

SUMMER  
2015

**BEST IN AMERICAN**

REDEFINING  
HOME AND  
COMMUNITY

# LIVING EASY

CREATE SPACES GUESTS LOVE

CONTEMPORARY EXTERIORS

BEST IN GREEN AWARDS

CREATING COMMUNITY  
THROUGH OPEN SPACE

**NAHB**

Published by the National  
Association of Home Builders  
[www.nahb.org](http://www.nahb.org)

### ON THE COVER:

Come on over: The Hasserton home features no less than a dozen areas—indoors and out—for family and guests to gather and be entertained.



A PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME BUILDERS

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
Debbie Bassert

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**  
Claire Worshtil

**CONTENT EDITORS**  
Paul Emrath  
Jaclyn Toole

**CONTENT COORDINATOR**  
Linda Wade

**REPRINTS AND BUDGETING**  
Debra Lesesne

**SPONSORSHIP/AD SALES**  
Harris Floyd

**MANAGING EDITOR**  
Melissa Bailey

**GRAPHIC DESIGN**  
LTD Creative



## CONTENTS

### 3 THE DRAWING BOARD

#### Summer Vacation

The ideal waterfront home offers plenty of space for relaxing with guests. Check out these three great examples.

**Wayne Visbeen, AIA, IIDA**

### 8 GOING GREEN

#### Best in Green Award Winners

This year NAHB went BIG and created a new awards program to recognize the industry's Best in Green.

**Jaclyn S. Toole, Assoc. AIA, CGP**

### 10 MARKETPLACE

#### How to Design Exceptional Exteriors

Learn to use color, finish materials, rooflines, and more to create contemporary exteriors that fit well in their local landscape.

**Tony Vinh**

### 15 PORTFOLIO

#### Three's a Charm

How the community of Willowsford turned its semi-rural location and a 50 percent open space requirement to its advantage—and took home top awards for three years straight.

**Laura Cole**

### 19 PROOFS AND TRUTHS

#### Local Impact of Home Building: 800 Studies and Counting

Building new homes does more to stimulate a local economy than most people think.

**Paul Emrath**

### 22 POLICY WATCH

#### The Many Benefits of Special District Financing

Special district financing beats impact fees hands down. A new study shows why.

**Debbie Bassert**

### 24 TOOLS & TECHNIQUES

#### Creating a Sense of Community through Open Space & Street Design

America's best neighborhoods boast a framework of open spaces with a network of streets, paths, and sidewalks to connect them.

**Michael Medick**

### 27 IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS

#### Designing Beautiful Transitional Spaces

Blurring the lines between indoors and out maximizes a space—and makes the most of summer weather.

**Phil Kean**

Copyright © 2015, the National Association of Home Builders of the United States, 1201 15th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system without permission in writing from the editor. The opinions expressed in articles in Best In American Living™ are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policies of the National Association of Home Builders.

ISSN (2325-9302)

# Summer's Vacation

Wayne Visbeen, AIA, IIDA

**IT'S SUMMER.** Time to kick back, take in vacationing guests, and entertain on the patio. Here's how to design homes with a wonderful atmosphere for spending time with family and friends.



Decks, covered porches, patios, and pools can easily double a home's usable square footage, and they create a relaxed, vacation-like setting for enjoying the great outdoors.

Whether it's a vacation place or year-round residence, a home that offers space for guests is ideal for anyone who hosts summertime visitors. When designed well, guest rooms and entertainment areas make gathering with family and friends truly enjoyable (and old adages about guests and fish seem silly).

Planning a home that will accommodate guests means providing space for both time together and time apart. There should be spaces where family and friends can gather to cook, eat, talk, and generally enjoy each other's company—as well as spaces where everyone can go off on their own and relish quiet time to themselves.

Homes that host summer guests must take full advantage of outdoor living space, which can easily double a home's usable square footage. The best homes for guests use porches, screened porches, decks, patios, and pools to create that relaxed, vacation-like feeling. Porches and decks with retractable screens provide protection from insects at dusk and evening hours, but retract completely for unrestricted views during the day.

Interior space can feel like a porch or lanai, too, by using door walls. These keep the heat inside during the winter but can open completely during the summer and provide a seamless transition to the outdoors. They look like window-filled walls, but are actually one large door that hinges back upon itself to provide openings up to 20 feet wide, uninterrupted by casings or other support. Panda door walls are a favorite source.

## Drawing Board



The owners and their guests get an impressive view as soon as they enter the front door of this lakefront home.

Every level of the Tupelo takes full advantage of the home's sweeping lake views.



With its quaint cottage style, the Tupelo gives guests a cozy, comfortable feeling.



With the opportunity to double one's living space, it makes sense to make outdoor living last longer than just the summer months. There are lots of options for keeping these outdoor spaces warm and toasty on more chilly evenings, allowing the space to be utilized throughout the year. One design aspect Visbeen incorporates in its outdoor living spaces is a double-sided fireplace that is glass-enclosed to keep wind from entering the house. At first look from either side, it appears to be a one-sided fireplace, but actually exists on both sides of the wall. Of course, if there is no inside fireplace, one can be incorporated into a patio. Outside fireplaces provide an elegant look, a comforting feel, and keep the patio or screened room nice and warm as summer fades.

Here are a few examples of homes that offer wonderful space for house guests, entertaining, and memorable summers.

### VIEWS UPON VIEWS

In the Tupelo home in South Haven, Michigan, the challenge of a steeply graded lakefront site offered the opportunity to create four levels of water views. The slope drops a dramatic twenty feet from the front door to the lowest level of the home, allowing for two levels below grade that provide loads of outdoor-oriented space. But every level of the Tupelo takes full advantage



Mitred glass, horizontal muntins, and chic lighting add a wow factor to the 180-degree views of this contemporary home.

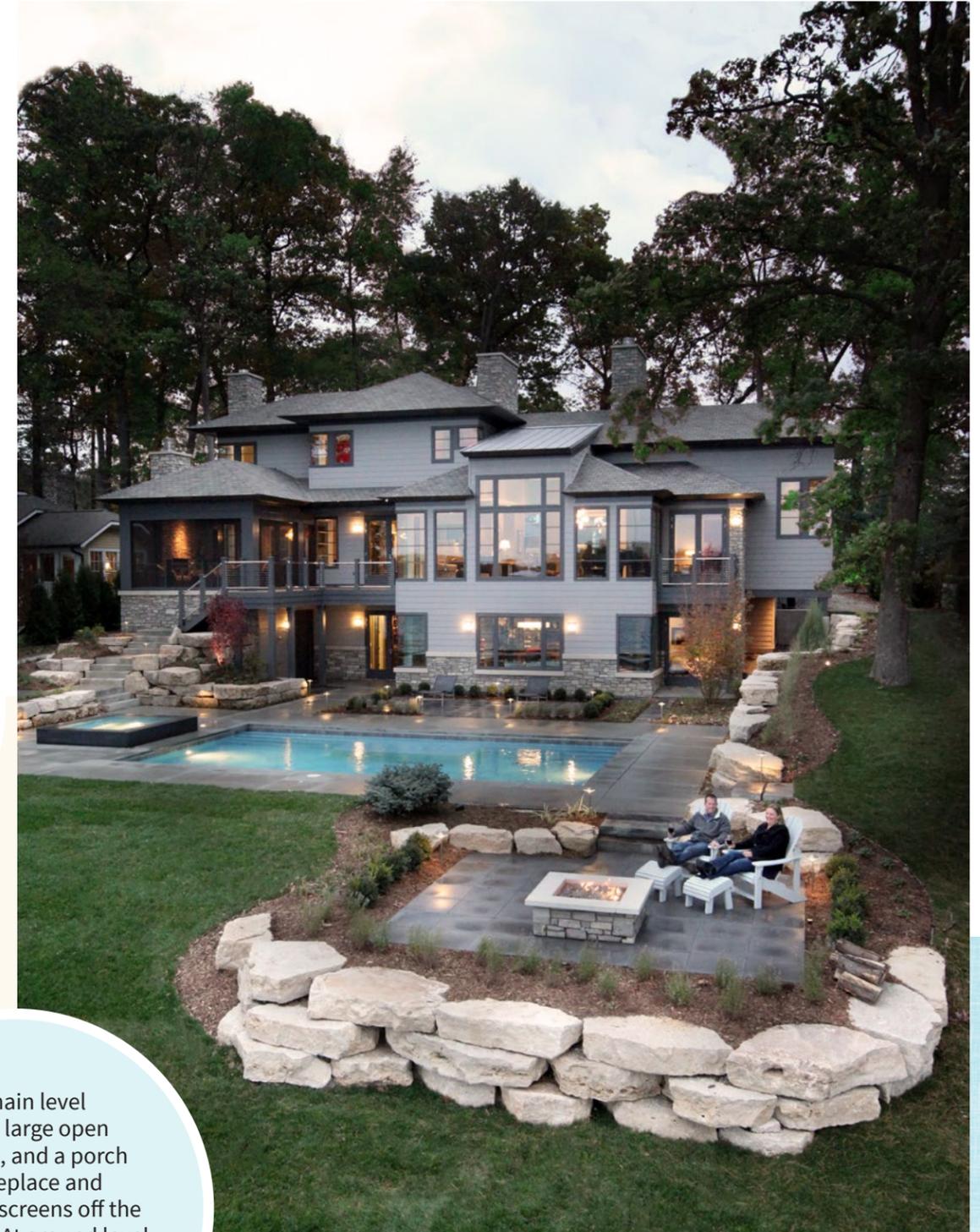
of sweeping vistas from its place on the shoreline, allowing both owners and guests to enjoy fresh lake breezes from its patio and two covered decks.

On the lower two levels, there is more than enough space for guests to either gather around the custom patio and pool, or enjoy the lakefront views from the kitchen and great room. A kitchenette on the lowest level provides easy access to snacks and drinks from the beach, and a beach bath keeps sandy feet from the main living areas. The owners' suite, with its own covered porch, is tucked away on the second level, where the stairway and master

closet separate it from a guest bedroom. The lounge on this level can double as yet another bedroom. Perched atop the four-story residence is a private guest suite, featuring a bedroom, loft, and bunkroom, which helps this home efficiently sleep 10 people.

### THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT!

While many lakefront property owners want a home with quaint charm, any style can encourage relaxation. The Hasserton's owners, who live here year-round, wanted a spacious, luxurious residence that capitalized on the site's spectacular lake views. With its open



The main level boasts a large open living area, and a porch with fireplace and retractable screens off the dining area. At ground level there's a ten-seat semi-circular bar, plus a pool out back.

## Drawing Board



floor plan, mitered glass windows, vogue lighting, and contemporary cabinetry, this sleek three-level contemporary home exudes modern chic. But it retains the comfortable feeling of a family cottage through the use of warm reclaimed lumber flooring, multiple upholstered seating areas, and the use of natural slate and ledger stone.

The home is the ideal place to congregate with friends, featuring no fewer than a dozen areas where family and guests can gather and be entertained! The main level boasts a large open living area with multiple seating areas, plus a sitting room behind a double-sided fireplace. A porch off the dining area features Phantom retractable screens and its own fireplace. Even the kitchen island offers a striking gathering place, dropping down to provide a glamorous dining banquette. To top it off, there's a ten-seat semi-circular beverage bar on the lower level and a pool out back.

A full bath with a separate shower room make showering after a swim both convenient and private for guests. And a huge storage area keeps pool and lake toys like inner tubes and patio



Craftsman elements and old-fashioned symmetry create a relaxed summertime feeling reminiscent of a simpler era.

furniture protected from summer storms and winter weather.

In addition to a sumptuous master suite on the main level, the home boasts two bedrooms with a sitting room on the upper level, plus a guest room with its own patio hidden away on the lower level.

### JOIN US AT THE LAKE—THERE'S PLENTY OF ROOM

Breezy Point uses Craftsman elements, quaint symmetry, and authentic materials to create the relaxed summertime feeling reminiscent of a simpler era. The home offers ample



A screened porch offers space for al fresco dining and leads to a wide deck.

## Drawing Board



A wide stretch of folding doors in the main living area open onto a wide deck that overlooks the lake.

outdoor living space and wonderful water views, combined with the ability to sleep many guests.

The main level boasts a screened porch combined with an enormous open deck. Its open living, dining, and kitchen areas allows guests and family to interact, while a luxurious master suite provides a phenomenal view. The upper level boasts three guest bedrooms—all of which have water views—plus two super-space-efficient bunkrooms, allowing this 4,500-square-foot home to be enjoyed by the owners, plus up to 12 more people. 🏡



**Wayne Visbeen** is president of Visbeen Architects, based in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



National Association of Home Builders

# LIVING™ BEST IN AMERICAN AWARDS

**This is your chance to win the nation's prestigious residential design award!**

Submit your home and design projects and earn the chance to be recognized as a leader in design, planning and development!

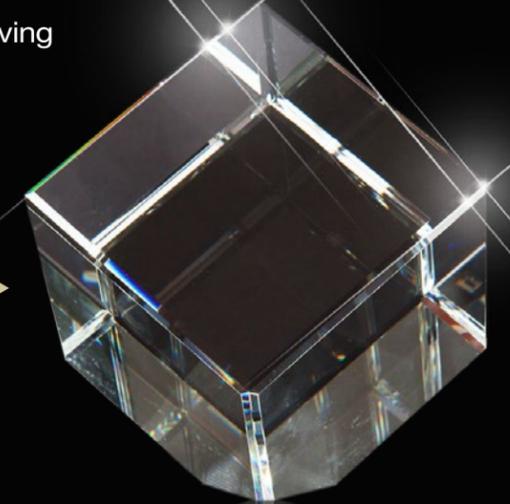
**Award Categories: Single-Family Custom • Single-Family Production • Multifamily • Remodel • Interiors • Community**

**[Check out the full list of award categories and submission details!](#)**

**Entries due September 1, 2015.**

Winners will be announced during the Best in American Living Awards Gala at the 2016 International Builders' Show®.

Learn about the importance of winning a Best in American Living Award from past winners! ▶



BALA Media Sponsor  
**Professional  
Builder**

# BEST IN GREEN

Award  
Winners

Check out this year's **BIG** Projects and People.

2015 marked the beginning of a new green awards program that focuses on integration—the Best in Green (BIG) Awards. Instead of a completely separate awards program, green and sustainable categories have been incorporated into many of NAHB's other award programs, including the Best in American Living Awards, The Nationals, the 50+ Housing Awards, the multifamily Pillars of the Industry Awards and the Jerry Rouleau Awards for Excellence in Marketing and Home Design for systems-built homes. This year, winners of green or sustainable awards in any of these programs were automatically entered to win a Best in Green (BIG) Award. The new awards program is one of the largest in the industry to recognize high performance and innovative distinction in design and construction.

With net-zero energy designs and rooftop solar power generation, Grow Community near Seattle took home this year's Best in Green Development Award.

