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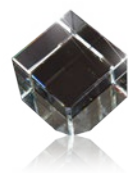
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ON THE COVER:

With its two iconic buildings, Stadium Place has helped revitalize Seattle's downtown. The project's thoughtful design brought it top honors in NAHB's Multifamily Pillars of the Industry awards.



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DESIGNED TO LAST

By Kevin Holdridge

Factors like budget, size, and room count must be considered in conjunction with siting in relation to topography, solar orientation and other elements of the project.

WERNER SEGARRA PHOTOGRAPHY

Styles come and go—but a great home remains appealing for decades. Here's how to design a custom home that will endure changing tastes through the years.

Designing a custom home to withstand the test of time while meeting the expectations of a homeowner is no easy task. Architects and designers must consider the owner's budget, desired room count and overall size of the home, and weave in specification expectations, style, and up-and-coming lifestyle trends. Complicating matters further is that not all lots are created equal. There may be unique restrictions, undesirable or desirable visual aspects, and other challenges like topography, solar orientation, and acoustical site planning. All of these impact the design and siting of a home.



FIRST APPROACH

With all of these competing influences and considerations, where does one begin? The first thing to consider when designing a custom home is the overall budget. Once a realistic budget is established, the design process can begin with a site visit that will identify the unique advantages and challenges of the property. Driveways and approaches from the street should be determined early on, as these could influence curb appeal and floor plan layout. Next, establish finish floor elevations with a mind to reduce foundation costs to the homeowner and minimize site disturbance. For steep lots, it pays to obtain a topography map from a local surveyor to accurately formulate a plan for wall heights as well as the proposed cut and fill of the land. Studying the topography is extremely important, since many dollars can either be saved or wasted at this stage.

ON THE DRAFTING TABLE

Site analysis completed, a designer can move on to scripting room counts, room sizes, and flow of the home. A timeless design will be thoughtful in its room sizes, room counts, and traffic patterns to best meet the needs of both the new homeowner and future families. If 1,000-square-foot living rooms are trending this year for some reason but have never before strayed far from 400 square feet, a timeless design will more often than not reflect historical living room sizing. In addition, designers should steer clear of incorporating room types that are quick to go out of style. For example, the past couple of years saw pet grooming stations and rooms incorporated into many multifamily projects, but they are leaving just as quickly as they came.

The livability of a home is a vital part of fine tuning the floor plan, and creating spaces for family activities is a must.

When looking at livability, be careful of the influence of design trends and fads, as these can severely date a home. What was commonplace in 1950, for instance, probably wouldn't be desired today. That said, some trends are actually lifestyle shifts; for example, technology in the home seems to be consistently incorporated, and an educated guess reveals that technology will likely continue to be a part of our home designs for centuries to come. As a result, bulky built-in cabinets have been replaced with open wall space for large flat screen televisions; charging stations, drop zones, and indoor-outdoor living areas are all evolving into our floor plans because of the way we live in homes today. These trends will likely persist in the future, transformed from trendy to timeless.

While designing the floor plan, a good designer will take special care to create specific traffic patterns throughout the home. A proper flow from room to room as well as the functionality of each room must be considered. Designing rooms with typical furniture placements better helps everyone visualize these traffic patterns. Furniture should be placed in a way to create desired primary and secondary views throughout the home.

When designing any home, it is important to acknowledge that not every square foot of a home costs the same. A designer must understand what building materials, finishes, and appliances the client is requesting. In the case of a speculative home, include what would be expected for a particular location. Sticking to vernacular finishes and materials will also help to ensure that the home withstands the test of time.

“Some trends are actually lifestyle shifts; [and] will likely continue to be part of our home designs for centuries to come.”

TIMELESS STYLE COMBINES WITH PERSONAL TASTE

To convey a timeless style, should a designer use Gothic or Mid-Century Modern elements?

Neither. Rather, a timeless home will borrow from the Greeks when it comes to details and architectural features. Drawing upon Grecian design elements—columns, detailed moldings, balance and proportions—creates home design that will outlast the rest of the neighborhood. These elements have appeared relentlessly throughout the centuries and will likely continue to dominate classic home design thanks to the style's emphasis on human scale and proportions.

Yet timeless design does not need to dampen personal taste and style. Many homeowners are afraid to customize their homes due to the dreaded unknown fear of resale. However, as a rule of thumb, if homeowners plan on living in the home more than five years, they should make it their own. A timeless floor plan and overall design will ensure that the home will appeal to buyers for years to come, and the current homeowner can switch up paint colors and other interior design elements to personalize the home in the meantime.

Homeownership is one of the biggest investments a person can make, and a timeless home design will help protect this investment for decades.

TRENDY OR TIMELESS?

Lifestyle trends do change, so it's often difficult to tell whether a trend will last and become timeless, or become dreadfully dated. A designer can often determine if something is more trendy than timeless by evaluating its history and purpose. Why did the trend come about? Does this trend answer a need? Keep in mind that perceived needs vary across income levels. Take a look at the slideshow for examples. 🏠



CHRIS MAYER PHOTOGRAPHY

INDOOR-OUTDOOR LIVING SPACES? TIMELESS.

As homeowners develop better work-life balances (or simply use technology to work from the patio more frequently) more are finding themselves with time to spend outdoors. This is increasing the need for better transitional and outdoor living spaces. It is unlikely that the culture will take a step back.

Kevin Holdridge is President of KDH Residential Design in Huntersville, North Carolina.



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WERNER SEGARRA PHOTOGRAPHY

COLORS? TRENDY AND TIMELESS.

Is there any particular need that would spark a homeowner to paint the kitchen harvest gold or purchase pink tubs and toilets for the bath? Aside from personal taste of homeowners and paint manufacturers, no. However, some colors—neutrals—do appear over and over again throughout the decades. Neutrals are timeless and classic, and they don’t scream “1970s bachelor pad!” or “21st century industrial!”

Kevin Holdridge is President of KDH Residential Design in Huntersville, North Carolina.



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DARIUS KUZMIKAS

FLEX SPACE? TIMELESS.

Living rooms and home offices may be fading into history, but flex space remains. Many homeowners opt for great rooms over formal living space, and people are working from their bedrooms and kitchen tables rather than home offices. But flex space that can become a guest room, game room or work space will stand the test of time.

Kevin Holdridge is President of KDH Residential Design in Huntersville, North Carolina.



Creating Community Identity

By Jim Constantine



Whether natural or planned, open spaces and parks balance the built environment and create a sense of place.



If creating a community is akin to building homes, then the “great rooms” of many neighborhoods are the parks and open spaces where residents go to relax, recreate, and socialize. Open spaces can range in size and

function from intimate courtyards and pedestrian mews, to neighborhood greens and squares, to large-scale community parks. When properly located, designed, and programmed, parks can create a special identity for

a community, enhance livability, and raise property values. Striking the right balance between the built environment and open space has benefits, which are demonstrated in many vibrant neighborhoods, old and new. Park systems that wind along watercourses, greenbelts that wrap the edge of a community, and trail systems

that link residents and amenities are some of the most desirable features for connecting with nature. Traditional neighborhoods designed around public squares gain character from that park space, adding value for adjacent homes as well as those located several blocks away. Some of America’s most prestigious neighborhoods have demonstrated the property value premium for residences fronting the edge of parks where views of nature are visible from

Parks and open spaces are like the great room of a home: they are the places people go to relax, recreate, and socialize.



Mews and paseos allow homes to front directly on a pedestrian-only open space without an intervening street.



Homes surrounding a green or square should be designed to frame the open space.

the interiors of homes. Urban infill housing is more successful if integrated with “re-greening” strategies such as creating pocket parks and community gardens on vacant lots, or refurbishing neglected public parks.

LETTING IN NATURE

Watercourses, wooded areas, hedgerows, hills, and other existing conditions can help imbue a community with special character. While some sites are bestowed with more natural beauty than others, ecological features should

be retained and incorporated in a way that shapes a unique identity for a community. Where nature meets neighborhood, there are opportunities for varying design approaches that range from bringing the “wild” into the community, to remaking the natural edge to look as picturesque as a romantic landscape painting. The challenges associated with storm water management can also be turned into opportunities—drainage sheds, natural swales, and wet pond basins can provide form to the layout of a community.



Natural features can be highlighted through a “window” where many homes have views of the open space.

Natural features are sometimes made exclusive to a limited number of lots that back directly to the open space, while limiting or preventing access by others

in the community. In another more inclusive approach, natural features can be highlighted through a “window” where the neighborhood is oriented to maximize the number of lots with open space views. This method provides views for homes across the street and a block or more away from the open space. Unfortunately, present-day environmental regulations are making it increasingly difficult to allow humans to do what they have done for thousands of years, which is build communities in close proximity to natural features.

Watercourses, wooded areas, hedgerows, hills, and other existing conditions can help imbue a community with special character.

THE FRAMEWORK OF NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Where natural features do not exist or are insignificant, the community design toolbox includes a wide palette of techniques for creating internal open spaces to serve as focal points, act as gathering places and frame vistas within the community. Properly designed parks can be strategically used to transition the interface between different housing types, densities, and price points in a community. Planned open spaces can be designed into the fabric of a community across a range of sizes.

At the smallest scale, there is the courtyard and mews, sometimes called a paseo. Mews allow homes to front directly on a pedestrian-only open space without an intervening street. This configuration appeals to residents who want direct access from their home to an intimate open space shared with a limited number of neighbors.



For residents of multifamily homes, townhomes, or small-lot single-family homes, direct connection to a communal outdoor space can help offset living in a residence with minimal outdoor space. Greens and squares are some of the most recognizable and popular forms of neighborhood parks. These open spaces are usually bounded by streets across from which homes are ideally designed to help frame the open space. Greens

can be designed in a variety of shape—including irregular forms with informal landscape design. Squares are usually rectilinear and more formal in design. To make the most of open space, homes should be strategically designed with raised finished first floor grades and floor plans that capture park views within interior living spaces. Porches and balconies can optimize views of green space and park activity while creating



Direct connection to a communal outdoor space can help offset the effects of living in a multifamily residence or other homes with little or no outdoor space.



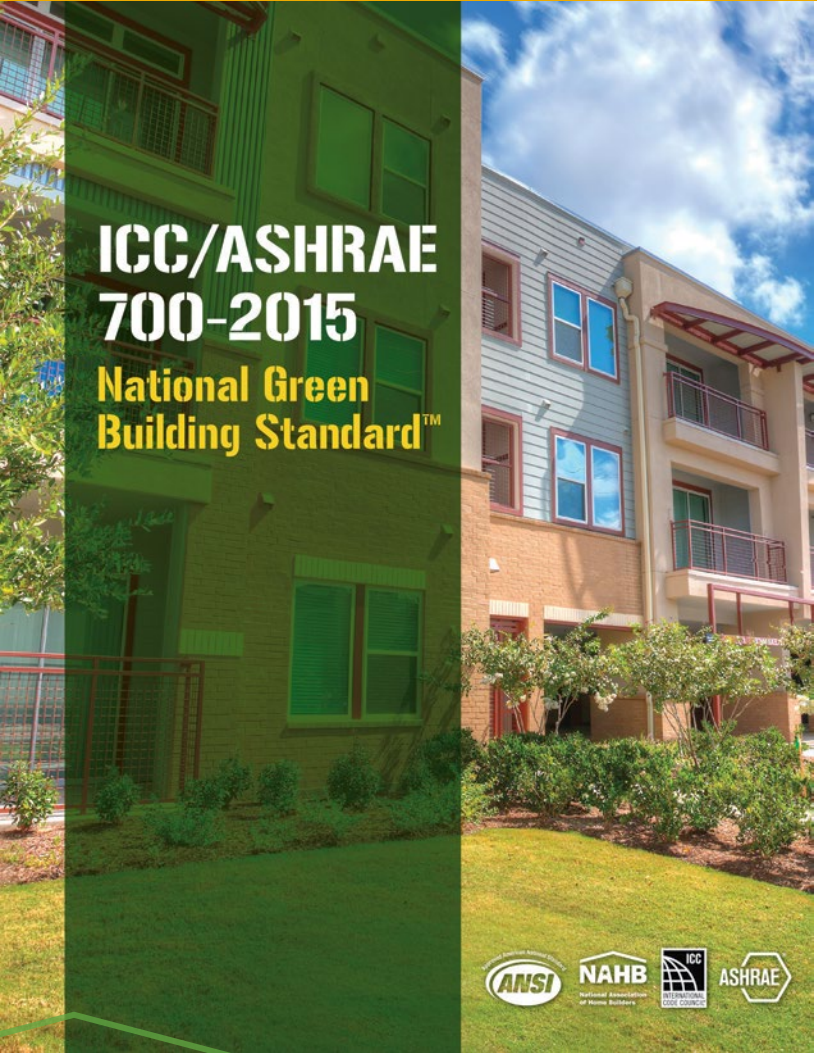
incidental “eyes on the park” surveillance from neighboring homes. Many parents feel that these type of highly visible parks are safer for children than secluded open spaces.

