

Living in NewVistas

The World's Largest "Mansion"

Through innovative neighborhood design, sustainable building practices, and a creative, transforming approach to the use of living and commercial spaces, NewVistas communities are planned to support a healthy, prosperous, enjoyable, and space-efficient standard of living that reduces waste, conserves limited resources, maximizes the advantages of walkability, and is scalable to and sustainable for all the world's population.

Each NewVistas community is laid out in roughly a diamond shape occupying 2.88 square miles. As prescribed in the 1830s plot, most of this diamond's central grid is taken up by garden-intensive neighborhoods divided into 96 villages, which are in turn grouped into 24 districts. Neighborhood components include 46 blocks, 960 apartment buildings, backyard and rooftop gardens, "street" areas that function as public squares, enclosed breezeways that connect the entire community, and functional hubs at each intersection that include a public building for local villages to use as workspaces and commercial areas. These neighborhoods provide housing for the community's 75,000–100,000 participants and space for a variety of local amenities and businesses. The NewVistas community pattern integrates living space with commercial space, so that many people can work in the apartment where they live and/or in a hub building nearby.

Neighborhoods in the NewVistas community are designed to provide a high quality of life while sustainably reducing the human footprint. This chapter describes basic principles underlying creation of NewVistas neighborhoods; layout of the neighborhoods; how transportation works in the NewVistas communities; design and construction of apartment buildings and household modules; features of the NewVistas apartments; and anticipated lifestyle improvements and adjustments that would accompany NewVistas living. The chapter concludes with a discussion of future steps toward building NewVistas, including prototype development and testing and construction of individual buildings that can eventually become part of a complete neighborhood.

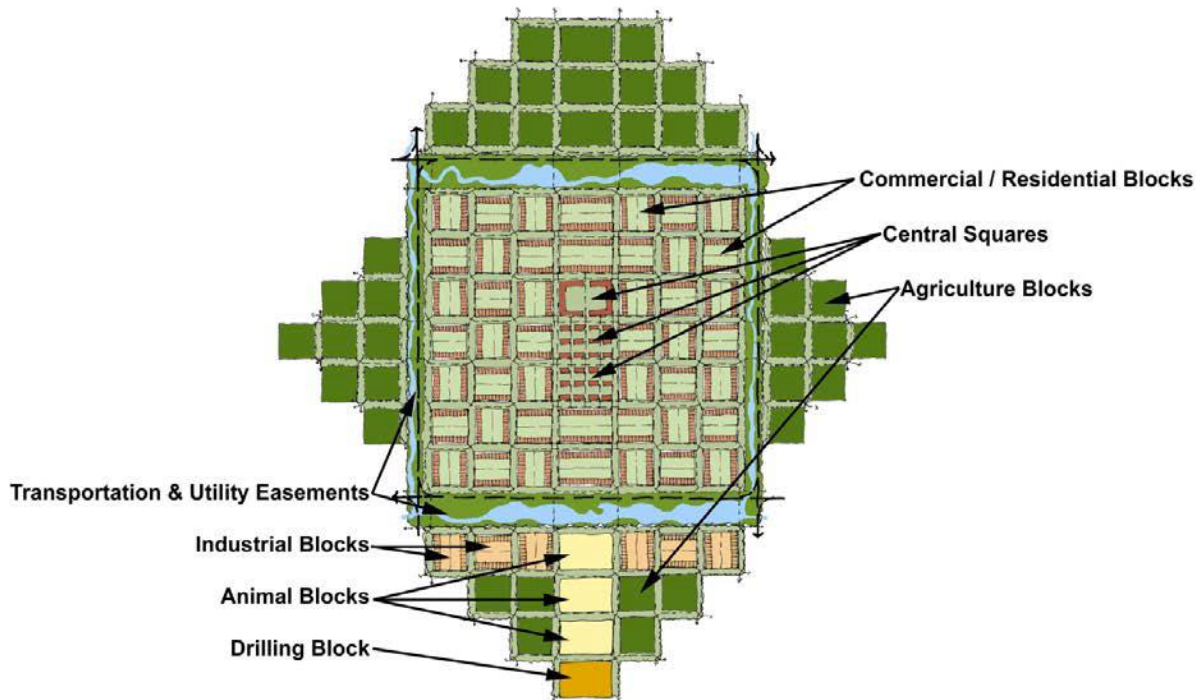


Figure 5-1. Neighborhood blocks are shown in pale green in the NewVistas community layout (not including the three centermost squares, which are covered in chapter 6).