By Jaclyn S. Toole, Assoc. AIA, CGP

# BEST IN GREEN DEVELOPMENT

Award Winner

## GROW COMMUNITY

Bainbridge Island, Washington  
Submitted by: PHC Construction  
Photography by: Anthony Rich Photography

Grow Community is one of only seven communities in the world (and the only one in the U.S.) endorsed by [One Planet Communities](#), a program by entrepreneurial charity BioRegional that certifies only a rare few on the cutting edge of sustainable development. It is also the largest planned solar community in Washington state. Low-impact site development, certified 5-Star Built Green homes, and net-zero energy designs with rooftop solar define the project. Residents enjoy extensive shared organic “pea patch” gardens and a bike share program for sustainability and self-sufficiency. The builder selects materials that are as “chemical free” as possible. Green building techniques and systems all contribute to ultra-energy-efficient homes with extremely low utility bills. The project design and proximity to Bainbridge Island’s Winslow town center provide opportunities for walking, biking, and outdoor connections that promote residents’ health and happiness.



# BEST IN GREEN REMODEL

Award  
Winner

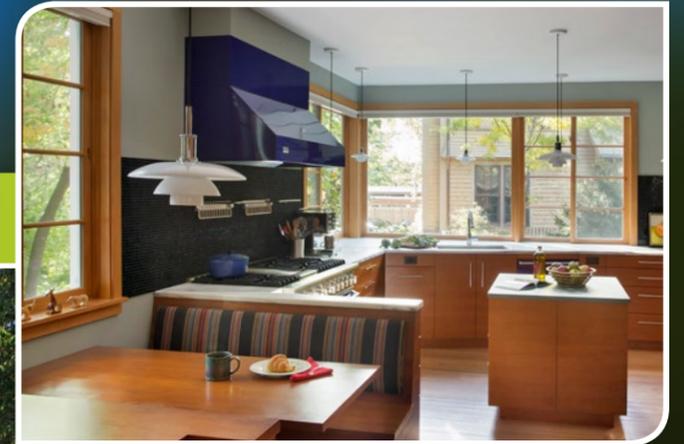
## SUSTAINABLE URBAN VILLA

Boston, Massachusetts

Submitted by: Wolf Architects, Inc.

Photography by: Eric Roth Studio

This LEED-Silver green remodel of a private residence uses a thoughtful sustainable design approach on a very small urban site. The building is clad in several types of wood, all milled from reclaimed lumber. The house features photovoltaic panels on its highest roof, a ground-source geothermal system, 100 percent permeable ground surfaces, underground recharger chambers, and densely insulated exterior walls and roofs. The emphasis on sustainability and nature continues inside the house, with marble and slate quarried in New England as primary materials, and heart-pine flooring throughout which was milled from reclaimed heavy timber beams. The home's use of a birch-bark column in the entry vestibule and laser-cut leaf forms in sliding screens on the first floor presents a poetic statement about the role of nature in the lives of the inhabitants, and in a sustainable world.



# BEST IN GREEN SINGLE-FAMILY CUSTOM HOME

Award Winner

## KATIE'S RIDGE

Asheville, North Carolina

Submitted by: Redtree Builders, Inc.

Photography by: Blue Ridge Pictures

This custom home offers modern conveniences and healthy indoor living while incorporating green technology and utilizing sustainable resources. The builder sought to get the lowest HERS (high efficiency residential standard) rating possible without using solar energy. Geo-thermal heating and cooling, high-performance windows, passive solar design, and smart technology thermostats make this house ultra energy efficient. All the ductwork is sealed and spray foam insulation provides a tight building envelope while Energy Recovery Ventilations (ERV) provide healthy indoor air for homeowners. LED lighting provides the best in energy efficiency and reclaimed barn wood delivers both design and structure. All of these building materials and practices led to the final HERS Score and an NCHBA Star award for most Energy Efficient Home in North Carolina in 2014.



# BEST IN GREEN SINGLE-FAMILY PRODUCTION HOME

Award  
Winner

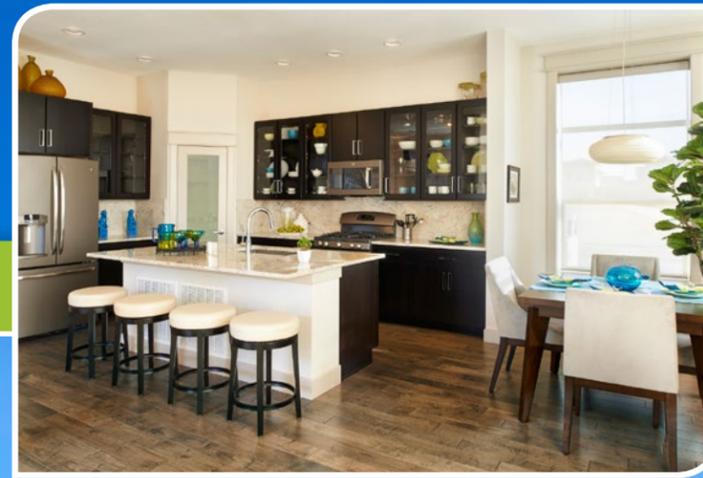
## THE ARTIZEN PLAN

Denver, Colorado

Submitted by: New Town Builders

Photography by: Ron Ruscio Photography

This home represents an entire series of production-built homes where Zero Energy is incorporated into every home. Without compromising design and livability, this home gives eco-minded, move-up buyers a cost-effective, high performance package of health, comfort, advanced technology, and durability—all with estimated annual energy costs of only \$5. The ArtiZEN plan was designed with a detailed understanding of the architectural design features that are expected in the market but have big effects on a home's efficiency—expansive windows, 10-foot plate heights, and open floor plans. Overcoming the potential negative effects with planning and coordination, the team was able to insure delivery of a Zero Energy home without compromise at a competitive price.



# BEST IN GREEN 50+ HOME OR COMMUNITY

Award  
Winner

## SKYLAR AT PLAYA VISTA

Los Angeles, California

Submitted by: KTG Group, Inc.

Photography by: Applied Photography

The Best in Green 50+ winner takes yesterday's three-story traditional townhome design and reinvents it to meet today's market, turning it on its side to appeal to the ever-increasing Boomer market and multigenerational families. This vertical triplex offers two single-level living homes, plus a larger two-story plan. The two-story plan includes a ground floor entry plus a bonus room or guest suite for extended-family, boomerang kids, or a home office. It features a bold, modern design, is LEED Platinum certified (achieving 95 points), and is inspired by the existing architectural context found in surrounding neighborhoods. This unique and luxurious contemporary plan gives residents the space to live, work, and play, minimizing the home's carbon footprint, reducing living expenses, and maximizing market appeal.



# BEST IN GREEN MULTIFAMILY PROJECT

Award  
Winner

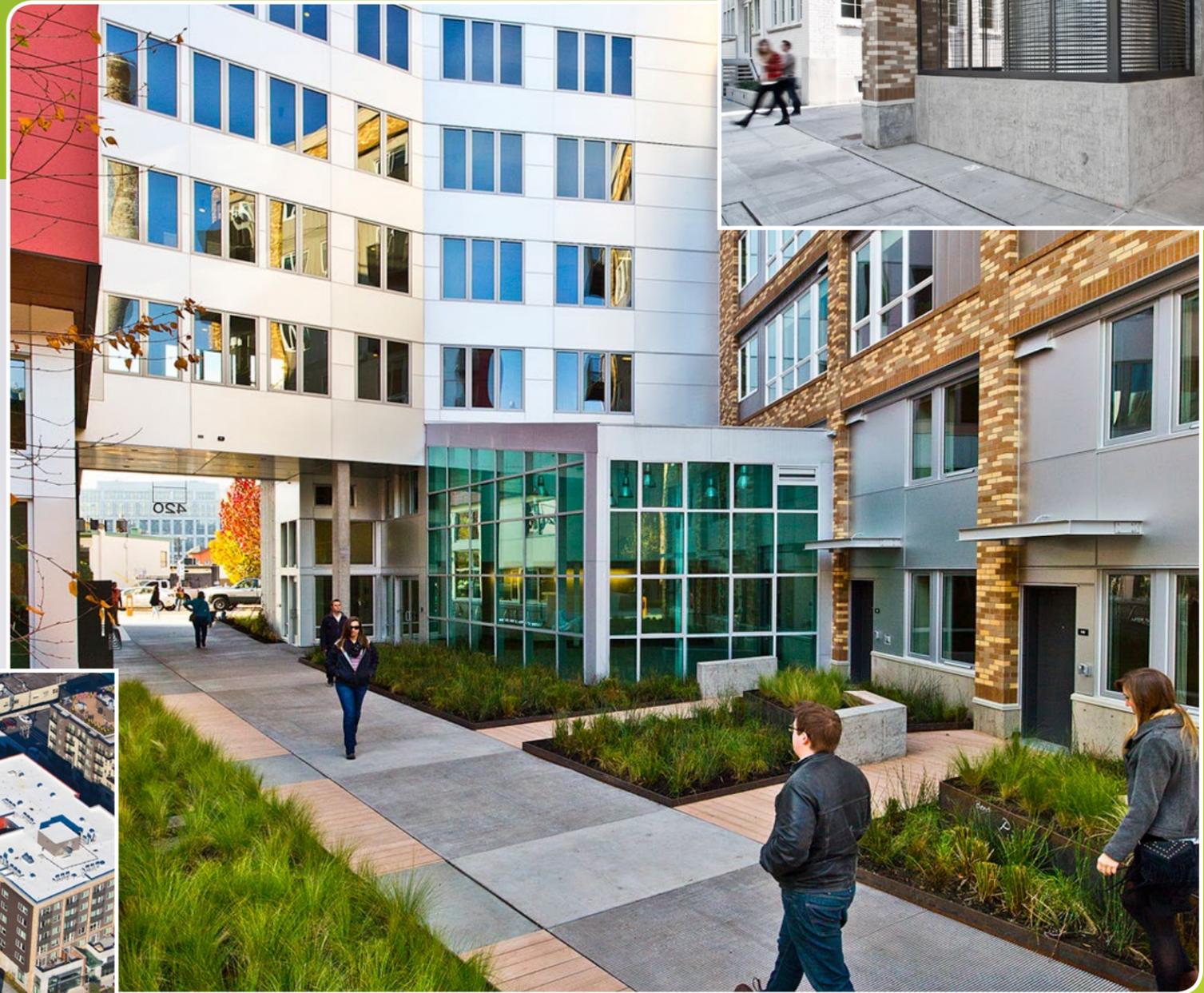
## STACK HOUSE APARTMENTS

Seattle, Washington

Submitted by: Vulcan Residential

Photography by: Michael Walmsley

The newly completed Stack House achieved LEED for Homes Platinum certification, and was named the U.S. Green Building Council Outstanding Multi-Family Project for 2013. Stack House is a mixed-use community with two residential towers consisting of 278 residential units, as well as office and restaurant space. It is located in Seattle's beautifully renovated Supply Laundry Building, a designated historical landmark. Shared amenities include a guest suite, well-appointed decks, a dining area, billiards and gaming areas, rooftop farming, a fitness center with sports court, on-site Zipcars, and underground parking. The residences are a mix of studio, one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments with or without a den, as well as lofts and townhomes.



# BEST IN GREEN SALES & MARKETING STRATEGY

Award Winner

## HOMES BY DICKERSON GREEN PROGRAM

Raleigh, North Carolina

Submitted by: Homes By Dickerson

Images Provided by: Homes By Dickerson

Homes by Dickerson builds custom high-performance green homes. The company is a leader in its market, educating and selling the features and value of green homes. In addition to Energy Star and the NGBS, the company voluntarily builds to the North Carolina HERO Code. Homes by Dickerson is has more homes certified through Home Innovation Research Labs than any other builder in the state. To demonstrate the value that sometimes cannot be seen behind finished walls, the company displays vinyl wall clings to point out specific features. These pieces create natural talking points as salespeople demonstrate the homes and also act as a “silent salesperson.” Educating prospective buyers about these features can increase the home’s perceived value and solidify a sale. Dickerson also employs Infographics to point out interior and structural highlights.



**CERTIFIED**  
DICKERSON  
**CERTIFIED**

### HIGH PERFORMANCE GREEN INTERIOR

FEATURES TO LOOK FOR IN *YOUR NEW HOME*

- Properly-Sized and Installed HVAC**  
eliminated the uneven conditioning of the home; reduces the overall energy costs.
- Less Water Usage**  
WaterSense Faucets & Shower Heads - these low-flow faucets are EPA approved and function well while using 30% less water. Dual Flush Toilets - EPA Approved; uses an average
- Conditioned and Sealed Rafter Spaces**  
vents air-flow to energy costs and reduces moisture, decreasing mold, dew growth and od rot.
- Low-VOC Paints, Stains & Green Carpets**  
harmful chemicals found in paint (Volatile Organic Compounds) are released into the air causing ozone depletion, health problems and possibly cancer. Although VOC levels are highest during and soon after painting, they continue to seep out for several years. People spend about 90% of their life indoors. 'Green' carpets, carpet pads and carpet adhesives emit fewer VOCs to maintain improved indoor air quality. Many 'Green' carpets are also made from recycled materials.

**ON**  
iding



**CERTIFIED**  
DICKERSON  
**CERTIFIED**

### HIGH PERFORMANCE GREEN STRUCTURAL

FEATURES TO LOOK FOR IN *YOUR NEW HOME*

- Zip System Exterior Air Infiltration Barrier**  
a specialized house sheathing designed with an embedded weatherization barrier, effectively reducing air filtration and moisture infusion.
- Framing to Maximize Insulation Value & Resources**  
2 x 6 exterior walls allow for the application of more insulation, fewer insulation gaps and reduces air infiltration making the home more air tight and energy efficient.
- Foil Backed Plywood**  
reflects up to 97% of the sun's radiant heat lowering attic temperature, improving energy efficiency and increasing indoor comfort.
- Low-E Energy Star Windows**  
"E" stands for emission or 'to throw or give off'. This special glass is coated with an ultra-thin layer of metal that has a low rate of emission. In winter, the heat given off by the furnace and all the objects the furnace has heated is bounced back into the room. In Summer, the same thing happens in reverse and the heat stays outside.

**ENERGY STAR PARTNER**

**HOMES BY DICKERSON**  
*Where the excitement is building.*



# BEST IN GREEN SYSTEMS-BUILT HOME

Award Winner

## THE RES4 GREENBUILD CABIN

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Submitted by: Simplex Industries, Inc.

Images Provided by: Simplex Industries, Inc.

This 810-square-foot pre-built cabin, designed by Resolution 4 Architects and built by Simplex Homes, is a modular one-room loft that can exude luxury and comfort. Featured at *Professional Builder* magazine's Green Zone exhibit at Greenbuild 2013 in Philadelphia, it includes bamboo flooring, high efficiency, and energy saving windows, radiant floor heat, LED Lighting, EnergyStar Appliances, environmentally-friendly fiberglass insulation, a high efficiency gas boiler, tankless water heater, and low-VOC gypsum board.



# BEST IN GREEN YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

Award  
Winner

## JAKE JOINES

Submitted by: Southern Utah Home Builders Association

Jake Joines is a Certified Green Professional (CGP) who is nationally recognized as an industry leader in the green building community. He has certified numerous homes in Southern Utah to the ICC 700 National Green Building Standards, and has won various awards including Eco-Home Magazine's Grand Award and *BUILDER* magazine's Green Home of the Year Award. In addition, he was instrumental in starting Southwest Green Build Council (SWGBC), the first green-build council in Southern Utah, and has served as its chairman for the last four years.



