

CELEBRATING WESTERN RED CEDAR ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN







WESTERN RED CEDAR MODERN ARCHITECTURE SERIES  
*the*  
**CEDAR  
BOOK**  
**XVII**

By Nick Mira, Architect,  
Propel Studio

# Foreword

XVII



**T**here is something undeniably special about Western Red Cedar, a warmth and authenticity that few materials can match. In my work as an architect, I have always been drawn to materials that not only serve a functional purpose but also create an emotional connection between people and the spaces they inhabit. Real Cedar does this effortlessly.

To me, cedar with a clear seal reveals the most beautiful hue and grain pattern that any wood can offer. The way it holds its warm, rich amber tones and its ability to age gracefully over time sets it apart from other materials. Cedar's visual texture is unique and organic. Each piece is shaped by nature, and no two planks are ever the same. This variation adds a level of richness and depth that is simply unmatched by synthetic alternatives, which tend to be uniform and predictable. This natural variation reminds us of the world we inhabit and the individual lives we lead.

Beyond aesthetics, cedar reminds us of our own connection to nature. Every board reflects the conditions in which it grew, carrying with it the story of its environment. Whether used in interior finishes, where it brings a tactile warmth, or as exterior siding, where it weathers to a stunning silver-gray, cedar feels alive. The natural oils it contains make it incredibly durable, resisting rot and insects in ways that many synthetic options can't. It stands the test of time, maturing with age, just as we do.

For us at Propel Studio, high-performance design is not just about efficiency or energy savings; it's about creating environments that feel authentic and human. Cedar's timeless qualities make it an ideal choice for achieving that balance. It offers a sense of grounding and rich texture, creating spaces that not only look beautiful but feel connected to the land around us. In a world where technology often separates us from nature, cedar brings us back to the simple, organic forms that resonate with our senses.

This book celebrates cedar in all its forms, exploring why architects continue to choose it as a defining material in high-performance, sustainable design. I hope these pages inspire you to see cedar not just as a building material, but as a reflection of the natural world we inhabit and our place within it.

Nick Mira  
Architect, Propel Studio



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ARCHITECT  
**Dubbeldam Architecture + Design**

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
**Blackwell Structural Engineers**

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
**HLD Muskoka**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**Riley Snelling**

**Guest Cabin**

# Bunkie on the Hill



LOCATION  
**Muskoka, Ontario, Canada**

# 01

**H**ow do you make waves in architecture with a fresh take on the A-frame cabin? Add a split roof twist and clad it in a material that checks all the boxes—sustainability, durability, and natural beauty—and you've got a design that stands out while blending in.

For Bunkie on the Hill, Dubbeldam Architecture + Design chose Western Red Cedar to seamlessly integrate modern architecture with Muskoka's rugged landscape. Its rich tones, organic grain, and





exceptional performance made it the ideal choice for this serene retreat. The result? A 1,000-square-foot cabin that is both visually striking and deeply connected to its natural surroundings.

One of the cabin's most distinctive features is its carefully crafted entryway, located midway along the side façade. A slatted cedar screen establishes a fluid connection with the forest while casting dynamic patterns of light and shadow. This interplay enhances the material's warmth and offers an ever-changing experience as sunlight filters through.



**“Western Red Cedar fosters a connection to nature, evoking warmth and comfort.”**

– Heather Dubbeldam, FRAIC





Inside, the design naturally draws connections between interior spaces and the surrounding environment. Strategic window placement frames forest and lake views, while the cedar-clad ceiling adds organic warmth to the minimalist rooms. These elements work together to create spaces that feel both sheltered and connected to nature.

"Real Cedar's organic beauty echoes the colors and textures of the surrounding landscape," says Dubbeldam. "Its natural wood grain and warm tones create a calming atmosphere that enhances the occupants' well-being, while its durability ensures it will endure for years to come."

Since its completion, Bunkie on the Hill has garnered praise from publications like Wallpaper and ArchDaily, who celebrated its cohesive site integration, dramatic split-gable roof, and modern interpretation of cabin architecture.

Yet, perhaps the most meaningful seal of approval comes from those who matter most – the clients themselves. When asked about their reaction to the cedar-forward design, the architect notes simply, "They loved it!"



## Details

GRADE

**KD Select Knotty &  
KD 'A' clear**

SIZE

**Varies**

FASTENING

**Stainless steel**

FINISH

**Sansin clear natural oil  
matte finish**





ARCHITECT  
**ID Architecture**

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
**Mason Clark Associates**

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
**Voase**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**Andy Haslam**

## Music Venue & Artist Studio

# Fruit



LOCATION  
**East Yorkshire, England, United Kingdom**

# 02

“A faceted Western Red Cedar jewel amongst a sea of historic brick warehouses.” That’s how architect James Lockwood aptly describes this showstopping addition to Hull’s historic Fruit Market quarter, where a once-redundant warehouse has been transformed into a dynamic music venue and creative hub.

The project required a sensitive yet contemporary approach—one that would respect the conservation area’s rich architectural heritage while introducing a bold new element. Western Red Cedar proved to be the ideal material, offering both aesthetic distinction and practical performance.