The popularity and value of parks has been demonstrated time and again by the lot premiums buyers are willing to pay to live near these features. While homes located adjacent to a park are usually priced with a higher open space premium, thoughtfully located open spaces within a neighborhood can add value to homes on otherwise undifferentiated interior blocks. Many homebuyers perceive an enhanced value for homes that are located down the street or within a neighborhood that takes its

Highly visible parks are often considered safer for children than secluded open space.

identity from a park. If properly planned, parks can establish places of special identity, social gathering, and recreation. They can truly enhance livability and value within the community that may even surpass that provided by natural amenities. ▲

Jim Constantine is Principal in the Princeton, New Jersey office of Looney Ricks Kiss.



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What's *Trending:*

The Design Elements and Colors of 2016

By Ruthanne Hanlon



Tweet it out: Social media and demographic changes are impacting trends faster than ever. Here's what's [#hotrightnow](#).

Trends are a critical aspect of our ever-changing world and are a product of consumer creation. Social media, technology, and demographic shifts are pushing trends across surfaces, market segments, and continents faster than any other time in history.

Before implementing trends as a marketing tool, it's important to first consider your buyer, since trends vary from one demographic to another. Understanding current demographics—today's various consumer groups—will provide insight into their color and design preferences.

TRENDING FOR MILLENNIALS

Millennial buyers, our largest demographic, want clean lines and contemporary styling—and they are willing to sacrifice space in exchange. Lack of ornamentation is significant and intentional. While bright, energetic colors hold a powerful attractiveness to them, the millennial prefers to keep those to home accents, opting instead for exteriors and interiors in industrial neutrals. Black, white, and nuanced grays are their backbone colors but the use of natural wood tones and colorful accents

KNIGHT'S ARMOR PPG1001-6

SAUTEED MUSHROOM PPG1085-5

GLACIAL ICE PPG1014-1

SHINING ARMOR PPG1003-5

PARADISE FOUND PPG1135-5



VOLCANIC ASH PPG1012-6

GEYSER PPG1138-2

WINTER PEACH PPG1060-1

CHOCOLATE MOMENT PPG1077-5

MOTHER OF PEARL PPG1100-1

warms the overall palette and is a way to express the unique color personality of the millennial homeowner.

Trends go beyond colors, of course—they influence elements both inside and outside the home. Matte blacks are currently popular on appliances, cabinetry, lighting fixtures, plumbing fixtures, countertops, furniture, and more. These black surfaces create a sleek look that references technology and implies a future-forward space. Stainless steel appliances now have a worthy competitor with the introduction of the new black stainless finish. Millennials, who grew up with granite and stainless steel, view this new finish as something different and representative of their generation.

Bathtubs continue to decline in

popularity among this group. A recent poll of millennials showed the majority do not want a bathtub in their homes, and are including them only for resale value. If they do invest in bathtubs, millennials they want them to look good and reflect their style—which is why freestanding tubs are overshadowing built-ins and will continue to do so.

Exterior trends are also shifting. While we've seen metal roofs in recent years on porches and accents, metal is now trending for siding alternatives and standing seam roofs are popular on new homes and replacement roofs; both complement contemporary homes but also work well on transitional and traditional designs. They also appeal to those seeking maintenance free structures.

WHAT GEN X WANTS

Generation X is the sandwich generation; they have their feet planted in both the millennial and Boomer camps. The Gen X generation is comfortable with computers even though they didn't grow up with them, they are highly tech capable but remember a simpler time pre-internet. In their homes, they bridge a similar divide. They appreciate the clean lines and simplicity of contemporary homes but have warm memories of the more traditional homes of their parents. Thus, transitional styling provides a happy medium, and design aspects for Gen X'ers borrow from both styles.

Just as with design styles, the color preferences of Gen X also borrow from both generations; whites, blacks, sand or stone browns and grays are staples. But for Gen X, espresso brown or midnight navy can stand in for a softer shade of black, and cooler grays are replaced with

warmer organic gray brown mixes. Wood elements warm the space on floors, feature walls, countertops and cabinets stained in natural hues.

The brass of today appeals to all demographics as a warm, bright, updated version of the finish that inundated us in the 80's. The softer look of gold-colored metals is a refreshing change to the cooler nickel and chrome finishes that ruled the industry in recent years. Brass and gold finishes are available on light fixtures, faucets and hardware offered in all design styles.

WARM IT UP FOR BOOMERS

Baby Boomers building homes today appreciate quality and craftsmanship. They find security in designs that hold more character and detail than most contemporary homes have to offer. At the same time, this generation is always renewing and redefining itself, and on the whole they are increasingly attracted

- SIENNA RED PPG1057-6
- PAID IN FULL PPG1115-6
- CONFIDENCE PPG1078-5
- WARM WASSAIL PPG1062-7
- GARILLC CLOVE PPG18-09



to homes that are more open and streamlined than they’ve had in the past. Open floorplans, abundant natural light, and authentic materials are preferred. Colors tend to be warmer for this generation; sandy beiges, muted sage greens, creamy yellows and warm off whites.

THE COLOR FOR EVERY DEMOGRAPHIC

It’s impossible to discuss trends without mentioning the current color frontrunner—gray. While it surged into popularity due to the economic downturn, it has become the hue of choice in most materials, and the appeal continues. There has been a strong and noticeable shift in shades of gray overtaking beige tones for standard wall colors, making anything else look dated in comparison. But like all trends it is evolving and changing.

Grays with warmer undertones and organic reference are strong and available

in hardwoods, tiles, countertops, paint colors, appliances, and more. Blue grays influenced by minerals are sophisticated and clean. Driftwood looks in tile, flooring, and cabinets are a popular way to utilize the gray trend while keeping the space warm and inviting with the worn aesthetic. Concrete, and concrete looks, are surging due to the interest in both gray and authentic materials. The concrete-look trend is not just for countertops but also for floors, cabinet fronts and more. Look for it to continue and become more mainstream. 🏠

Ruthanne Hanlon is Color and Design Manager at PPG Architectural Coatings in Columbus, Ohio. For more information on her PPGs forecasted color trends visit www.ppgvoiceofcolor.com/global-paint-color-trends



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By Ann Marie Moriarty

A fifth floor deck shared by both buildings overlooks the Seattle Seahawks' new Century Link Field.

Stadium Place subtly bridges the past to the future for downtown Seattle.

Billy Pettit, Senior Vice President of Pillar Properties, Seattle, won't build boring projects. He wants the company's multifamily communities to relate to their location, to add value to both their neighborhood and their city, with designs that connect with potential residents and speak their language—without shouting.

Stadium Place, the company's entry in the 2015 NAHB Multifamily Pillars of the Industry awards competition, did all that and more. It earned the respect of the entire judging panel, which named the project Multifamily Community of the Year for 2015.

IT ALL STARTED WITH THE KING DOME

The Stadium Place story began more than a decade ago, with the lackluster performance of the King Dome in downtown Seattle that resulted in its north parking lot—a brownfield site—being put on the market. The city had clustered a number of public transportation options in that area, so the site, which sat between the Pioneer Square historic

The development's southern building, The Wave, has a clean, crisp design, resembling stacked bento boxes. Each level shifts orientation slightly from those above and below.

district and the Stadium District, had a lot going for it. Pettit described it as “the largest undeveloped piece of land in downtown Seattle.”

“Anyone in the real estate business would have wanted this opportunity,” Pettit says, in spite of its complexity and risk.

A local firm, Daniels Real Estate, bought the property and looked for a partner to help them develop it. They found one... just before the real estate bust, which forced that developer to step aside. Daniels then invited Pillar Properties to partner with them on the project. Pettit agreed, knowing full well that the project was the “single largest investment our company had ever made.”

But the two firms already had a good relationship and, said Pettit, they shared the same goals: “to develop legacy assets



Nolo's chic rooftop lounge offers handsome skyline views.

and hold them for the long term.” Daniels was looking to create an iconic project, one that Pettit believed would become “the jewel in the company's portfolio.”

A DESIGN THAT TELLS A STORY

The partners saw an opportunity to create something distinctive, something that would define the south end of the city. “We didn't want two identical towers,” said Pettit. The team, including architects from Seattle's ZGF Architects, decided to tell a story through the design. One building would speak to the city's early industrial era in Pioneer Square, and the other that would express a more modern, forward-looking feeling—something more fresh and lively than anything that had yet been built downtown.

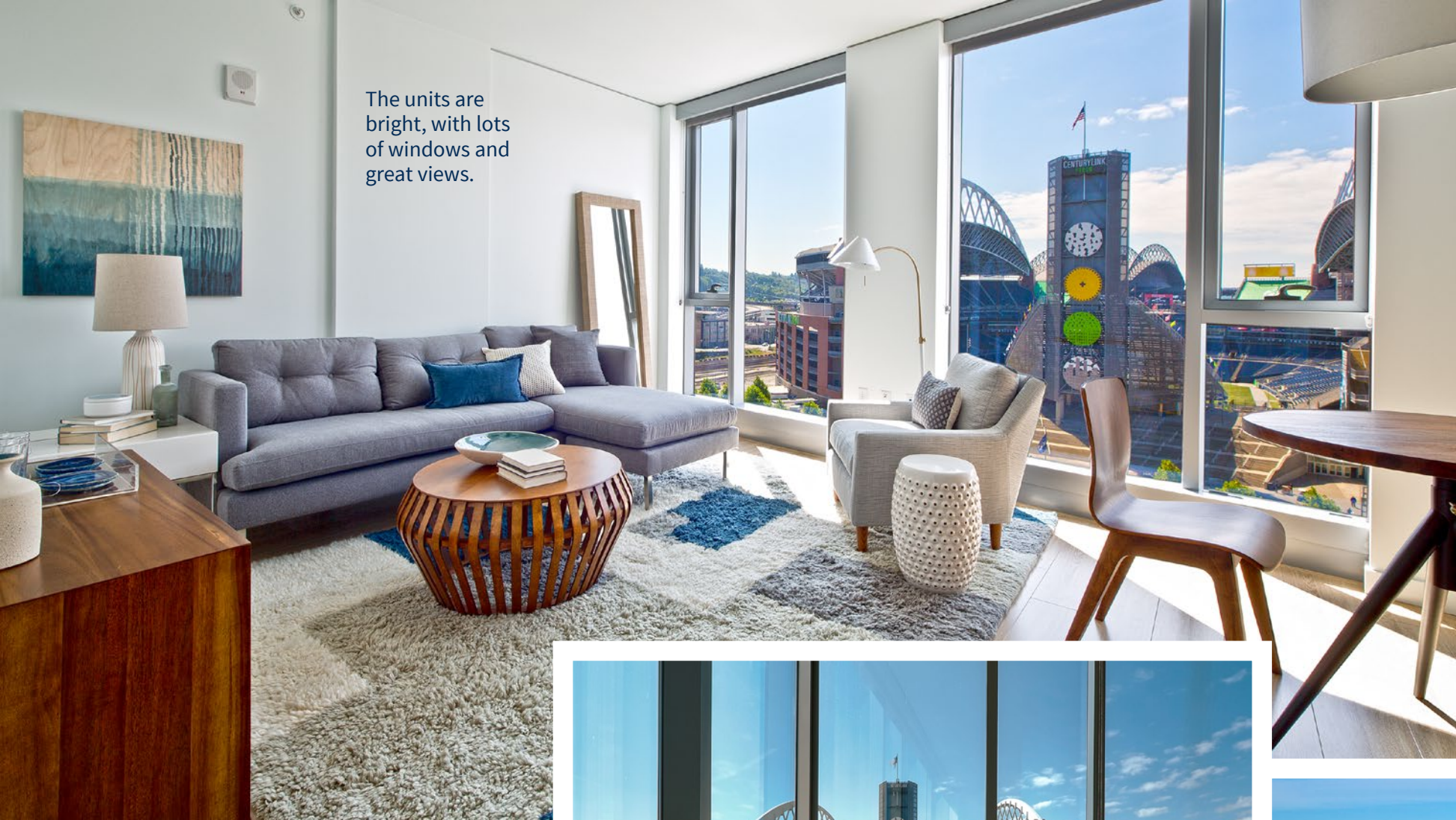
Not only were the buildings going to be different, the floor plans would be distinctively different as well. The units in Nolo

(from North Lot) would be loft-like, with high ceilings and lots of concrete.