Basic Principles

Basic principles underlying the design of the NewVistas neighborhoods include the following:

- Each NewVistas community supports the physical, social, emotional, and economic needs of community members, including spaces to live, work, shop, play, and socialize.
- Members of NewVistas communities enjoy a healthy, pleasant, and prosperous standard of living, with easier access to a wider variety of day-to-day activities.
- NewVistas communities are built to be sustainable, with low impact and a small footprint in terms of physical space, resource consumption, and effect on the environment. Consumption and waste are reduced more than is possible in standard modern communities.
- Buildings and fixtures are designed to be safe, functional, efficient, and very long-lasting.
- Household-based housing modules are built using standardized, mass-produced building elements that incorporate transforming technology and are designed to allow buildings to be disassembled, moved, and reassembled.
- NewVistas communities are built to be walkable while also supporting a range of safe, scalable, and sustainable transportation options to meet a variety of needs, provide exercise, and promote a more diverse mix of economic and lifestyle opportunities.

- Household privacy is maximized while individual space requirements are minimized through innovative design and technology, including transformative use of living and commercial spaces.

Specific elements of these principles are described in more detail later in this chapter, including how these principles translate into the plans and designs for the NewVistas neighborhoods, which follow the prescriptions of the 1830s plot.

Bigger Isn't Always Better: High-Quality, High-Density Housing

Advantages of high-density housing are undeniable.¹ Because high-density housing is compact, its ecological footprint is smaller. Smaller buildings and apartments consume less in the way of building materials. They occupy less space, meaning that land is saved for recreation, agriculture, conservation, and other uses. They consume fewer resources and promote in-person socialization. Because distances are walkable, there is less need for motorized vehicles and the pollution, stress, and waste they bring, as well as more opportunity for exercise and for social and economic interaction.

Unfortunately, many people have negative impressions about high-density housing. There are two main reasons for this. On the social and emotional level, people in Western cultures have come to equate more living space with greater prosperity, believing that “a man’s home is his castle”—and the bigger the castle, the greater the success. People enjoy owning space where they can spread out their belongings and enjoy their favorite activities. The second reason many people dislike high-density living is that people in modern Western cultures place a high value on privacy. We don’t enjoy having our senses assaulted by evidence of other people around us—and we don’t like the idea of our neighbors being able to see, hear, and smell us.

NewVistas captures the advantages of high-density development while eliminating the negatives. Calculated on a basis of 75,000–100,000 total inhabitants in 2.88 square miles, an entire NewVistas community will average 40–55 people per acre, and twice that within the 46 neighborhood blocks. Yet innovative community design and technology support an enjoyable and sustainable quality of life within these neighborhoods.

While living space is limited to 100 square feet per person, space will be transformed for multiple uses throughout the day, effectively more than doubling the amount of space available. Efficient use of storage and easy access and placement through robot technology mean that residents will have all the space they need for many activities. Convenient walkable access to a variety of community areas and amenities means that residents won’t need to have space available in their homes for everything they might want to do.

At the same time, efficient community design and use of technology will make it easy to have privacy whenever residents want it. Unlike traditional high-density housing designs, NewVistas housing is designed so each apartment looks out over expansive green space, thus the name *NewVistas*. Additionally, NewVistas employs advanced technologies to

¹ For a discussion of the advantages of cities and what makes for more attractive cities, see The School of Life, “How to Make an Attractive City,” 26 January 2015, <https://youtu.be/Hy4QjmKzF1c>. While approaching the issue from a different perspective than NewVistas, the discussion of key features that make an attractive city includes many points of agreement with the NewVistas approach.

reduce residents' awareness of their neighbors, including vacuum-pack insulation between units to block sound, rubber spacers for vibration isolation, LED lighting specific to small areas, and graphite and other microfilters to eliminate odors at the source.

At a basic level, while NewVistas technically qualifies as high-density housing, it won't *feel* high-density. Missing are the high-rise apartments, noise and traffic congestion, and window views looking out on concrete and asphalt that we associate with city centers. Instead, NewVistas residents will enjoy privacy, greenspace, and open vistas.

Leasing, Not Owning

In the NewVistas model, households lease living space from the community trust, which owns all real estate within the community.² (For more details about the community trust, see chapters 2 and 3.) This shift from private ownership to week-to-week, no-deposit leasing is a key element that helps make the NewVistas model workable and will add to the quality of life of NewVistas residents.

Part of the so-called American dream has been for each family to own their own home. Unfortunately, home ownership can easily turn into a nightmare for many families. Circumstances may force a family to purchase a house that requires a long commute or that doesn't meet their changing needs. Poor financial planning, unemployment, or ill health can leave families burdened with debt and locked into houses they can't afford and could lose. Home maintenance involves a variety of tasks and expenses that families may be ill equipped to handle. Changing life conditions mean that a home that matches a family now may not fit as well ten or twenty years down the road. Over time, neighborhoods deteriorate, leaving the houses less desirable as places to live. Depressed housing markets may make it impossible to sell a home when a change is needed or desired. Home ownership can make it hard to quickly take advantage of economic opportunities, because owning a home ties people to their existing location, requiring them to find a buyer before they can move to where the best possibilities are available.