Acoustic performance was a primary concern, as the expanded venue needed to prevent sound transfer to the surrounding new developments. A super-insulated timber frame structure, clad entirely in Western Red Cedar, enhances both thermal efficiency and soundproofing.

Cedar's rich tonal range, straight grain, excellent workability, dimensional stability, and remarkable natural durability made it a

**“The warm tones and tactile form of Western Red Cedar offer a connection with nature, where there is an absence of green space in an urban area.”**

– James Lockwood, Architect





preferred choice for the complex faceted design. Its weather resistance was also a key factor, ensuring longevity in Hull's coastal climate.

The use of cedar is not limited to the music hall itself but extends across all faceted faces of the rear extension, including the parapet and recessed escape door. To ensure cohesion across the entire scheme, Western Red Cedar was also introduced at high level above the original storefront doors, visually linking the new elements with the existing structure.

Despite initial reservations about introducing timber in a masonry-dominated streetscape, the architect's vision ultimately won support.

"The faceted façade would have been difficult to achieve with masonry and would not have offered the visual contrast with its neighboring buildings," explains Lockwood. "The choice of WRC is both a celebration of natural material and a striking counterpoint that allows its immediate neighbours to shine in their own right."

The result is a distinctive yet contextual intervention—one that showcases the potential of sustainable materials in contemporary urban regeneration.



## Details

GRADE  
**KD 'A' clear**

SIZE  
**1x4  
(converted from metric)**

FASTENING  
**Stainless steel**

FINISH  
**Clear stain**





ARCHITECT  
**Laura Marion**

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
**Anthem Structural Engineers**

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
**Kruse Builders**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**Dan Tullos**  
**for The Scout Guide Boulder**  
**and Ian Warren**

## Family Retreat

# Sleeping Giant Ranch



LOCATION  
**Steamboat Springs, Colorado, USA**

# 03

**F**or architect Laura Marion, this project was deeply personal. "My 'clients' were my own family," she explains. "We were on the hunt for a summer cabin escape and a winter ski house. Somewhere we could have a host of adventures in all seasons, then come home to roost somewhere where we weren't packing into the car to drive home again at night."

That somewhere turned out to be a Sleeping Giant Ranch, a stunning, year-round family cabin nestled into a mountain shoulder in Northwest Colorado. Bordered by wildlife preserve and state park on three sides, the 12-acre property required an approach that





would minimize impact while creating a durable home suited to extreme mountain conditions. It was essential to make design choices and material selections that could withstand the site's climatic conditions and advance the project's environmental aspirations.

"Western Red Cedar checked all of our boxes," Marion explains. "It is a renewable resource that sequesters carbon and has a low embodied carbon footprint. As a biodegradable material, it aligns with sustainable building practices. Cedar's natural durability makes it well-suited for the cold and sometimes severe mountain climate, and with our treatment to allow it to silver, it is low maintenance. Its aesthetic is also suitable for a mountain style, making the outcome cohesive with the surrounding farms and ranches, new and old."

Taking inspiration from early settler barns, Marion developed a pure geometric form clad entirely in vertical Western Red Cedar shiplap. Random-width boards create subtle texture, while a tinted oil finish promotes even silvering over time. Large, barn-like openings are like an agricultural service aisle which frame dramatic views of the Yampa River Valley, where elk, deer and migratory birds move freely across the unchanged landscape.

The home's performance matches its aesthetics. Passive design strategies like deep overhangs and south-facing glazing eliminate the need for air conditioning and dramatically reduce the heating load. A high-efficiency air-to-water heat pump provides in-floor heating. This refined yet elemental structure stands as a modern interpretation of regional building traditions, demonstrating how material choices can advance both sustainability and design excellence.



**“The simple, modern building is enhanced by the interest, range of color and texture of cedar.”**

– Laura Marion, AIA

## Details

GRADE

**KD Select Knotty**

SIZE

**Random widths of 1x8,  
1x6 & 1x4**

FASTENING

**Stainless steel**

FINISH

**Semitransparent stain**

WESTERN RED CEDAR

SUPPLIER

**Wood Source**





ARCHITECT  
**Brett Farrow Architect**

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
**Coastline Engineering**  
– Mike Israel

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
**Brett Farrow Architect**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**Auda & Auda Photography**

## Private Residence **San Dieguito**



LOCATION  
**Encinitas, California, USA**

# 04

**W**hat makes a house feel timeless? Is it the materials, the way it connects to its surroundings, or the way light moves through its spaces? For architect and builder Brett Farrow, AIA, it's all of the above—and the San Dieguito Residence is a testament to that philosophy.

Encinitas, a coastal town just north of San Diego, is defined by its rugged bluffs, sandy beaches, and a climate that invites year-round indoor-outdoor living. The ocean's influence is ever-present—salt air drifts through the hills, golden light shifts throughout the day, and cool breezes roll in like clockwork. Designing for this environment means embracing materials that not only endure but also evolve with time.