To enter any of the programs eligible for a BIG Award, and to see additional photos of the 2014 winners featured in this article, visit [nahb.org/BIGAwards](http://nahb.org/BIGAwards).

Jaclyn S. Toole, Assoc. AIA, CGP, is Senior Program Manager, Sustainability & Green Building at NAHB.



HOW TO DESIGN  
**Exceptional.  
Exteriors**



By Tony Vinh

Contemporary elevations require the right palettes and textures. Here's how to make sure your styles are consistently sleek.

To keep architecture fresh and exciting, designers search for new ways to use color and materials to help shape and complete the look of their designs. Although some overlook these details and deem them an afterthought, color and materials can make or break the integrity of the overall design concept.

Home elevations with a more contemporary character must use color and materials that are contemporary as well. Details make all the difference in executing appropriate contemporary exteriors in residential communities. Designing a unified building with a visual identity that sparks interest can be accomplished

**1: Trevion at Playa Vista**  
Los Angeles, California;  
Aron Photography

## Marketplace

in this architectural style with a few key points to guide the process:

1. Choose contemporary colors and materials that reflect architectural character and are appropriate to the specific locale.
2. Mix colors and materials in a harmonious and thoughtful way.
3. Use natural and faux materials to enhance the look of contemporary exterior finishes.
4. Employ streamlined roof profiles and appropriate colors to unify and complete the overall look.

In this article, we will explore the right ways to execute each of these ideas to add color and detail to contemporary homes and communities so that they capture buyers' interest and enhance this growing architectural expression.

### CHARACTER AND LOCALE

Materials and colors must reflect the essential character of the architectural theme and location of the neighborhood. Case in point: the unique contemporary community at Playa Vista. This newly developed neighborhood in West Los Angeles has become known as 'Silicon Beach' due to its proximity to Santa Monica and Venice, and it is now the choice address for tech and entertainment businesses. Residents gravitate to this community not only



**2: Vermillion at Escena**  
Palm Springs, California;  
AG Photography

for its abundance of amenities and new open floor plans, but also for its fresh modern appeal.

Trevion by Brookfield Homes and Woodson by TRI Pointe Homes, both designed by Bassenian Lagoni, encompass contemporary styled architecture. **(Image 1)** The massing and elevations capture the spirit of Playa Vista and pay homage to Irving Gill, a quintessential progressive architect who refined Spanish architecture to its purest forms and then reinterpreted the style for a contemporary setting. His work is uniquely appropriate to the California Coastal region.

The distinctive seaside color palettes range in body colors from crisp whites,

tans, and gray-blues to warm khaki hues. These base colors are reminiscent of a Santa Barbara Spanish palette, but by pairing these hues with clean profile stone and siding we create a more contemporary flair.

### MIXING COLORS AND MATERIALS

It's important to recognize and pay tribute to the environment that inspires the color palette. Drawing inspiration and incorporating cues from local history, nature, flora, and fauna can make a strong and lasting statement. The designs at Vermillion by Beazer Homes are a good example of this concept. The project is in the community

of Escena in the heart of Palm Springs, so Bassenian Lagoni architects gave a nod to the Palm Springs Mid Century vernacular while creating exciting new architectural forms and angles. The area's backdrop of the majestic Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains offered inspiration, and the palette at Vermillion directly pulls from these adjacent rich mountains and rolling hills. From its mossy green accent siding, warm brown garage door, and sandy gold stucco, the colors are all derivative elements. **(Image 2)** Contemporary and natural-looking profiles from Eldorado Stone and Creative Mines—Crafted Stone Veneer also help harmonize the homes with the neighboring landscape.

Where appropriate, unexpected combinations of color or material can bring excitement to the elevation. Horizontal siding with pops of color in burnt reds and coastal gray blues on the façade help further contemporize the elevations at Playa Vista while adding a level of richness to the palette. **(Image 3)**



**3: Trevion at Playa Vista**  
Los Angeles, California;  
Tony Vinh

### FINISH MATERIALS

It's important to be sensitive to details and how architecture and color can work symbiotically. Well-designed details complete any architectural style. Whether it be natural stone, faux stone, or brick, masonry veneer can enliven and enhance an architectural elevation. Stone can also heighten and add volume to the massing. For example, Ledgecut33 stacked profile from Eldorado Stone, in sandy hues and warm gray tones, is a perfect palette to enrich this new Spanish architecture at Woodson. **(Image 4)** This stone veneer wraps the chimney and elongates the vertical massing while creating a clean contemporary appeal. The placement of this accent stone at the front of the elevation also helps frame and celebrate the entry. Stone should never look cumbersome or heavy or weigh down the architectural design. It should help highlight certain design

features and create a bridge between the architecture and colors.

The color, texture, and profile of masonry material plays an important part in harmonizing the



**4: Woodson at Playa Vista**  
Los Angeles, California;  
Applied Photography



**5: Trevion at Playa Vista**  
Los Angeles, California;  
Tony Vinh

# Who's the BIG Winner? Your Latest Green Project!

NAHB's Best in Green (BIG) Awards give additional recognition to green-related category winners of NAHB's Best in American Living Awards.

Even better, category winners from these programs are **automatically entered** into the BIG Awards at **no additional charge!** These projects—truly the “best of the best”—are reviewed against a second set of criteria that focuses on green building, design and sustainability. Winners are honored at the NAHB International Builders' Show® (IBS).



Go BIG! For more information,  
visit [nahb.org/BIGAwards](http://nahb.org/BIGAwards).



[nahb.org/Green](http://nahb.org/Green)

Join the Conversation.



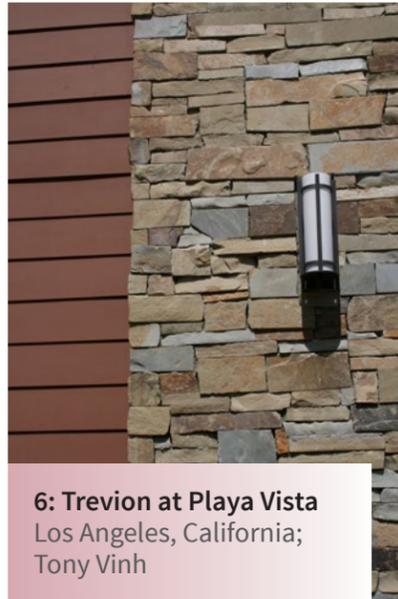
## Marketplace

color palette. The masonry should derive from the adjacent materials and originate in the architecture. For example, natural stone was used at Trevion for its richness and unique color and texture.

Thompson Building Material's Cameron Stacked Stone incorporates all the colors from this elevation with the khaki gray stucco, gray blue trim, and rich copper facade siding. **(Image 5)** The clean angular stone shapes and their horizontal orientation strengthen the base and create an attractive massing.

Pay particular attention to material transitions and use masonry veneers appropriately to define the style. For example, at Trevion, the clean transition from the natural stone to the red lap siding adds a fun yet interesting play on texture and colors. **(Image 6)** At Woodson, the stone at the entry is finished with a precise precast arch that not only frames the entry but provides a clean transition to a new material, the entry door. **(Image 7)**

Remember, a poorly designed or improperly constructed detail—be it in color or material application—can



**6: Trevion at Playa Vista**  
Los Angeles, California;  
Tony Vinh



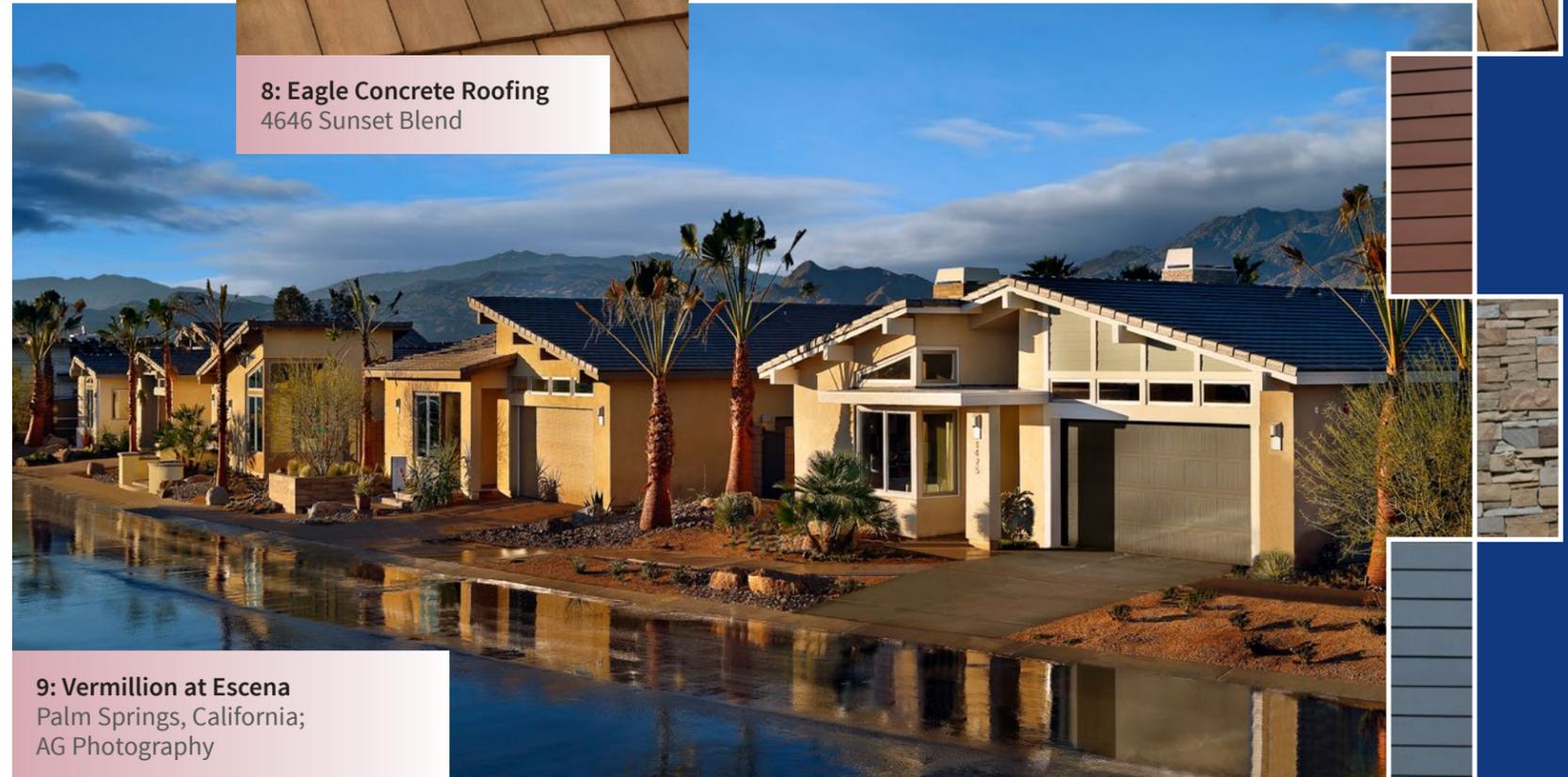
**7: Woodson at Playa Vista**  
Los Angeles, California;  
Applied Photography  
Tony Vinh

undo every architectural element

employed to define a style. Details must age with the design, and never be added simply for decoration.

### ROOFLINES AND ROOFING MATERIALS

Roofing plays an important part in bringing together the color and materials in contemporary design. There are many exciting types of roof materials available, from flat concrete tiles and asphalt roof shingles to more expensive options such as metal standing seam and clay roofs. At Trevion, Eagle flat concrete roofing was used on the Irving Gill inspired elevations. This smooth flat tile cleanly caps the roof while the rich terra cotta tones link back to its Spanish barrel tile



**8: Eagle Concrete Roofing**  
4646 Sunset Blend

**9: Vermillion at Escena**  
Palm Springs, California;  
AG Photography

heritage. **(Image 8)** These burnt copper tones and brown gray hues tie into the warm wood notes of the fascia, eaves, and cantilevered front balcony, while the tans compliment the ivory cream base stucco. At Vermillion in Palm Springs, a flat concrete roof was used to blend with the surrounding mountain-inspired hues, but also to create a more streamlined profile that strengthens the playful roof pitches. **(Image 9)**

Appropriate roof profiles are important to maintain the integrity of the architectural style. In selecting roofs for contemporary architecture, it is critical to pay close attention to the style the roof is laid upon. For instance, standing seam

metal roofing works best with lower roof pitches and clean line contemporary design. Its rigid form creates a powerful but quiet statement on the roof that it adorns. Take for example the new plans Bassenian Lagoni designed for Shea Trilogy at Vistancia in Arizona. **(Image 10)** Metal roofing was used to accent the entry tower and add a fresh and modern feel to the elevation. The metal roof unifies the color scheme by creating a neutral yet contemporary statement. This sophisticated change of material elevates and completes the design.

Because it is more conforming and pliable, composition roofing has a bit more versatility and can be used in high

## Marketplace



**10: Trilogy® at Vistancia**  
Phoenix, Arizona;  
Mark Boisclair Photography

to low pitch applications and with curving roof planes. It also comes in an abundant range of colors. GAF asphalt shingles were used at Woodson to provide a refined low pitched roof that almost seemed to lighten the tops of the buildings.

With such a multitude of colors and materials to choose from, contemporary design becomes that much more exciting. The details of combining the materials and colors complete the design and give it its unique quality. Smart and thoughtful design choices elevate the architecture. Color and materials often are the first thing shoppers identify and associate with, so plan for this part of the overall home and community aesthetic. It can make or break your project. 🏠

**Tony Vinh** is Associate and Director of Color for Bassenian Lagoni Architects.



# NAHB Current



## Refresh Yourself This Summer

Whether you need design and technology expertise, business management tips, or sales and marketing trends, NAHB's On-Demand Webinars feature current topics ranging from color trends to code regulations. Turn to this remarkable source for current insight on these housing topics. Participate live or access the webinar library 24/7.

For a complete list of webinars and to register, visit [nahb.org/webinars](http://nahb.org/webinars).

Join the Conversation.



# Three's a Charm

By Laura Cole

Using its open space and agrarian roots, Willowsford creates an authentic daily experience for its home owners—which has helped it collect three straight Community of the Year awards.

When people visit Willowsford, they know immediately that it's different from other suburban new-home communities. They can't quite put their finger on it at first, but as they get to know the place, they start to understand. From its award-winning home designs to its amenities and open spaces, every element of Willowsford was inspired by the natural environment, community connections, human interactions, and the joy of living well.

Willowsford is a 4,000-acre community in Loudoun County, Virginia, tucked between the edges of the suburban and rural areas, about 25 miles west of Washington, D.C. Willowsford is predominantly zoned for single-family detached homes and agricultural use. The



With 50 percent of its land preserved as open space, Willowsford's residents have plenty of room to enjoy both planned and spontaneous community activities.



developer was faced with multiple challenges: It had to create a unified vision for four **non-contiguous** parcels, meet a requirement to preserve half the land as open space, and draw potential homebuyers farther west than they'd ever been willing to go.