Additionally, in today's economy, many people feel that a house is the best investment they can make. However, as discussed in chapter 2, NewVistas participants invest in the community and earn a 12% annual dividend, which in most cases will, on average, be above the rate of return on a home investment.

Private home ownership can cause problems for communities as well. People have different ideas about how their houses should be built, which gets in the way of efficiency and consistency. Competition for status leads to houses and lots that are larger and more elaborate than they need to be, which isn't sustainable on a large scale. Individual owners are motivated to make choices that may benefit themselves but aren't in the best interests of the neighborhood as a whole. At the same time, homeowners need to worry not just about their own actions but those of their neighbors that may impact the value of their own home, thus fostering conditions that can lead to conflict. Families that dislike where they live or don't get along with their neighbors typically find it harder to relocate if they own their homes, adding to community friction and disengagement.

² See "Revelation, 9 February 1831 [D&C 42:1–72]," p. [3], The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed February 4, 2017, <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/revelation-9-february-1831-dc-421-72/3?highlight=behold>

The NewVistas model avoids these and other problems through a two-part solution involving community ownership and affordable short-term leasing. All the buildings are owned and managed by the local community trust to which the residents belong, eliminating motivations for price gouging and poor maintenance. Short-term leases without up-front deposits mean that residents can move whenever their circumstances change or even if they simply decide they want new neighbors. Because everyone is a vetted member of the community, there is no need for security deposits, making it even easier to move whenever a change is needed or wanted.

Layout of the Neighborhoods

A key element of the NewVistas solution for pleasant, sustainable, high-density living is the unusual layout of the neighborhoods, as prescribed by the 1830s plot. This layout encourages walking, social interaction with neighbors, and independent mobility for children and the disabled, reversing negative trends in modern cities and suburban communities.

As shown in Figure 5-2 below, the central part of each NewVistas community is laid out in a 49-block grid (7 rows by 7 columns) that stretches 1.2 miles on each side.³ The wider middle column of blocks includes three central squares featuring a complex of public community buildings, as described in chapter 6. All the other 46 blocks in the grid feature apartment buildings, gardens, small shops and kiosks, and other amenities.

[Insert the same diagram as above, but the square part only and with the arrows removed.]

Figure 5-2. The central part of each NewVistas community is a 7x7 grid of blocks, most of which provide mixed residential and commercial space.

Most of the blocks are 660x660 feet square.⁴ However, in the central column the blocks are 660x990. In addition to the three central squares, this column also includes four “wide” neighborhood blocks, two each above and below the central squares.

A Blend of Residential and Commercial

A distinguishing characteristic of the plan for the NewVistas neighborhoods is a blend of residential and commercial. NewVistas moves away from the modern separation of people’s living space from their spaces for shopping and working, back toward a time when it was more common for people to have local, walkable options.

This way of doing things will bring several benefits. A key advantage is eliminating the stress, wasted time, and pollution that accompany the commuter lifestyle. Additionally, people will be able to split their time more flexibly and efficiently between home, the workplace, and other activities. This could be particularly important for people caring for

³ The 1830s plot text states that the community is “one mile square.” The statute mile used in 1830s Kirtland, Ohio—as today—measures 5,280’. However, analysis of the plot drawing and text shows that the plot square actually measures 6,336’, which is equivalent to 1.2 statute miles. Before Queen Elizabeth standardized the mile at 5,280’ in 1593, the British Isles had many different miles. The 6,336’ mile was the average of the premodern Scotch and Irish miles. The NewVistas hypothesis is that the plot text may be connected to the time and language of Bible-translator William Tyndale (1494–1536) rather than to 1830s Kirtland, Ohio. Similar language is also used in the Book of Mormon.

⁴ Using the older measures of the plot, this is 40x40 rods. In metric measurements, this comes to about 200x200 meters.

children or other dependents at home, people who juggle multiple activities, or even people who just want to be able to enjoy more variety or take a break from time to time for the sake of their health and stress level.

Another advantage is that integrating people's workspaces close to their living spaces will bring more activity to neighborhoods. This in turn can help develop more of a community feeling and character and a more robust local economy.

Layout of the Neighborhood Blocks

Blocks in the NewVistas neighborhoods are planned to be considerably larger than in most American cities. At 660x660 feet, each block will be a little more than a tenth of a mile on each side. In comparison, most city blocks in the United States range between 200 and 400 feet to a side. One of the few cities featuring blocks of comparable size to NewVistas is Salt Lake City, which is based in small part on the 1830s plot.⁵

Unlike standard residential blocks in cities in the U.S., Canada, and many other parts of the world, each NewVistas block will have house lots on only two sides instead of all four sides. Where possible, adjacent blocks will be "turned" 90 degrees from each other to allow for private, unobstructed vistas looking out over gardens and groves rather than facing other buildings, as shown below.

