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INFLUENCES MODERN HOME DEVELOPMENT

AFFORDABLE HOUSING'S PROGRESSION OF DESIGN

Coupled with sustainability, features and amenities play increasingly important role in the livability of affordable housing

By Abby Pittman

Photo Credit: Jim Doyle



▲ A walkable community, Parc Derian's amenities include a swimming pool, tot lot, fitness room, barbecue and fireplace pavilion, bike storage and community garden.

Gone are the days when low-cost, rental housing was bare-bones shelter with white washed walls and few if any amenities. In an evolution of design and livability, today's affordable housing incorporates many of the features and amenities found in more expensive market-rate housing: swimming pools, exercise rooms, barbecue pits, and community

centers. Even parking facilities have evolved into lifestyle features.

"Creating safe areas for resident parking – such as subterranean or gated on-grade – enhances the quality of life for residents," explains Steven Dewan, NCARB, a Senior Principal of Bassonian Lagoni Architects.

One of Southern California's leading affordable housing builders, C&C Development, has mastered

the art of creating attractive properties combined with solid sustainable credentials. The Orange County, CA – headquartered developer completed construction on three workforce housing properties in Orange County in the past year alone – Depot at Santiago, Parc Derian, and Andalucia – projects C&C believes best illustrate the importance of amenities coupled with sustainability in today's affordable



housing projects.

The Depot At Santiago – A True Transit-Oriented Development

A true transit-oriented development, the 70-unit Depot at Santiago was built by C&C and Orange Housing Development Corporation in partnership with the City of Santa Ana and was completed earlier this year. The mixed-use Depot was built on a 1.35-acre urban infill site across from the

Santa Ana Regional train station and the proposed OC Streetcar line. The signature property is designed to achieve a LEED Gold Certification that exceeds California’s Title 24 CalGreen energy efficiency standards by at least 30 percent.

In recognition of its advanced sustainable design, the Depot was selected by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) for its 2016 SCAG Sustainability Award for Achievement in Integrated Land Use and Transportation. The Depot’s

sustainable footprint will benefit residents who live in the property with convenient access to public transportation that helps reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions, explains Todd Cottle, a C&C Development principal.

“We believe the Depot at Santiago is the gold standard for transit-oriented development,” he says. “The Depot not only adds a new generation of quality workforce housing to Santa Ana and Orange County, it serves as a sustainable template for future



residential and mixed-use projects.”

Consisting of two urban-styled, multi-family buildings, the Depot establishes a structural landmark at the intersection of Santa Ana Boulevard and Santiago Avenue. The property features a 3,000 square-foot

community room, abundant open space, play area, and barbecue pavilion. “Creating amenities that enhance the lives of residents within a secure environment drives our community planning efforts, particularly when it comes to affordable and workforce housing,” notes Scott Adams, AICP, Senior Principal at Bassenian Lagoni, which designed the Depot.

vice opportunities in the surrounding Santa Ana Transit Zoning Code, an area that has been historically underserved. The Depot includes approximately 8,500 square feet of ground-level retail space that opens onto a large, vibrant outdoor plaza for social

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gatherings and community events.

Santa Ana Councilmember David Benavides summed up the community benefits of the Depot at Santiago by pointing out that quality workforce housing like the Depot

is critical to providing a neighborhood environment for families by giving them access to beneficial community and neighborhood

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services such as public transit and family resources. Availability of affordable housing, he states, leads to a “dignified family life.”

Parc Derian – In The Heart Of The Irvine Business Complex

Developed on a 2.2-acre urban infill site in the heart of the Irvine, CA, Business Complex, the 80-apartment Parc Derian is C&C’s first workforce housing development in Irvine and is a result of a public/private partnership between C&C, Innovative Housing Opportunities, Lennar Corporation, the City of Irvine, and the Irvine Community Land Trust. It

is a truly walkable community in the center of one of Southern California’s most dynamic business complexes, a 4,000-acre commercial, industrial and residential district with companies that employ more than 90,000 people.

