

MASSTAC
Washington Mass Timber Accelerator

Skyscraper

MASS TIMBER HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES —
UTILIZING LOCAL RESOURCES TO DELIVER HOUSING AT ALL SCALES

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This book series reflects the deep commitment and innovation of organizations dedicated to developing projects with mass timber across different typologies. We would like to thank the MASSTAC Housing Committee members and individuals for their participation and support.

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The Washington Mass Timber Accelerator would like to express its gratitude for the generous funding provided by the Washington State Department of Commerce, which has enabled Washington's design, construction, and manufacturing industries to show the nation how we might sustainably address our housing crisis, at all scales, and across rural and urban landscapes.



About the Washington Mass Timber Accelerator

The Washington Mass Timber Accelerator (MASSTAC) is a non-profit organization working to advance high quality, low-carbon construction through increased utilization of locally manufactured mass timber. With representation from Indigenous communities, government agencies, private industry, labor organizations, and forestry, we are the central hub of mass timber activity in the State of Washington.

Our Mission

To sustainably and equitably accelerate the adoption of mass timber in construction, in Washington and nationally.

Our Vision

Locally manufactured mass timber is driving cleaner, faster, safer construction and healthier, more beautiful buildings in Washington and beyond.

We envision a future where mass timber is not only a standard in construction but also a catalyst for economic growth, community development, and environmental stewardship. Where sustainable mass timber buildings provide healthy and inspired environments for living, working, learning, playing, and healing. Where reciprocal relationships between cities and forests, urban and rural communities, support social, environmental, and economic well-being for our region.

Our Funders

Seed funding for MASSTAC was provided by the City of Seattle Office of Economic Development, and the Washington State Department of Commerce.

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Foreword

Rico Quirindongo

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF PLANNING
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From Vancouver, British Columbia to Portland, Oregon, Seattle, Washington and the Olympic Peninsula, the Pacific Northwest has deep roots in the timber industry. Timber production in the state of Washington has not only shaped our cities but has also been pivotal in defining the region's economic trajectory. The state's forests, particularly in the Olympic Peninsula and the Cascade Range, have long been a rich source of timber, which fueled the state's development into one of the nation's most prosperous regions.

And so, the timber industry in Washington was not just about extracting resources, it was about transformation. The rise of the timber industry put Washington on the map and contributed significantly to the establishment of the Pacific Northwest as an industrial hub during the early 20th century. Cities like Seattle grew rapidly due to the vast timber resources of the region. The iconic sawmills and logging camps that dotted the Puget Sound provided raw materials for much of the nation's infrastructure and built the foundation of the Pacific Northwest economy. Washington's timber industry, along with its proximity to the Pacific Ocean, also played a key role in the development of ports and transportation networks, which allowed timber products to be exported globally. The growth of the railroads, shipyards, and other transportation networks followed in the wake of intensive timber harvesting, creating a powerful industrial economy. As Seattle and the surrounding areas became the epicenter of timber production, the state's economy flourished. For decades, timber was the cornerstone of the region's prosperity.

However, as the world has grown more environmentally conscious in the last several decades, the traditional timber industry has faced many challenges. Unsustainable logging practices and deforestation concerns prompted a call for a different approach to the work. Today, the demand for timber remains

strong, and we are moving into a more sustainable relationship with the forests. Simultaneously, we are recognizing the power of wood to be used as a substitute for energy intensive and carbon-emitting structural materials.

This is where the new frontier of mass timber comes into play. Today, we find ourselves at a crossroads where the timber industry, once defined by traditional methods, is evolving into something even more revolutionary with the development of cross-laminated timber (CLT). Utilizing products such as CLT, mass timber construction is not just reshaping construction, but paving the way for a more sustainable, carbon-neutral future while creating jobs, spurring economic growth, and supporting the state's industrial and architectural innovations.

CLT is an engineered wood product that has been hailed as a breakthrough in sustainable building, offering a new way to utilize the region's rich forest resources while dramatically reducing carbon emissions from traditional construction. A shift to mass timber is critical for Washington's ambitious goals of achieving carbon neutrality in the coming decades.

Mass timber is not just a material; it represents a new vision for the state's future, combining the historical legacy of timber production with cutting-edge innovations in architecture and construction. As a renewable resource, mass timber is part of the solution to reducing the carbon footprint of our built environment. When sourced and produced sustainably, mass timber buildings can sequester carbon, locking away greenhouse gases that would otherwise contribute to climate change.

The Canyons, LSW Architects
Photo: © Marcus Kauffman Photography

“ Utilizing products such as CLT, mass timber construction is not just reshaping construction, but paving the way for a more sustainable, carbon-neutral future while creating jobs, spurring economic growth, and supporting the state's industrial and architectural innovations. ”



The production of mass timber also uses far less energy than traditional construction materials like concrete and steel, making it a key component in Washington's transition to a carbon-neutral economy.

Beyond its environmental benefits, mass timber has the potential to invigorate the state's economy and provide a pathway to future job growth. From blue-collar construction industry jobs in the assembly and erection of mass timber buildings to white-collar jobs in architectural design and engineering of carbon-neutral buildings, the industry holds tremendous promise for diverse job creation. The growth of mass timber manufacturing could revitalize rural communities in the state's timber-producing regions, such as the Olympic Peninsula, creating opportunities for local manufacturing across the region. Investment in the development of mass timber production facilities and the necessary infrastructure to support the industry is critical to the state's economic future.

This investment will also help foster innovation in construction techniques. The ability to build mass timber skyscrapers, residential buildings, and even single-family homes represents a new era for the construction industry. For Seattle and its neighboring cities, mass timber offers a more efficient, sustainable way to build for the growing population. It opens new possibilities for housing production, from small accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to large-scale transit-oriented development (TOD) projects. Mass timber allows for faster construction timelines, which is essential in addressing the housing crisis that many cities across the U.S. are currently facing. Whether for mid-rise apartment buildings in Seattle or sustainable affordable housing projects in rural communities, mass timber provides a scalable solution that can meet the housing demands for urban and rural communities across the region.

What's more, the integration of mass timber into the design and construction of tall buildings, including mass timber towers, is breaking new ground in architectural design. Washington, a region known for its innovative architectural firms and design-driven approach to construction, is poised to lead this charge.

Mass timber provides a unique material aesthetic, warmth, and versatility that cannot be replicated with traditional construction materials. As architects and builders increasingly turn to mass timber, Washington could position itself at the forefront of a global movement toward sustainable building practices.

