

Pacifica Cohousing



Biography

Project Type: Cohousing
 Project Context: Ex-urban community
 Completion: 2006
 Budget: N/A
 Building Size: 610 - 1460 square feet
 Cost per Square Foot: \$143-\$179 USD

Pacifica Cohousing is a resident managed group of 46 homes divided into 2 neighborhoods on 8 acres in Carrboro, NC. There is an emphasis on community and participation throughout their decision making process.

Context

Carrboro is a mainly residential community consisting of 68% rental housing. The current efforts are towards having a more ownership inclined model, and the trends are indicating more growth in ownership than in rental. Carrboro has a density of 3,753 people per square mile while the median cost per unit of owner occupied housing is \$143,242. The median household income is \$35,273 while the per capita income is \$22,303. Most of the jobs are in Retail and Service industries.

Sustainability

- Site Design Bioretention areas and pond for stormwater management.
- Unpaved overflow parking.
- Street trees every 4-5 spaces in parking lot.
- Solar access provided for all buildings on the south side of building.
- Minimum site lighting to reduce night sky radiation.
- Energy efficient house design.
- At minimum, passive solar design of homes.
- Houses sited on N/S axis.
- Concrete or tile flooring on first floor.
- More windows on south side of house.
- Windows on side of end units.
- Houses designed for modular construction as baseline.
- Covered bicycle storage.
- Bicycle repair area and air compressor.

Affordable Housing

Pacifica is made affordable through density and membership. First, the site is very dense (6 units per acre). This gets as many units possible (allowed by the town of Carrboro) onto the site which in turn gets as much revenue generated from homeowners as possible. This money doesn't go to the profit of a developer, but instead goes to community spaces. There is a community center and playing fields, etc. On the roof of the community center, there is a system of photovoltaic cells that generates enough electricity to sell power back the grid.

Each member is required by the board of directors, who are themselves members elected by other members, to do a certain amount of work or its equivalent for the direct benefit of the community. In this way, the members of the community maintain it and there is no direct cost of keeping a large staff.

