

CITY OF REGINA FINDING MIDDLE GROUND DESIGN COMPETITION

Winning Submissions

CATEGORY 1: Lane Access/Corner

1st Place: The Osler – Leif Sauder & Extol Developments

The Osler is an exemplary project that maximizes the number of units on site in a simple, pragmatic form. It makes for a commendable, affordable solution. This project develops a flexible typology that can be adapted to the character of the neighbourhood in which it finds itself. The design may not have architectural sophistication, but it has been constructed and is a real-life example of what is achievable within the current revised zoning and creates a valuable precedent for future densification in Regina. The efforts to bring the building closer to the street has been recognized as an opportunity for people in their housing to connect to the street, while also allowing for extra space at the backyard for private and public/shared outdoor space. The simplicity of this project is viewed as the reality of how one might build affordably and sustainably in the current housing market.

2nd Place: Living Skies Townhouse – Gregory Whistance-Smith and Shane Hauser

Living Skies is seen as a contemporary approach to achieving multi-residential on a site that is still contextually sensitive. Through its articulation and elevated design, this design is a good example of how intensifying sites can have scale and appeal to different housing markets and neighbourhoods. This design shows how this missing middle typology could carve into a single detached market for those who would not typically consider the other options.

This project shows a sophisticated density for the relatively small lot that allows for three generously sized units and gives individuality to each unit with light wells to the basement level, dynamically shaped ceilings and upper floor balconies overlooking the street that activate the public realm.

3rd Place: Maximum Softness – Team Oxbow Architecture

The judges appreciated the design process, which included community engagement with a young school group. The resulting design was influenced from the children's drawings which deconstructed and faceted the usual housing form. The folding of the building's roof makes it unique, including how the light/shadows would be affected. The design is similar to a Mansard typology, with the roofline bringing the three-storey scale of the buildings down to the scale of smaller houses on the street. The judges felt that turning the form 90 degrees did not necessarily create the desired effect to the resulting courtyard or side-facing street facade.

CATEGORY 2: Lane Access/Interior

1st Place: Cathedral House Project – Marshall Drafting & Design

This is a thoughtful approach to the design problem considering context, sustainability, accessibility and is highly resolved. It plays on the traditional Mansard roofscape by cutting in windows to break down the scale. The judges saw that the side walls of the mansard roof could be ideal for the deep wall truss used with highly insulated envelopes in passive house design projects. The second-floor balcony that is cut into the roofline creates engagement with the street below. The design is a sophisticated way to disguise three units into a form that easily looks like it is a single family detached home.

2nd Place: Shift House – Team SCK

The judges appreciated this variation of the multi-unit dwelling to be one that could be adaptable and could accommodate various living situations throughout its lifespan. The shared deck space between the front and back units is believable as a common area that can bring residents together. The innovation is the flexibility to adjust the unit types and change the number of units including the possibility of a commercial unit as well – various scenarios are imaginable. The form uses one material, and apertures and doors are well considered. Situating parking access exclusively at the rear would take advantage of the lane and would avoid interrupting an otherwise continuous pedestrian streetscape, which is an important asset in Regina's pre-war neighbourhoods.

3rd Place: Maximum Softness – Team Oxbow Architecture

Of all the types submitted by this team, this configuration was the most successful. The courtyard space in this version could be seen to be the most activated but would still need development on how you would access it and view it directly to activate this public space more fully into daily life. There is thoughtfulness around children's play in the form of the buildings, but activation of the courtyard that is created needs more consideration.

Honorable Mention: The Compact Four – Dan Dang

The project receives honourable mention as it shows the ability to create four good-sized units on the lot. The efficiency of space planning is recognized as an example of broader efficiencies of cost, energy performance and compact form. The judges thought better architectural consideration and innovation with respect to activating the public realm within the project and better development of the facade with respect to the local context would be of benefit to the street and the tenants.

CATEGORY 3: Front Access/Corner

1st Place: None Awarded

2nd Place: None Awarded

3rd Place: None Awarded

Honorable Mention: Maximum Softness – Team Oxbow Architecture

This project receives an honourable mention due to the detailed investigation for how to achieve a meaningful housing project on this difficult site. Maximum Softness was able to achieve seven units on this lot which shows the possibility of the density that can be achieved as “missing middle” infill in Regina. The project had other shortcomings related to accessibility and public spaces that were not available to all units.

CATEGORY 4: Front Access/Interior

1st Place: Pocket House – Team SCK

This project showed an innovative approach to designing on an interior lot. At the street, this building hides its inner U-shaped form around a courtyard that could activate community life within it. The “scattered parking” approach is an innovative idea that cracks the usual conventions of the parking lot all in one dedicated area that often diminishes any opportunity for public space within smaller housing typologies. Although the courtyard proper contains three of the parking spaces, the judges thought that summertime parking could be accommodated on the street and in the winter, for street snow clearing, there would be opportunity for moving it into the courtyard. The units are well laid out with access to natural lighting and cross ventilation. The project consists of simple materials and the layout of the upper floor outdoor walkways works well to enhance a community feel. The option for a commercial coffee shop/studio enhances the flexibility for this building type to be located in a commercial/mixed use streetscape or to serve as a “third place” in an otherwise residential streetscape. It could also be used as an amenity space for tenants within the building if no commercial spaces are sought. The simple, clean form of this project allows for constructability, accessibility and affordability.

2nd Place: None Awarded

3rd Place: None Awarded