Investing in mass timber represents a chance to honor the region's timber roots while propelling the state toward a more sustainable, carbon-neutral future. Washington's timber industry has always been a powerful economic engine, and the mass timber sector offers the potential to continue that legacy while aligning with a green energy and materials strategy and a carbon neutral future. Supporting the emerging mass timber industry will strengthen our economy, reduce global carbon emissions, create green jobs, and improve the quality of life for residents in both urban and rural communities. Mass timber is part of the sustainable future that I want to see for myself, my family, and the diverse communities of which we are all a part.

This book outlines a vision for how we can invest in and see a sustainable vision forward, one that leans into our housing needs for the state and the region.

I am grateful to the leadership and investments of Washington Governor Bob Ferguson, Policy Director Sahar Fathi, Housing Senior Policy Advisor Nicholas Carr, City of Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell, Office of Economic Development Director Markham McIntyre, Manufacturing and Maritime Strategic Advisor John Persak, and Washington Mass Timber Accelerator Executive Director Erica Spiritos. Their vision, their efforts, and their commitment in partnership with state, city, and industry leadership makes me hopeful for our collective future.



The Canyons, LSW Architects
Photo: © Jeremy Bitterman Photography

Introduction

Stronger, Faster, Greener: Mass Timber Housing in Action

The mass timber industry is evolving rapidly, reshaping the way we think about building design and construction. Once a niche material, mass timber has rapidly gained acceptance across the architectural and construction industries, thanks to its remarkable versatility, sustainability, and economic advantages. With advancements in technology and updates to the International Building Code (IBC), including allowances for taller structures currently up to 18 stories, mass timber is poised to transform skylines and communities alike.

Mass timber offers a compelling suite of benefits that make it a smart choice for developers, institutions, and private clients alike:

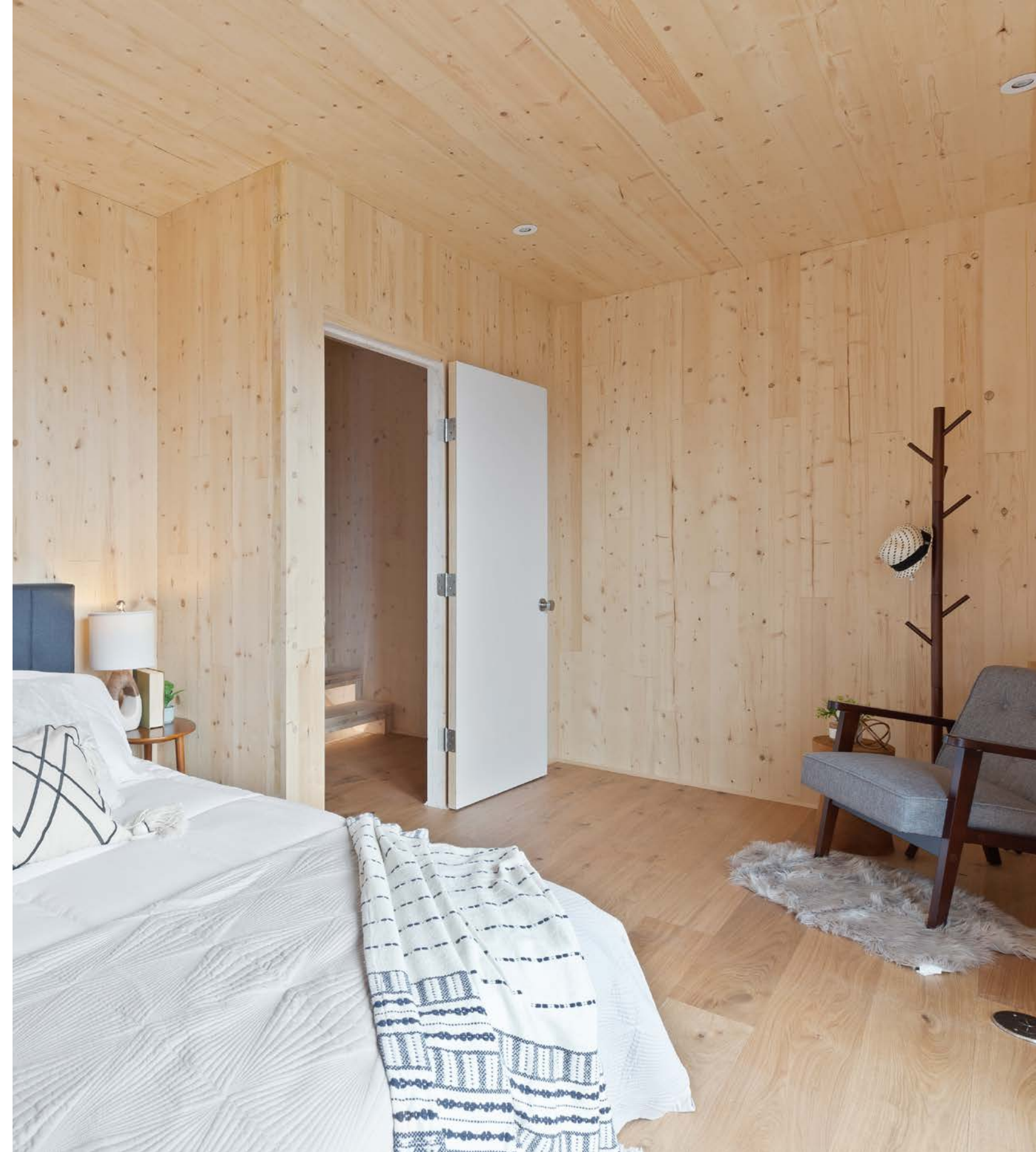
- **Revenue Generation:** Mass timber buildings offer opportunities for increased density, faster speed to market, and enhanced leasing velocity due to the beauty of exposed wood.
- **Streamlined Construction:** Harnessing the potential of prefabrication to reduce construction timelines, mass timber buildings are erected quickly, quietly, and with minimal waste generated on-site.
- **Carbon Reduction:** A renewable material sourced from sustainably managed forests, mass timber reduces reliance on high-carbon materials and stores carbon throughout its lifecycle.
- **Building Performance:** Mass timber buildings offer durability, thermal comfort with energy efficiency, fire-resistance, and higher indoor air quality due to a reduced reliance on finish materials.

- **Health and Wellness:** Mass timber buildings enhance occupant well-being by fostering connections to natural materials. Research links such environments to improved cognitive function, reduced stress levels, and overall psychological benefits.

The state of Washington has emerged as a leader in this movement, with forward-thinking policies that enable mass timber's use in taller buildings. However, broader adoption will require continued collaboration among architects, developers, policymakers, and builders as we co-create a better way to build.