With that in mind, Western Red Cedar became a defining element of the home's character. Used for vertical siding, exposed ceilings, and fencing, its warmth and richness play a crucial role in shaping the overall feel of the house.

"I chose Western Red Cedar because it is, to me, the highest quality material that I can use in a project," explains Brett Farrow, AIA, the project's lead architect and general contractor. "Cedar can be stained or left untreated, will last

for generations, and is naturally insect and water resistant. It also brings a warmth and beautiful color to any setting. The way light reflects off of it in natural daylight or at night with uplighting creates a special glow."

As for grades, Farrow deliberately chose knotty cedar, appreciating the way its organic patterns enhance the architectural composition.

**“Western Red Cedar enhanced this project by both its quality and natural warmth – nothing else can do that the same way.”**

– Brett Farrow, Architect



"I actually prefer using Select Knotty," he says. "To me, the knots and wood grain patterns create both interest and communicate a connection to the natural world. I like the imperfections, which are always unique and, to me, allow for a certain meditative daydreaming when looking at it closely or widely on a surface plane. When used in large formats, it becomes a textural field that organizes architectural planes very nicely."

Sustainability was also a key factor in material selection. The home integrates passive solar strategies, energy-efficient systems, and native landscaping, aligning with the homeowners' commitment to environmentally responsible design. Cedar's natural durability, renewability, and climate-fighting properties made it a perfect fit for this vision.

"It feels good knowing that this material is not synthetic, can be regrown, and captures carbon," Farrow says before adding, "Cedar as a material and an exterior finish also sends a message that this home involves craftsmanship."



## Details

GRADE  
**KD Select Knotty**

SIZE  
**1x6**

FASTENING  
**Stainless steel**

FINISH  
**Semitransparent stain**





ARCHITECT  
**Scott Edwards Architecture**

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
**SFA Design Group**

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
**iBuildPDX**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**Andrew Pogue**

**Working Vineyard Home**

# Lone Feather Residence



LOCATION  
**Sheridan, Oregon, USA**

# 05

**S**ituated in the heart of Oregon wine country, Lone Feather Residence is a serene retreat that blends seamlessly into its pastoral surroundings. Perched on a south-facing hillside overlooking rolling vineyards, the home is positioned within the Van Duzer Corridor—a natural passage in the Coast Range Mountains that channels cool, dry ocean winds into the valley. This unique phenomenon shapes the region's winemaking character, and the residence is carefully sited to embrace both the landscape and the lifestyle it supports.

Designed as a quiet refuge for a couple transitioning from corporate life to winemaking, the one-story home is a study in restraint and connection to place. A simple





yet refined composition of wood, glass, and steel, it nestles into the forested hillside, with indoor and outdoor spaces thoughtfully arranged to maximize sweeping views of the valley. The exposed wood and steel structure is deliberately minimal, allowing the surrounding environment to take center stage.

Western Red Cedar establishes a strong connection to the home's Pacific Northwest setting. The exterior is clad entirely in clear-grade cedar with a semitransparent stain, chosen for its durability, ease of maintenance, and ability to age gracefully within the natural landscape.

Reflecting design continuity, some interior walls also feature Western Red Cedar, allowing the material to flow uninterrupted from outside to in. As Rick Berry, Principal at Scott Edwards



**“Western Red Cedar was an important element to connect the house to the site.”**

– Rick Berry, Principal and Lead Designer





Architecture, explains, cedar strengthens the home's continuous dialogue with its surroundings: "Using Western Red Cedar so prominently in the design anchors the home to its Northwest setting, and cedar siding is timeless."

The clients embraced the use of Western Red Cedar from the outset, recognizing it as a natural fit for their vision. Now complete, Lone Feather Residence stands as a quiet, enduring retreat—one that reflects its owners' new chapter while honoring the landscape that inspired it.



## Details

GRADE  
**KD 'A' clear**

SIZE  
**1X4**

FASTENING  
**Stainless steel**

FINISH  
**Semitransparent stain**

WESTERN RED CEDAR  
SUPPLIER  
**International Wood  
Products, LLC**





ARCHITECT  
**Taylor Callaway,  
AIA/First Lamp Architects**

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
**Mike Annee, SE**

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
**Hamor and Naegl**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**Tim Bies Photography**

**Private Residence**

# Lake Tapps Residence



LOCATION  
**Lake Tapps, Washington, USA**

# 06

**P**erched on a steep hillside above Lake Tapps in western Washington, this residence is designed to minimize site impact while maximizing its breathtaking surroundings. Framed by mature evergreens and dramatic rock outcroppings, the home cascades down the slope, creating a seamless dialogue between architecture and nature.

Expansive glazing captures panoramic views of Mt. Rainier, while a shed roof lifts toward the lake, enhancing natural light and openness in the main living spaces. From the street, the structure presents as a single level, while the waterfront façade reveals three stories of uninterrupted connection to the outdoors.





Designed for a close-knit family of five, the home balances functionality and warmth, with purposefully designed spaces that support both daily life and recreation including: a craft room, game room, and an integrated hot tub and negative-edge pool. For the exterior, the clients sought a low-maintenance material that would not only complement the modern design but also provide long-term versatility.