From a development standpoint, the simple solution might have been to build four subdivisions and sell them to individual builders. But developer Corbelis believed it could create more value in the buyers' market of the early 2010s. The answer, instead, was to embrace the site's rural heritage and do something that couldn't be found anywhere else in the Capital region—a fully amenitized farm-to-table community.

Three years into the project, all four villages branded under the Willowsford name are open, all hard amenities are complete, and most of the significant costs lie behind them. The community has eight builders, 21 model homes, and 550 home sales. Corbelis established the Willowsford Conservancy, a thriving non-profit organization dedicated to the stewardship of the open spaces and farm. And the development's thoughtful design and success have been acknowledged: It won NAHB's National Community of the Year in 2013 and Community of the Year for the Washington Region in 2012 and 2014.

And yet Willowsford's greatest accomplishment is that it has taken on a life of its own as residents engage in spontaneous

and programmed activities using both the open spaces and the built environment. "In the evolution of any truly great planned community, there's a point at which it transitions from being directed solely by the developer's vision and starts to become something even better—a real place. That is where we are today," says Brian Cullen, Corbelis NoVA President.

Here are six of the top reasons why Willowsford works:

## 1 Innovation

Despite having four non-contiguous parcels, Willowsford created a branded destination using shared themes and amenities, which are all rooted in Loudoun's agrarian history. From its signature four-board livestock fencing and understated signage to its exclusive architecture,



Willowsford creates a distinctive sense of arrival. Its unique community concept has enhanced the community's sales and home values.

## 2 Development Approach

Willowsford transformed its land use challenge—a requirement to build only single-family detached homes and to preserve 50 percent of the site as open space—into the community's key differentiator. The land plan clusters homes among agricultural "theaters" on the site surrounded by tree stands that once served as wind breaks. The Willowsford Conservancy preserves and manages the more than 2,000 acres of open space, which includes Willowsford Farm and over 40 miles of trails.



A grassy amphitheater and more than 40 miles of trails are just some of the open space amenities at Willowsford.



### 3 Land Use Economics

Willowsford underwrote most of the amenities and farm infrastructure in the early stages of development to prove to a skeptical market that the developer was committed to delivering high quality facilities and lifestyle programming from the first settlement. “Most communities won’t build amenities until a predetermined number of residents live there,” says Cullen. “We flipped that model on its head, and put all the amenities in up front, so none of our residents had to wait to have the daily experiences we promised.” With just 115 homes occupied, two substantial resort-quality pool complexes were open, and both Community Center buildings were active.



### 4 Sustainability

Willowsford utilized native and repurposed materials from the property to provide authenticity and character. Over 80 percent of the finished wood used in the community centers was harvested and milled onsite and reintroduced into the buildings by local artisans. It gives the community a sense of permanence rooted in the land’s history and is a most effective “green” concept.



### 5 Community and Culture

“With a lifestyle built around farm-fresh food, outdoor recreation, and well-being, Willowsford has developed a discernable, authentic culture,” Cullen says. Willowsford calls it “agri-culture,” and it relates to the powerful role that food plays in connecting friends, neighbors, and families. An appreciation for food grown by people you know and nature is central to the Willowsford culture, and a great bridge to meeting new neighbors and establishing bonds.



## The Ripple Effect

Willowsford hasn’t just become a great community in its own right; it has impacted the community around it, as well.

- Willowsford has created an alternative to a “typical suburban subdivision” and draws buyers from throughout the Washington region, including core and inner ring locations (DC, Alexandria, and Arlington), and leading-edge Millennials—a key demographic for the future of housing.
- Farm and food connections are not only enjoyed by residents, but also by the broader community that purchases local, seasonal items at the Willowsford Farm Market or participates in the weekly CSA program (Community Supported Agriculture), which provides vegetable, egg, poultry, flower, and meat shares.
- Willowsford has raised the bar for residential architecture in Northern Virginia. Surrounding communities are redesigning product to compete with Willowsford—in particular one of the community’s best-selling lines, designed by Dutch architect Piet Boon and built by K Hovnanian, which is achieving price points in excess of \$1.4 million.
- The Willowsford Conservancy has formed partnerships with local schools, The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America, Rev3 Adventure, and the Loudoun Arts Council to carry out preservation and recreation programs that enhance the quality of life for the residents of Willowsford and Loudoun County.





**PROJECT TEAM**

**DEVELOPER**  
Corbelis, LLC

Brian Cullen, President,  
Ashburn, VA

Garrett Solomon, Managing  
Member, Boston, MA

**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT**  
LandDesign

Peter Crowley, Managing  
Partner  
Alexandria, VA

**ARCHITECT**  
Rust Orling

John Rust, Partner  
Alexandria, VA

## 6 Design Excellence

In addition to integrating natural landscapes in the land plan, Willowsford instituted residential design guidelines requiring builders to provide unique product for the community while staying true to select architectural styles and using higher quality materials (for example, no vinyl siding is allowed in Willowsford).

The net result of these six strategies is not just an award-winning neighborhood, but one that helps create well-being for its residents as well as the broader Northern Virginia community. ▲

Laura Cole is Vice President of Marketing for Corbelis Development NoVA in Ashburn, Virginia.



Carol Morgan

Meredith Oliver

Kerry Mulcrone

Marla Esser

Kimberly Mackey

Juli Bacon

Presented by Members of NAHB's Professional Women in Building  
Hosted by Lasso CRM

# Fresh PERSPECTIVES

May - July 2015

## 6 FREE WEBINARS FOR NEW HOME SALES SUCCESS

The Tools & Tips You Need to Market, Sell and Excel

This six-part webinar series will cover a range of topics including sales and marketing, green building, and success in the workplace. All webinars are complimentary, presented by members of NAHB's Professional Women in Building, and hosted by Lasso CRM.



## FEATURED WEBINARS

May 19th @ 9 Pacific/12 Eastern	The State of Social Media 2015	Carol Morgan
June 2nd @ 9 Pacific/12 Eastern	Content is King	Meredith Oliver
June 16th @ 9 Pacific/12 Eastern	Customer Care & Service is Not a Department... It is a Culture	Kerry Mulcrone
June 30th @ 9 Pacific/12 Eastern	Get Into Green: Selling the Value of High Performance Homes	Marla Esser
July 14th @ 9 Pacific/12 Eastern	Sales Leadership by the Numbers	Kimberly Mackey
July 28th @ 9 Pacific/12 Eastern	Best Practices for Attracting & Retaining a High-Performance Workforce	Juli Bacon

**REGISTER NOW**  
[www.LassoCRM.com/FreshPerspectives](http://www.LassoCRM.com/FreshPerspectives)



# Local Impact of Home Building: 800 Studies *and Counting...*

By Paul Emrath

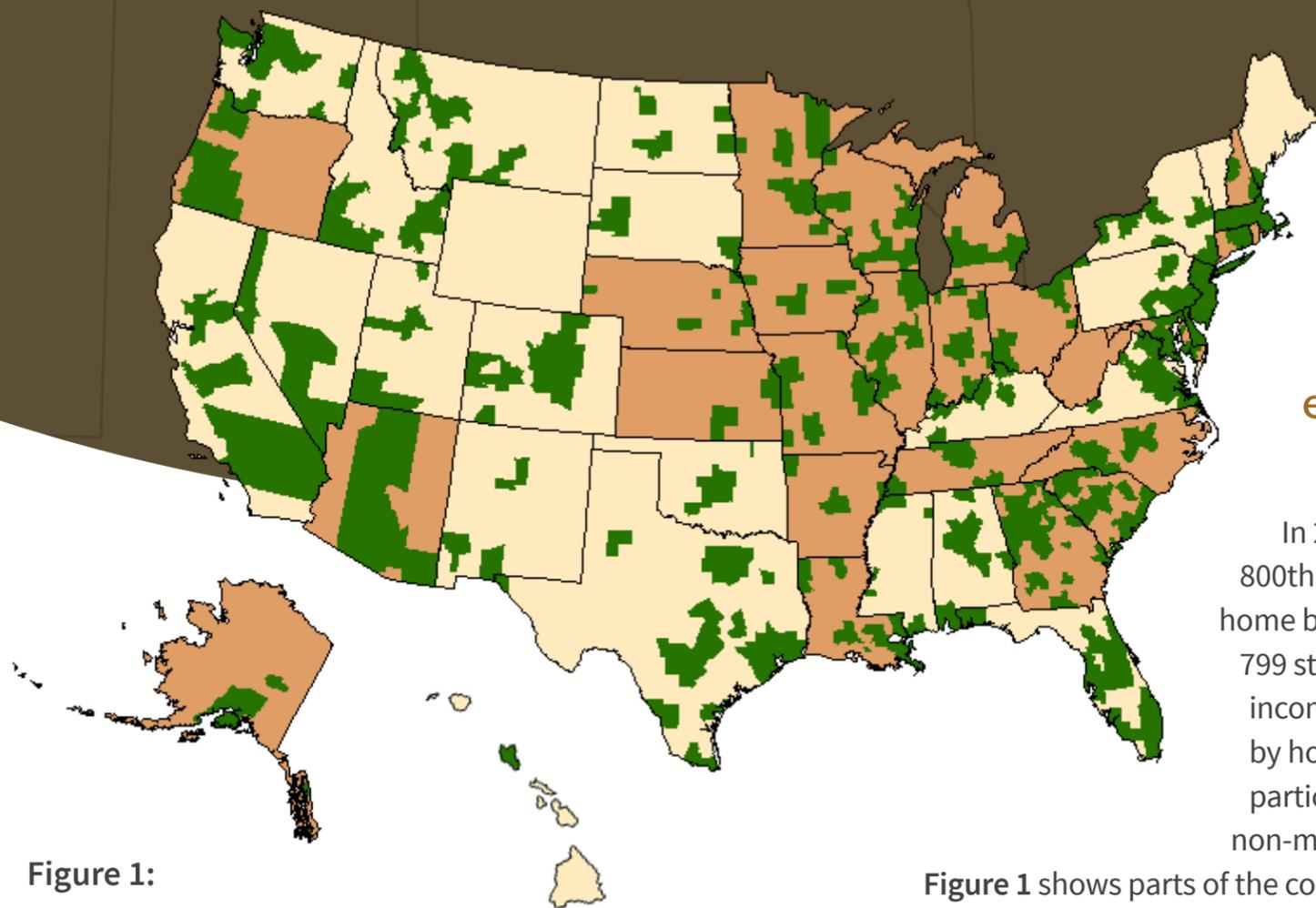


Figure 1:

- Studies covering metro areas and non-metro counties
- Studies covering an entire state

Facing NIMBYs gets easier once you're equipped with these economic studies.

In 2015, NAHB produced its 800th customized local impact home building study. Like the first 799 studies, the 800th estimated the income, jobs, and taxes generated by home building activity in a particular metropolitan area, non-metropolitan county, or state.

Figure 1 shows parts of the country covered by the studies. The green shading indicates studies covering metro areas or non-metro counties; the tan shading indicates studies produced for an entire state.

The local market area analyzed by NAHB must be large enough to include places where construction workers live, and places

where the new home occupants work and shop (typically a metropolitan area or non-metropolitan county), but the construction can be confined to an individual jurisdiction or development. Since 1996, the studies have been used to help get individual projects approved, counter anti-growth proposals, and generate publicity for the local home building industry.

A customized report can be ordered by anyone willing to pay the fee and provide the inputs needed to run the NAHB model. For those lacking the time or resources, NAHB produces a general report for a typical or average local area that is available free to all online.

NAHB has recently updated this "typical" local report. It shows the jobs, income, and taxes generated by building 100 single-family homes and 100 rental apartments, as well as \$1 million of residential remodeling in a typical local area.

The new estimated one-year impacts of building 100 **single-family** homes are in a typical local area are:

- \$28.7 million in local income,
- \$3.6 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 394 local jobs.

And the annual, *ongoing* impacts (resulting from the home becoming occupied and the occupants paying taxes and otherwise participating in the local economy year after year) are:

- \$4.1 million in local income,
- \$1.0 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 69 local jobs.

Similarly, the estimated one-year impacts of building 100 **rental apartments** are:

- \$11.7 million in local income,
- \$2.2 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 161 local jobs.

For apartments, the annual ongoing impacts are:

- \$2.6 million in local income,
- \$503,000 in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 44 local jobs.

Finally, the one-year impacts of spending \$1 million on **residential remodeling** in the typical local area are estimated at:

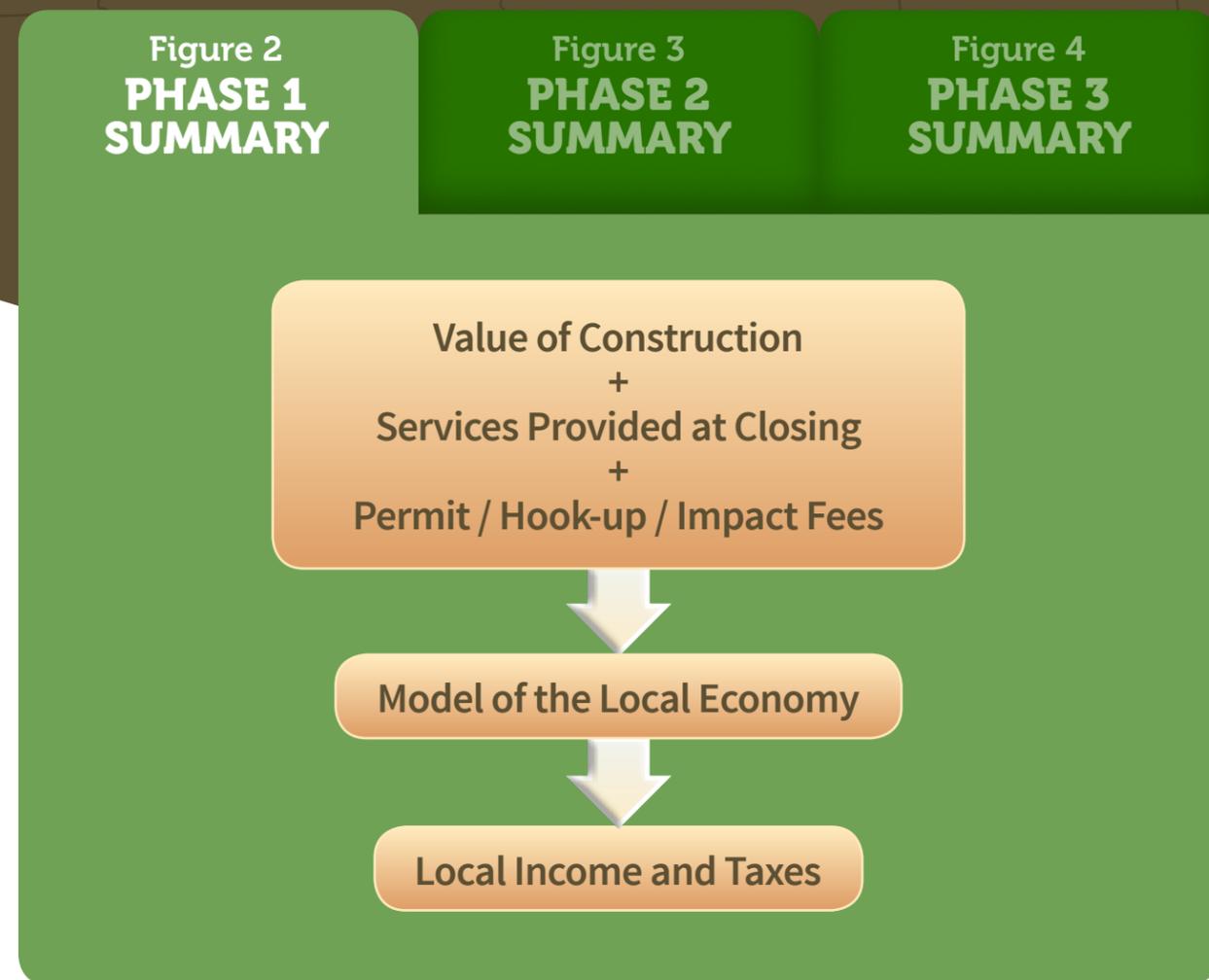
- \$841,000 in local income,
- \$71,000 in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 11 and a half local jobs.