This Mass Timber Housing look book celebrates the vast potential of mass timber in housing projects throughout the Pacific Northwest, showcasing examples across categories such as modular and custom single-family homes, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), cluster housing, townhome, low-rise and mid-rise developments, tall timber housing, and skyscrapers. These projects — both built and unbuilt — demonstrate the material's adaptability and its ability to meet diverse housing needs. While the focus is on Washington State, the lessons and inspiration drawn from these projects resonate across North America and beyond. The projects in this look book demonstrate what is possible.

The next step is yours.



CLT Townhome Building Kit, Green Canopy Node
Photo: © Inside Spokane Photography

Meet Washington's Mass Timber Manufacturers

Cascade Joinery • Bellingham, WA

FABRICATOR



For 33 years, Cascade Joinery has been crafting timberwork for high-end, commercial, residential, and municipal buildings, in a vast range of architectural styles. Today, we're one of the Northwest's leading producers of structural and decorative crafted timberwork, providing creative solutions to complex structural challenges. We believe in Mass Timber, and we're devoted to, and passionate about, delivering on it. From design-phase consultation to fabrication and on-site installation, we're by your side to manifest the most ambitious Mass Timber projects.

For more information, contact: Allen Stoltzfus, Sales Engineer
allen@cascadejoinery.com • cascadejoinery.com

Composite Recycling Technology Center (CRTC)

MASS TIMBER PANELS (CLT)



The CRTC Building Innovation Center was established to provide mass timber-based housing solutions to rapidly deployable military housing, emphasizing durability and protection. With access to vast stands of rapidly growing coastal western hemlock on the Olympic Peninsula, CRTC-BIC is the first entity worldwide to utilize thermal modification to stabilize and enable this underutilized species in CLT. ACLT - Advanced Cross Laminated Timber, is a CLT product that uses thermal modification (TM) of the lamstock in place of kiln-dried lumber. The TM process imparts improved dimensional stability as well as increased resistance to mold and mildew attack. Sourcing our primary lumber supply from the Makah Tribe, we have expanded to provide tribal and other affordable single-family modular detached homes.

For more information, contact: Glenn Ellis Jr, Housing Business Manager
(505) 274-9198 • gellis@crtc-wa.org • compositerecycling.org

Green Canopy Node • Seattle, WA

PREFABRICATED MASS TIMBER HOUSING



Green Canopy NODE builds sustainable housing using offsite and traditional methods. We service developers in Washington and Oregon to acquire, plan, and construct their low rise multifamily and multi-unit projects. We innovate construction methods and components to increase cost control, reduce timelines, and improve sustainability. Green Canopy NODE offers a catalog of mass timber modular houses, townhomes, and apartments that are pre-designed and customizable to deliver carbon negative housing for developers and neighborhoods.

For more information, visit: greencanopynode.com



Mercer Mass Timber • Spokane Valley, WA

COMPLETE MASS TIMBER STRUCTURES

As a global mass timber manufacturer with operations in Washington, we provide high-performance prefabricated solutions for residential construction at all scales. Our vertically integrated approach—combining digital design, off-site manufacturing, and construction services—reduces project risk, accelerates schedules, minimizes site disruption, and enhances energy performance. From modular homes to mid- and high-rise developments, we enable sustainable, innovative, and resilient housing solutions.

For more information, contact: clt@mercerint.com • mercermasstimber.com

Tieton Cabin Co. • Tieton, WA

PREFABRICATED MASS TIMBER HOUSING



Tieton Cabin Company, located in Tieton, WA, builds ready-made, thoughtfully designed one and two bedroom small homes optimized for versatile functionality as guest accommodations, income properties, or personal retreats. Robustly built with Cross Laminated Timber, Rockwool installation, steel frames and premium fixtures for energy efficiency, durability and performance, their elegant simplicity offers modern, timeless warmth with essential features. IBC compliant and WA State L&I certified, these homes arrive complete and install in one day with minimal disruption, ready for immediate use.

For more information, contact: Alex Mondau, Director of Strategy • 509-673-1030
alex@tietoncabinco.com • tietoncabinco.com

Vaagen Timbers • Colville, WA

COMPLETE MASS TIMBER STRUCTURES



Vaagen Timbers is a leader in sustainable mass timber manufacturing, transforming small-diameter logs from forest restoration into premium glulam and cross-laminated timber (CLT) products. By sourcing wood from within 100 miles of their Colville, WA (USA) facility, they reduce emissions and support local economies. Their precision-engineered glulam beams offer exceptional strength and beauty, meeting stringent ANSI/APA standards. Choosing Vaagen Timbers means investing in resilient, low-carbon buildings while actively contributing to healthier forests and wildfire prevention. From Forest to Frame — with purpose.

For more information, contact: Joel D. Rohrs, Executive Vice President
(206) 708-3260 • vaagentimbers.com

Mass Timber in Washington

Manufacturers Map

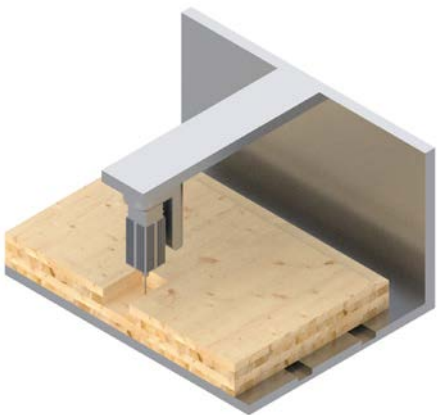


Mass Timber Products

||| Glue Laminated Timber (Glulam)



+ Fabrication



≡ Mass Timber Panels (CLT, DLT, MPP)



▀ Prefab Mass Timber Housing



○ Connectors and Hardware



■ Complete Mass Timber Structures



Typology 8

Skyscraper

What is a skyscraper?

Mass timber skyscrapers represent a new frontier in sustainable high-rise construction, offering an alternative to traditional steel and concrete towers with significant environmental and aesthetic benefits.

While not yet universally accepted, their adoption depends largely on jurisdictional inclusion and local code alignment – particularly for buildings exceeding the current Type IV-A height limit of 270 feet.

Recent developments suggest that the height potential for mass timber skyscrapers remains open-ended. For example, the proposed 55-story timber tower in Milwaukee aims to surpass the 284 ft tall Ascent building – currently the world's tallest mass timber structure, also in Milwaukee. Hybrid high-rise towers reaching up to 627 ft are already under construction or have received planning approval in Perth and Sydney, Australia.

As mass timber buildings grow taller, structural considerations such as overturning stability become increasingly critical. Because timber is lighter than traditional materials, tall timber structures can be more vulnerable to lateral forces like wind. Hybrid structural systems – combining mass timber with concrete or steel cores and columns – are proving essential to mitigate these risks and ensure resilience.