"We chose Western Red Cedar," explains First Lamp principal, Taylor Callaway. "Over time, the material offers flexibility—maintained with stain for a rich, warm tone or left to naturally weather to a silvery-gray patina, all while preserving its protective performance as a siding material."



**“Cedar was selected to soften and warm the modern aesthetic while providing a durable, low-maintenance exterior.”**

– Taylor Callaway, AIA

As for grades, the award-winning architect selected a beautiful tight knot cedar for extra texture and warmth. The cedar was thoughtfully extended into the living room, main stair, and soffits, reinforcing a seamless indoor-outdoor connection and creating a cohesive visual narrative that flows throughout the home.



"Cedar infuses the home with warmth, grounding the modern aesthetic in its natural surroundings - its rich texture and organic tones create a dialogue with the towering trees enveloping the site, seamlessly integrating the architecture into the landscape," says Callaway before adding, "More than just a material choice, cedar serves as an homage to the environment, reinforcing a sense of place and connection to nature."

## Details

GRADE

**KD Select Knotty**

SIZE

**5/4 x 6 shiplap**

FASTENING

**Stainless steel**

FINISH

**Semitransparent stain  
(dark tint)**





ARCHITECT  
**Laura Killam Architecture**

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
**Miskimmin Structural Engineering**

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
**Rising Sun Custom Homes**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**Andrew Latreille**

**Private Residence**

# Writer's Retreat



LOCATION  
**Desolation Sound, British Columbia, Canada**

# 07

**T**ucked into the rugged beauty of a remote off-grid island in the Salish Sea, the 650-square-foot Writer's Retreat by Laura Killam Architecture (LKA) is a masterclass in understated design. A serene sanctuary for focused writing sessions, the Retreat was carefully positioned to capture the shifting quality of light throughout the day, offering a distinct experience from the main family compound below.

It's also a testament to sustainable design. Elevated on pier foundations to minimize site disturbance, the structure lightly touches the landscape, preserving the delicate ecosystem





beneath. Thoughtfully integrating environmental responsibility with architectural intent, the Retreat embraces passive design strategies—deep overhangs for shading, cross-ventilation for cooling, and a well-insulated envelope for warmth.

As a LEED AP, Killam is committed to green building, and materials like Western Red Cedar are central to both her environmental and aesthetic goals. The flexibility of cedar allows her to craft structures that are both resilient and refined, seamlessly blending into their natural surroundings.

For the retreat’s exterior, she selected Real Cedar board-and-batten siding with a subtle grey stain, paired with a cedar shingle roof. This choice allows the cabin to visually recede into the landscape, creating a quiet, organic presence within its coastal setting. She also selected Real Cedar for the louvered outdoor shower screen to provide privacy while maintaining airflow and a seamless connection to the natural surroundings.



**“Cedar brings  
the experience  
of nature inside  
the Retreat.”**

– Laura Killam, AIBC



Inside, clear cedar envelops the walls in every room and was also used for all the built-in millwork and custom furniture, reinforcing a cohesive, immersive material palette. Every detail reflects a thoughtful approach to craftsmanship: the kitchen cabinets, built-in couches, closet doors in the bedroom, shelves in the entry hallway, and bathroom vanity are all crafted from clear cedar.

"Cedar is incredibly rich while being totally simple, natural and understated at the same time," says Killam, who is no stranger to designing with cedar. "I keep going back to cedar for all my projects - it's a material I just love to use."



## Details

GRADE

**Siding - KD Select Knotty  
Paneling - KD 'A' clear**

SIZE

**Siding -1x10 boards,  
1x3 battens,  
Paneling 1x6 fineline T&G**

FASTENING

**Stainless steel**

FINISH

**Siding - Semitransparent  
stain (grey)  
Paneling - none**





ARCHITECT  
**DeForest Architects, pllc**

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
**Evergreen Design Company**

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
**Walter F. Toth Construction**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**John Granen**

**Private Residence**

# Boomerang House



LOCATION  
**Seattle, Washington, USA**

# 08

**T**he Boomerang House is shaped by both site and program. The program consists of a family room anchoring one end, while a multi-purpose studio defines the other. Movement between these two “magnetic poles” encourages interaction, while the bend in the plan orients key spaces toward Mt. Rainier and creates a sense of place and shelter on the water side.

Material choices reinforce this architectural intent. Western Red Cedar, used for both the exterior siding and interior ceilings, establishes continuity throughout the home, seamlessly integrating structure and landscape.





"Whether modern or traditional in style, our work reflects a deep appreciation for scale, texture, and practicality," says architect John DeForest. "In this case, that meant complementing durable concrete floors and steel beams with the warmth and variation of natural cedar."

Cedar's organic range of tones and textures allows the home to settle into its wooded environment, while its use on the ceilings enhances spatial flow and cohesion. The material extends beyond the interior, shaping overhangs and soffits that define the transition between indoor and outdoor spaces. Large sliding glass panels open the home to its surroundings, and cedar's presence across these thresholds reinforces the connection between structure and landscape.