The scale—11 stories—and the exterior would blend in with the nearby historic industrial buildings. The views look north, to the Space Needle and the hills surrounding Seattle. Nolo was built first and opened in September, 2013.

Around the corner, the Wave, a 26-story community, overlooks both the new Century Link Stadium (Seahawks) and Safeco Field (Mariners) to the south, as well as Elliott Bay to the west. The Wave has a clean, crisp design, resembling stacked bento boxes. The units are bright, with lots of windows and great views. Each level shifts orientation slightly from those above and below. The Wave was ready to welcome residents nine months after Nolo, in June, 2014.





The units are bright, with lots of windows and great views.



COME TOGETHER

The two buildings are a bridge between Seattle's history and its future. They share more than a footprint, as the fifth floor has a shared courtyard, fitness center and large common room that hosts community events. Each building also has its own rooftop deck. Nolo's roof space includes a wine bar, while the Wave's roof deck includes an area where residents can watch the football games and, of course, a sports bar.

During the planning process, the neighborhood—which

had a less than savory reputation—began to show signs of revitalization, with a few new restaurants and shops generating interest among Seattle's young urbanites. While Nolo and the Wave would inject residents into the mix for added vibrancy and

energy, that would also create a need for additional shops and services. So, except for the buildings' two lobbies and a parking garage, the rest of Stadium Place's ground floor—a little over 16,000 square feet of space—houses retail and restaurants, which helped the neighborhood become an amenity for the residents.

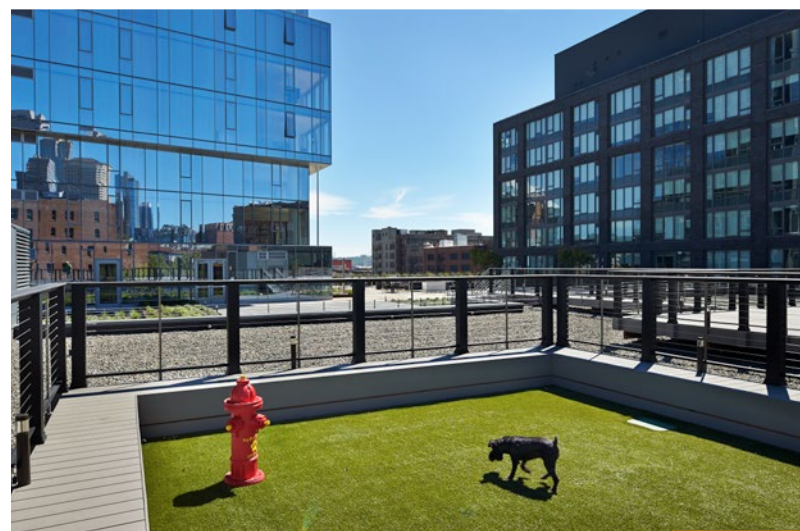
The nearby public transportation is extensive, including light rail, street car lines, buses, the Sounder commuter train, the Elliott Bay bike trail, as well as water taxis and a ferry across Elliott Bay. With all that in mind, the design and development team planned to allocate 19 percent of the development's square footage to parking—somewhat less than might ordinarily be needed for a project the size of Stadium Place. But Pettit was surprised to find few residents were ready to go car-free. Since Zip cars were also part of the mix, the variety of transportation options is proving sufficient to the needs of the residents.



An aerial view shows Century Link stadium pointing toward the Wave's stacked "bento boxes."



Each building also has its own rooftop deck. Nolo's roof space includes a wine bar, while the Wave's (shown here) includes a sports bar and an area for watching football games.



Pettit is proud of the project, both for the design and the performance—current occupancy rate is 97 percent. He says that it reflects the spirit of “a pioneering project in a pioneering location.” And, like Seattle's early pioneers, Stadium Place took a risk, and succeeded. 🏠

Ann Marie Moriarty is Communications Manager for NAHB's Multifamily and 55+ Housing Industry Councils.



AN UNEXPECTED BONUS

Football fans are aware that between Nolo's launch and the Wave's opening, there were a series of football games that culminated in the NFC playoff game at Century Link field. Seattle fans were so enthusiastic that the team began referring to them as “the 12th man” on the team. Pettit decided to salute the team and the fans by lighting up the windows in the not-yet-completed Wave in the shape of the number 12 during the playoff game. When Seahawk Richard Sherman tipped a pass headed for San Francisco Receiver Michael Crabtree, that clinched the game for the Seahawks, and a Sports Illustrated photographer caught the play . . . with the big 12 in the background, which generated lots of publicity for the development as well.

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- Scheduling (October 4, 11, 18)
- Land Acquisition & Development Finance (November 1, 8, 15)

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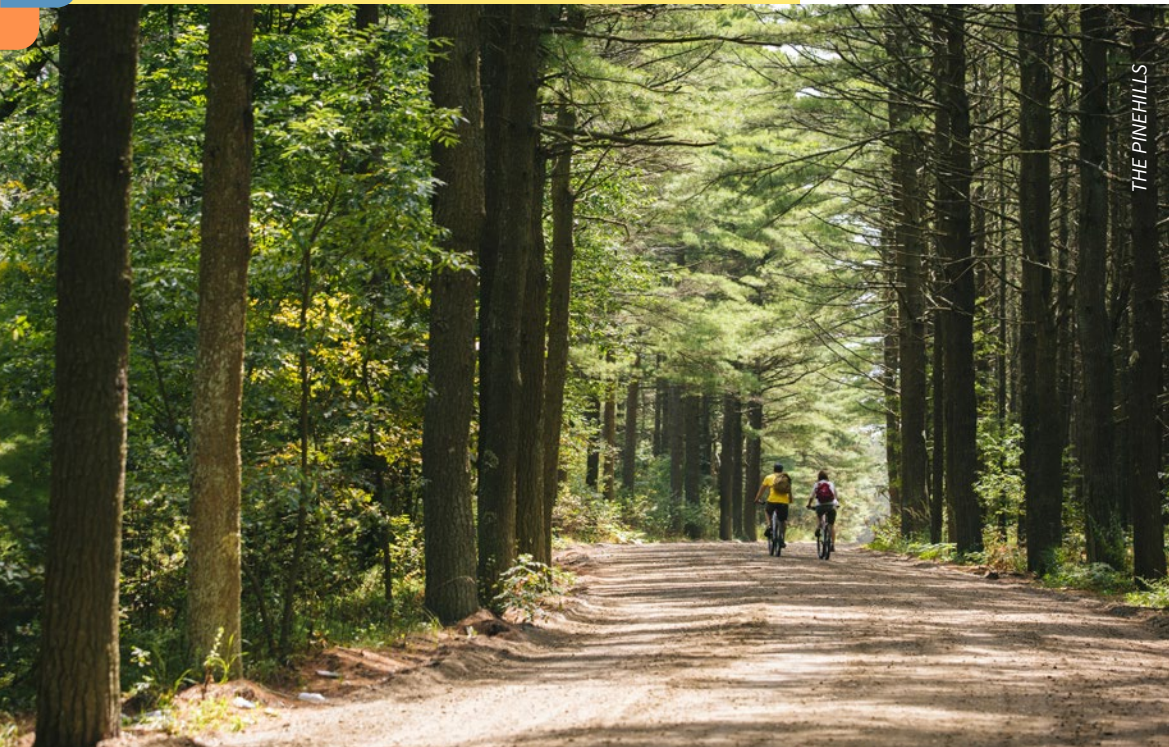




It may mean more sprawl, but home buyers in NAHB's latest consumer survey say they still love traffic-free streets, jogging trails, and lakes.

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

...on a Cul-de-sac



Can you achieve efficient land use by building high density communities with interconnected streets? Sure—but it won't be appealing to the typical home-buyer, according to NAHB's [latest consumer survey](#). More home buyers desire a suburban neighborhood of all single-family detached homes than any other community feature listed in the survey, and nearly 80 percent prefer a cul-de-sac over efficient traffic flow when given the choice.

The latest survey is one of a series conducted by NAHB, using a panel of consumers maintained by [Home Innovation Research Labs](#). The data from this particular survey were collected in September of 2015 and consist of 4,326 recent and prospective home buyers. The buyers were stratified and weighted to be representative of the age, geography (nine Census divisions), income, and race and ethnicity of homeowners in the U.S.

By Paul Emrath, Ph.D.

Proofs & Truths



Sixty-six percent of those surveyed said a park area would be “essential” or “desirable.” Fifty-four percent say a lake is “essential” or “desirable.”

Complete results are published in [Housing Preferences of the Boomer Generation](#). Although the publication emphasizes the preferences of Baby Boomers, it contains results for home buyers of all ages. A chapter of particular interest to land developers and city planners is the one on how home buyers choose a community.

RATING COMMUNITY FEATURES

Over the years, our studies have shown us it’s effective to have buyers rate many aspects of a home on the following four-tier scale:

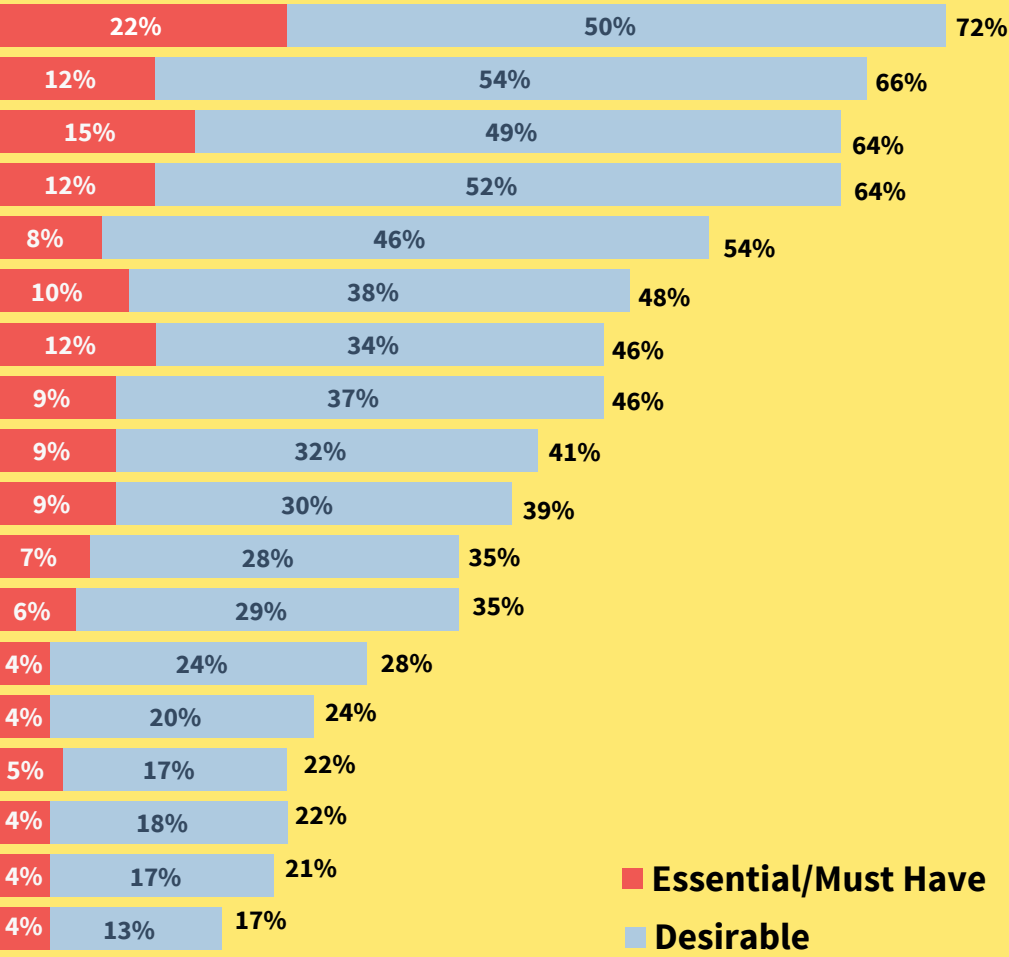
- **Do not want**—not likely to buy a home with this design or feature.
- **Indifferent**—wouldn’t influence decision.
- **Desirable**—would be seriously influenced to purchase a home because this design or feature was included.
- **Essential/Must have**—unlikely to purchase a home without this design or feature.