[Closeup diagram showing 4 neighborhood blocks, with callouts for the house lots, breezeways, streets, and garden areas. Upper left and lower right blocks should have house lots running up and down.]

Figure 5-3. In this four-block area, the blocks in the upper left and lower right corners have house lots along the east and west sides of the block. The other two blocks have house lots on the north and south sides.

As prescribed by the 1830s plot, each side of a block with housing will be divided into ten 66-foot-wide lots (15 lots for the wide blocks). Houses on the lots will be joined together into a single long building, similar in concept to the row houses of older times. Each house will have three levels with multiple apartments that can also be transformed for use as working space, providing living space for about 100 participants. Front to back, each house will be 66 feet deep, or four rods using the traditional measures that feature so often in interpreting the 1830s documents.

The center of each block will be taken up with half-acre terraced garden areas behind each apartment building, which will be leased to farmers or to other community members who want to do their own gardening. These gardens will drain down to a wetland area occupying at least an acre in the middle of each block, including a pond. Wetlands naturally purify water by helping remove sediments, nutrients, and even pollutants such as heavy metals.⁶ This wetland area will be maintained as part of the terraced gardens but will also double as a play space where neighborhood children can climb trees, make forts and treehouses, and generally get dirty.

⁵ Daniel Nairn, "The Variety of American Grids," *Greater Greater Washington*, 31 May 2010, <http://greatergreaterwashington.org/post/6002/the-variety-of-american-grids>.

⁶ See State of Washington Department of Ecology, "Functions and Values of Wetlands," <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/wetlands/functions.html>. Large grated underground piping connects the pond areas to each other and to an external water outlet, allowing purified water to slowly circulate out of the drainage areas. The pipes also prevent overflow in case of excessive rain or snow melt.

Between the houses and the street will be a 25-foot-wide, glass-enclosed, communitywide breezeway that residents can use to go anywhere in the community by walking, biking, skating, or using personal electric vehicles, without exposure to bad weather outside. In addition, the breezeway will provide public access to businesses located in the hubs where streets intersect. (For more about how the breezeway will be used for community transportation, see the section on transportation later in this chapter.)

Streets and Hubs

Between adjacent blocks there will be a 132-foot-wide “street” area. This area will include paths for walking and biking, particularly in good weather, and is also designed as a common space for use by nearby residents, like a public square. On the 1830s plot, the streets are colored green, which suggests areas that are at least partly planted with vegetation, unlike today’s totally paved streets.

Because motorized traffic in the NewVistas community will be confined to the breezeways, the “streets” (public squares) are freed up to serve as a community space with trees, box gardens, paved areas, benches, kiosks, and more. The streets will be a place for residents to get out and meet their neighbors, explore nearby blocks, or simply stroll and enjoy the scenery. When weather is good, most people will walk and ride bikes through the community via the outside streets rather than using the enclosed breezeways. In keeping with the NewVistas philosophy of promoting local food production, garden spaces in the streets would typically consist of edible fruits, nut trees, herbs, vegetables, and other produce. (For more information about intensive gardening in the NewVistas communities, see chapter 7.)



Figure 5-4. Elimination of the automobile frees up streets to serve as pleasant common areas for walking and public interaction in a NewVistas community, as well as additional productive food-growing space.

With streets 132' wide but only relatively narrow breezeways needed to facilitate transportation, intersections also function as hubs for local neighborhood amenities such as cafés, laundry services, daycare centers, gyms, hair and nail salons, self-serve convenience stores, and entertainment arcades, which can stay open in the evenings. Surrounded by breezeways, a hub building measures 132x132 feet, starts out as one story with a rooftop garden/patio, and can be expanded as needed up to five stories high. Upper floors can be used for office space, storage, production or processing facilities, and other commercial needs.

Hubs do not replace a community's three central blocks, which function as the entire community's downtown area with big-box stores and the 24 community service agencies. The square footage of hub buildings plus central buildings can total as much as 10,000,000, which works out to about 100 public square feet per community participant, the same square footage that participants also each have for personal living space. In addition, a NewVistas community provides 1,000 square feet of green space per person and 50 square feet of roads/walkways.⁷

In general, each village of 10 apartment buildings connects to a hub at each end. One of these hubs is designated as "active" and the other as "passive," referring to noise, activity levels, and types of shops. The half of the street connected to the active hub is also designated as active, and the same for the passive side. Families with children would usually live on a village's active side and make use of the active half of the street and the active hub, while older or single people might usually prefer the passive side. If a person needs access to a specific hub building, they can rent an apartment close to that hub.

Thus, each village is divided into an active group and a passive group. Two of the three village president positions (four individuals) each serve a village group, and the third village president position serves the village as a whole. A village president serving a village group must live within the five apartment buildings comprising that group. Each village president serving a group is responsible for one-fourth of the active or passive hub to which that village group is connected.⁸ As needed, village group presidents coordinate with each other.

