomplished by arranging the parking areas into three main sections: the southwest rectangular area, the middle bar and the south and east 'L' parking areas. The buildings shape and delineate the parking areas, significantly reducing the amount of parking lot and in turn cars present at any given time. This is a significant design decision that results in a development with a strong pedestrian focus and community approach. Connections to the three main parking areas are created by lifting the building off the ground at selective locations where the drive aisle connects and covered parking for accessible stalls is provided. Two-thirds of all accessible parking stalls are provided within the covered parking areas to increase their usability and reduce the impact of rain, snow, ice, hail, etc. on those stalls.

The building roof lines and heights have been carefully considered as a response to the neighbourhood context. Throughout the community, sloped and gabled roofs are the predominant features. Rundle Manor is designed to reflect and respond with a modern interpretation of this architectural language. The roofs of the 3 storey apartment buildings have a series of asymmetric, continuous gabled roof, consistent with the typical Rundle roof line. The intent is to break down the building massing into a series of side by side buildings. The ground floor angled screens accentuate and strengthen the architectural language while providing privacy at the ground floor patios. A gabled roof provides space for buildings systems to be run within the uninsulated roof space while reducing the visual impact of the building height on the neighbourhood.



Colour in the cladding materials is also employed as a tool to break down the building size and massing. A dark and light version of the same cladding is utilized to create four distinct section of the building. The change in colour further enhances the perception of side by side buildings as opposed to a large singular building on the site. At all recessed portions of the building - ground floor patios, lobby entries, and recessed balconies - weathering steel cladding is utilized to add playful pop of colour and create a visual focus on the pedestrian scale realm.

LANDSCAPE AREA

The proposed design includes high quality landscaped and outdoor amenity spaces in the form of two courtyards accessible both to the tenants and the neighbourhood. The courtyards are connected through a pedestrian walkway as well as to the pedestrian and regional path east of the property. The building has also been raised off the ground at multiple locations to provide additional locations for parking stalls while providing the maximum amount of landscaped area possible. The 'quilt' site strategy explained above also uses landscaped areas to breakdown the visual impact of the required parking stalls and creates a more pedestrian and neighbourhood friendly site. Lastly, the landscaped area along the frontage of the building is designed to the same quality as the courtyards, to create a series of private patio spaces as well as improve the development edge along the sidewalk.

While the development does not meet the prescriptive requirements for the low water landscape, there are several sustainability strategies employed through the landscape design that will provide low water and low maintenance landscaping. All planting proposed in the landscape design requires low maintenance [including low water needs], is drought-resistant and either provides edible fruit for the tenants or supports local flora and fauna. A large number of fruit bearing shrubs are integrated into the design. This provides a strong educational potential for tenants and neighbourhood alike.

PARKING STALL COUNT

The site for Rundle Manor falls within 600 m of the Rundle LRT station on 36 St NE, which qualifies the site for a 10% dwelling unit parking stall reduction. The Land Use Bylaw requires 153 stalls for residents and 21 visitor parking stalls for a total of 174 parking stalls. The proposed design provides 156 [18 residential stall reduction]. The requested relaxation provides a 1.0 ratio of parking stalls per dwelling units and provides the bylaw specified .15 per unit visitor parking stall ratio. The 1.0 ratio has been derived using two metrics.

1. CHC [Calgary Housing Corporation] has provided a 1.0 ratio of dwelling unit to parking stalls on all recent new developments.
2. A transportation engineer was commissioned to study the parking requirements of three other developments of similar size and scale, with one case study within the Rundle neighbourhood, to understand the actual parking stall use for such developments. The study supported the reduction of residential parking stalls provided the visitor parking stall ratio remained at 0.15 as outlined by the Land Use Bylaw.



EAST BOUNDARY

Along the east site boundary, the project's edge has a soft landscape edge and a single access point. The access point will connect the internal pathways and courtyards with the pedestrian and bicycle path running along the east property line. The vegetation planted along the property line along with the second and third floor units overlooking the greenspace will both screen parking along the east property line and provide 'eyes on the street' to the adjacent green space.

This concludes our explanation and analysis of our proposed design for Rundle Manor. If there are any further questions, concerns or additional information required, feel free to contact myself, Pablo Batista at pablo@5468796.ca.

Thank you.

Best,

Pablo Batista

5 4 6 8 7 9 6 A R C H I T E C T U R E I N C