Figure 1
Essential and Desirable

Typically suburban	22%	50%	72%
Park area	12%	54%	66%
Near retail space	15%	49%	64%
Walking/jogging trails	12%	52%	64%
Lake	8%	46%	54%
Swimming pool	10%	38%	48%
Outdoor maintenance service	12%	34%	46%
Exercise room	9%	37%	46%
Gated to control access	9%	32%	41%
Access to public transit	9%	30%	39%
Clubhouse	7%	28%	35%
Playgrounds	6%	29%	35%
Infill	4%	24%	28%
Tennis courts	4%	20%	24%
Other mixed use	5%	17%	22%
Baseball or soccer fields	4%	18%	22%
High density	4%	17%	21%
Golf course	4%	13%	17%
Daycare center	4%	11%	15%

Figure 2
Do Not Want

Figure 3
Green Space
v. Pavement



SOURCE: 2015 HOME BUYER PREFERENCES SURVEY, NAHB

As you can see, the categories are defined in terms of their likely impact on the home purchase decision. Overall, the 2015 survey asked home buyers to rate approximately 150 features using this this scale. Nineteen of these were community features. **Figure 1** shows the percentages of home buyers rating each of these features essential and desirable.

The most desired of these features is a “typically suburban” community (defined in the questionnaire as consisting of all single-family detached homes) rated desirable or essential by 72 percent of respondents. After that comes a group of three community features rated essential or desirable by 64 to 66 percent: a park area, being near retail space, and walking or jogging trails.

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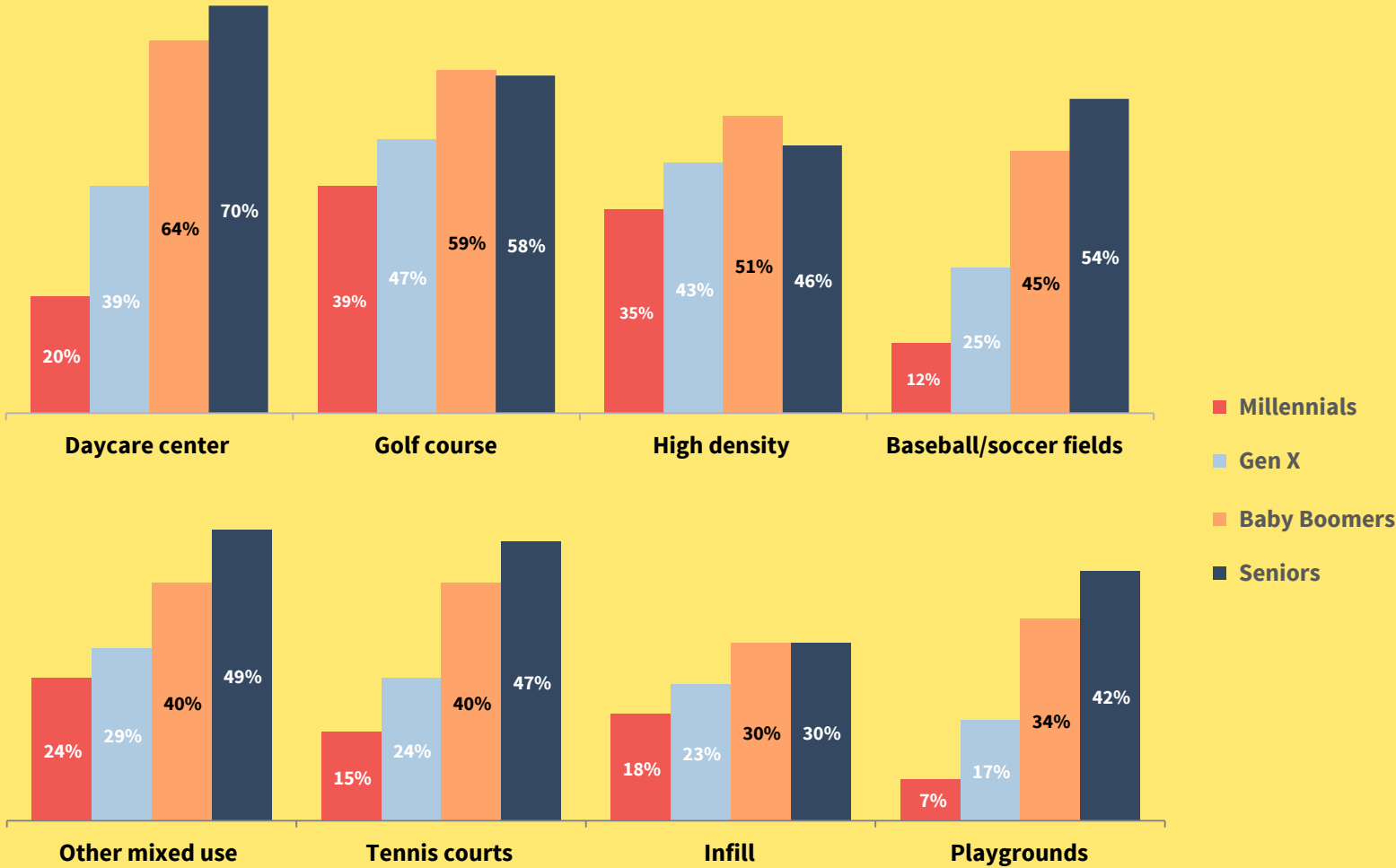
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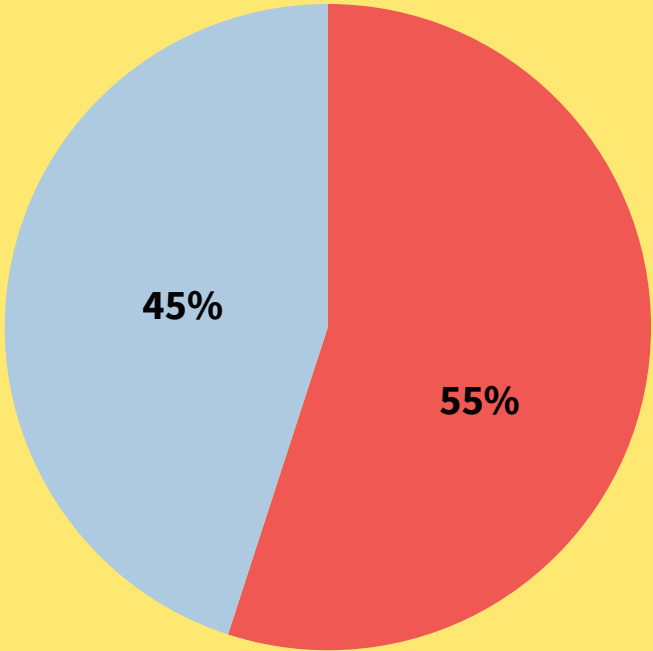
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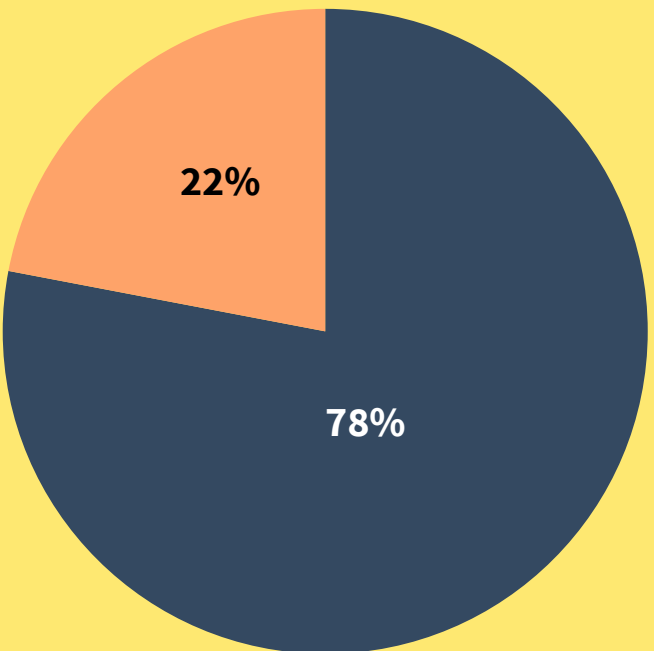
Figure 1
Essential and Desirable



■ Wider sidewalks and streets

■ Narrower sidewalks and streets with more green space

Figure 2
Do Not Want



■ A continuous, interconnected street with more efficient traffic flow

■ Home on a cul-de-sac or other street design with limited traffic flow

SOURCE: 2015 HOME BUYER PREFERENCES SURVEY, NAHB

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GREY STREET STUDIOS

Next comes a lake, rated essential or desirable by 54 percent of buyers, followed by a group of community amenities rated essential or desirable by 46 to 48 percent: a swimming pool, outdoor maintenance service, and an exercise room.

THE LESS POPULAR FEATURES

At the other end of the scale, tennis courts, other mixed use (defined as homes near office or other commercial buildings, to distinguish it from homes near retail space), baseball or soccer fields, high density (smaller lots and attached/ or multifamily buildings), a golf course, and a daycare center are each rated essential or desirable by fewer than a quarter of the home buyers.

Home buyers are not merely indifferent to the features at the bottom of **Figure 1**, but often explicitly hostile toward them. For example, 52 percent of buyers said they “do not want” (are unlikely to buy a home in a community with) a day care center, 53 percent “do not want” a golf course, and 46 percent “do not want” high density. These are three of the six highest “do not want” percentages among all 150 home and community attributes listed in the survey (only an elevator, pet washing station, and wine cellar fare worse).

A swimming pool and exercise room both rank in the Top 10 list of features those surveyed said were “essential” or “desirable.”



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Proofs & Truths



GREY STREET STUDIOS

Homes on cul-de-sacs or other designs with limited traffic flow beat out “continuous interconnected” street design by 78 to 22 percent.

High density is interesting because public policy often seeks to encourage it. The number one housing policy cited in [Policies that Work](#) (published by the Governors’ Institute of Community Design) calls for “cities and counties to permit more multi-family and higher density housing.” Yet nearly half of home buyers do not want to live in high density communities. The caveat is that the 21 percent who rate high density desirable or better, add up to a significant total in an area as large as the U.S. So high density housing can be successfully developed for a significant minority of home buyers, although most want something else.

Figure 2 shows the “do not want” percentages for the eight features at the bottom of the **Figure 1** by generation, youngest to oldest from right to left (Millennial=born 1980 or later; Gen X=born 1965 to 1979; Boomer=born 1946 to 1964; Senior=born 1945 or earlier). An interesting aspect of these relatively unpopular community features is that they tend to be rejected even more often by older home buyers.

For example, daycare centers are explicitly rejected by 70 percent of Seniors—three and half times the 20 percent rejection rate among millennials. This is the tendency you’d expect for daycare centers, but in other cases the result may be more surprising. Golf courses, for example, are sometimes considered particularly appropriate in retirement communities. But this study shows that Seniors reject golf courses more often than Gen X’ers and millennials.



