

PARK COTTAGES – PROJECT NARRATIVE

(A) **ACHIEVING SMART GROWTH:** Housing in Sandpoint is overpriced, low density and tends to serve the 3bd+ market. Park Cottages, nestled on the edge of downtown and adjacent to a beloved neighborhood park, will serve one and two-person households with modest “working” incomes. The project is composed of sixteen compact units in four buildings; each unit with south light. Density is over 19 DU/A. All twelve ground-level units are accessible to those with mobility challenges and have porches and patios. This infill location has full infrastructure in place.

Building orientation contributes to creating community. The north and south buildings become part of the existing neighborhood by fronting on their respective streets with minimal setbacks, 5’ sidewalks and generous porches. The buildings are in scale with nearby homes. On Spruce Street, bulb outs around on-street parking will narrow the roadway. Street trees will grace the parkway. Hickory Street has a 40’ ROW, so the sidewalk is placed onsite, reducing the effective building setback. Special effort has been made to review plans with neighbors; they are generally interested and supportive. Three very large Chestnut trees and 10 white pines have been retained.

The two internal buildings face each other across a formal courtyard. A community barbeque and an entry to the park will be located at the east end of the courtyard. A reduced parking requirement of 1.4 spaces/unit was approved by the city and that parking is located behind and beside buildings. Each building includes bicycle facilities. Internal sidewalks add connectivity.

Jobs at Litehouse, Safeway, Bonner General Hospital, Panhandle Special Needs, the public library and 5 schools are among those within walking distance of the project. A bicycle will easily take its rider to any destination inside the city limits. Public transit is “on call” only; a covered porch adjoining the common area/ laundry facility provides a sheltered waiting area. The automobile can remain parked whether one is working, heading to school or filling the pantry.

(B) **UNIQUE QUALITIES OF PARK COTTAGES:** This project was conceived as one that would showcase smart growth, eco-friendly building and management, and fill an unmet housing need. The property was selected because it is ideally located for these purposes. Buildings are constructed of Rastra (ICF blocks of recycled, ground up Styrofoam in concrete). Interior finishes will include dyed concrete, integrally-colored gypsum plaster and be low toxicity wherever feasible. All building components are well insulated. Heat is supplied by passive solar and an in-floor radiant system powered by high-efficiency natural gas boilers. Landscaping will be based on the permaculture model, with perennial plant communities, low water needs and edible components. Storm water swales will be landscaped with native vegetation rather than mown, fertilized lawn. Occupants will be invited to garden if they choose. Indoors and outdoors, living will be attractive and compact. A commons area in the Spruce St. building will have coin-op laundry facilities, comfortable chairs, tables and an adjoining patio.

(C) **WHY A GROW SMART AWARD:** Park Cottages incorporates both Smart Growth and Eco-friendly principles. These are integral to the concept, chosen location, and design. The housing provided by the project is unique for the Sandpoint area, serves an unmet need and demonstrates that a private developer can invest responsibly and successfully.