NAHB's default assumption is that remodeled homes are occupied before and after remodeling, so the annual local impacts are limited to:

- \$11,000 in residential property taxes.

Jobs are measured in full-time equivalents—i.e., enough work to keep one worker employed full time for a year.

The above estimates are generated from a proprietary NAHB model that captures the income earned by local industries during construction, the ensuing “ripple” effects that occur as some of this income is spent locally, and ongoing effects of increased property taxes and the new



homes becoming occupied. In the NAHB model, these are labeled Phase I, II, and III. Although NAHB uses several data sources, the business-to-business transactions that define a local economy come from industry accounts maintained by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) for generating GDP and related statistics. The inputs into Phase I are the value of construction (new home prices minus raw land, closing costs paid

“A percentage of [the] additional income [generated in Phase I] is also spent locally, generating another ripple of economic activity.”

by the buyer, and any permit, hook-up, and other fees paid to local governments). The outputs include income for residents and revenue for governments in the local area (Figure 2).

And the annual, *ongoing* impacts (resulting from the home becoming occupied and the occupants paying taxes and otherwise participating in the local economy year after year) are:

- \$4.1 million in local income,
- \$1.0 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 69 local jobs.

Similarly, the estimated one-year impacts of building 100 **rental apartments** are:

- \$11.7 million in local income,
- \$2.2 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 161 local jobs.

For apartments, the annual ongoing impacts are:

- \$2.6 million in local income,
- \$503,000 in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 44 local jobs.

Finally, the one-year impacts of spending \$1 million on **residential remodeling** in the typical local area are estimated at:

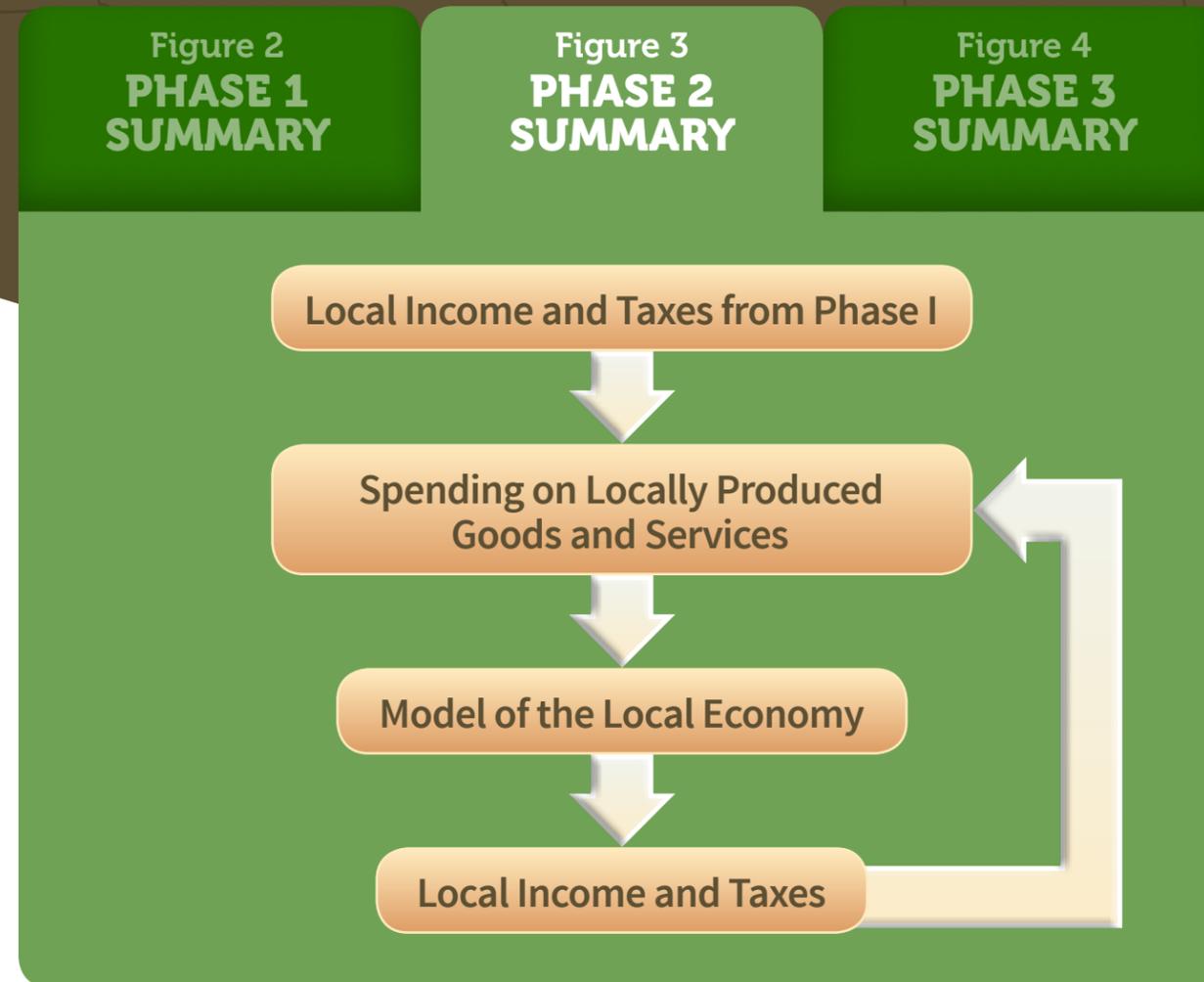
- \$841,000 in local income,
- \$71,000 in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 11 and a half local jobs.

NAHB's default assumption is that remodeled homes are occupied before and after remodeling, so the annual local impacts are limited to:

- \$11,000 in residential property taxes.

Jobs are measured in full-time equivalents—i.e., enough work to keep one worker employed full time for a year.

The above estimates are generated from a proprietary NAHB model that captures the income earned by local industries during construction, the ensuing “ripple” effects that occur as some of this income is spent locally, and ongoing effects of increased property taxes and the new



homes becoming occupied. In the NAHB model, these are labeled Phase I, II, and III. Although NAHB uses several data sources, the business-to-business transactions that define a local economy come from industry accounts maintained by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) for generating GDP and related statistics. The inputs into Phase I are the value of construction (new home prices minus raw land, closing costs paid

“A percentage of [the] additional income [generated in Phase I] is also spent locally, generating another ripple of economic activity.”

by the buyer, and any permit, hook-up, and other fees paid to local governments). The outputs include income for residents and revenue for governments in the local area (Figure 2).

And the annual, *ongoing* impacts (resulting from the home becoming occupied and the occupants paying taxes and otherwise participating in the local economy year after year) are:

- \$4.1 million in local income,
- \$1.0 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 69 local jobs.

Similarly, the estimated one-year impacts of building 100 **rental apartments** are:

- \$11.7 million in local income,
- \$2.2 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 161 local jobs.

For apartments, the annual ongoing impacts are:

- \$2.6 million in local income,
- \$503,000 in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 44 local jobs.

Finally, the one-year impacts of spending \$1 million on **residential remodeling** in the typical local area are estimated at:

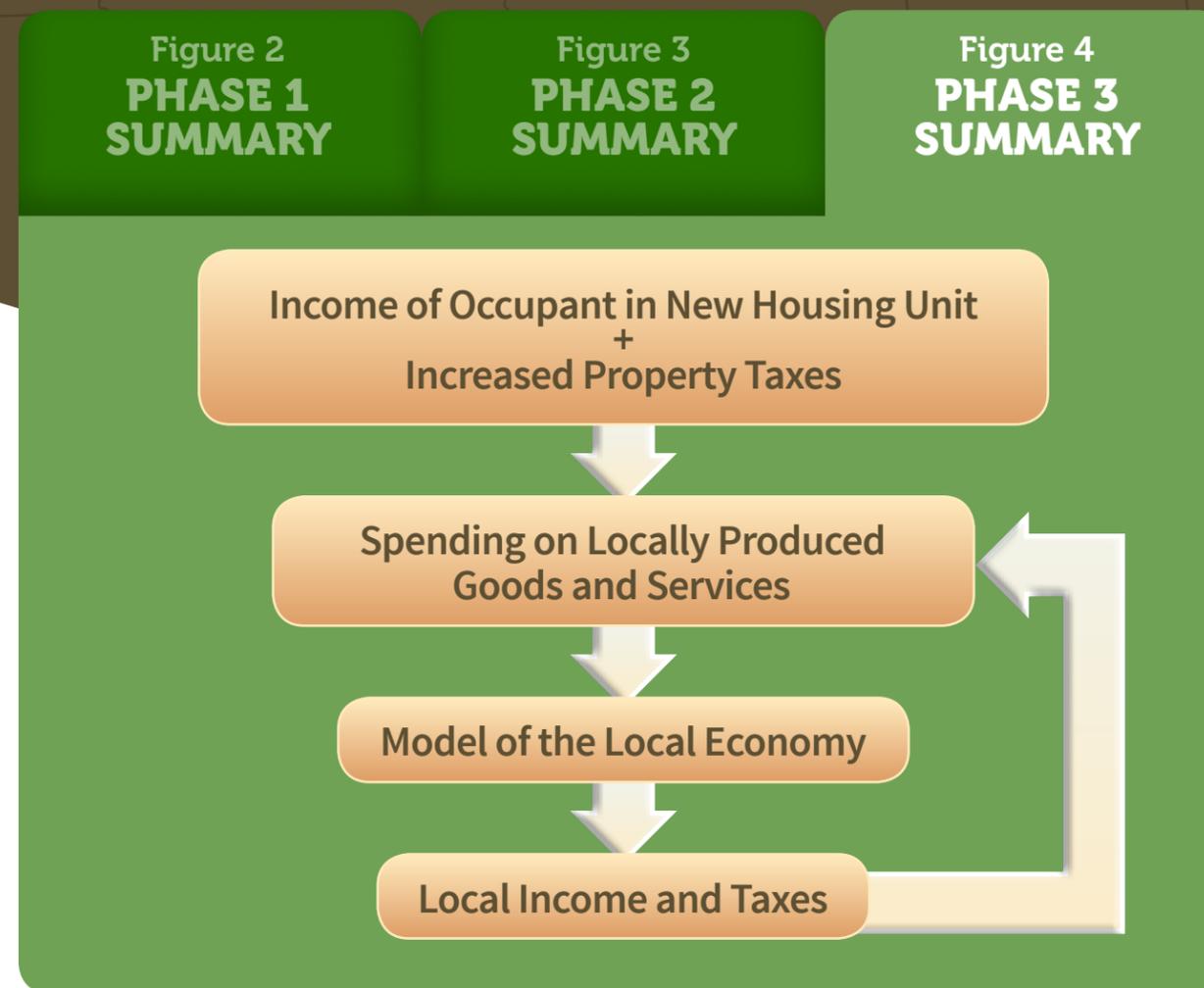
- \$841,000 in local income,
- \$71,000 in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 11 and a half local jobs.

NAHB's default assumption is that remodeled homes are occupied before and after remodeling, so the annual local impacts are limited to:

- \$11,000 in residential property taxes.

Jobs are measured in full-time equivalents—i.e., enough work to keep one worker employed full time for a year.

The above estimates are generated from a proprietary NAHB model that captures the income earned by local industries during construction, the ensuing “ripple” effects that occur as some of this income is spent locally, and ongoing effects of increased property taxes and the new



homes becoming occupied. In the NAHB model, these are labeled Phase I, II, and III. Although NAHB uses several data sources, the business-to-business transactions that define a local economy come from industry accounts maintained by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) for generating GDP and related statistics. The inputs into Phase I are the value of construction (new home prices minus raw land, closing costs paid

“A percentage of [the] additional income [generated in Phase I] is also spent locally, generating another ripple of economic activity.”

by the buyer, and any permit, hook-up, and other fees paid to local governments). The outputs include income for residents and revenue for governments in the local area (Figure 2).

In Phase II (the construction ripple effect), some of the income earned in Phase I is spent locally (for example, at a grocery store or fitness center). NAHB uses the Consumer Expenditure (CE) survey (conducted by the Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics to establish weights for the Consumer Price Index) to estimate how much is spent locally.

As in Phase I, spending on the locally produced goods and services generates local income and tax revenue. But then a percentage of this additional income is also spent locally, generating another ripple of economic activity. This is illustrated by the circular flow shown in **Figure 3**, where each time through the bottom three boxes is another economic “ripple.”

Phase III is based on the occupant of the new homes participating in the local economy. This doesn't mean every one of them moves in from outside the local area. A household may move into the new home from elsewhere in the local area, while a household from outside moves into the vacated home. Or the new home may allow the local area to retain

a household that would eventually have moved out of the area. In either case, the local economy has one net additional household it otherwise wouldn't have.

Again, NAHB uses CE data to estimate spending. A distinctive feature of the NAHB model is the way it estimates income and spending of households depending on the type of new homes they are moving into. This local spending, including increased property taxes, feeds into the local economy and starts a series of economic ripples, similar to those in Phase II (**Figure 4**).

While Phases I and II occur one time, Phase III is an ongoing effect that occurs every year as long as the home is occupied.

For a builder or developer interested in applying the local impact model to a particular construction project, possibly to help get the project approved, more information is available on the [Housing's Economic Impact](#) page on NAHB's Web site. 🏠

**Paul Emrath, Ph.D.**, is NAHB's Vice President for Surveys and Housing Policy Research.



## Data You Can Build On

The Economics Publication for America's Housing Industry

In today's housing market, getting solid economic information is the key to helping you adapt and thrive. HousingEconomics.com is the proven source of this information providing—

- Historical data
- Industry analysis
- Forecasts including State and Metro
- Special Studies
- Excel tables

Get this information and more at [HousingEconomics.com](#) which will help you support your business decisions.