STREET DESIGN

An advantage of the four-tier rating technique is that it can be applied to a large number of community features. Another section of the survey contained trade-offs, which can be useful when there are two clear alternatives, as arises in the case of street design.

The [National Complete Streets Coalition](#) recommends small blocks with interconnected streets, medians for safe crossing, wider sidewalks, and more bike lanes, all of which generally require more pavement. Yet the same coalition also advocates [green streets](#) that avoid large swaths of pavement.

So how do home buyers feel about trading off green space for pavement? They are close to evenly split: 53 percent prefer narrower sidewalks and streets with more green space, while 47 percent prefer wider sidewalks and streets (**Figure 3**).

In addition to requiring more pavement, an emphasis on street connectivity implies that designs like cul-de-sacs, which



THE PINEHILLS

A “Park area” was noted as “essential” or “desirable” by 66 percent of respondents, and “Near retail space” by 64 percent.

seek to limit through traffic, should be avoided. On this issue, home buyers as group have a clear opinion. As **Figure 3** shows, 78 percent prefer the cul-de-sac or other street design with limited traffic flow—more than triple the 22 percent who prefer the alternative of a home on a continuous street with more efficient traffic flow.

Developers planning in local jurisdictions that seem reluctant to approve subdivisions with cul-de-sacs, may find these results useful in persuading planning departments. Similarly, the consumer preferences shown in this study may persuade planners not to pursue high density to the total exclusion of historically typical suburban single-family development. 📌

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





KEVIN SYMS AND TIM BROWN AND MICHAEL DOTY

Cutting Through the Regulatory Red Tape with Development Process Efficiency

By Debbie Bassert

Long and complex land development approvals add to the rising cost of housing. But some developers have worked with municipalities to simplify things. A new NAHB report shows how.

Home prices are once again on the rise—and so are concerns about housing affordability. Many factors contribute to the cost of housing, from outdated ordinances that limit the range and mix of housing types, to environmental requirements at all levels of government that constrain land supply, to an increasing array of fees imposed on new development.

Another key factor, often left unconsidered, is the length and complexity of the development approval process itself. In many areas of the country, development approvals have gone from taking a few months to two years or more years to obtain. It is not uncommon to hear that it takes four to seven years from start to finish.

The review and approval process is an important component of the risk and expense of development, because it is not only lengthy but also unpredictable. It ties up capital and accumulates interest expense and other carrying costs before even one shovelful of dirt is moved.

These costs add significantly to the overall expense of housing, often without a commensurate benefit in return, and threaten the very feasibility of a project. They present an especially difficult challenge for affordably priced housing: With a lower return on investment, such projects suffer

disproportionately from costs associated with approval processes. As a result, fewer affordable housing units get built. The process ties up public investment dollars, too.

Over the years numerous task forces and commissions have investigated how land development costs might be minimized through increased efficiency and better coordination of development review and approval procedures. But NAHB found no recent explorations on the issue, and so retained the well-credentialed firm Abt Associates to take a fresh look at it. The results are contained in a NAHB report *Development Process Efficiency: Cutting Through the Red Tape*.

Minimizing these costs has been called “streamlining the process” or “regulatory barriers removal” in the past. NAHB recast the issue as “development process efficiency,” because the older terms have come to hold a negative connotation.

Abt Associates compiled a comprehensive list of approaches currently being used across the country, based on an extensive review of popular and professional media, Internet searches, and interviews with practitioners, administrators, and industry observers.

Overall, Abt found that much of the frustration related to land development review and approval involves:

- the complexity of the process,
- lack of information about what the steps are,
- what documents are required at each step, and
- how long each step will take.

The fact that most builders and developers work in multiple jurisdictions—each typically with different processes and requirements—compounds the problem.



A more efficient land development review and approval process benefits builders, developers, and most importantly, home buyers.

A more efficient land development review and approval process benefits builders, developers, and most importantly, home buyers. But time is money for the public sector, too. Multiple, overlapping, uncoordinated approval procedures both increase government’s administrative costs and make it look incompetent.

The new report relays a case study from Leesburg, Virginia, in which a high-profile business almost walked away from a development because of the town’s permit process. The situation led to an overhaul that focused on better communication between agencies and with applicants, clearer signature authority for steps in the process, and a change in agency



Figure 1: Strategies for Increasing Process Efficiency from Across the Country.



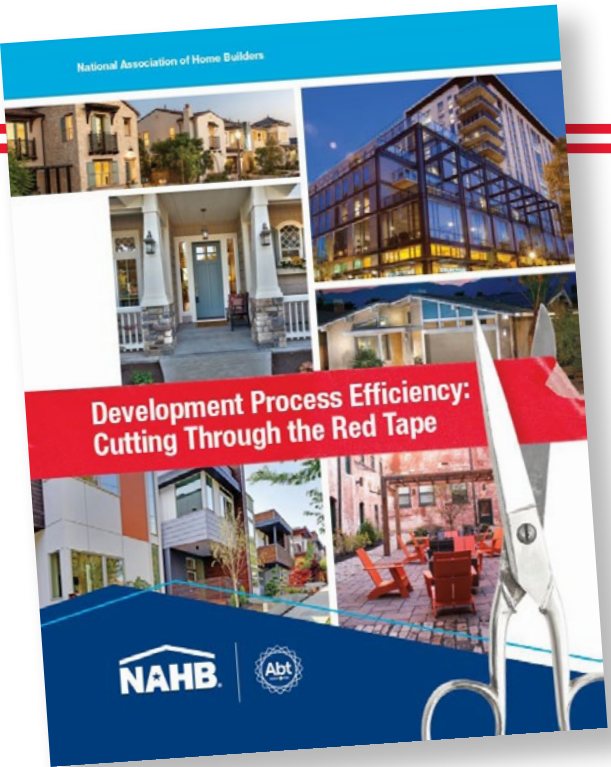
GROUP	STRATEGIES
Streamlining/consolidating the review process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overhaul permitting approval process• One-stop permit system• Increase coordination between permitting agencies• Standardize interpretation of laws or building codes across large geographical areas• Change or update zoning to reduce the need for individual variances• Combine public hearings to consolidate community input process
Increasing capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain appropriate staffing levels• Hire specialized staff• Establish a reliable mechanism for funding building services
Creating a separate process for expedited review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expedited review for desirable housing proposals• Expedited review based on pre-approval• Expedited review for an extra fee
Implementing online permitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online permitting; online submission of building plans; and real-time inspection progress updates
Creating accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual report including statistics such as average approval time• Online permit progress tracking• Customer satisfaction surveys• Tie employee advancement/promotions to performance record• Limits on review times for components of the land development permitting process
Making the process more user friendly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comprehensive checklist of requirements accompanied by staff help• Create ‘development assistance department’• Assist with quality of applications• Improve communication between government staff and developers with regular meetings
State-level strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create state-level regional planning commissions/authorities to provide planning and regulatory assistance to local government agencies• Pass state legislation to improve the land development process• Provide resources to towns and cities

culture to encourage partnerships with applicants.

Increased process efficiency also benefits municipalities, government staff, and taxpayers—it’s a win-win for all. Government agencies save money by reducing redundant reviews and time-consuming procedures that have little added benefit. It improves staff morale and retention both by eliminating confusing and stressful procedures, and by improving relationships between review staff and developers.

Process efficiency can also directly improve a local jurisdiction’s bottom line, as shorter review times bring in more revenues from developments and allow the community to better compete with neighboring jurisdictions for economic development. It returns foreclosed property to productive use more quickly, and can help developers rapidly adjust a project to meet changing market conditions.

The report covers a wide array of



strategies being used across the country. While most of these ideas are not new, the report provides current examples. The strategies are categorized into seven different groups as seen in Figure 1.

The report provides more extensive information about each strategy based on online and print documentation and telephone interviews with state

and local officials, as well as representatives from organizations such as local builders’ groups.

It also highlights several different locations under each strategy to illustrate the range of places in which the strategies are being used, often in combination. Both local- and state-level efforts are highlighted, and several examples document extensive overhauls of development review processes. In many cases, results are included as well.

Many of these strategies are further illustrated in case studies located at the end of each section. The report is available for free on www.nahb.org.

For more information contact Debbie Bassert at dbassert@nahb.org or Claire Worshtil at cworshtil@nahb.org. 📧

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

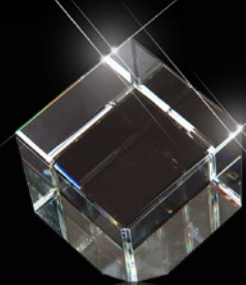


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HOME OF THE YEAR

Refined Desert Haven

Scottsdale, Arizona

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER	PHX Architecture, Scottsdale, Arizona
BUILDER	Luster Custom Homes, Scottsdale, Arizona
INTERIOR DESIGNER	Kim Scodro Interiors, LLC, Chicago, Illinois
DEVELOPER	Discovery Land Company, Scottsdale, Arizona
LAND PLANNER	City of Scottsdale, Scottsdale, Arizona
INTERIOR MERCHANDISER	Kim Scodro Interiors, LLC, Chicago, Illinois
PHOTOGRAPHER	Werner Segarra Photography

The owners, who split their time between Arizona and Illinois, were ready to plant firm roots in the Southwest. Drawn to Spanish-style homes often found in California, the owners—one of which is an interior designer—envisioned a house inspired by a classic foundation but with an updated neutral color palette, with layers of warmth and texture. With Scodro's vision, the team collaborated on the single-story, hacienda-style structure with sweeping vistas and a floor plan that encouraged family togetherness and outdoor living, an essential for the Scodros. An open floorplan was created that allowed for the living room, dining room, and kitchen to flow effortlessly into one central space overlooking the golf course. Long, adjacent hallways lead to the private quarters, while expansive glass doors open to connect the inside seamlessly to the alfresco spaces. The centerpiece is an infinity-edge pool that sits on the same plane as the patio and appears to drop into the desert on the other. When the water is still, it creates a beautiful mirror that reflects the sky.

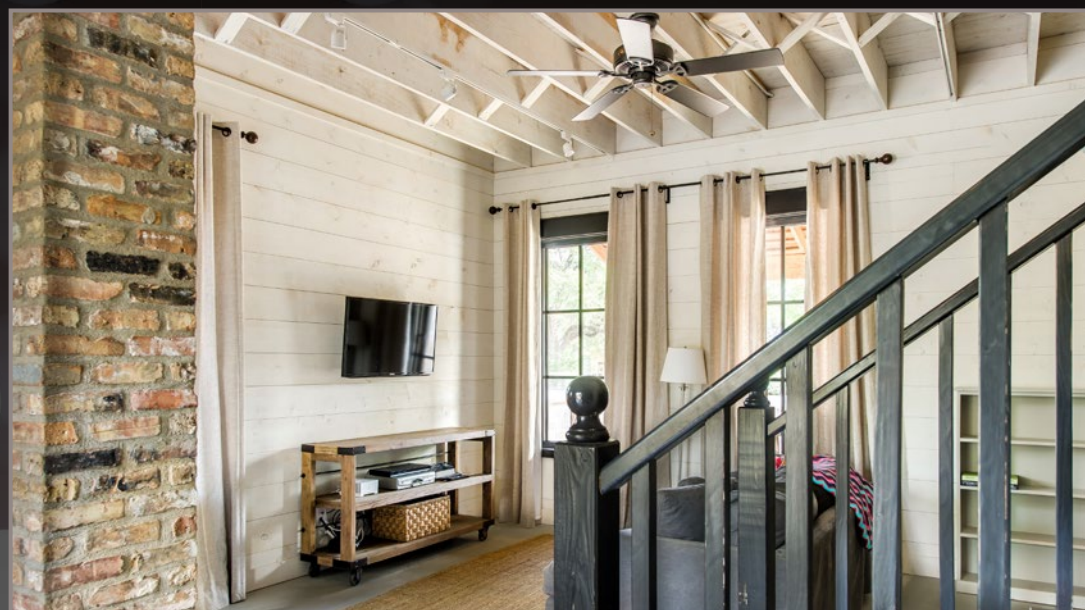
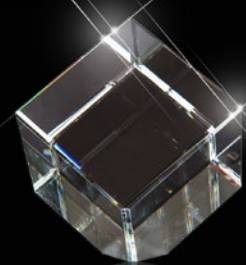
For the interiors, Scodro selected a sea of pale blues and gray sand creams to create a soft and calming palette. A matte plaster finish on the interior walls provides a subtle depth to the soaring spaces, while textures of wood lend softness and warmth. Reclaimed barnwood shelving and alder ceiling beams mirror the textured white-oak floors and 18th-century Spanish doors. As her own client, Scodro was willing to take more risks, including installing pieces of faux hide in the coffered office ceiling—a detail that required almost 3,800 individual nailheads and three days of installation. The end result was a comfortable, inviting space that is open, airy, and gives nod to the landscape, allowing the family a chance to reconnect and retreat from the cold Chicago winters.