With no clear ceiling on height, the future of mass timber skyscrapers is expansive. As engineering strategies continue to advance, hybrid systems are enabling taller, safer, and more adaptable timber towers – redefining the possibilities for sustainable urban architecture.

Seattle Mass Timber Tower, Matthias Olt
Renderings courtesy of Matthias Olt



Why mass timber for this typology?

High-rise construction demands a balance of structural efficiency, sustainability, and user experience—qualities where mass timber excels. When used as part of a composite system with steel and reinforced concrete, mass timber optimizes performance while reducing embodied carbon. The material's biophilic qualities create inviting, high-quality spaces that enhance occupant well-being and increase market appeal. Prefabricated timber components accelerate construction timelines, reducing labor costs and improving site efficiency. Washington State's strong timber supply chain and growing policy support make this an especially viable region for mass timber adoption. Additionally, fire safety regulations now recognize the resilience of large, engineered wood elements, further paving the way for its integration in high-rise buildings. By leveraging mass timber, developers gain a competitive edge in an industry increasingly driven by sustainability and user-centric design.

Rendering: UnTower, Matthias Olt

What are the opportunities to scale?

The opportunity to scale mass timber in high-rise construction lies in its adaptability, modularity, and evolving regulatory acceptance. A composite approach allows for targeted use of each material—concrete for foundations and super columns, steel for lateral stability, and timber for floor systems and structural cores—optimizing cost and performance. Local procurement options ensure stable pricing and supply chain resilience, making it a predictable material choice for investors. Furthermore, the reuse potential of modular timber components aligns with circular economy principles, offering long-term value beyond the initial construction. As cities focus on reducing carbon footprints, mass timber provides a tangible, scalable solution that aligns with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) mandates and developer objectives. The increasing adoption of hybrid mass timber systems across North America signals a major shift in how high-rises are designed, built, and operated, making now the ideal time for developers to invest in this future-ready construction method.



Seattle Mass Timber Tower

Seattle, WA

The Seattle Mass Timber Tower by Arcadis redefines urban luxury with a bold, sustainable presence in Emerald City. Designed for maximum prefabricated modularity, this 40-story multifamily high-rise blends the warmth of exposed timber with cutting-edge structural innovation, offering a striking contrast to traditional glass-and-steel towers. Its sleek, biophilic interiors enhance tenant well-being, while its carbon-negative materials reinforce Seattle's commitment to sustainability. Precision-engineered for rapid assembly, the tower minimizes construction waste and disruption, delivering unparalleled efficiency and cost predictability. A symbol of forward-thinking design, the Seattle Mass Timber Tower is a breakthrough for developers seeking an iconic, ESG-aligned investment.

Website: [Seattle Mass Timber Tower](#)

Renderings courtesy of Matthias Olt / Arcadis



PROJECT TEAM

Lovinklaan Foundation
SPONSOR/OWNER

Lovinklaan Foundation
DEVELOPER

Matthias Olt /Arcadis
ARCHITECT

Sellen Construction
CONTRACTOR

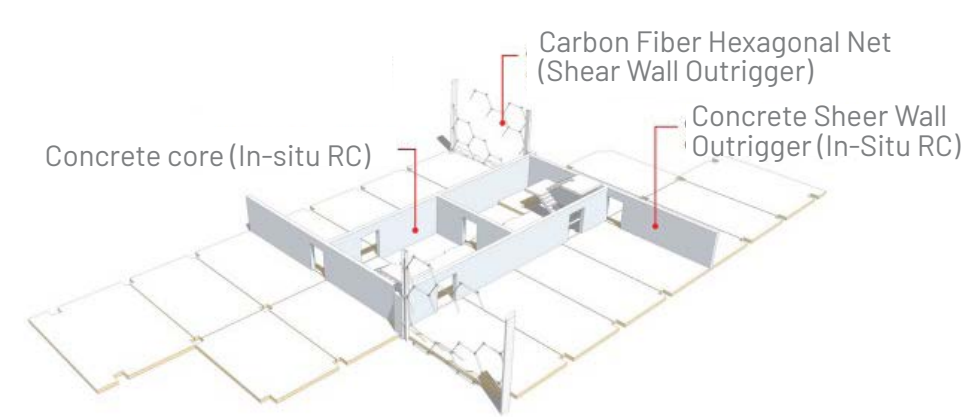
Magnusson Klemencic Associates
ENGINEER

Anderson Construction
TIMBER TRADE PARTNERS

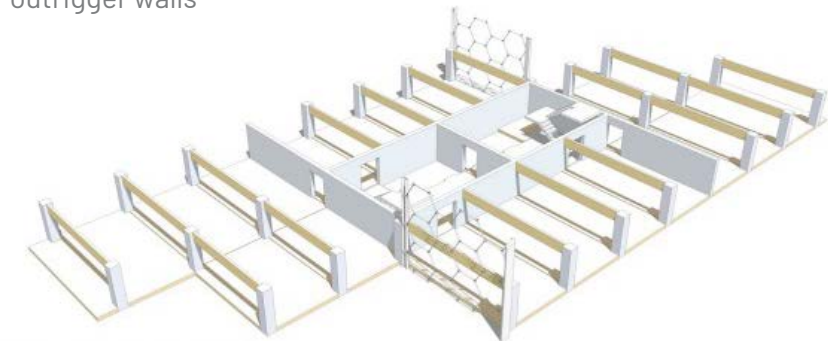


SEATTLE MASS TIMBER TOWER SYSTEM DESIGN

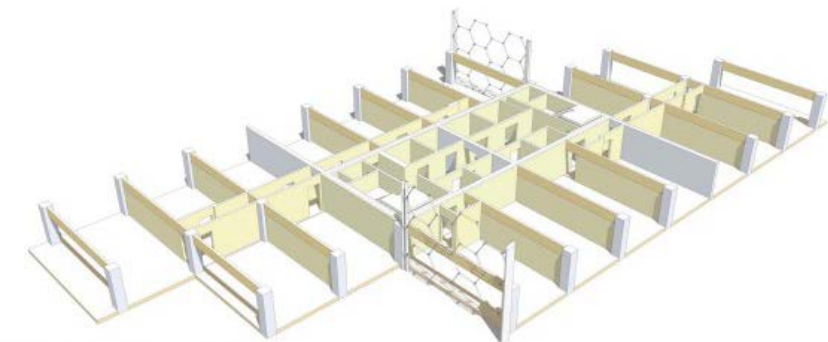
Installation sequence of modular building systems