A NewVistas community has 36 full interior hubs, each for use by four connecting villages; thus, with each village housing about 1,000 people, a full hub could function as a bustling community center for nearly 4,000 people. A full hub measures 132 square feet

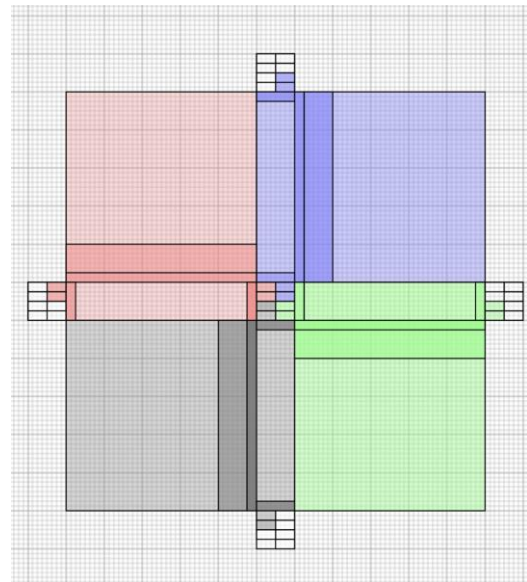


Figure 4-1: This graphic shows four villages connecting at a hub, with colors indicating the areas for which each village is responsible: street in front (public square), breezeway, apartment buildings, backyard gardens, and 1/4 of the hub and breezeway at each intersection.

⁷ For an interesting comparison, see "The Allocation of Space in U.S. Cities," <https://www.geotab.com/urban-footprint/>.

⁸ If a hub is connected to a central public square, one group president takes responsibility not only for the connected quarter-hub but also for the adjacent quarter-hub.

and is surrounded by 24'-9" breezeway extensions that serve as traffic throughways and roundabouts. Around the edges of the community grid, 24 half-hubs each serve two villages. At the grid corners, four quarter-hubs each serve one village. With fewer villages attached, the community's half-hubs and quarter-hubs will have lower use, so some community residents may prefer to live in these villages.

Villages and Districts

Communitywide, NewVistas neighborhoods will be organized into 96 villages and 24 districts. The villages and districts will be geographically organized, serving both as social units and as a way of organizing the neighborhoods for local decision-making.

Each village will include ten "houses" (apartment buildings) that house a total of about 1,000 people. In a standard NewVistas neighborhood block, a village will consist of the ten joined houses on one side of the block. This will make it convenient to coordinate issues related to building maintenance, care of the garden areas behind the houses, and use of the street in front of the houses. In the plot's center column, the wider blocks will require villages to be organized differently, but always with ten houses per village. (For more details about village organization and functioning, see chapter 2.)

NewVistas villages are intended to function as more than just geographical markers and organization structures. The village is also where social needs can be met and people can develop a sense of personal connection with their neighbors. Members of each village live privately in households but close together and share outdoor spaces tailored to a variety of uses, providing opportunities for shared recreational activities.

Four adjoining but demographically diverse villages will be organized into a district. There are 24 districts total in a NewVistas community. For an example of how the villages in a NewVistas community might be divided to form districts, see the diagram below.

[Diagram corresponding to slide 6 in the District PPT, https://newvistasllc.sharepoint.com/NewVistas%20Foundation/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?guestaccesstoken=xLwImt8NXzf9oFsC2dcqUoU3FOnE3fg5BD656BgVk%2f0%3d&docid=097d14cbe24c6487b911ae31265230896&action=view. For clarity, remove the blocks shown on left and right outside the neighborhoods. Possibly also remove the detail from the 3 central blocks and simply call them "Central squares." May want to change shading to make it easier for someone who is partially colorblind, like myself, to actually see the villages in this diagram—for me they are very easy to lose against the background.]

Figure 5-6. A NewVistas community includes twenty-four districts, each consisting of four adjoining villages.

The district is intended to provide a forum for communication and coordinated effort above the level of the village but below the level of the complete community. Each district will be responsible for one public multipurpose building in the central squares of the community, as well as the covered mall that surrounds the building (for more details, see chapter 6). Each district will also be responsible for part of the NewVistas community's agricultural and industrial areas outside of the neighborhood grid. (See chapter 4 for more details about districts.)

Transportation

One of the most wasteful, unsustainable aspects of modern society is daily use of private gasoline-powered automobiles. The NewVistas community eliminates the use of automobiles for most purposes, while providing convenient, more healthful, and more sustainable alternatives.

Distances within a NewVistas community are easily walkable, with only about two miles of walking distance separating the opposite corners of the community's neighborhood grid area. Residents will be encouraged to walk, bike, jog, or skate to get from place to place whenever possible, both for the sake of health and sociability and for energy efficiency. Options will be provided for transportation both outdoors and within enclosed breezeways that are protected from the weather.