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REMODEL OF THE YEAR

Pine Creek Place

Fredericksburg, Texas

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER Laughlin Homes & Restoration, Inc., Fredericksburg, Texas
 REMODELER Laughlin Homes & Restoration, Inc., Fredericksburg, Texas
 LAND PLANNER Land-flo, Fredericksburg, Texas
 PHOTOGRAPHER Blake Mistich

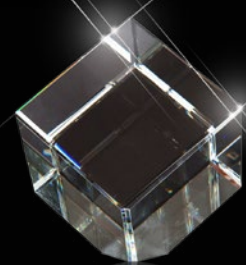
The design-build team created spaces fulfilling the family's need for a larger home, with emphasis on an open serene space. The challenge was to convert the cramped 1970's saltbox into an inviting place, suitable for entertaining, while respecting the original building form. Additions were designed to blend with, rather than overpower, the surrounding historic neighborhood. Simple in design, with solid details, the kitchen-living area has the feel of exterior space. Flooded with natural light, the veranda stairway includes a hand-wrought steel railing that stands strong against the backdrop of weathered oak. The stairwell is truly a work of art and a testament to the craftsmanship of the home.

Discarded 1-by-1 weathered oak slats were reused for the interior pine wall siding, and a salvaged cast-iron grate was inlaid into the wooden stair landing and lit from the underside, creating a beautiful pattern that is cast onto the wall at night. Solid bronze light fixtures imported from Egypt cast light that warms the stairwell space. The dining room incorporates two antique tornado sirens that were converted to function as lighting over the dining room table. The master suite, at the top of the veranda stairway, features a large walk-in closet, elegant bath, and sleeping area with a balcony that overlooks the spa and pool. Functioning interior casement windows, complete with turn-of-the-century hardware, and a custom-built door allow the master suite to open up onto the interior balcony for an open airy feel when desired. Teenage daughters have their own living area and bedroom suites within the reconfigured shell of the original home. An outdoor fireplace and deep porches expand the living space into the backyard which features an outdoor kitchen and poolscape.

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MULTIFAMILY COMMUNITY OF THE YEAR

Monroe Street Market

Washington, D.C.

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER	KTGY Group, Inc., Tysons, Virginia
BUILDER	Bozzuto Construction Company, Greenbelt, Maryland
INTERIOR DESIGNER	RD Jones and Associates, Chevy Chase, Maryland
DEVELOPER	The Bozzuto Group, Greenbelt, Maryland
LAND PLANNER	Torti Gallas, Silver Spring, Maryland
PHOTOGRAPHER	The Bozzuto Group

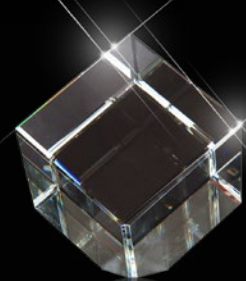
This transformative use of The Catholic University of America's South Campus fulfills a market need, creates unique student and family housing, and provides much-needed retail to the area. A connection to the arts in all its forms encourages artists and art enthusiasts to share culture by providing studio space where artists can make, show, and sell their wares. The project showcases a commitment to building a better community by including three housing options in varying price ranges, facilitating public transit and pedestrian-friendly atmospheres, and adding a community arts center that is available to rent for a small fee. Unsurpassed attention to detail in design and materials selection adds to the character, personality, and theme. Monroe Street Market advances the multifamily industry's potential through creativity and a focus on authenticity, spurring renewed interest in quality and unique projects.



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COMMUNITY OF THE YEAR

The Pinehills

Plymouth, Massachusetts

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER	Various
BUILDER	Various
INTERIOR DESIGNER	Various
DEVELOPER	Pinehills, LLC, Plymouth, Massachusetts
LAND PLANNER	Pinehills, LLC, Plymouth, Massachusetts
PHOTOGRAPHER	Various

The Pinehills is one of the nation's most celebrated examples of thoughtful community planning and design. Underlying it all is a commitment to quality and environmental stewardship that acknowledges what a gift it is to live in the world's third largest pine ecosystem. By holding true to the village's original vision—a robust sense of community, active open space, and intimate neighborhoods—The Pinehills just keeps getting better. This mixed-use community is densely designed, while still preserving significant open space. The community includes 1.3 million square feet of mixed-use commercial space and 3,065 homes on only 30 percent of the land, preserving over 2,200 acres of open space. Eleven builders build homes ranging from condominiums and apartments, to custom and cottages. Demand for walkable places is not isolated to urban settings—at The Pinehills, eight neighborhoods and 750-plus residences are within walking distance of the Village Green.

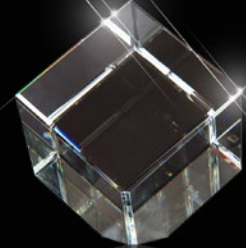
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BEST IN REGION

PACIFIC

Cassis

Irvine, California

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER Bassenian Lagoni, Newport Beach, California
BUILDER Toll Brothers, Orange, California
INTERIOR DESIGNER CDC Designs, Costa Mesa, California
DEVELOPER The Irvine Company, Irvine, California
PHOTOGRAPHER Chris Mayer Photography

Appealing to a buyer segment interested in a statement, this extraordinary home offers a one-of-a-kind lifestyle and unparalleled luxury throughout, with all the excitement, understated elegance, and detail demanded by a very affluent, very discriminating buyer. Features that appeal to this select demographic include well-articulated, classical exterior architecture with rich materials and well-planned, well-executed design details. Statement spaces such as the great room open to outdoor areas that are brought to life by water features; a covered retreat surrounded by water; and a master-suite luxury indoors and out, with a private deck.

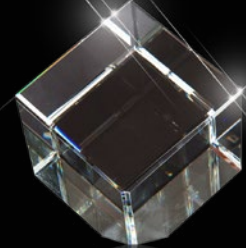


National Association of Home Builders

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WOW! AWARD

Mountain Villa—Library

Round is a design element that is beautiful and challenging at the same time. From a rounded stair case and balcony, round walls, round ceilings, rounded pocket doors, round shower enclosures, to a raised round formal dining, the theme continues throughout the entire home. The library extends three full stories. Large custom windows add a comforting natural feel.

BEST IN REGION

MOUNTAIN

Mountain Villa

Provo, Utah

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER Upwall Design, Salt Lake City, Utah
BUILDER Magleby Construction, Lindon, Utah
INTERIOR DESIGNER Roxbury Studio, Salt Lake City, Utah
DEVELOPER Magleby Construction, Lindon, Utah

One's breath is taken away by the view after emerging from the half-mile private road that is cut through the mountain hillside. Sitting in its own mountain meadow stands Mountain Majesty. The home is surrounded by views on every side, and large, custom-built windows that withstand the cold mountain winds bring the views from outside within.

The Master Bedroom is accessed by a hallway bridge with windows on either side and a stream below running from one large pond to another. The climbing tower is incorporated into the home to accentuate the exterior appeal. The sports level includes basketball, racquetball, a climbing wall, a golf simulator, and a home theater. The pool sits aside nature, ponds, and streams as if it were a natural part of the mountain. Even the many garages complement rather than detract from the theme and beauty of the home's design. Every design element is meticulously thought out and created, leading to a once-in-a-life-time masterpiece.



National Association of Home Builders

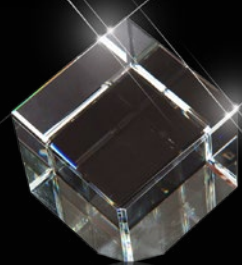
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PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Gallery House

Seattle, Washington

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER DeForest Architects, Seattle, Washington
BUILDER Joseph McKinstry Construction, Seattle Washington
INTERIOR DESIGNER Jan Holbrook, Seattle Washington
PHOTOGRAPHER Benjamin Benschneider

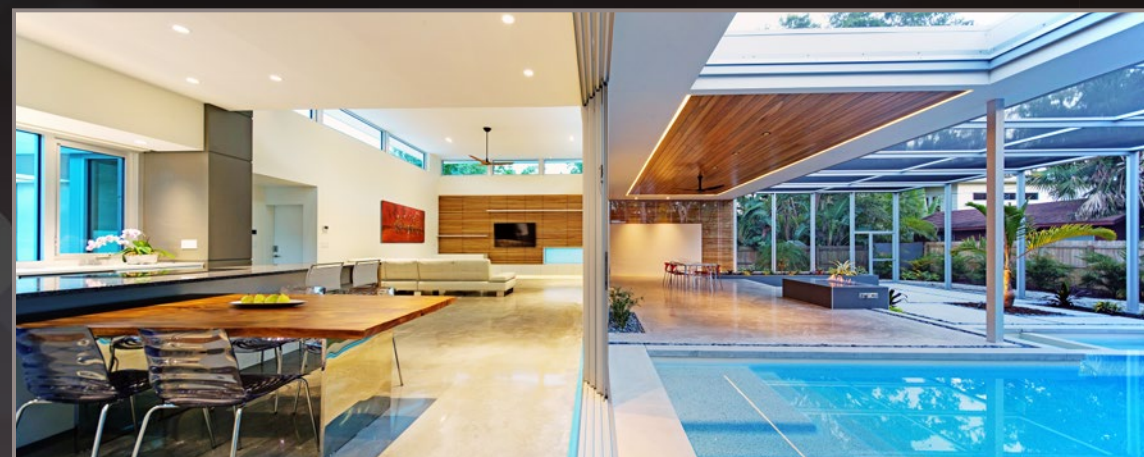
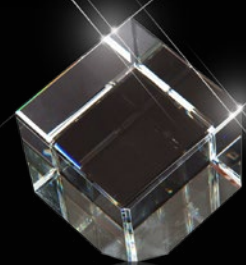
A couple with grown kids were downsizing from a larger suburban home and desired a cozy, in-town retreat that would connect with the Puget Sound and Olympic Mountain views and highlight their wonderful collection of Northwest art. The architect designed a light-filled “vertical gallery” that provides separation between public and private areas, while creating numerous places to encounter art in unexpected ways. The centerpiece is a translucent glass and steel stair that glows from below and channels natural light from above. A few steps down from the entry, the bedroom level features water and mountain views and a small deck. The bedrooms are buffered from more public areas by alcoves for art display. The master bathroom has an elegantly simple layout, and refined details create a spa-like atmosphere. To the west, the living and dining rooms open to an expansive terrace with views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains. To the east is a screened outdoor sitting area that provides shade and privacy when desired.



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SOUTH ATLANTIC

Lotus on Orange

Sarasota, Florida

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER Leader Design Studio, Sarasota, Florida
BUILDER Josh Wynne Construction, Sarasota, Florida
INTERIOR DESIGNER SAWA Design, Sarasota, Florida
PHOTOGRAPHER Gamma Photography

This project was designed with consideration of the clients' love of European Modern styling in mind, as well as their love of the warmth of California-style modern homes. The large expanses of carefully placed glass allow for natural day-lighting throughout the home, while large sliders and casement glass allow for passive ventilation through the home. The views are centralized to the natural flower pond in the front court as well as the pool and outdoor living areas to the rear. Cypress wood detailing, terrazzo tiles, and bamboo panels counterbalance the smooth white walls of the home's interior, which serves to provide bouncing light and a framework for viewing the outdoor spaces.