**“We chose cedar for its natural variation and warm, welcoming appearance.”**

– John DeForest, AIA



Designed to evolve with its inhabitants, the Boomerang House is a hallmark of DeForest's innovative approach to creating dynamic, responsive spaces. The residence also demonstrates how a single, thoughtfully applied material can unify complex spatial relationships while supporting both durability and warmth. Here, cedar is not an accent—it is fundamental to the home's sense of place, reinforcing both its architectural clarity and its connection to the environment.



## Details

GRADE  
**KD 'A' clear**

SIZE  
**1x6 fineline T&G**

FASTENING  
**Stainless steel**

FINISH  
**Semitransparent stain**

WESTERN RED CEDAR  
SUPPLIER  
**LS Cedar Co. Inc.**





ARCHITECT  
**Masaki Kato, Aoi Hirose,  
Puddle Inc.**

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
**Ohno Japan**

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
**Shinkenchiku Co., Ltd.**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**Daisuke Shima**

**Private Residence**

# House in Kazakoshi



LOCATION  
**Karuizawa-machi, Kitasaku-gun, Nagano City, Japan**

# 09

In the southern part of Karuizawa, Nagano Prefecture, House in Kazakoshi is a study in restraint and connection to nature. The small, forested site presented a challenge—how to build without disrupting the landscape? Architect Masaki Kato approached the design with a light touch, minimizing tree removal and shaping the house to fit naturally within its surroundings.

The result is a long, single-story structure oriented north-south, with a gabled roof that welcomes in light and air, creating a home that feels both expansive and deeply connected to place.







A defining feature of the house is its modern take on the Engawa—a traditional Japanese space that bridges indoors and outdoors. Kato incorporated three distinct Engawa areas, each enhancing the home's connection to nature in a unique way. "We aimed to create a place that comfortably connects people with nature and people," Kato explains.

Western Red Cedar was essential to achieving this seamless integration. Used as exterior siding in five different widths, its natural warmth allows the house to settle effortlessly into the wooded surroundings.



**“Cedar is a material that becomes more beautiful over the years.”**

– Masaki Kato, Architect



"We chose Western Red Cedar because it is highly durable and weather-resistant, and it's also well-suited to the varied climate of Karuizawa," says Kato. "Its longevity and low maintenance requirements make it an ideal material for enduring use."

In addition to resilience, cedar offers exceptional versatility, with a spectrum of grades and profiles that provide architects with precise control over both aesthetic and functional outcomes. Here, a deliberate variation in siding sizes was employed to enhance the façade's visual interest and establish a composition that is both dynamic and cohesive.

"By using five different widths of rough finish, we were able to emphasize the material's richness while imparting a sense of warmth to the overall appearance," says Kato, adding, "Western Red Cedar creates a natural, inviting presence that harmonizes with the surrounding forest and neighboring houses."



## Details

GRADE  
**KD 'A' clear**

SIZE  
**1x2 thru 1x6**

FASTENING  
**Stainless steel**

FINISH  
**Semitransparent stain  
(blue)**

WESTERN RED CEDAR  
SUPPLIER  
**Takahiro  
Lumber Co., Ltd.**





ARCHITECT  
**MacCracken Robinson  
Architects**

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
**L Wong Engineering**

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
**Welling Construction**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**Adam Potts**

Private Residence

# Arboreal House



LOCATION  
**Tahoma, California, USA**

# 10

**T**he Arboreal House isn't just built in the forest—it's built with the forest. Nestled among the evergreens along Lake Tahoe's western shore, this residence was conceived as a seamless integration of architecture and landscape, responding to both the region's stringent environmental regulations and its demanding alpine climate.

Height and massing restrictions, tree retention requirements, and significant snow loads informed the design, ensuring the home harmonizes with its surroundings rather than imposing upon them. Expansive glazing and carefully framed views establish a constant dialogue between interior and exterior, reinforcing the primacy of place.





The clients, longtime patrons of MacCracken Robinson Architects, envisioned a retreat where their family could convene, work remotely, and immerse themselves in the natural environment. The architectural response balances openness with structural clarity, employing an exposed steel framework—an unexpected yet essential strategy for addressing Sierra Nevada’s extreme snow loads while allowing for expansive spatial volumes.

Material selection was paramount in achieving this synthesis between built form and natural context. The design required a cladding material that could both complement the alpine setting and withstand the region’s climatic challenges.

“We chose Western Red Cedar mainly for the aesthetics and how it relates to the environment in which the project is located,” says Daniel Robinson, principal at MacCracken Robinson Architects, before adding, “Its inherent resistance to decay, rot and insects are wonderful bonuses.”



Western Red Cedar wraps the exterior and extends across the overhead planes, reinforcing a continuous material language and an immersive connection to the forest beyond. A subtle grey-tinted stain allows the wood to weather gracefully while maintaining its rich tonal range. What emerges is a residence that feels both grounded and open—fortified against the elements yet visually and experientially permeable.