SUBSCRIBE TODAY! [HousingEconomics.com](#)

# The Many Benefits of \$PECIAL DISTRICT FINANCING

By Debbie Bassert

As post-recession development increases, communities should ditch the old impact fee assessment solution and fund infrastructure with special district financing instead.

With development once again underway, the age-old pressure points in the development approval process have also returned. As communities look at how to finance new infrastructure, it is all too easy for them to bump impact fees on new homes back up to pre-recession levels, for roads, schools, water, sewer, and so on.

Yet relying on impact fees during the sustained construction boom that preceded the recession did not help build our way out of the infrastructure challenge. Impact fees are an imperfect tool for financing infrastructure, because you can't spend them until they accumulate, they rise and fall with the pace of construction, and they unfairly burden new development to solve a broader community need. They are often based on flawed assumptions about the level and costs of growth, and are also frequently poorly managed and improperly spent on other budget needs.



Special district financing draws upon the broader community, rather than just new homebuyers, to finance infrastructure such as schools.

## Policy Watch

There are alternative municipal finance solutions that better meet the needs of both the private and the public sector, and more importantly homeowners. So NAHB's Land Development Committee recently hired a CPA to write a report on the best alternatives to impact fees: special district financing.

Special districts are more reliable as well as more equitable revenue sources. They draw on a broader base of residents, rather than just new homebuyers, and are levied as straightforward annual assessments instead of being rolled into a mortgage, with interest, as impact fees are typically implemented. Since special districts by their very nature are specific bounded geographical areas, there is a clearer and more transparent connection between the assessed fee and the community benefits that are bought and provided with them. They can be used more easily with other financing tools, allowing infrastructure to be built sooner—in advance of or concurrently with development. Overall they offer the opportunity for much more of a positive collaboration between the public and private sectors. ▲



This new report, "An Overview of Special Purpose Taxing Districts," is now available online and in hard copy from NAHB's Land Use and Design Department. NAHB has extensive additional resources on infrastructure financing at [nahb.org/infrastructurefinance](http://nahb.org/infrastructurefinance).

**Debbie Bassert** is Assistant Vice President, Land Use & Design at NAHB.



Special districts offer a clearer and more transparent connection between the assessed fee and the community benefits that are bought and provided with them.

By Michael Medick

Putting open space in a community should never be done just to meet the requirements of a zoning ordinance. Use it to create the framework for a place people love to live in.



# Creating A Sense of **Community** *through Open Space & Street Design*

Open space should draw people to it as they live their daily lives.

Ahhhhhh, the great outdoors! Who doesn't enjoy being outside on a beautiful day? Everyone enjoys visiting public parks, playgrounds, ballfields, plazas, and beautifully planted gardens. But whether we create new or rejuvenated communities, how are developers and builders integrating open space into their planning?

Most jurisdictions require dedicated open space as a percentage of site development through local zoning ordinances. When used well, that "percentage" of open land can generate tremendous value in the community. Open space that draws people to it in their daily activities becomes a vital destination, creating a strong sense of local place. Unfortunately many planning efforts only meet the letter of the ordinance, creating site plans that adhere to the rules, but that don't fully capture the potential value of the land.

For centuries, towns and cities inherently knew open space was the principle form-giver of urbanism. Plazas, courts and parks were places where public and private interests met. Today, we have similar opportunities to give shape to the neighborhoods in which a majority of housing consumers and renters want to live. A recent National Association of Realtors survey indicates, "sixty percent of Americans want to live in

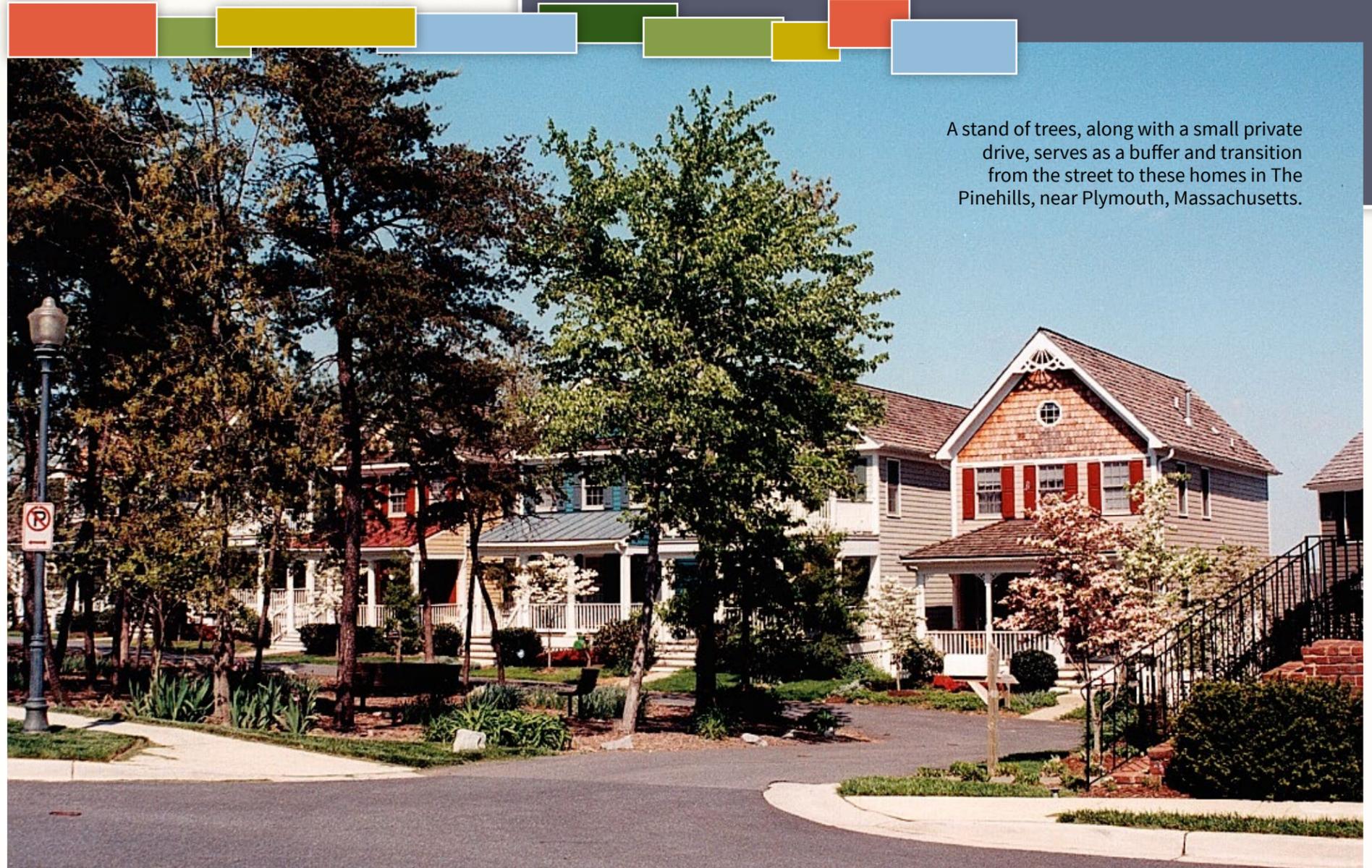
## Tools & Techniques

neighborhoods with stores and services within easy walking distance.” What better way to accommodate the desire for “walking to places,” than by creating the types of places people want to walk to?

Architects and planners realize that one does not create community through planning efforts alone. However, we can establish a framework that cultivates places people love by carefully placing buildings and lots along streets and open space. To do so, one needs to understand the intricacies of the many components of building the next great neighborhood. In their informative book *Street Design: The Secret to Great Cities and Towns*, Victor Dover and John Massengale reintroduce us to the importance of the street as a key component of placemaking. Great streets that accommodate the pedestrian, bicyclist, and motor vehicle become the network upon which to interconnect outdoor space with the private realm. A big step (pun intended) towards building community begins with creating streets people once again feel compelled to walk along.

If the street is the primary public space, how can we frame its edge to provide a transition between the public and private realm? In commercial or town center applications, this occurs fairly simply: The face of the office building is the edge and, beyond the front door, a semi-public lobby or atrium gives way to private offices. In the case of a restaurant or café, a sidewalk seating arrangement serves as a transitional space between pedestrians on a public sidewalk and the private dining room of the establishment. Similarly, when we look at the various residential buildings used in the creation of a true neighborhood, building setbacks, front yards, and porches all begin an interplay with the public street.

The front porch may be the most important linkage between public and private. When properly executed, the front porch, terrace, or stoop elevates far enough above the height of the sidewalk to provide a sense of security, transition, and privacy from the public street, yet is comfortable for easy conversation



A stand of trees, along with a small private drive, serves as a buffer and transition from the street to these homes in The Pinehills, near Plymouth, Massachusetts.

with pedestrians on the sidewalk. Porches become an extension of outdoor living rooms, allowing neighbors to interact with neighbors. There is a sense of being part of a community.

Poorly executed front porches that are aren't deep enough to comfortably arrange seating (8-foot minimum depth) or are too low to grade (less than 18 inches) tend to be underutilized because they are located too near the public space. A front yard patio that adjoins the sidewalk feels “too public” to be comfortable. The front yard, or door yard serves as an “air-lock,” the

transitional space between public sidewalk and private porch.

Now, this isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. The scale, character, setbacks, building types all must come together properly to define the public-private edge. The size and scale of the open space is also a huge contributing factor to building community. Whether a large master planned community or small infill parcel, the open space opportunities must be appropriate to their surroundings. A tour of older established neighborhoods often serves as a good example of best practices.

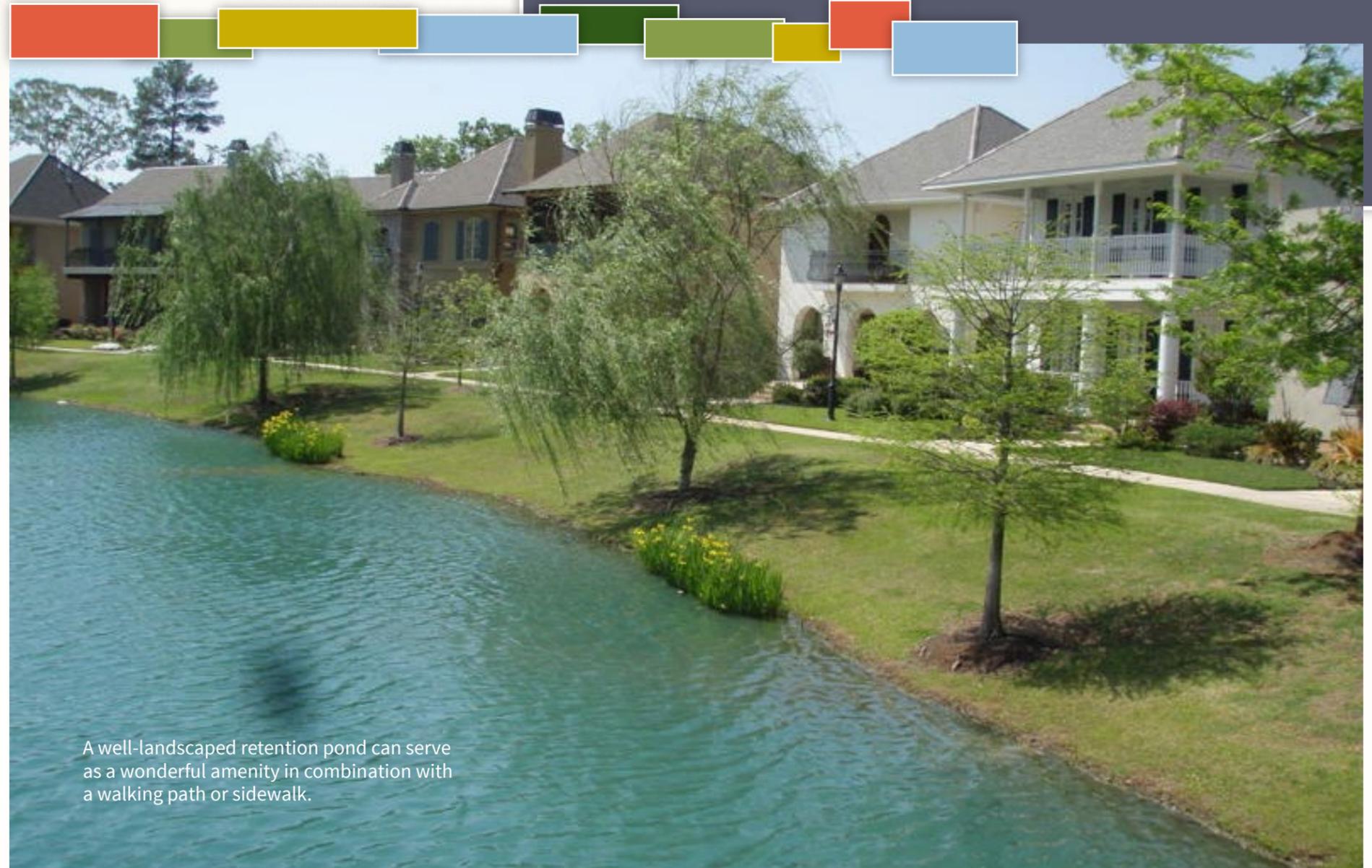
## Tools & Techniques

neighborhoods with stores and services within easy walking distance.” What better way to accommodate the desire for “walking to places,” than by creating the types of places people want to walk to?

Architects and planners realize that one does not create community through planning efforts alone. However, we can establish a framework that cultivates places people love by carefully placing buildings and lots along streets and open space. To do so, one needs to understand the intricacies of the many components of building the next great neighborhood. In their informative book *Street Design: The Secret to Great Cities and Towns*, Victor Dover and John Massengale reintroduce us to the importance of the street as a key component of placemaking. Great streets that accommodate the pedestrian, bicyclist, and motor vehicle become the network upon which to interconnect outdoor space with the private realm. A big step (pun intended) towards building community begins with creating streets people once again feel compelled to walk along.

If the street is the primary public space, how can we frame its edge to provide a transition between the public and private realm? In commercial or town center applications, this occurs fairly simply: The face of the office building is the edge and, beyond the front door, a semi-public lobby or atrium gives way to private offices. In the case of a restaurant or café, a sidewalk seating arrangement serves as a transitional space between pedestrians on a public sidewalk and the private dining room of the establishment. Similarly, when we look at the various residential buildings used in the creation of a true neighborhood, building setbacks, front yards, and porches all begin an interplay with the public street.

The front porch may be the most important linkage between public and private. When properly executed, the front porch, terrace, or stoop elevates far enough above the height of the sidewalk to provide a sense of security, transition, and privacy from the public street, yet is comfortable for easy conversation



A well-landscaped retention pond can serve as a wonderful amenity in combination with a walking path or sidewalk.

with pedestrians on the sidewalk. Porches become an extension of outdoor living rooms, allowing neighbors to interact with neighbors. There is a sense of being part of a community.

Poorly executed front porches that aren't deep enough to comfortably arrange seating (8-foot minimum depth) or are too low to grade (less than 18 inches) tend to be underutilized because they are located too near the public space. A front yard patio that adjoins the sidewalk feels “too public” to be comfortable. The front yard, or door yard serves as an “air-lock,” the

transitional space between public sidewalk and private porch.