The Florida-friendly landscape was carefully considered to provide the necessary screening in an infill lot such as this, while being sensitive to the single-story scale of the home and the adjacent neighbors. There are three courtyards, which form the critical adjuncts between the vertical architecture and the landscape architecture. The entry court welcomes one from the street frontage with a koi and lotus pond. The rear court is the heart of the home. The "L" shaped design lives around and is open to this pool court with outdoor fireplace and kitchen area. The last courtyard is the most private, flanked by the master suite and accessible only through the master bath.

National Association of Home Builders

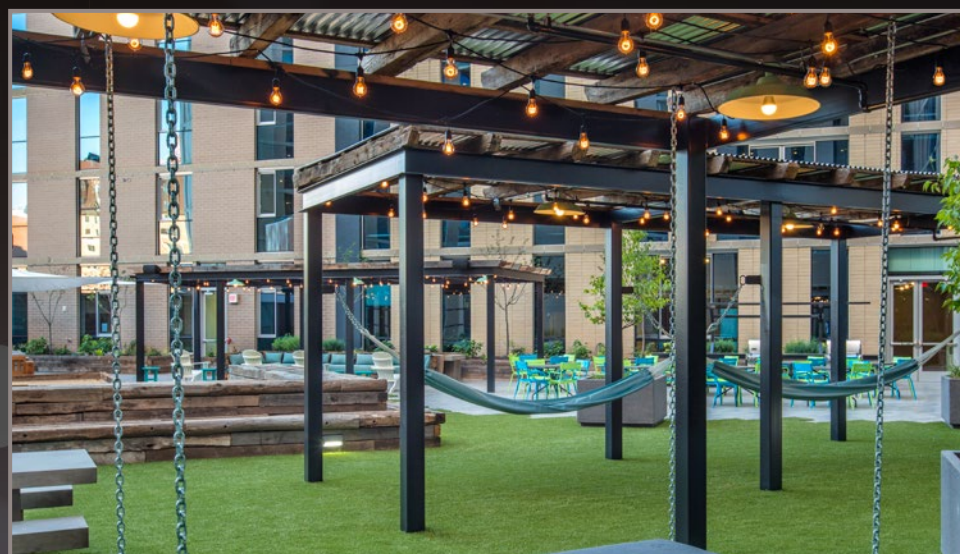
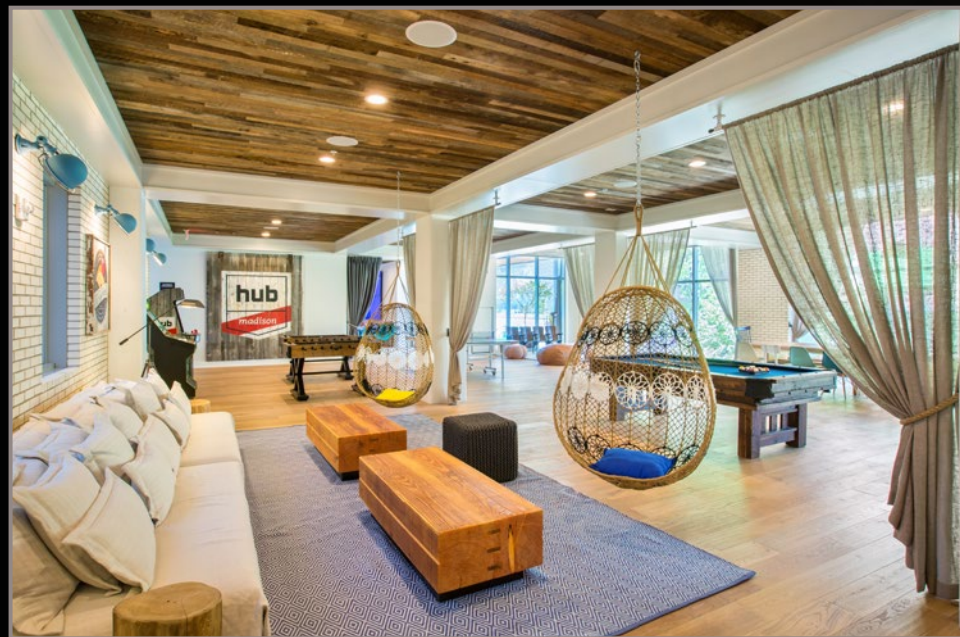
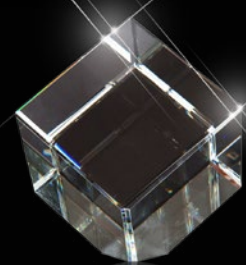
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BEST IN REGION

MIDWEST

Hub Madison

Madison, Wisconsin

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER Antunovich Associates and Myefski Architects, Evanston, Illinois
BUILDER J.H. Findorff & Son, Madison, Wisconsin
INTERIOR DESIGNER Studio K Creative, Chicago, Illinois
DEVELOPER Core Spaces, Chicago, Illinois
LAND PLANNER Vandewalle & Associates, Madison, Wisconsin
PHOTOGRAPHER Modern Depiction

In the heart of downtown Madison, near the State Capital building and adjacent to the University of Wisconsin campus, Hub Madison offers an unmatched living experience. This 960-bed, mixed-use residence tower includes prized amenities above a vibrant street-level commercial atmosphere. The ground-floor lobby, detailed like a boutique hotel, welcomes student residents with a custom UW badger portrait painted on a wood-plank wall. The lobby's expansive bi-fold windows open to transfer the energy along State Street's retail corridor into the Hub Madison. Hub Madison's amenities embody the work hard, play hard philosophy. Overlooking State Street, a rooftop infinity-edge pool is surrounded by cabanas and hot tubs. An interior courtyard features a sand volleyball court, a seasonal ice rink, and an outdoor lounge that is equipped with cabanas, hanging daybeds, and stadium seating around a 20-foot LED screen. Indoor amenities at Hub Madison meet the bar for high-end design and cater to resident's individual lifestyles. A luxurious spa and fitness center are appointed with contemporary but age-appropriate touches. Residents unwind in the music practice/performance space, in a game-filled lounge, and in plush stadium seats in the media room. Private study rooms, video-conferencing spaces, and dedicated quiet and scholarly floors ensure residents' myriad needs are met.

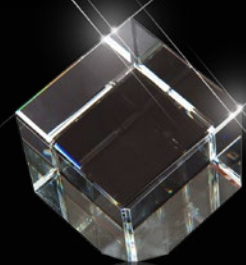
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BEST IN REGION

SOUTH CENTRAL

Pine Creek Place

Fredericksburg, Texas

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER Laughlin Homes & Restoration, Inc., Fredericksburg, Texas
 REMODELER Laughlin Homes & Restoration, Inc., Fredericksburg, Texas
 LAND PLANNER Land-flo, Fredericksburg, Texas
 PHOTOGRAPHER Blake Mistich

Simple in design, with solid details, the kitchen-living area has the feel of exterior space. Flooded with natural light, the veranda stairway includes hand-wrought steel railing that stands strong against the backdrop of weathered oak. The stairwell is truly a work of art and a testament to the craftsmanship of the home. Discarded 1-by-1 weathered oak slats were used for the interior pine wall siding. A salvaged cast-iron grate was inlaid into the wooden stair landing and lit from the underside to cast a beautiful pattern onto the wall at night. Solid bronze light fixtures imported from Egypt cast light that warms the stairwell space. The dining room incorporates two antique tornado sirens that were converted to function as lighting over the dining room table. The master suite, at the top of the veranda stairway, features a large walk-in closet, elegant bath, and sleeping area with balcony overlooking the spa and pool. Functioning interior casement windows, complete with turn-of-the-century hardware, and a custom-built door allow the master suite to open up onto the interior balcony for an open airy feel. Teenage daughters have their own living area and bedroom suites within the reconfigured shell of the original home. An outdoor fireplace and deep porches expand the living space into the backyard with an outdoor kitchen and pool.

National Association of Home Builders

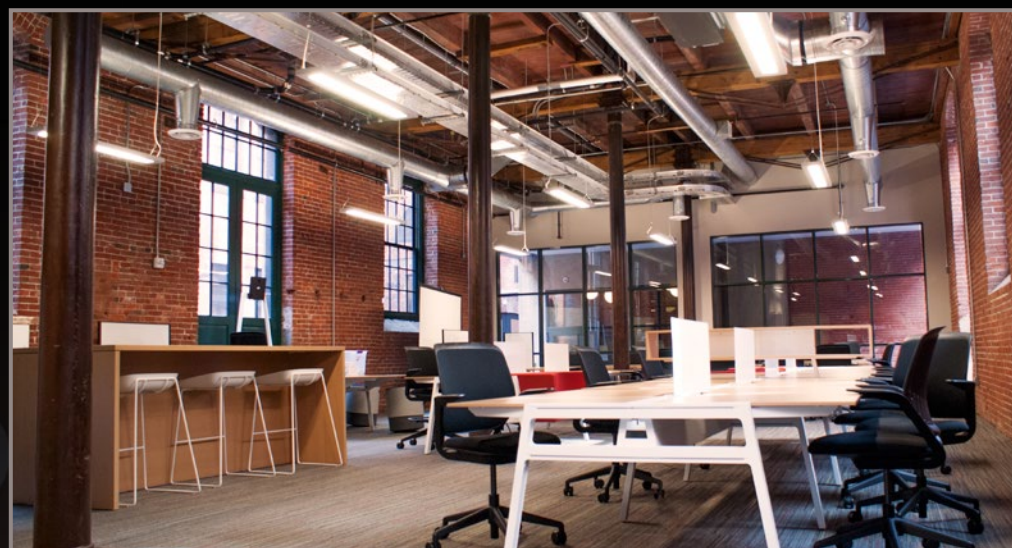
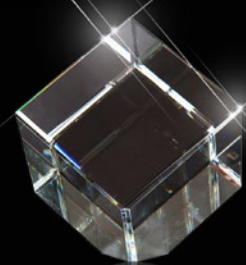
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BEST IN REGION

NORTH ATLANTIC

Oxford Mills

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER BartonPartners, Norristown, Pennsylvania

REMODELER BartonPartners, Norristown, Pennsylvania

INTERIOR DESIGNER BartonPartners, Norristown, Pennsylvania

DEVELOPER D3 Real Estate Development, Inc., Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania

LAND PLANNER Cornerstone Consulting Engineers, Lansdale, Pennsylvania

INTERIOR MERCHANDISER D3 Real Estate Development, Inc., Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania

PHOTOGRAPHER Imagic Photography

The mission of the project was to create a vibrant, synergistic education-based community of teacher housing and non-profits. Two dilapidated warehouses were converted into 114 market-rate quality apartments that are offered to educators at discounted rates. The project includes 35,000 square feet of commercial space for over 10 different non-profit organizations, offering small office spaces for local start-ups. A wide variety of units were designed, including studios with grand historic windows; one-bedrooms with lofts between exposed trusses; and comfortable two-bedrooms with great views—all with exposed, beautifully restored timber framing and brick.

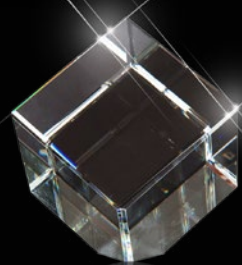
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BEST IN REGION

MIDDLE ATLANTIC

Magnolia Pavilion

Pinehurst, North Carolina

ARCHITECT/DESIGNER Tony F. Miller, Charlotte, North Carolina
 REMODELER Edward Tennant, Charlotte, North Carolina
 INTERIOR DESIGNER Johnsye White Interior Design, Pinehurst, North Carolina
 PHOTOGRAPHER Tim Buchman

The previous swimming pool was replaced with one that had the exact depth and dimensions to accommodate water volleyball, a sunbathing pool ledge, a spa, and diving, simultaneously with a two-story water slide entry all without a safety conflict. The architect coordinated with a dozen specialty consultants and 3D-modeled all dimensions of the pool, pavilion, and slide to work together with the most available picturesque sightlines within the space allowed from the existing house to the beloved magnolia tree. Heavy timber braces and beams were modeled to resemble the blossom petals and leaves of the adjacent magnolia tree. The new pool with its own guest entry is designed for a variety of pool activities, with mood-changing lighting and sound effects.