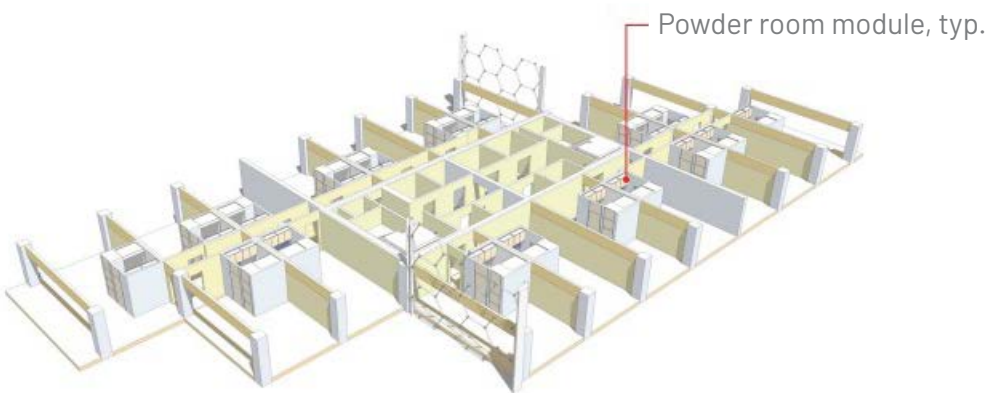
1. Structural system: central core with types of outrigger walls



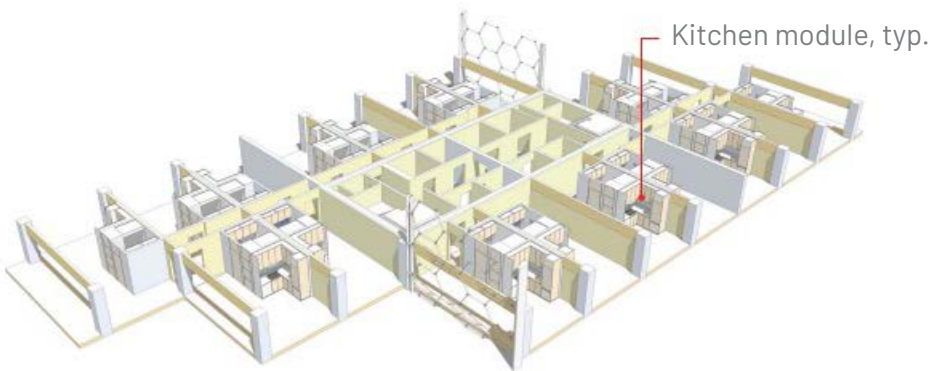
2. Steel Columns and Glue-lam beams 16' o.c.



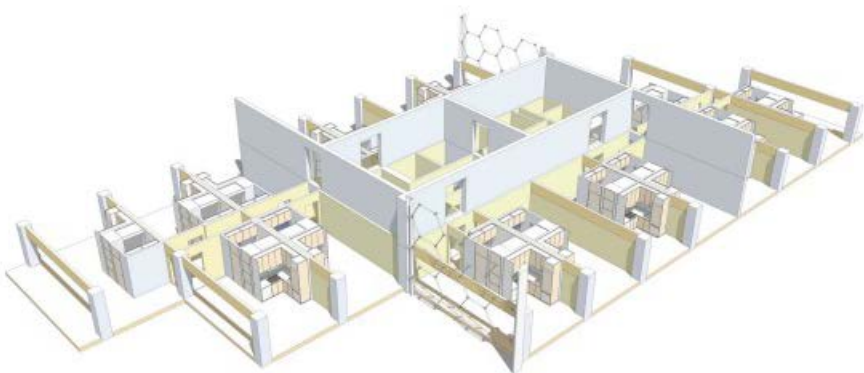
3. Interior, Non-load bearing partition walls



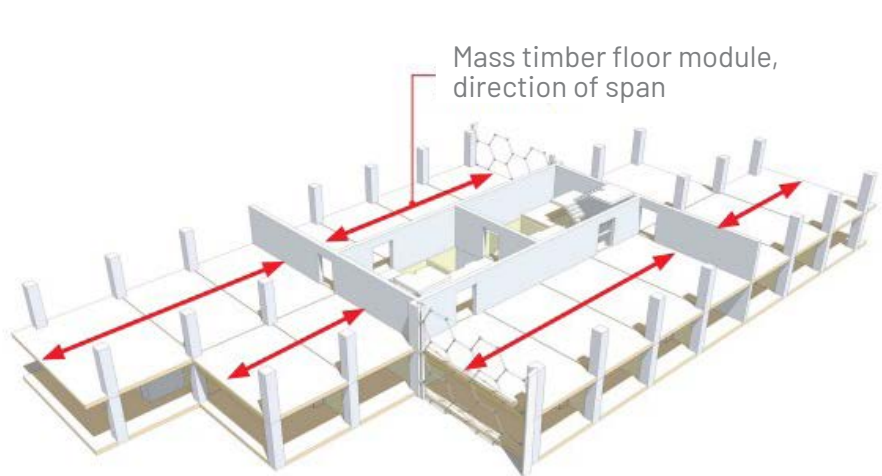
4. Installation of prefabricated powder room modules



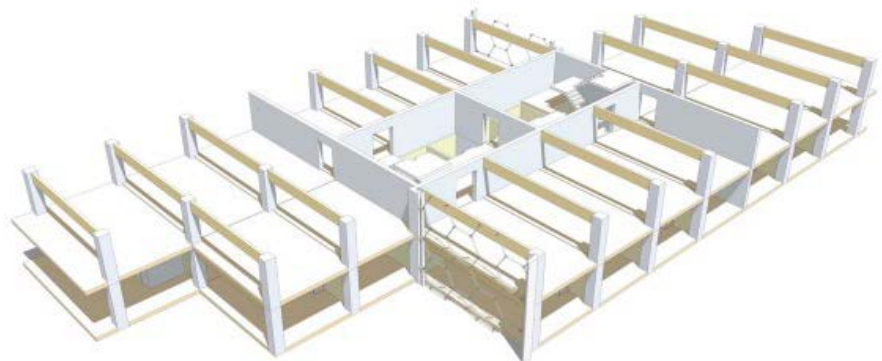
5. Installation of prefabricated kitchen modules