**“Cedar offers a beautiful, warm and durable exterior skin to the solid elements of the building while providing balance to its transparency.”**

– Steve MacCracken, Architect





For the architects, this choice in wood represents a thoughtful continuation of their material philosophy rather than an experimental departure. "We have specified Western Red Cedar on several projects in California with excellent results," notes the award-winning architect. "It is a beautiful natural material that intrinsically connects structure to site."

## Details

GRADE  
**KD 'A' clear**

SIZE  
**1x6 & 1x8 T&G**

FASTENING  
**Stainless steel**

FINISH  
**Semitransparent stain  
(grey)**





ARCHITECT  
**Wittman Estes**

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
**Josh Welch Engineering**

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
**Sparrow Woodworks**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**Andrew Pogue**

**Private Residence**

# Whidbey Puzzle Prefab



LOCATION  
**Whidbey Island, Washington, USA**

# 11

**P**refab homes are often perceived as rigid, standardized, and disengaged from their surroundings—but Whidbey Puzzle Prefab challenges that notion entirely. Situated on a forested site overlooking Puget Sound, this pilot project reimagines modular construction as a system that responds to its surroundings rather than imposing upon them.

"While most prefab houses are divorced from context, Puzzle Prefab can be crafted according to each site, reconfigurable for





an infinite variety of shapes and arrangements,” explains lead architect Matt Wittman. “The architecture essentially weaves into the environment.”

In pursuit of a light ecological footprint, the structure was prefabricated off-site and assembled on pin foundations, eliminating the need for extensive excavation and preserving the site’s natural drainage patterns and wildlife migration routes.

The result is a weekend retreat for a Seattle-based family that dissolves the threshold between indoors and out. A 600-square-foot core of heated living space seamlessly extends into 557 square feet of covered outdoor areas, achieving a near 1:1 ratio of enclosed and open-air environments. Expansive glazing, interlocking decks, and deep roof overhangs blur the boundaries between shelter and landscape, immersing inhabitants in nature year-round.



**“Cedar has a grain and color way that is visually warm and has a soft tactile quality.”**

– Matt Wittman, AIA



At the heart of this adaptive design strategy is Western Red Cedar—one of nature’s most versatile building materials. Just as the Puzzle Prefab system is designed to flex and respond to different sites, cedar’s inherent adaptability makes it an ideal complement. It’s also naturally resistant to rot, decay, and insects, making it perfectly suited for outdoor applications in all types of climates.





For this project, variable widths of Real Cedar siding were selected to echo the diversity of tree trunks in the surrounding forest, while clear tongue-and-groove cedar ceilings and soffits enrich the interiors with warmth and texture. Cedar decking extends the living space outward, further dissolving distinctions between built form and landscape.

“Having cedar as the primary interior and exterior material made the building feel rooted in its location,” notes Wittman. “Its rich, warm tonal range strengthens the home’s connection to nature, making it feel like an organic extension of the forested area.”



## Details

GRADE

**Siding - KD Select Knotty  
Ceiling & soffits - KD ‘A’  
clear  
Decking - Architect  
Knotty**

SIZE

**Siding - varied T&G  
Ceiling & soffits - 1x4  
T&G  
Decking - 2x6**

FASTENING

**Stainless steel**

FINISH

**Siding, ceiling & soffit -  
Transparent stain  
Decking - none**

WESTERN RED CEDAR

SUPPLIER

**Terminal Forest Products**





ARCHITECT  
**Propel Studio**

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
**Michael Nouwens**  
**Structural Consultants**

GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
**Colvos Construction**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**Rafael Soldi Photography**

**Mixed-Use**

# The Wilder Apartments



LOCATION  
**Capitol Hill, Seattle, USA**

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Capitol Hill in Seattle is a vibrant, eclectic neighborhood known for its artistic energy, historic charm, and stunning views of Puget Sound and the Cascade Mountains. Building here presents unique challenges—from hilly terrain to strict zoning regulations—but it also provides opportunities to create spaces that reflect the community's deep appreciation for sustainability and thoughtful urban design.

Enter the Wilder. Revolve Development sought to transform an underutilized site into a modern, community-oriented housing project that blended clean, contemporary lines with natural materials. To bring this vision to life,





they hired Propel Studio Architecture, a firm known for its thoughtful, sustainable design approach.

Naturally, Western Red Cedar was the ideal choice for this dynamic mixed-use development—its warmth, durability, and environmental resilience aligning seamlessly with both the design intent and Seattle's climate. The standout feature is a striking Real Cedar rainscreen veneer that defines the building's façade, complemented by metal trim.

Cedar also extends to the commercial canopy's underside, landscape fencing, and interior trim in the lobby and lounge spaces, reinforcing a seamless indoor-outdoor connection.

"Western Red Cedar added warmth and a connection to nature, enhancing the building's inviting atmosphere," says Nick Mira, lead architect at Propel Studio. "Its organic texture aligns with biophilic design principles, fostering a sense of well-being and grounding the modern design in natural elements."