Creating a Community of Distinction

By Thomas W. Kopf
Principal, DTJ DESIGN, Inc.

Thoughtful planning helps one community create a unique character that stands apart from its cookie-cutter competitors.

A large, international builder-developer recently challenged DTJ DESIGN to define a distinctly different character for a new masterplanned community. The developer's market had been saturated with a myriad of look-alike subdivisions with big box retail on the corner of major arterials and homogenous looking homes throughout the remainder of the property. Developing a community of 5,000+ homes and commercial space required the company to rethink how to create a community brand while encouraging a diversity of neighborhoods. What evolved was a Design Book that established a framework for design but did not prescribe specific solutions. The Design Book reinforces



Illustration 1: A community icon element—slanting, almost vertical lines—anchors important architecture and supports the enriching urban energy on the street and in the plazas.

Tools & Techniques

but does not specifically outline six major components of a quality community:

1. Respect the Context

- Understand how a new community will fit within the natural and built environment to act as a foundation for future decisions.
- Open large community spaces to the greater region to create an identity that goes beyond the borders of the community.

2. Create a Community Heart

- Establish gathering places to bring people together.
- Provide uses that are common to most residents.
- Place higher densities around those uses to enhance feasibility.
- Provide multi-modal connections to the community heart.

3. Provide a Variety of Open Spaces and Amenities

- Allow for a wide range of activities.
- Establish strong trail connections for a walkable community.
- Create shared spaces to promote ownership of common facilities.

4. Establish a Mix of Land Uses and Housing Types

- Integrate uses that support everyday life.
- Create a range of housing types and price ranges to integrate people economically and socially.
- Connect higher density housing to activity centers.
- Allow for a variety of building massing and texture.

5. Allow for Neighborhood Evolution

- Establish flexibility to respond to changing market conditions or housing needs.
- Allow variations in architectural styles to be built throughout the community.
- Provide opportunities for carriage homes or mother-in-law cottages to increase housing density near the

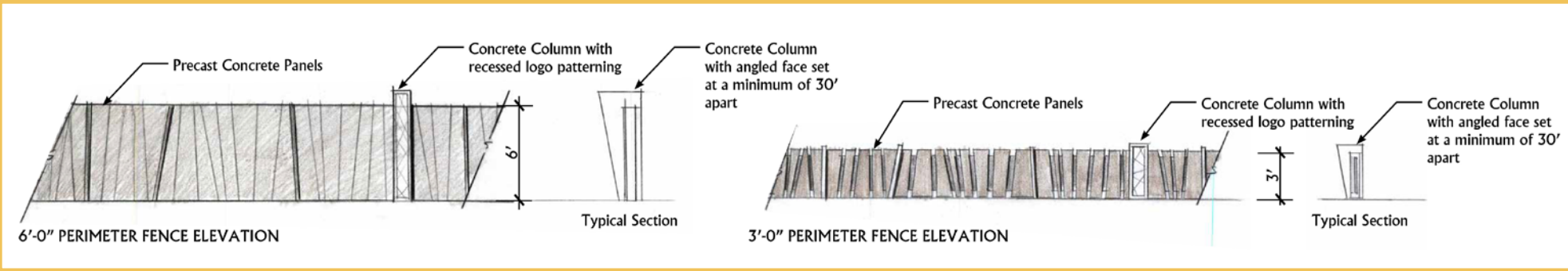


Illustration 2: The community icon element is also expressed through street furniture, walls, and fences.

community center.

- Allow for future expansion while remaining compatible with the original style of the home.

6. Balance Auto and Pedestrian Systems

- Encourage Complete Street design.
- Establish a network of off-street trail connections for pedestrians and bikes.
- Reduce dependence on convenient or excessive parking.

Within the overriding goal to create a single, unified community defined by places and events, each of the components listed above were part of the framework for community design. It was especially important to create a heart, or center, through an artful blend of public spaces defined by programmed uses in large plazas, more urban architecture and street design, and a mix of retail and higher density residential uses. An urban energy on the street and in the plazas enriches daily life. Supporting this was the introduction of a community icon element that anchored important architecture (Illustration 1) within the community and was also expressed through street furniture, walls, and fences (Illustrations 2 & 3). The architecture of the “Uptown” area is characterized by a contemporary re-invention; its designs were inspired by the essence of Traditional Styles, notably Prairie and Farmhouse with some edgy, contemporary homes. (Illustration 4)

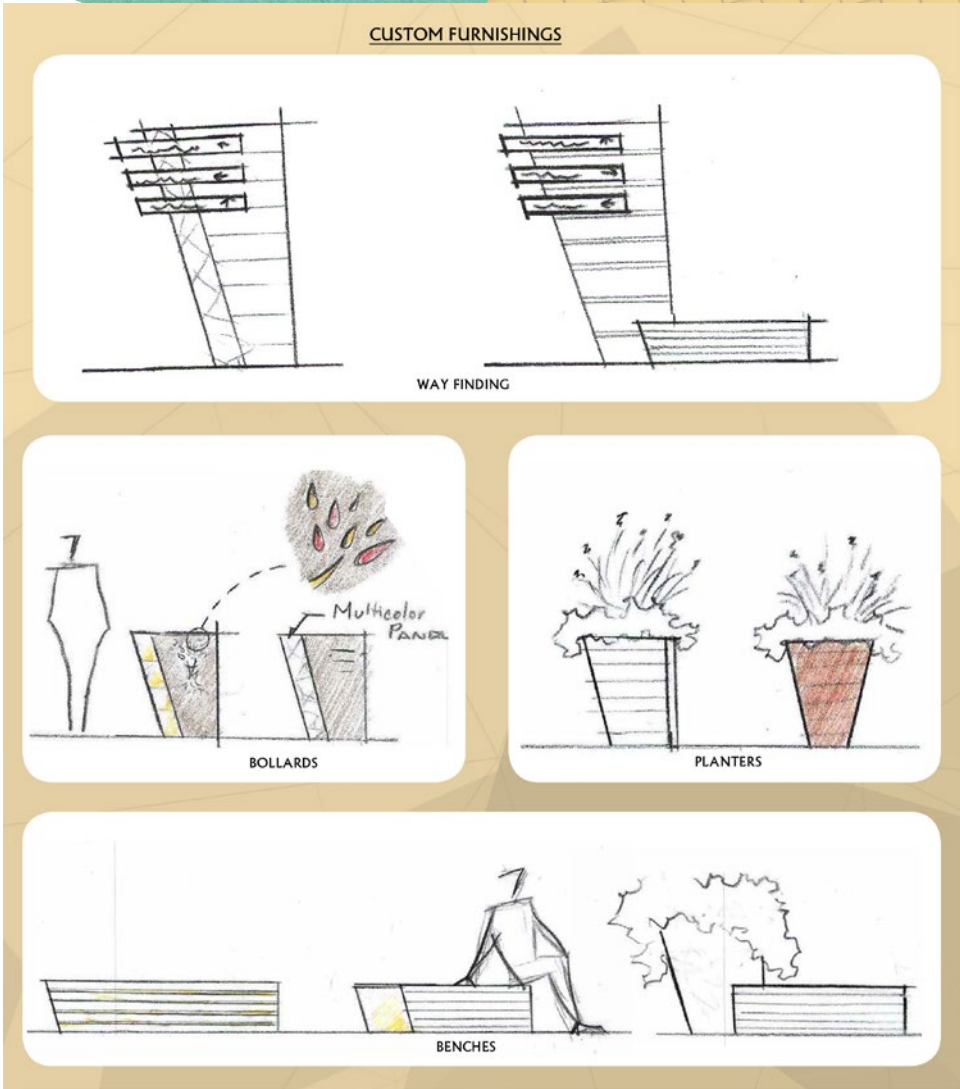


Illustration 3: The icon element of slanted lines is carried out subtly throughout the community in signs, planters, and benches.



Traversing the community, the architectural character and landscape evolves to a Moderated Modern look with a balance of contemporary and traditional architectural elements. Defined as “Midtown,” the setbacks become more generous,

larger tree lawns define the streets, and the parks and open spaces have a more relaxed feel. While Uptown invited people from a larger region, Midtown is designed to host smaller events for the community with intimate little parks and green spaces to enhance the fabric of the neighborhood. (Illustration 5) Park landscapes have both formal and informal spaces with a distinct edge.

Near its periphery, the community character subtly shifts again at “The Meadows.” Natural areas with soft trails and informal planting define the open spaces. The architecture relies on traditional styles; contemporary architecture is out of place. Homes sit on larger lots with generous tree lawns. There is a celebration of the outdoors as the built environment blends seamlessly with nature. (Illustration 6)



Illustration 7: The three neighborhoods are each defined by different architecture, landscaping, and roadway character. At the same time, they are pulled together via elements that run throughout the entire community.

By creating neighborhoods defined by different architecture, landscaping, and roadway character, yet pulled together by community elements that permeate all, the community challenges the competition’s homogeneity and stands apart. And it does this in a thoughtful, crafted way where each neighborhood appeals to a different buyer profile to bring a dynamic quality to the whole community. The result is “One Community” with a true sense of identity, and enhanced marketing and sales. (Illustration 7) ▲

Thomas Kopf is a Partner, planner and landscape architect for DTJ Design in Boulder, Colorado.





ILLUSTRATION 5

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Using Sunlight BEAUTIFULLY

By Alexandra Isham

Solar panels can be good-looking as well as functional. Here are some of the best and most innovative uses.

Have you seen a solar panel installation truck driving through your neighborhood this week? Chances are, you have. The recent reduction in cost for homeowners—coupled with environmentally aware consumers, governments, and corporations—has solar panel popularity on the rise. Thanks to industry scaling, photovoltaic cell production costs have gone down, helping to lower the cost of home solar power.¹ A recent report also attributed reductions to decreasing solar soft costs, including labor, permitting and inspection, marketing, and system design². Homeowners also have the choice of third-party ownership (TPO) solar systems that can reduce or eliminate installation costs to the homeowner while allowing the homeowner to lock in a fixed-rate with the third-party company.

The popularity of solar presents interesting new design challenges, however. Builders, designers, and home owners need to be thoughtful in the design and installation of home solar systems, both to maximize solar generation capacity and to avoid turning the systems into community eyesores.

To design the most efficient and attractive photovoltaic system, multiple questions must be addressed. What are the power consumption needs in the home? Is



PHOTOGRAPHY BY TUCKER ENGLISH

the goal to offset a certain percentage of consumption, or more? How long will it take for the energy savings to offset the investment cost? Once addressed, a homeowner or builder can choose to move forward with any number of home solar projects. Here are some new and different ways to incorporate solar at home. ▲

One of the most popular home solar energy options is rooftop solar arrays. These range in size depending on roof area and the solar offset goal of the homeowner. Three factors are most important in designing a rooftop solar array: orientation, tilt, and roof area. Before saying yes to rooftop solar, one should complete a solar study of the site and home to make sure the system is viable.

Alexandra Isham is Program Manager, Design at NAHB.



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IMAGE COURTESY OF LUMOS SOLAR

Solar panels can double as a garage or carport roof in some parts of the country. Although this may not be recommended in locations with harsh winters, a garage pergola generates power for a home while simultaneously shading cars from summer rays.

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IMAGE COURTESY OF LUMOS SOLAR

This unique incorporation of solar replaces an existing balcony railing with a power-generating solar panel. Personal aesthetics come into play when considering this incorporation of solar, as the panels are highly visible from the interior and exterior of the deck.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL MULLINS

Seen here on an affordable multifamily project in the Bronx, this rooftop solar element is elevated to provide shade on the roof itself. The panels create a shady rooftop space for recreation, providing an additional benefit to residents.

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Using solar to shade a balcony is shown here in a single-family project. Panels can also be used to cover first-floor patios, second-floor balconies, and more. Just be sure to consider any outdoor cooking equipment when placing solar.

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