Now, this isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. The scale, character, setbacks, building types all must come together properly to define the public-private edge. The size and scale of the open space is also a huge contributing factor to building community. Whether a large master planned community or small infill parcel, the open space opportunities must be appropriate to their surroundings. A tour of older established neighborhoods often serves as a good example of best practices.

## Tools & Techniques

neighborhoods with stores and services within easy walking distance.” What better way to accommodate the desire for “walking to places,” than by creating the types of places people want to walk to?

Architects and planners realize that one does not create community through planning efforts alone. However, we can establish a framework that cultivates places people love by carefully placing buildings and lots along streets and open space. To do so, one needs to understand the intricacies of the many components of building the next great neighborhood. In their informative book *Street Design: The Secret to Great Cities and Towns*, Victor Dover and John Massengale reintroduce us to the importance of the street as a key component of placemaking. Great streets that accommodate the pedestrian, bicyclist, and motor vehicle become the network upon which to interconnect outdoor space with the private realm. A big step (pun intended) towards building community begins with creating streets people once again feel compelled to walk along.

If the street is the primary public space, how can we frame its edge to provide a transition between the public and private realm? In commercial or town center applications, this occurs fairly simply: The face of the office building is the edge and, beyond the front door, a semi-public lobby or atrium gives way to private offices. In the case of a restaurant or café, a sidewalk seating arrangement serves as a transitional space between pedestrians on a public sidewalk and the private dining room of the establishment. Similarly, when we look at the various residential buildings used in the creation of a true neighborhood, building setbacks, front yards, and porches all begin an interplay with the public street.

The front porch may be the most important linkage between public and private. When properly executed, the front porch, terrace, or stoop elevates far enough above the height of the sidewalk to provide a sense of security, transition, and privacy from the public street, yet is comfortable for easy conversation



When properly executed, the front porch elevates far enough above the sidewalk height to provide a sense of security, transition, and privacy from the street—yet is comfortable for easy conversation with pedestrians, as the Monument Avenue neighborhood in Richmond, Virginia shows.

with pedestrians on the sidewalk. Porches become an extension of outdoor living rooms, allowing neighbors to interact with neighbors. There is a sense of being part of a community.

Poorly executed front porches that aren't deep enough to comfortably arrange seating (8-foot minimum depth) or are too low to grade (less than 18 inches) tend to be underutilized because they are located too near the public space. A front yard patio that adjoins the sidewalk feels “too public” to be comfortable. The front yard, or door yard serves as an “air-lock,” the

transitional space between public sidewalk and private porch.

Now, this isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. The scale, character, setbacks, building types all must come together properly to define the public-private edge. The size and scale of the open space is also a huge contributing factor to building community. Whether a large master planned community or small infill parcel, the open space opportunities must be appropriate to their surroundings. A tour of older established neighborhoods often serves as a good example of best practices.

## Tools & Techniques

neighborhoods with stores and services within easy walking distance.” What better way to accommodate the desire for “walking to places,” than by creating the types of places people want to walk to?

Architects and planners realize that one does not create community through planning efforts alone. However, we can establish a framework that cultivates places people love by carefully placing buildings and lots along streets and open space. To do so, one needs to understand the intricacies of the many components of building the next great neighborhood. In their informative book *Street Design: The Secret to Great Cities and Towns*, Victor Dover and John Massengale reintroduce us to the importance of the street as a key component of placemaking. Great streets that accommodate the pedestrian, bicyclist, and motor vehicle become the network upon which to interconnect outdoor space with the private realm. A big step (pun intended) towards building community begins with creating streets people once again feel compelled to walk along.

If the street is the primary public space, how can we frame its edge to provide a transition between the public and private realm? In commercial or town center applications, this occurs fairly simply: The face of the office building is the edge and, beyond the front door, a semi-public lobby or atrium gives way to private offices. In the case of a restaurant or café, a sidewalk seating arrangement serves as a transitional space between pedestrians on a public sidewalk and the private dining room of the establishment. Similarly, when we look at the various residential buildings used in the creation of a true neighborhood, building setbacks, front yards, and porches all begin an interplay with the public street.

The front porch may be the most important linkage between public and private. When properly executed, the front porch, terrace, or stoop elevates far enough above the height of the sidewalk to provide a sense of security, transition, and privacy from the public street, yet is comfortable for easy conversation



Small pocket parks like this one at Kentlands in Gaithersburg, Maryland, can offer a seamless transition from one housing type to another.

with pedestrians on the sidewalk. Porches become an extension of outdoor living rooms, allowing neighbors to interact with neighbors. There is a sense of being part of a community.

Poorly executed front porches that are aren't deep enough to comfortably arrange seating (8-foot minimum depth) or are too low to grade (less than 18 inches) tend to be underutilized because they are located too near the public space. A front yard patio that adjoins the sidewalk feels “too public” to be comfortable. The front yard, or door yard serves as an “air-lock,” the

transitional space between public sidewalk and private porch.

Now, this isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. The scale, character, setbacks, building types all must come together properly to define the public-private edge. The size and scale of the open space is also a huge contributing factor to building community. Whether a large master planned community or small infill parcel, the open space opportunities must be appropriate to their surroundings. A tour of older established neighborhoods often serves as a good example of best practices.

## Tools & Techniques

neighborhoods with stores and services within easy walking distance.” What better way to accommodate the desire for “walking to places,” than by creating the types of places people want to walk to?

Architects and planners realize that one does not create community through planning efforts alone. However, we can establish a framework that cultivates places people love by carefully placing buildings and lots along streets and open space. To do so, one needs to understand the intricacies of the many components of building the next great neighborhood. In their informative book *Street Design: The Secret to Great Cities and Towns*, Victor Dover and John Massengale reintroduce us to the importance of the street as a key component of placemaking. Great streets that accommodate the pedestrian, bicyclist, and motor vehicle become the network upon which to interconnect outdoor space with the private realm. A big step (pun intended) towards building community begins with creating streets people once again feel compelled to walk along.

If the street is the primary public space, how can we frame its edge to provide a transition between the public and private realm? In commercial or town center applications, this occurs fairly simply: The face of the office building is the edge and, beyond the front door, a semi-public lobby or atrium gives way to private offices. In the case of a restaurant or café, a sidewalk seating arrangement serves as a transitional space between pedestrians on a public sidewalk and the private dining room of the establishment. Similarly, when we look at the various residential buildings used in the creation of a true neighborhood, building setbacks, front yards, and porches all begin an interplay with the public street.

The front porch may be the most important linkage between public and private. When properly executed, the front porch, terrace, or stoop elevates far enough above the height of the sidewalk to provide a sense of security, transition, and privacy from the public street, yet is comfortable for easy conversation



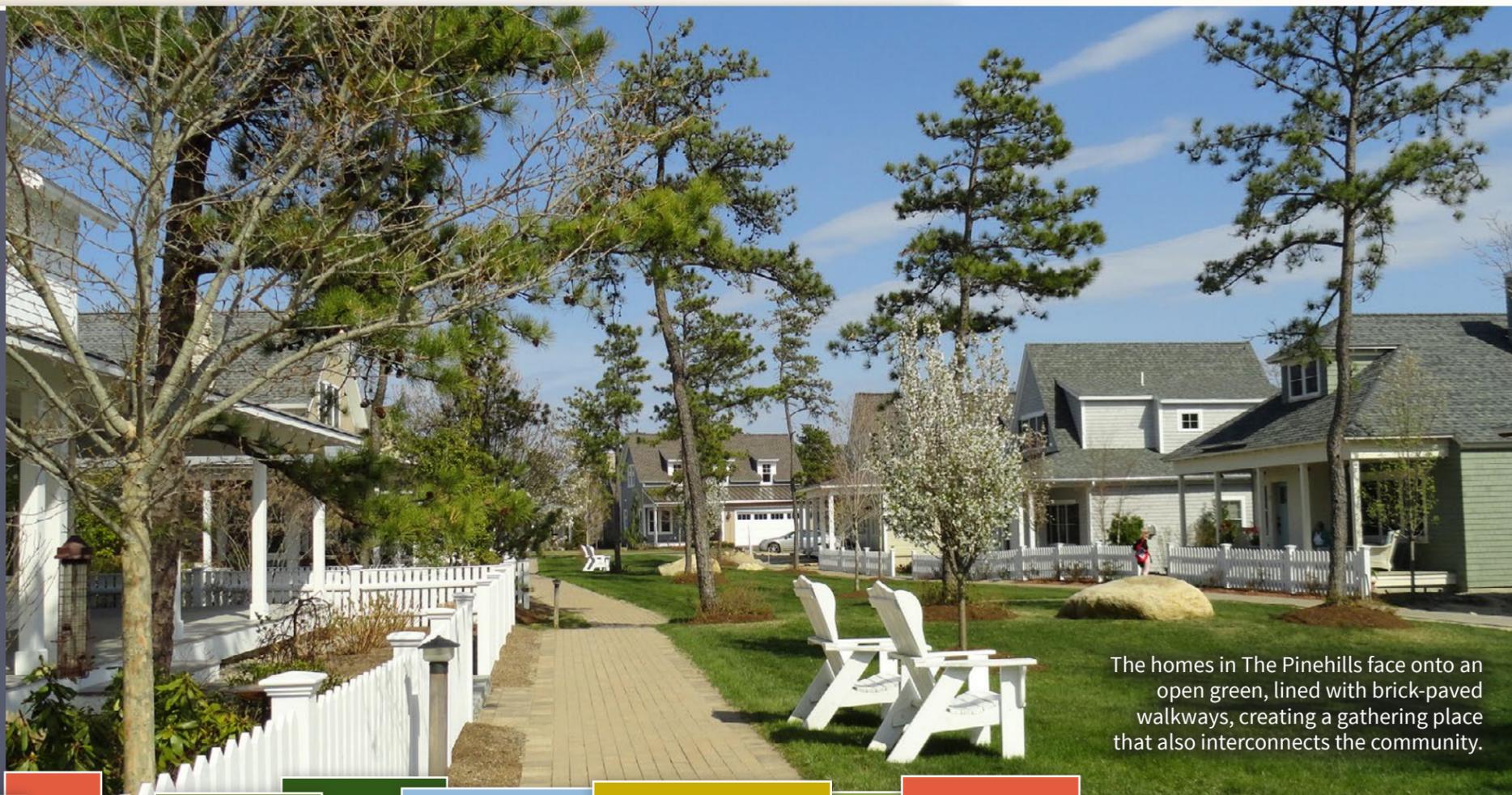
The value of well-designed open space goes well beyond the lots directly on it. A home with a view from down the street, within a short walking distance, or perhaps just the location you drive by each day, all draw from the value created by a well-done open space.

with pedestrians on the sidewalk. Porches become an extension of outdoor living rooms, allowing neighbors to interact with neighbors. There is a sense of being part of a community.

Poorly executed front porches that are aren't deep enough to comfortably arrange seating (8-foot minimum depth) or are too low to grade (less than 18 inches) tend to be underutilized because they are located too near the public space. A front yard patio that adjoins the sidewalk feels “too public” to be comfortable. The front yard, or door yard serves as an “air-lock,” the

transitional space between public sidewalk and private porch.

Now, this isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. The scale, character, setbacks, building types all must come together properly to define the public-private edge. The size and scale of the open space is also a huge contributing factor to building community. Whether a large master planned community or small infill parcel, the open space opportunities must be appropriate to their surroundings. A tour of older established neighborhoods often serves as a good example of best practices.



The homes in The Pinehills face onto an open green, lined with brick-paved walkways, creating a gathering place that also interconnects the community.

### USING NATURAL FEATURES

Many master planned communities use existing natural features to create useable open space. Waterways, tree stands, and topographic obstacles can all be integrated into a network of community openness. In larger communities, open space should be varied between natural and formal. Small pocket parks within a larger community can offer a seamless transition from one housing type to another. Larger parks provide opportunities to vary lot sizes around the amenity, utilizing the openness to relieve the density of smaller lots and attached housing.

Using existing natural elements also preserves the character and ambiance of the given location. A grove of large, mature

trees within an attached green can add an atmosphere of maturity to a new community that would not otherwise exist. Wooded areas also make memorable community gathering places, great landmarks, and desirable locations for homes. Even a single mature tree adds tremendous value to an otherwise barren green space.

Each special outdoor environment should have a unique character and purpose, yet all should work closely together to interconnect through a network of paths, sidewalks, and streets. The scale of each space should be appropriate to the size and number of dwellings to be built upon it. Lot prices should reflect the special nature of their location within the master plan. Lots

that front on special places deserve premiums for their location; however, the value of well-designed open space goes well beyond the lots directly upon it. Open spaces one can view from a home, that are within a short walking distance, or that offer drive-by views all create value.

Water also serves as a magnet for attracting people and activity. Whether using a small stream bed within public open space or creating a stormwater retention pond as a focal point, great value can be developed by designing the required drainage an amenity. Too many communities treat stormwater retention as an engineering issue without aesthetically enhancing a potential asset.

Often a pond is hidden behind a chain-link fence at the rear of some lots, ostensibly to “secure” the pond from children who might be tempted to play in the water. To the contrary, isolating a pond where it is not in sight and behind a physical barrier makes it a greater hazard, because if someone were to fall in, there is no one there to see them! Landscaping a pond that encourages activity at the water’s edge within public view seems a much better solution.

Communities of all size and scale can benefit greatly from flexible, useable open space. The best places begin with a solid framework of open spaces and a network of streets, paths, and sidewalks to connect them. Abundant examples and prototypes exist in America’s great cities and neighborhoods. Enjoy them as you think about creating the next great neighborhood! ▲

Michael Medick is Land Planning Market Leader for BSB Design in Des Moines, Iowa.