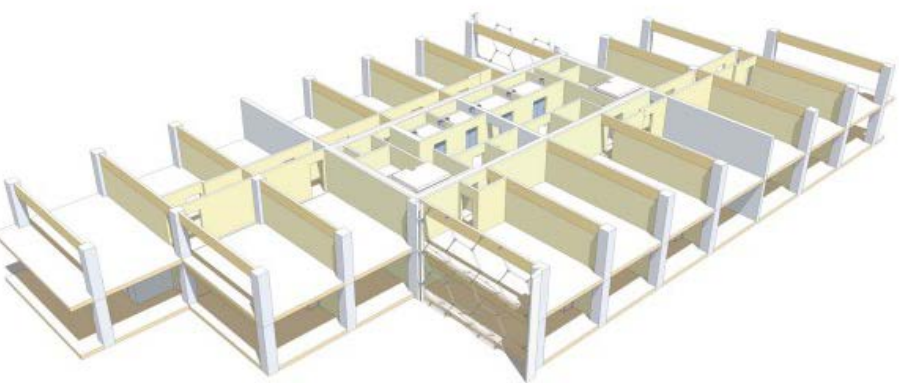
6. Next floor prep / Install of the central core outrigger walls



7. Steel column extensions and mass timber floor modules



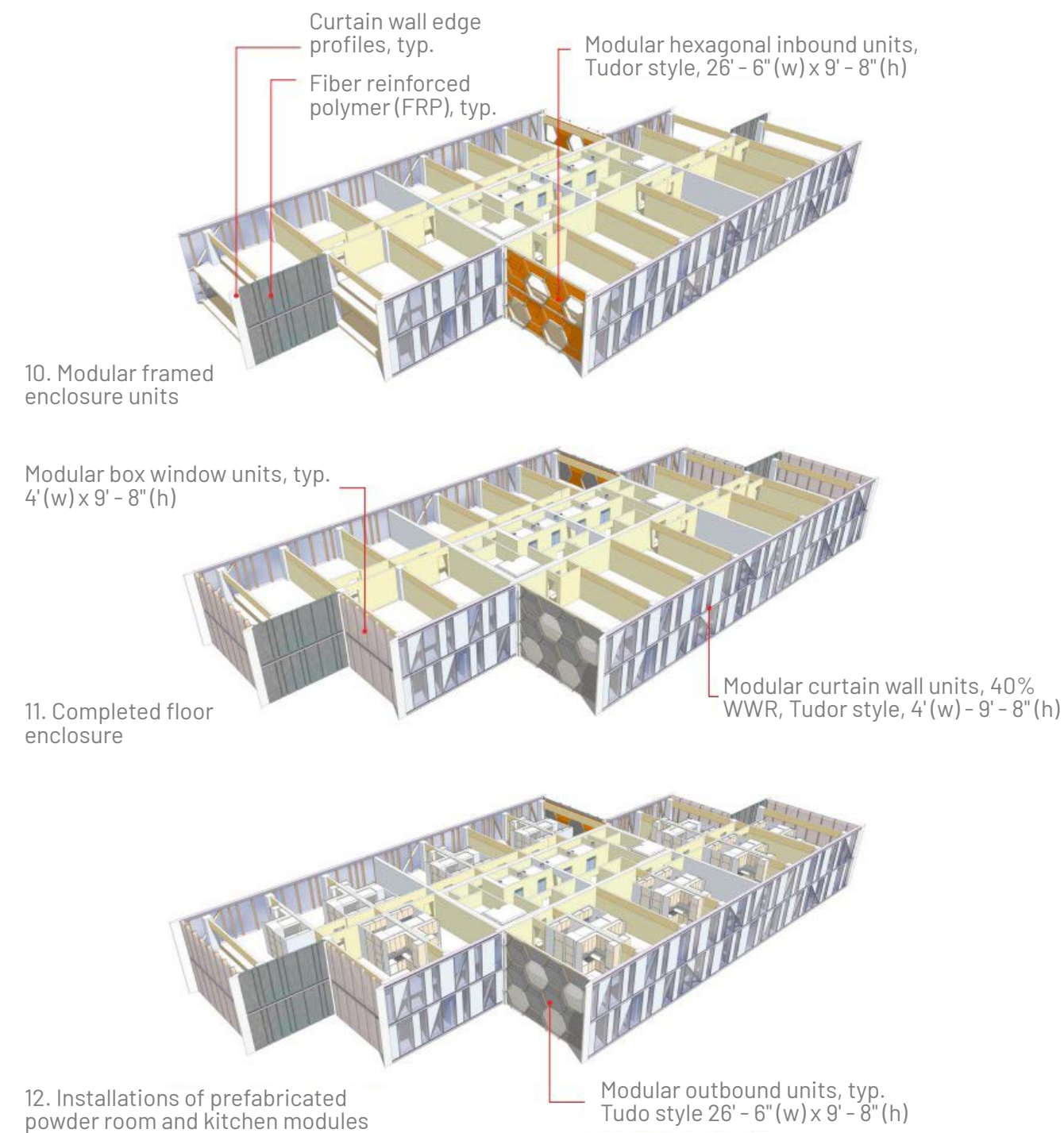
8. Next floor Glue-lam beams



9. Interior, Non-load bearing partition walls

SEATTLE MASS TIMBER TOWER SYSTEM DESIGN

Installation sequence of modular building systems



"Affordability and sustainability are the two most important conversations in which our community should be engaged. [...] I am thankful we have the kind of Design firms in this community who take it upon themselves to fund this R&D work."

- Peter Orser, Director, Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies, College of the Built Environments, University of Washington

SEATTLE MASS TIMBER TOWER SHEAR WALL DESIGN
COMPOSITION OF CARBON FIBER STRAND SHEAR WALL



Carbon fiber shear wall net and frames



Completed wall with glass panels and rainscreen



Solid Wall Assembly



Drawings and renderings courtesy of Matthias Olt / Arcadis



unTower (Use-Neutral Tower)