Gasoline-powered vehicles are not allowed within the NewVistas community. Instead, electric M²ULEs and other small electric vehicles can be rented for short-term use or leased for long-term. Because electric vehicles are smaller and lighter, they take up less energy and space while massively reducing noise and air pollution—two of the banes of modern city life. Large items and bulk goods can also easily be moved around the community by electric vehicles, using trailers and pallets as needed.

The network of breezeways provides transportation access throughout the neighborhoods. Each breezeway will be divided into lanes for walking, bicycles and skating, and use of electric M²ULEs, including loading and unloading areas in front of each building. The breezeway's transparent walls with doors on the street side are designed to provide a pleasant view and easy access to the street area. At the same time, the breezeways will be climate-controlled so residents don't have to worry about rain, snow, ice, cold, pollen, heat, or humidity.

Pedestrian traffic will move both directions in the breezeway. However, traffic for bicycles, skating, and M²ULEs will all be one-way, as shown in the diagram below. Each hub will be surrounded by breezeways. Even using the one-way lanes, any location within the community should be less than three miles travel distance from any other location in the community.

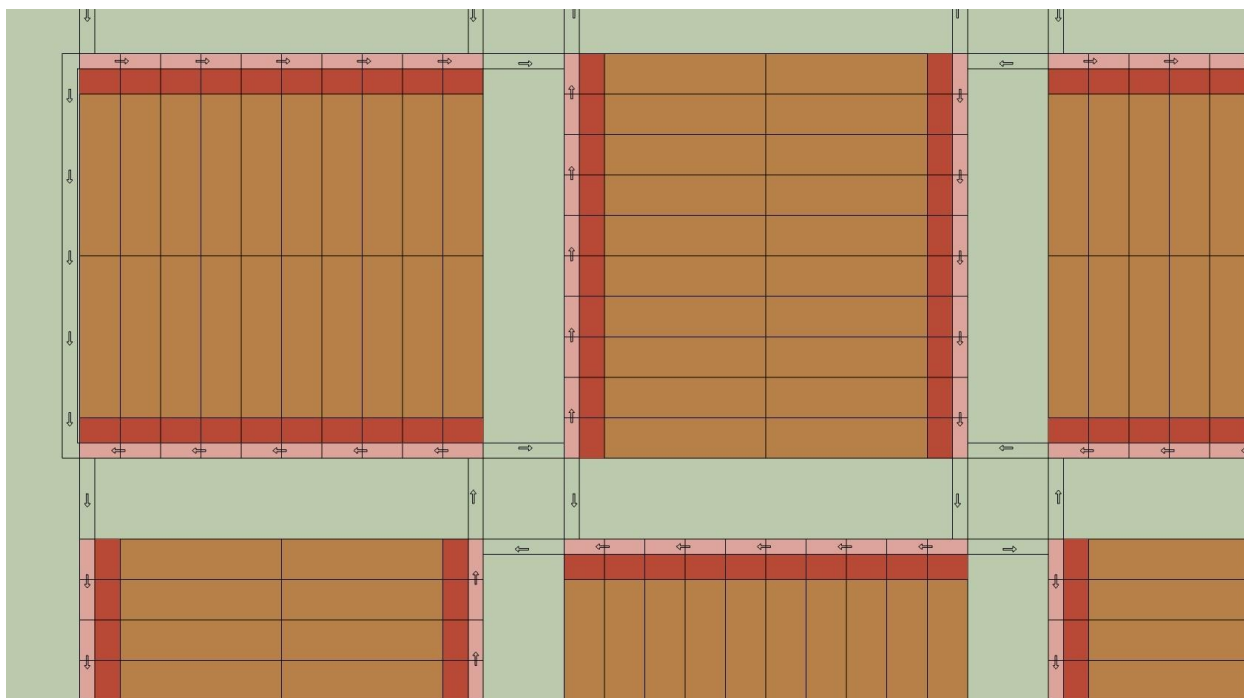


Figure 5-7. Breezeways (pink) in front of the apartment buildings provide access for businesses and residents. The network of breezeways gives easy access in every kind of weather via walking, biking, skating, or using electric M²ULEs.

For travel outside the community, residents will be able to rent vehicles as desired or use larger public-transportation networks.

Design and Construction of Apartment Buildings

Achieving the goals of NewVistas requires not only innovative community layout and socio-economic design, but a new approach to housing as well, down to the details of how houses are built, materials used, and even how apartments and standard fixtures are configured.

This aspect of the NewVistas model represents a work in progress, as ongoing research, design, and practical experience reveal some ideas that don't work as well as expected and thus stimulate replacement of good ideas with better ones. However, several years of thinking by a creative team of designers and engineers have yielded at least partial solutions in a wide array of areas. The rest of this chapter describes the current best thinking of this design team, subject to ongoing improvement and the inevitable future evolution of ideas.