Built in compliance with Irvine’s inclusionary zoning policy, Parc Derian is a four-story, podium-designed structure featuring contemporary architecture that incorporates urban inspired elements and finishes. The property is designed to achieve a LEED Gold certification allowing residents to enjoy tangible utility savings from the energy efficient design. Parc Derian utilized sustainable building methods such as Low E windows, water saving plumbing

fixtures and LED lighting. The site exterior is landscaped with drought tolerant trees and shrubs to reduce water usage, provide aesthetic value and natural shade, and to aid in water retention.

The community encompasses almost a half-acre of open space and residents are served by 5,000 square feet of community space with amenities such as a fitness room, community room, on-site laundry facilities and secured bicycle storage. A second-floor exterior podium deck includes a tot lot, outdoor barbecue and fireplace pavilion, swimming pool, and a community garden.

Keith Labus, a partner with KTG Group, designer of Parc Derian and

▲ Andalusia is the first workforce housing property built in the Santa Ana Harbor Mixed-Use Corridor district and sets the design bar for future residential and commercial development.



▲ The mixed-use Depot at Santiago encompasses 8,500 square feet of retail space designed to be a catalyst for future development of retail and community services within the Santa Ana Transit Zoning district.

one of the architectural and planning firm's leading experts on the design of affordable housing, notes that, "In many ways, affordable housing design can be more challenging than market-rate projects due to the need for higher density at a lower cost. Our goal is to create a distinctive, quality-driven design with the earmarks of a market-rate project but with the cost and construction efficiency of an affordable development like Parc Derian."

Andalucia – A Pioneering Workforce Housing Development

The first workforce housing development in the City of Santa Ana, CA's Harbor Mixed-Use Corridor Plan, Andalucia is a public/private development between the City of Santa Ana, C&C and Orange Housing, and encompasses 70 three-bedroom apartments designed for the needs of larger, growing families. The pioneering workforce housing property underscores the importance that residential development plays in the planning of urban infill districts such as the Harbor Plan.

"The vision of the City of Santa Ana's Harbor Mixed-Use Corridor Plan is for a more livable and sustainable Harbor Boule-

vard corridor created through new housing and mixed-use developments," says Santa Ana Council Member Juan Villegas. "Andalucia represents an important achievement in fulfilling that vision by improving the social and economic fabric of the surrounding neighborhoods and community through the development of a vacant lot into a vibrant, family-oriented housing property."

Andalucia features a 3,195 square-foot community center that houses several multi-purpose rooms including a kitchen, computer lab, and lounge area. The community center provides families with a community-oriented environment in which to socialize, learn and play. The urban infill property also encompasses ample outdoor space featuring a tot lot, barbecue pavilion and picnic seating, and includes a combination of surface and tuck-under parking.

"The key in providing such amenities as playgrounds, chess/checker tables, and picnic tables, that will be enjoyed by residents, is to control access to the space," explains Dewan of Bassenian Lagoni. "In several recent communities that we've designed such as Andalucia, these gathering spaces are housed in interior courtyards and access from the street is controlled through

architectural design."

Along with security, Andalucia promotes a healthier environment within the Harbor Plan area as a highly walkable development with a LEED Gold Certification and such components as solar thermal water heating to reduce energy consumption and operating costs. To further enhance its sustainability, the property is landscaped throughout with drought tolerant trees, shrubs, and grass to provide aesthetic value, shade, and aid in water retention.

Although Andalucia is on a tight urban infill location, Adams points out that the site plan creates a strong sense of community within the project boundaries, while also establishing a feeling of openness and connectivity with the surrounding neighborhoods and commercial areas. "Time is a sparse commodity for a lot of people, so there are open and inviting areas specifically designed for gathering both inside and outside the community," adds Dewan. "Being able to visit with neighbors is, we believe, an important feature." **BS**

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