Burnaby, BC

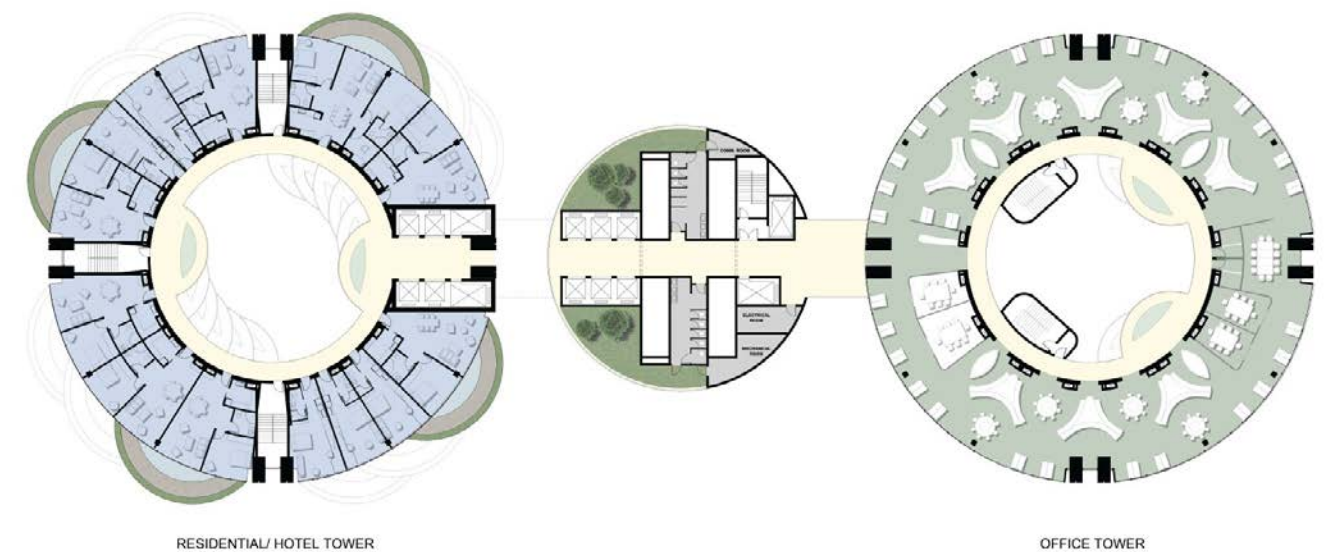
The Use-Neutral Tower (unTower) is a paradigm shift in high-rise development, offering unmatched flexibility for commercial real estate investors. Designed as a program-agnostic structure, it seamlessly adapts to changing market demands—evolving from office to residential, hospitality, or mixed-use with minimal retrofitting. Its goldilocks geometry and modular, scalable design ensures longevity, maximizing asset value across economic cycles. Prototyped and cost-modeled for two locations—27 stories in Bellevue, WA, and 65 stories in Burnaby, BC—the unTower demonstrates its adaptability across diverse urban contexts. By eliminating rigid programming, it future-proofs investment, reduces risk, and sets a new benchmark for resilient, high-performance urban development.

Website: [The unTower](https://www.thuntower.com)

Renderings and drawings courtesy of Matthias Olt



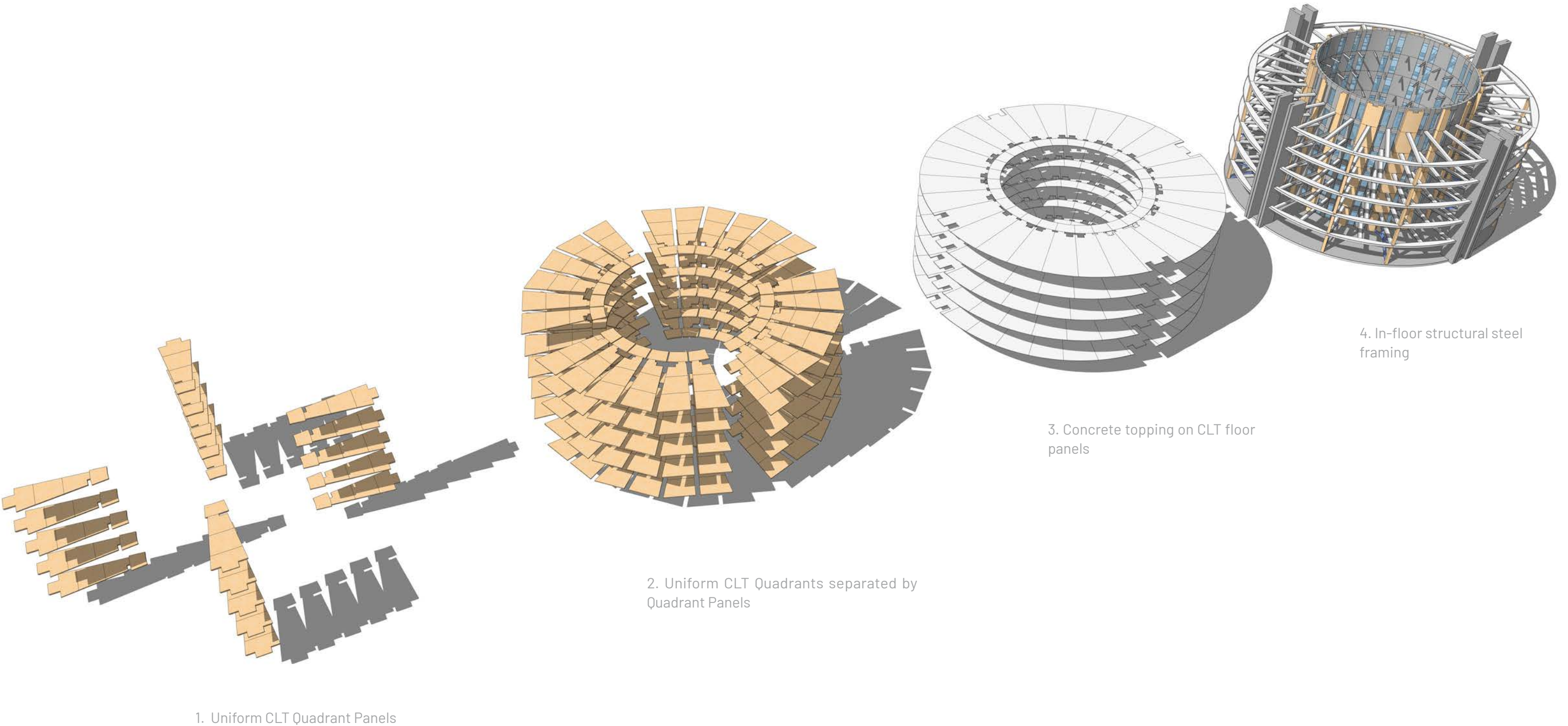
CONCEPTUAL PARTIAL SECTION: In-floor steel beam system minimizes the required structural floor assembly heights to 12 inches, resulting in reduced floor-to-floor heights, material volumes and associated costs.



PLAN: Typical Plan of residential (left) and office tower (right). The tower pair achieves economic viability partly through a shared service core (center).

