

# INFILL HOUSING SOLUTIONS

Leading architects and designers present four cutting-edge concepts for infill applications.

By Larry W. Garnett, AIBD, House Review Lead Designer

**T**his issue kicks off our monthly House Review section, where we ask a group of leading architects and designers to present their best concepts and design solutions to the challenges faced by home builders. This month, our design team presents four infill housing solutions for today's market. The designs featured in the following pages address a number of issues that builders face in infill applications with compact building sites, such as creating open, light-filled plans and first-floor master bedrooms.

Responding to the concern for privacy in high-density environments has resulted in the creation of secluded side courtyards on several of the designs. Particular attention has been paid to the proper proportions, massing, roof forms, and scale of each exterior design.

These considerations — along with the appropriate selection of materials — ensure that, while the designs might not exactly replicate the look of nearby properties, they will be compatible.



## DESIGNER'S ESSAY

The economics of most infill projects require high-density sites. Therefore, one of the most important features of any infill design is the creation of private, yet open outdoor space. This design features a private side yard and porch with views from the living/dining area, kitchen, master bedroom, and upstairs study/bedroom.

The exterior materials utilize durable cement-fiber horizontal and vertical (batt and board) siding, along with metal roofing. The raised front porch and wrought-iron gate leading to the side porch offer views to the neighborhood, while maintaining a sense of privacy.

The first-floor master bedroom provides easy access from the rest of the house, while still maintaining a sense of seclusion. Ten-foot ceilings and 32-inch-wide doors enhance the open design of the first floor. A "drop zone" adjacent to kitchen becomes a functional place to organize daily tasks with dedicated spaces for mail, keys, cell phones, and other items commonly placed on the kitchen counter.

Large windows with transoms along the dining and kitchen areas allow for plenty of natural light and views to the side courtyard. Traffic patterns throughout the first floor provide for functional placement of furniture. The living room arrangement allows generous seating with ideal views of the fireplace and flat-screen TV above, along with great views toward the front yard.

Upstairs, a cozy library loft with built-in bookcases offers the perfect place to read and relax. The third bedroom can easily transform into a private study, game area, or media room. Double French doors open to a covered porch overlooking the side courtyard below. The staircase design features a landing that is separated from the expansive front windows by a railing and open space. This, along with the upper windows on the front and side, creates a distinctive and light-filled focal point of the home. Depending on the lot size and location, a detached garage can easily be placed to the side or rear of the home.



PLAN 30501

## DESIGNER

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## PLAN SIZE

First floor: 1,480 sf  
 Second floor: 600 sf  
 Front porch: 108 sf  
 Side porch: 264 sf  
 Second-floor porch: 112 sf  
 Width: 35 feet  
 Depth: 59 feet, 2 inches



**BELLE/MATTISON 2880**

**ARCHITECT**

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**ARCHITECT'S ESSAY**

Located in an older, existing neighborhood, the goal of Belle/Mattison was to take five existing lots of 50x150 feet and create a lot that would slightly increase the density to attain more units in this desirable neighborhood. The lots were resized and replatted to 35x120 feet, yielding seven total new homes in this infill location.

While preserving a character that existed in the neighborhood, the seven courtyard-entry homes were created utilizing the "front door" to the courtyard as the main entry to the home. A person experiences the courtyard first as they walk through and then into the main door to the home.

The exteriors utilize a reinterpretation of a Spanish eclectic architecture. Clean-lined but filled with character, these homes fit wonderfully into the existing context while providing all of the modern appointments and amenities highly desired in a new home.



THE CLOISTER

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

First floor: 1,853 sf  
Optional second floor (1): 255 sf  
Optional second floor (2): 549 sf



ARCHITECT'S ESSAY

The Cloister features an efficient, livable floor plan with the conveniences of a much larger home. The private study off the family room maintains interaction with the rest of the home while offering privacy when needed. The mudroom includes a large drop zone for a briefcase, keys, etc. The luxurious master suite offers two walk-in closets and a connection from the spa-designed bath to the laundry area for ease of use.

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD HOME SERIES, PC-01A-2

DESIGNER

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PLAN SIZE

First floor: 796 sf  
Second floor: 462 sf  
Width: 22 feet  
Depth: 54 feet, 9 inches  
Ceiling height: 10 feet on first level, 9 feet on second



DESIGNER'S ESSAY

The example illustrated is a fairly typical urban infill lot with alley access. The building nestles to the sidewalk, offering the front porch as a "gift" to the street. The size and form of the building are designed to allow for the creation of meaningful outdoor spaces with room-sized courtyards, food production, runoff collection, and ancillary unit opportunities as top priorities.

The building is from our Traditional Neighborhood Home Series, PC-01A-2. Designed by the cubic inch to celebrate living small, it reveals and utilizes much of the wall and floor framing cavities. Sustainable interior finishes are designed to last and withstand wide temperature and humidity swings (e.g., no sheetrock) to allow for natural ventilation much of the year.

THOUGHTS, FEEDBACK, COMMENTS,  
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