Multi-Level, Multi-Family Housing

Those of us who live in the United States tend to think of single-family housing as the norm. However, this is a fairly recent historical development. For the most part, single family homes—especially in towns and cities—are something that we have become widely used to only since the automobile came into general use.

The NewVistas neighborhoods go back to an older model in which multiple families lived in the same building, in many cases above the shops where they worked. Each

NewVistas “house” is designed to include 42 household apartments, which can also be transformed for use as daytime workspace. A single household apartment includes space for 2–4 individuals (on average, 2.4 individuals), so 42 household apartments together house about 100 people.

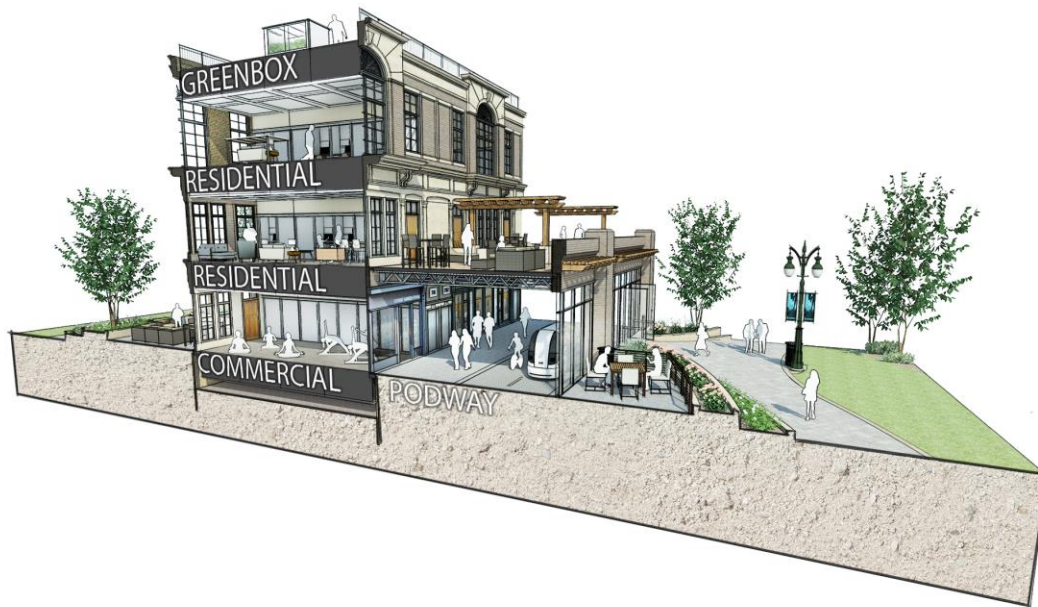


Figure 5-8. A NewVistas apartment building features three levels of space that can be transformed for residential or work use. Each level has access to an outdoor patio, and the roof is used for box gardens.

Siting and Excavation

Contouring will be used to advantage in NewVistas communities to keep houses and businesses high and dry, use the land efficiently for a variety of purposes, and provide good drainage. NewVistas communities can be built both on flat ground and on slopes.

Ground-level elevation in a NewVistas community will range about 14' total, from the lowest “pond” areas in the middle of the blocks, up about 7' to the level of excavation below the buildings, and then up another 7' to the actual walking level of the lowest floor in the buildings, which is also the level of the adjoining breezeway. The space between the level of excavation and the walking level of the lowest floor will be taken up by an 18" crawlspace above a layer of crushed gravel on the bottom. NewVistas buildings will be erected on concrete RR ties.

Streets will slope downward as they get further away from the building to provide good drainage. Dirt that is excavated from the center of each block for the terraced gardens and pond area can be used elsewhere as needed to build up some areas. Adjoining houses on a block can be “terraced” if needed to accommodate the natural underlying slope of the land.