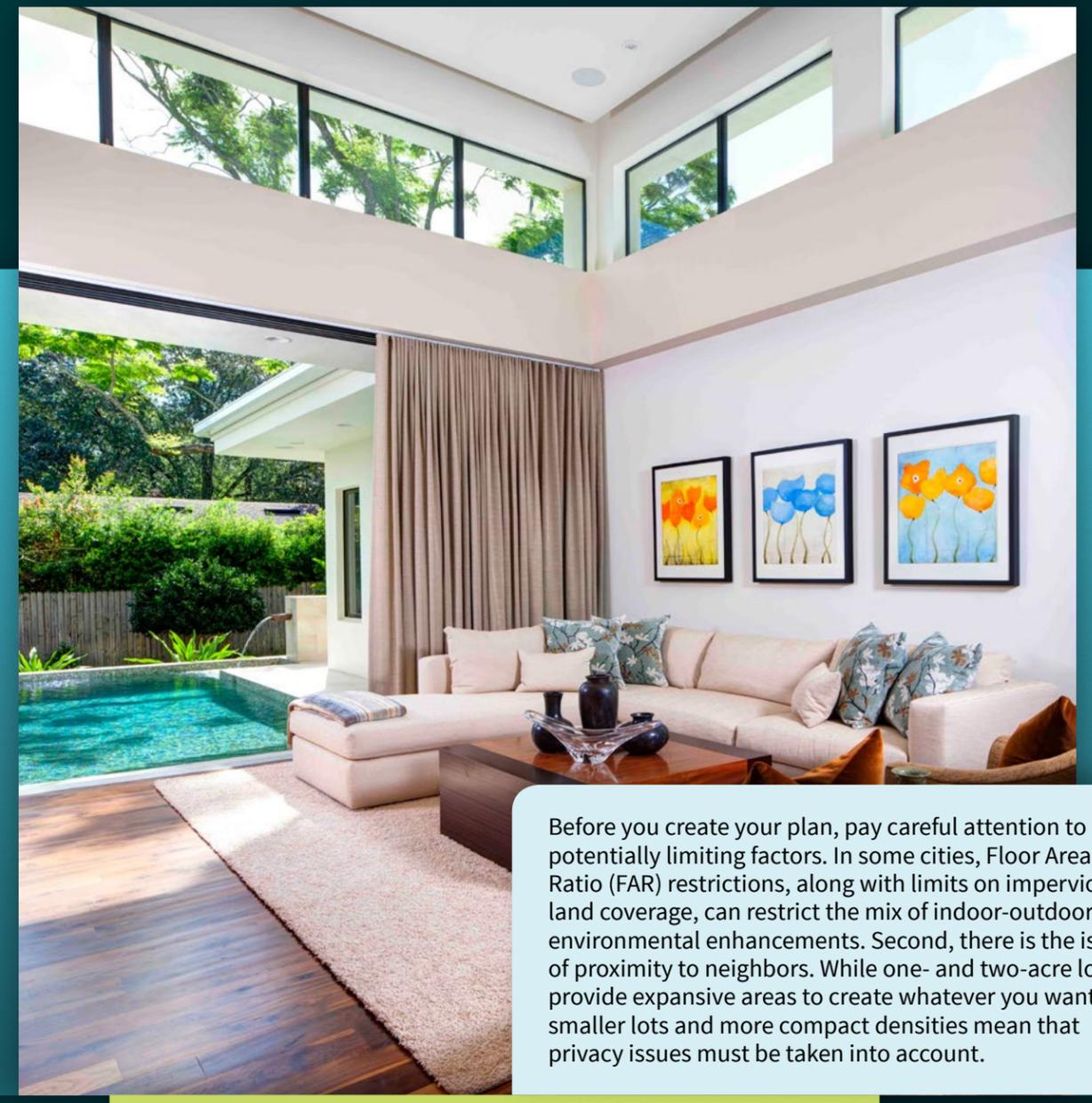
# designing beautiful TRANSITIONAL spaces

By Phil Kean

The trend toward blurring the lines between indoors and out continues to grow. Here's how to create the alfresco atmosphere home owners love.

Architecturally, many homes now blur the line between outside and inside. Many of the same materials, surfaces, cabinetry, lighting fixtures, appliances, and even fireplaces that used to be only found inside are now finding their way into outdoor areas. The growing demand for homes that flow naturally from the inside out has fostered the creation of transitional areas that are neither completely inside nor completely outside. Here's how to do them well:

**Phil Kean** is President of Phil Kean Design Group in Winter Park, Florida.



Before you create your plan, pay careful attention to potentially limiting factors. In some cities, Floor Area Ratio (FAR) restrictions, along with limits on impervious land coverage, can restrict the mix of indoor-outdoor environmental enhancements. Second, there is the issue of proximity to neighbors. While one- and two-acre lots provide expansive areas to create whatever you want, smaller lots and more compact densities mean that privacy issues must be taken into account.



# designing beautiful TRANSITIONAL spaces

By Phil Kean

The trend toward blurring the lines between indoors and out continues to grow. Here's how to create the alfresco atmosphere home owners love.

Architecturally, many homes now blur the line between outside and inside. Many of the same materials, surfaces, cabinetry, lighting fixtures, appliances, and even fireplaces that used to be only found inside are now finding their way into outdoor areas. The growing demand for homes that flow naturally from the inside out has fostered the creation of transitional areas that are neither completely inside nor completely outside. Here's how to do them well:

**Phil Kean** is President of Phil Kean Design Group in Winter Park, Florida.



Use flooring, expansive glass walls and doors, automated screens, and extended roofs to make sure transitional "rooms" can be easily adapted to varying weather conditions and lifestyle needs throughout the year. This approach enables homeowners to quickly reconfigure their living environments to meet changing weather and other environmental conditions.



# designing beautiful TRANSITIONAL spaces

By Phil Kean

The trend toward blurring the lines between indoors and out continues to grow. Here's how to create the alfresco atmosphere home owners love.

Architecturally, many homes now blur the line between outside and inside. Many of the same materials, surfaces, cabinetry, lighting fixtures, appliances, and even fireplaces that used to be only found inside are now finding their way into outdoor areas. The growing demand for homes that flow naturally from the inside out has fostered the creation of transitional areas that are neither completely inside nor completely outside. Here's how to do them well:

Phil Kean is President of Phil Kean Design Group in Winter Park, Florida.



People love outdoor pools (even if they don't swim) because they provide an attractive water feature. Swimming pools are at their best when they're incorporated into the overall design of the home. In new construction, integrate the pool into the structure, creating a seamless transition between the house and the water.



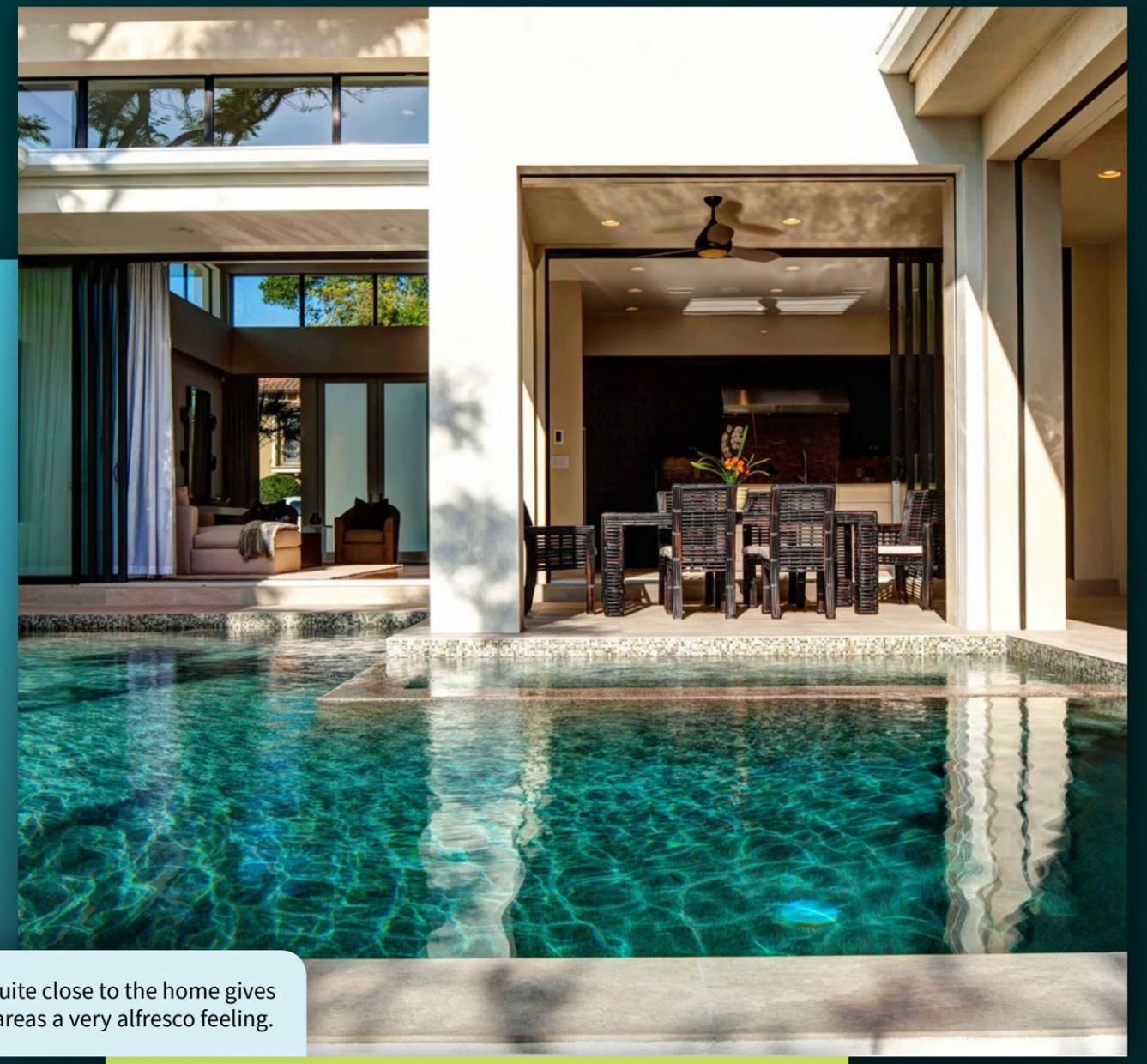
# designing beautiful TRANSITIONAL spaces

By Phil Kean

The trend toward blurring the lines between indoors and out continues to grow. Here's how to create the alfresco atmosphere home owners love.

Architecturally, many homes now blur the line between outside and inside. Many of the same materials, surfaces, cabinetry, lighting fixtures, appliances, and even fireplaces that used to be only found inside are now finding their way into outdoor areas. The growing demand for homes that flow naturally from the inside out has fostered the creation of transitional areas that are neither completely inside nor completely outside. Here's how to do them well:

**Phil Kean** is President of Phil Kean Design Group in Winter Park, Florida.



Siting pools quite close to the home gives indoor living areas a very alfresco feeling.



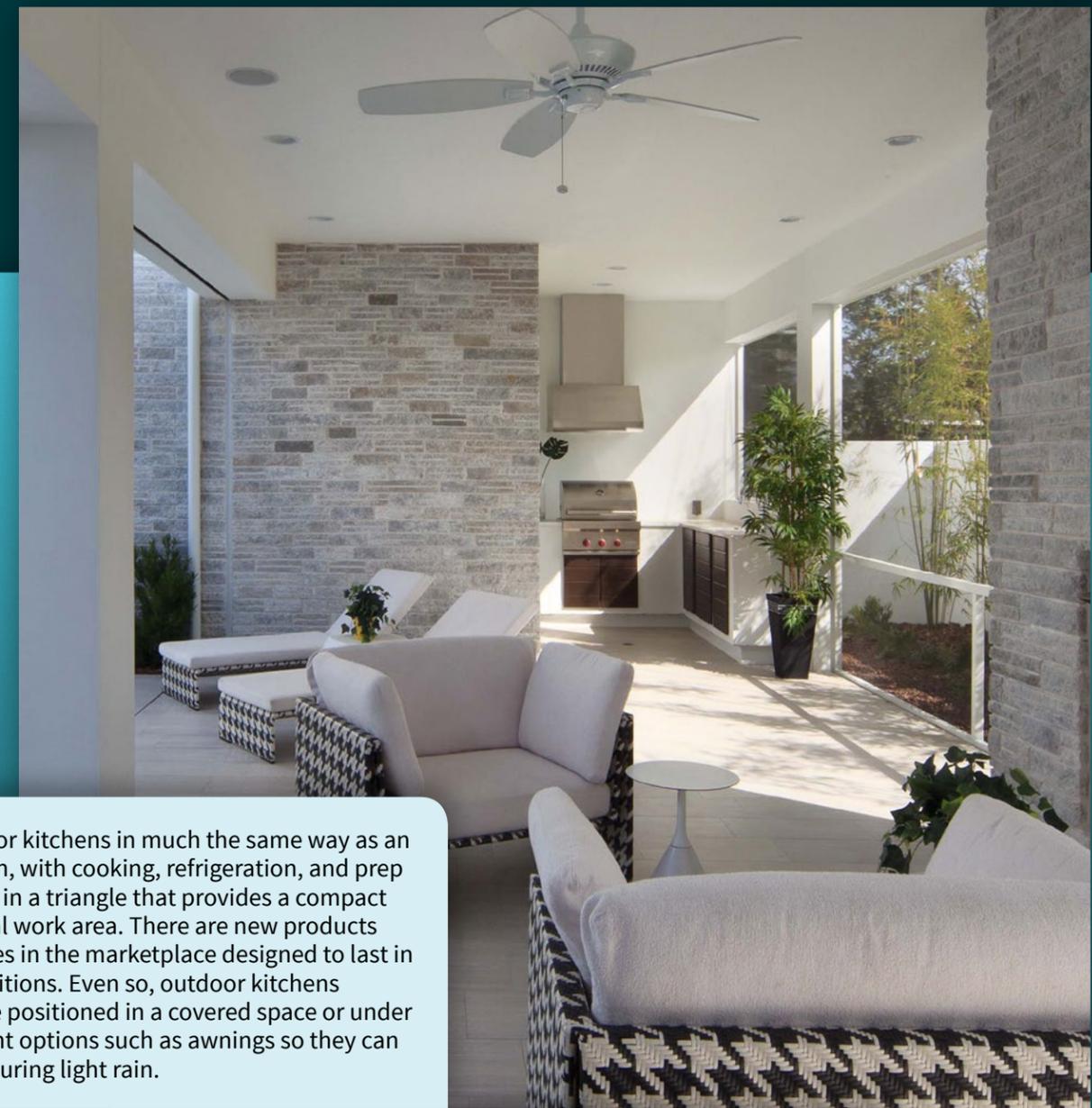
# designing beautiful TRANSITIONAL spaces

By Phil Kean

The trend toward blurring the lines between indoors and out continues to grow. Here's how to create the alfresco atmosphere home owners love.

Architecturally, many homes now blur the line between outside and inside. Many of the same materials, surfaces, cabinetry, lighting fixtures, appliances, and even fireplaces that used to be only found inside are now finding their way into outdoor areas. The growing demand for homes that flow naturally from the inside out has fostered the creation of transitional areas that are neither completely inside nor completely outside. Here's how to do them well:

**Phil Kean** is President of Phil Kean Design Group in Winter Park, Florida.



Design outdoor kitchens in much the same way as an indoor kitchen, with cooking, refrigeration, and prep areas laid out in a triangle that provides a compact and functional work area. There are new products and appliances in the marketplace designed to last in outdoor conditions. Even so, outdoor kitchens should still be positioned in a covered space or under nonpermanent options such as awnings so they can still be used during light rain.



# designing beautiful TRANSITIONAL spaces

By Phil Kean

The trend toward blurring the lines between indoors and out continues to grow. Here's how to create the alfresco atmosphere home owners love.

Architecturally, many homes now blur the line between outside and inside. Many of the same materials, surfaces, cabinetry, lighting fixtures, appliances, and even fireplaces that used to be only found inside are now finding their way into outdoor areas. The growing demand for homes that flow naturally from the inside out has fostered the creation of transitional areas that are neither completely inside nor completely outside. Here's how to do them well:

**Phil Kean** is President of Phil Kean Design Group in Winter Park, Florida.



Indoor kitchens, especially when combined with counters that extend into bars, can serve as transitional areas themselves and provide everything needed for outdoor entertainment.

