URBAN_Greenscape

An affordable housing project in Englewood, Chicago

Project Description:

Located in the Englewood neighborhood of southern Chicago, Urban_Greenscape is a 50-unit affordable housing project proposal. The project is developed based on an RFP by the City of Chicago to encourage development in Englewood - as a part of the Invest South-West initiative. Although the site is located at the heart of Englewood, with proximity to an Interstate highway, an initial site analysis revealed that the neighborhood severely lacked food security. The nearest supermarkets or grocery stores were far away, and people had to drive to buy their food supply. This situation has been exacerbated in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Apart from being confined to their homes, residents in urban areas are now facing food shortages. Also, with minimal access to open green spaces, working from home has resulted in stressful living conditions. To combat these seemingly un-related issues, the Urban_Greenscape project looks to exploit the productive as well as restorative aspects of green cover in this housing project.

Cultivation of produce within the housing complex – in the form of greenhouses and terrace gardens – gives the residents access to fresh produce throughout the year. Provisions for community gardens and planters in balconies allow for visual relaxation in between the long hours spent at work. The project also aims to create a closed circuit of production-processing-consumption within the housing complex – a potential employment generator. Programmatically, the first-floor amenities include a greenhouse, a café/restaurant, processing, and research facilities, storage space in addition to resident amenities, and community spaces. The residential floors are separated from the public floors by a service floor level. The residential floors themselves consist of a combination in 1, 2, and 3-bedroom apartments. The layout is planned to allow for the privacy of the residents and also to enable combining multiple units to cater to large extended families. A terrace garden/greenhouse is dedicated to the residents of the complex, in addition to the public greenhouse on the first floor.

Formally, the building is oriented to take complete advantage of natural sunlight so that the reliance on artificial lighting is significantly reduced for the green spaces. The two residential wings flank a central atrium. The atrium is dedicated to providing light inside the building and restorative green terraces and work-from-home pods. These pods are spread throughout the atrium. They are meant for residents who need to focus on work but are unable to do so from their residences. The unit itself is designed to allow for maximum sunlight into the living areas. The design has been calibrated for maximum efficiency and also to make provisions for a post-pandemic way of life.

The challenge undertaken in this project has been to incorporate green spaces across scales – small, medium, or large – as integral parts of urban housing design.
SITE LOCATION + ANALYSIS

URBAN GREENSCAPE
Affordable Housing | Urban Agriculture | Englewood, Chicago.

SITE LOCATION + ANALYSIS

RESEARCH FOCUS

THE BIG IDEA

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TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL FLOOR PLAN - 01
No. of Floors = 2 (Levels 2&3)
Per Floor -
3- Bedroom units = 4
1- Bedroom units = 8

TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL FLOOR PLAN - 02
No. of Floors = 3 (Levels 4,5&6)
Per Floor -
2- Bedroom units = 4
1- Bedroom units = 8

TYPICAL UNIT FLOOR PLANS

SECTIONAL DETAIL: UNIT BALCONIES

LEGEND:
1. Planter box with integrated drainage
2. Hydroponics planter
3. Planter suspension system
4. Glass Louvers
5. Glazing
6. Parapet