UNTOWER SYSTEM DESIGN

Installation sequence of modular building systems



Renderings and drawings courtesy of Matthias Olt



unTower

Bellevue, WA

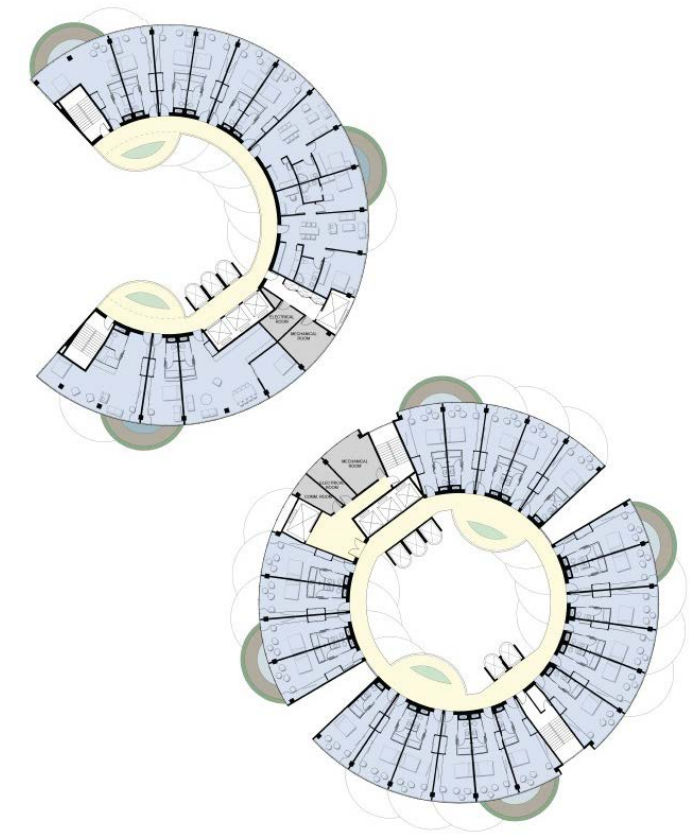
The architectural vision of the unTower centers on long-term adaptability and environmental responsibility. Its program-agnostic design allows seamless transitions between hotel, residential, and office uses with minimal disruption to building operations or environmental impact. The circular floor plate and modular layout enable a high degree of flexibility – movable partitions, flexible MEP systems, and generous floor-to-floor heights allow for rapid interior reconfiguration as market demands evolve.

Renderings and drawings courtesy of Matthias Olt

Architectural diagrams reveal how the building's form and systems support this versatility. The radial geometry allows multiple towers to be linked horizontally or expanded vertically without compromising function or clarity – ensuring that scalability and adaptability remain intact across a range of applications and building heights. Each component is designed for assembly, disassembly, and reuse, promoting a circular lifecycle and minimizing construction waste.



CONCEPT: Proposed towers and skybridge to Meydenbauer Center from Bellevue Downtown Station (East Link).



PROJECT TEAM

Surbana Jurong
SPONSOR/OWNER

Mortenson
DEVELOPER & CONTRACTOR

Silent Water Real Estate
DYNAMIC COST MODELING

B+H, Matthias Olt / Arcadis
ARCHITECT

Robert Bird Group
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Coffman Engineers
MASS TIMBER STRUCTURE / MEP

Vaagen Timbers
TIMBER PARTNERS

PLAN: Typical plan of residential (upper left) and hotel tower (lower right). For mid-rise developments, the tower pair achieves economic viability partly through integrated building cores.



Atlassian HQ

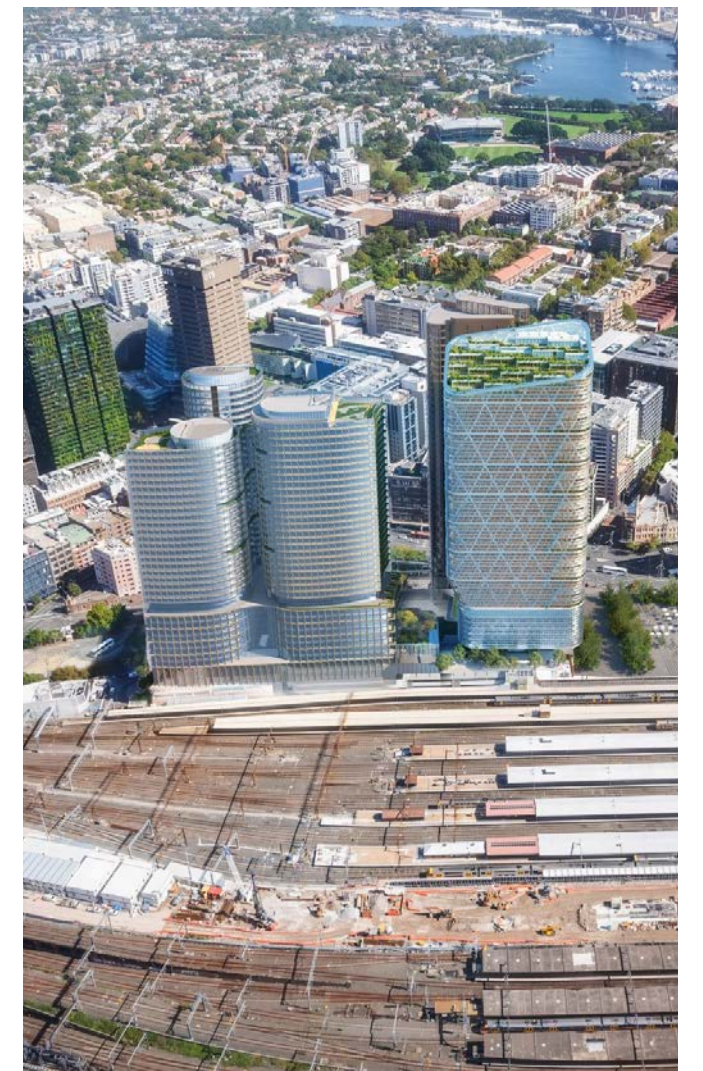
Sydney, AU

Over 39-stories high, Atlassian's proposed headquarters are designed to soar above the new innovation and technology precinct known as Tech Central. Upon completion this hybrid-mass timber commercial tower will be the tallest of its kind in the world. Holmes ANZ is providing base fire engineering alongside structural fire engineering for this groundbreaking project.

The hybrid mass timber design predominantly houses commercial offices, with retail and accommodation facilities that are adaptable for the evolving needs of Sydney's tech community.

Construction photo courtesy of Holmes
Renderings © SHoP / BVN

Complex design pushes vertical limits and also sets a new benchmark in sustainable design and futureproofing. Sustainability targets include a 50% reduction in embodied carbon for the substructure, superstructure and facades compared to a conventionally-constructed building; a 50% reduction in operational energy compared to a conventional building; and the use of 100% renewable energy to power the building.



PROJECT TEAM

Dexus
OWNER

SHoP Architects & BVN
ARCHITECTS

Built
CONTRACTOR

Holmes ANZ
FIRE ENGINEER



MASSTAC

Washington Mass Timber Accelerator

visit us at wamassttimber.org 