

# 2023 AIA | DC CHAPTER DESIGN AWARDS

## Project Title:

The Brooks Short-Term  
Family Housing

## Location:

Washington, DC

## Date of Completion:

October 12, 2019

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**Would you like this project to be considered for a Jury Citation in any of the following categories?**

- Integration
- Equitable Communities
- Ecosystems
- Water
- Economy
- Energy
- Well-being
- Resources
- Change
- Discovery

## Project Statement (150 words max):

As part of a citywide initiative to provide short-term housing throughout the city, The Brooks living environment is one of eight facilities in the District offering families a safe place to transition as they find more permanent housing. The long, narrow 4.6-acre site is adjacent to a beloved community garden and addresses community concerns by including additional outdoor amenity space. The Brooks provides 50 family units, offices, a computer lab, medical clinic, dining hall, multipurpose room, and outdoor play spaces. Using vibrant colors and warm, inviting surfaces, the project creates a modern long-term family hotel-style atmosphere. Careful consideration is given to providing private areas for families as well as group gathering spaces to create supportive communities.

## Design Narrative: How does this project address Design for Integration, Wellbeing, and Discovery? (150 words max)

The Brooks conveys a level of sophistication standing among its refined neighboring homes. It is a project that is envisioned as a home environment, where residents are afforded the chance to get back on their feet in a setting that is anything but institutional.

Residents are welcomed with an open, landscaped walkway leading to a glass entryway that integrates into the fabric of the neighborhood street, and a brightly lit lobby that feels like home. On the ground level, the community dining room offers healthy food options with daylight and views overlooking a large, planted area that doubles as a stormwater management basin, and an outdoor deck that reaches over this natural amenity. Nature is integrated via exterior views with the ability to maintain privacy. This rear outdoor gathering space provides a space of mental wellbeing for adults and discovery and delight for young residents.

## Community Engagement: How does this project address Design for Equitable Communities and Economy? (150 words max)

The Brooks has had a profound effect on the surrounding neighborhood since its opening. While some neighbors initially expressed concerns about the project, it has become a place in this area where many neighbors now feel more in touch with their city, engendering greater compassion for those that just need a few breaks to go their way.

As the neighbors came to understand the mission of the short-term family housing program throughout the District, they welcomed the residents of The Brooks as proud residents of this great City, who work and live and raise their children just like any other DC residents would. The Brooks has become a bridge between Washingtonians who might have otherwise not crossed each other's paths.

## Sustainability and Resilience: How does this project address Design for Ecosystems, Water, Energy, Resources, and Change? (150 words max)

The Brooks addresses sustainability through holistic strategies to increase the project's resilience. Stormwater is a critical issue as runoff negatively impacts the fragile Chesapeake Bay ecosystem. 4,260 square feet of vegetated roofing maintains over 76% of the lot's permeability with native plant species managing stormwater for the 98th percentile storm event on site. Low-flow fixtures inside the building coupled with the native landscaping reduce total water consumption by nearly 40% from baseline. The Brooks' high-performance envelope and mechanical systems are anticipated to reduce annual energy costs over 18% compared to the ASHRAE90.1-2010 baseline.

Materials selected prioritize durability to ensure long-lasting construction. Water-resistant flooring installed in moisture prone areas limit particulates carried into the building and improve air quality. Locally produced aggregate concrete support local supply chains and metal framing included significant recycled content to reduce environmental impacts. Less than 8 pounds of construction waste per gross square foot was produced.



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*The Brooks is a project that is envisioned as a home environment, where residents are afforded the chance to get back on their feet in a setting that is anything but institutional. Nature is integrated via exterior views with the ability to maintain privacy in a rear outdoor gathering space, providing a space of mental wellbeing for adults and discovery and delight for young residents.*







*The Brooks has become a place where neighbors now feel more in touch with their city. As the neighborhood came to understand the mission of the short-term family housing program throughout the District, they welcomed those living at The Brooks as proud residents of this great city, who work and live and raise their children here just as they do.*









Site / Landscape Plantings Plan



Select Concept Sketches



West Elevation



First Floor Plan



Typical Floor Plan Showing Family Units



*Each floor within the multi-family housing complex follows a color theme so that residents can orient themselves in the building. Community lounges provide spaces outside of individual units to connect with one another, provide play and learning spaces for children, and areas of respite for parents.*





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