Engineered wood also played a key role, with exposed exterior timber framing and decking extending into the courtyard. "The combination of Real Cedar, engineered



**“Western Red Cedar was chosen for its beauty, sustainability, and durability.”**

– Nick Mira, Architect







## Details

GRADE

**KD Select Knotty**

SIZE

**1x6 square edge boards,  
open joint**

FASTENING

**Stainless steel**

FINISH

**Semitransparent stain**

WESTERN RED CEDAR

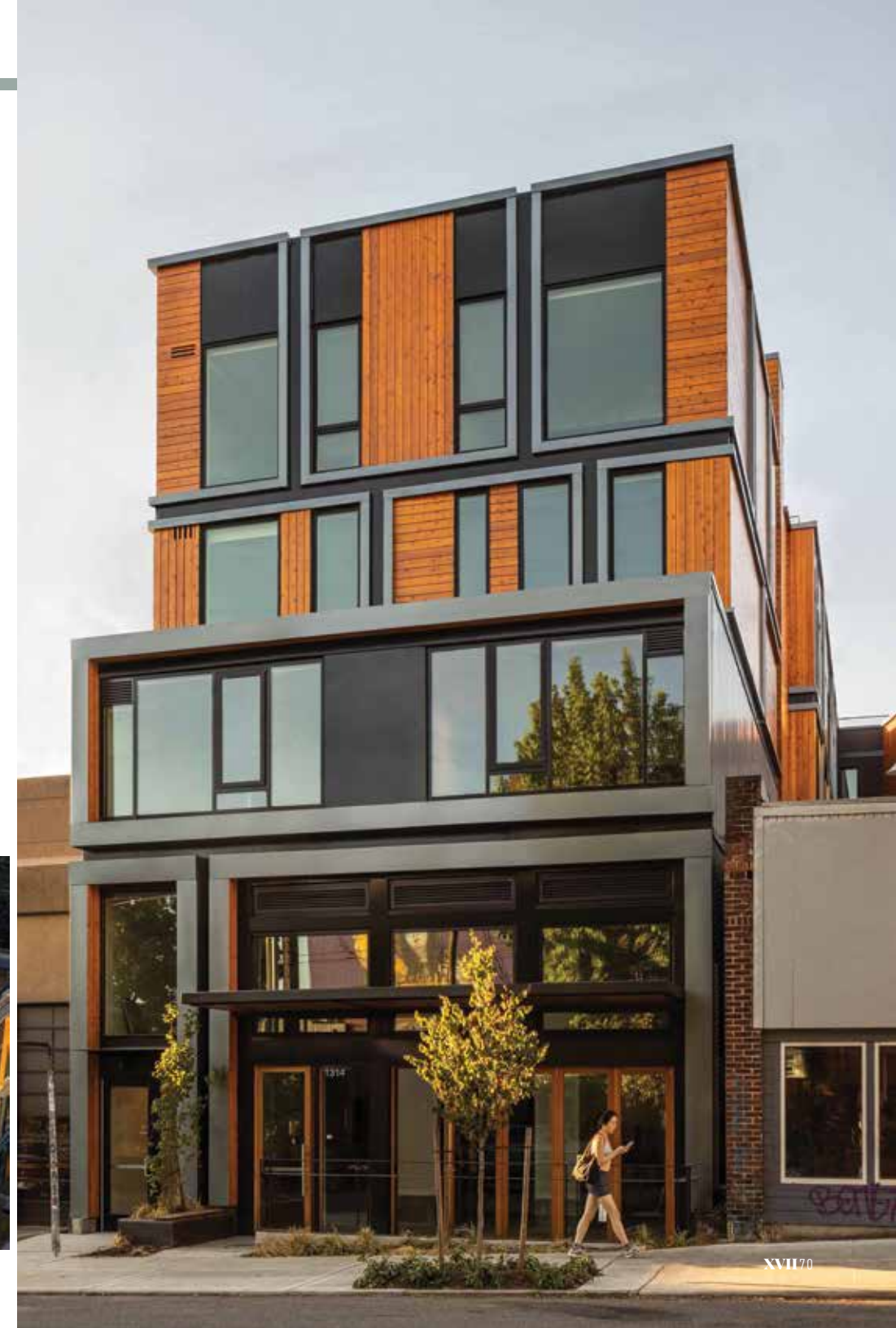
SUPPLIER

**LS Cedar Co. Inc.**

wood, and glulam beams enhances both aesthetics and structural integrity, creating a modern yet organic feel that ties the project together," says Mira.

And, as Mira points out, it's a material palette that will continue honoring the area's artistry roots, while enhancing the building's organic aesthetic for years to come.

"As cedar ages, it will further enrich the design, making it a lasting focal point and a conversation piece in the neighborhood."





Western Red Cedar  
Lumber Association

# About Us

# XVII

**T**he 17th volume of the Cedar Book profiles stunning and award-winning architecture from inspired designers around the world. These architects continue a tradition that started centuries ago when the Indigenous Peoples of the Pacific Northwest recognized the value of using this unique wood species.

First Nations people recognized Western Red Cedar's natural durability, stability, versatility and beauty, making it the preferred choice for building ocean-going canoes, ceremonial dance masks, totems, basketry, clothing and post-and-beam houses and lodges. Today's discerning architects and builders enhance their projects with this stunning, versatile and sustainable building material.

Nature still knows best. Despite all efforts at imitation, no man-made product can match the beauty, performance and longevity of Western Red Cedar— something this book, as well as the RealCedar.com online gallery, undoubtedly illustrates.

Western Red Cedar is one of nature's truly remarkable materials. It absorbs and stores carbon, generates less water, air pollution and requires less energy to produce than alternatives. And it comes from a renewable and sustainable resource.

By choosing products with a light carbon footprint and by reducing waste, we can have a real impact on climate change now, and into the future. As part of their commitment to transparency, the Western Red Cedar Lumber Association has Environmental Product Declarations available for siding, decking and other products. We hope this book inspires you to consider Western Red Cedar for siding, paneling, trim boards, decking, fencing, soffit and outdoor structures on your next project.

Photo credit: Andrew Snow





# For Architects Resources

## Innovative tools to keep you on the leading edge of sustainable architecture and wood design

Founded in 1954, the Western Red Cedar Lumber Association (WRCLA) is a non-profit organization that represents reputable producers of quality cedar. As the voice of the cedar industry, our mandate is twofold. The first is to promote the many virtues of Real Cedar.

The second is to educate, support and equip architects with the right tools to meet their environmental and design goals. Actually, if truth be told, our mission is to help you surpass client expectations with every project you design and build.

With that in mind, we're thrilled to announce we recently opened our membership doors to architects. This way, we can better facilitate your architectural needs and help keep you on the leading edge of innovative and sustainable wood design.

And if you're an architect looking to grow your business, becoming a member means greater reach to potential clients. As a member, your firm will be listed on [realcedar.com](http://realcedar.com) (1,300,000 visitors per year). Your member profile will also include a direct link to your website, putting more eyes on your portfolio.

As well as enhancing your lead generation strategy, you'll also have a direct line to the WRCLA field reps who can offer technical and logistical expertise with our architect advisory services.

### 1. Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

As part of the WRCLA's ongoing continuing education program, every year we produce new CEUs via *Architectural Record* and/or *Architect magazine*. These AIA-accredited courses are free for design and construction professionals looking to enhance their expertise and earn learning units.

Covering a wide range of timely architectural topics, our extensive library is there to help you broaden your knowledge of wood design and meet your licensing requirements. Simply select the CEU of your choice, read the designated article and answer test questions at the end to receive certification.

### 2. Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs)

Whether it's a community project with multiple stakeholders, a commercial development or single family dwelling, chances are your next architectural brief is going to include rigorous environmental requirements. This presents an exciting

challenge for builders and designers - a chance to mitigate the impact of new builds on the planet.

In addition to innovative design, meeting these goals requires certified sustainable building materials. Products purporting to be "green" without the science to back-up will not do. Savvy eco-minded clients and local regulators for environmental compliance often require independent research to quantify eco claims.

At WRCLA, we take pride in our commitment to sustainable architecture. That's why we commission and regularly update our 3rd party Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) for our siding, decking and lumber products.

In accordance with the International Organization for Standardization, every aspect of our products' impact on the environment is measured and compared to similar products using the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) method. The results? From production to construction to end-of-life, Real Cedar is one of, if not, the greenest building materials you can choose. And these EPDs provide comprehensive, irrefutable proof of that statement, so you and your clients can make the most informed decisions.

### 3. ARCAT - Architectural info at your fingertips

Specifying building products for your next project just got a little easier. That's because free, downloadable Real Cedar specs for Western Red Cedar siding and trim are now available on ARCAT.

The WRCLA proudly provides this customized online service to streamline your proposal, design and installation processes. ARCAT's platform provides, among other things, visual concepts with exacting measurements. These digital documents can then be used to optimize in-house communications with your firm as well as simplify and enhance client interface.

Quoting clients, calculating coverage and ordering Real Cedar products for all your projects is more efficient with ARCAT - be it detailed interior work on a renovation job or mass cladding on a new multi-family housing development.

### 4. Training & Seminars

Enhance your expertise and earn licensing credentials with a Real Cedar seminar. Our Real Cedar specialists offer these AIA-accredited training sessions online and in-person. It's an opportunity for you and your team to earn Learning Unit Credits while increasing your knowledge of wood products in general and particularly with Western Red Cedar.

Seminars can be customized according to your level of knowledge and learning objectives. Our experts offer a wide scope of subjects including the latest in green building innovation and creating biophilic spaces using Real Cedar.

They also offer very practical overviews for achieving a variety of desired looks with cedar - key areas here include choosing patterns and profiles to create specific types of texture and shadowing as well as best practices for siding installation, finishing and maintenance.

In turn, you'll be in a better position to provide your clients with the best advice on incorporating this unique and remarkable species in their project.

Visit our resource page to learn more about our tools: [www.realcedar.com/architect-tools/](http://www.realcedar.com/architect-tools/)





Western Red Cedar  
Lumber Association

Credits

XVII

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Need help selecting, specifying or sourcing the right Western Red Cedar products?  
Contact the Western Red Cedar Lumber Association and we will be glad to assist.  
[realcedar.com](http://realcedar.com)

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