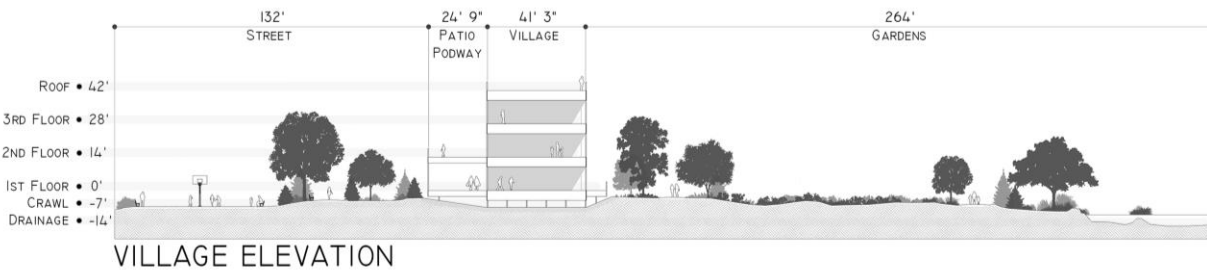


Figure 5-9. This diagram shows differences in elevation from the pond (at far right) to the crawlspace under the building, to the first floor and adjoining breezeway, up to the roof of the buildings, drawn to scale. The apartment building is 24'-9" back from the 132' street; the breezeway's roll-up glass garage doors take up three inches overlapping the street easement, so the apartment building is actually 25' back, as specified in the plat. The apartment building is 66x66 feet and the garden area behind is 239.25 feet long. The lot itself is 330x66 feet.

Modular Design

Mass production and use of ready-to-assemble housing units have poor reputations in housing construction, largely because this approach has been associated with low-quality materials and shortcuts in the building process. However, that's not the way it has to be. The plan is that each NewVistas apartment building will be constructed according to a standardized design that guarantees high quality while lowering both cost and construction time.

Assembling the Building

Bridge modules and vertical modules fit together like LEGOs. They are joined together to form a complete modular design for one section of a building, as shown below.

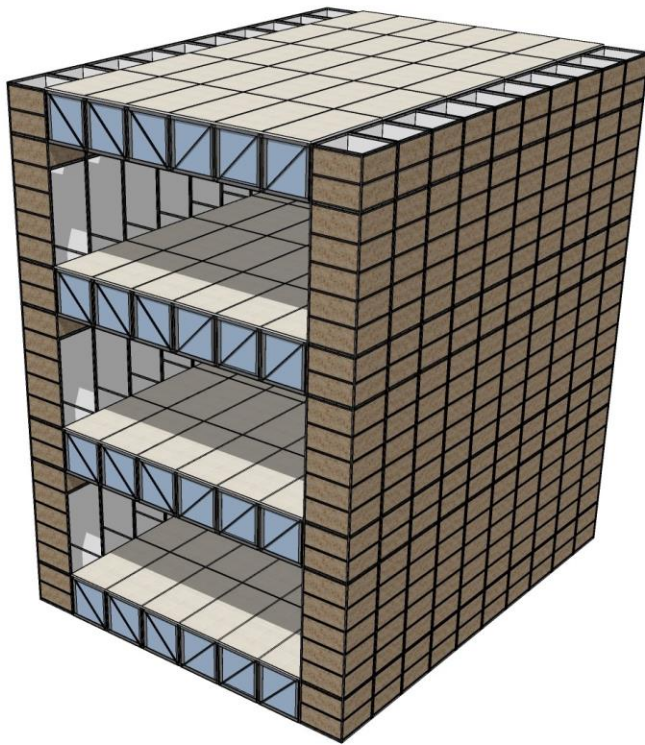
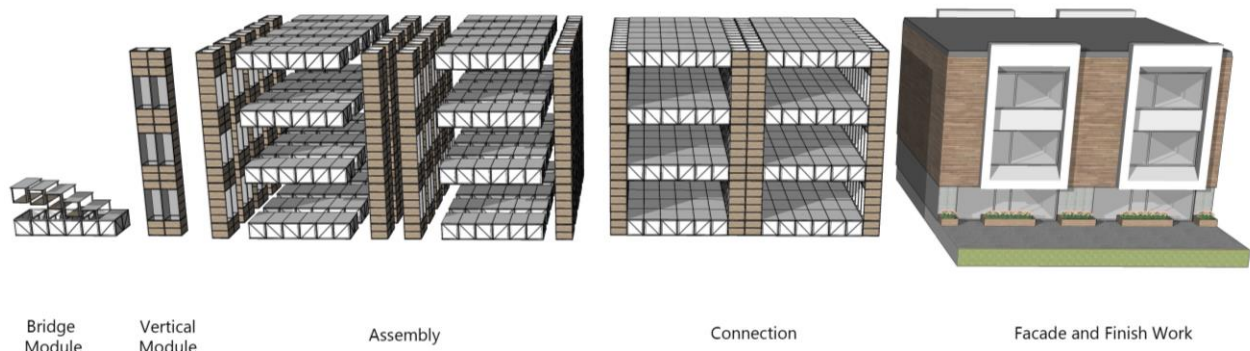


Figure 5-13. This section of a building consists of five vertical modules on each side, linked by bridge modules on each floor and above the top floor, forming the roof.

A complete 66-foot apartment building consists of two of these building sections, joined together with back-to-back vertical modules.



Lifestyle Adjustments

NewVistas is more than just a blueprint for a physical and economic community. Living in NewVistas is also designed to encourage a variety of lifestyle adjustments that can benefit individuals, families, and the community as a whole.

Walking, Not Riding

As described above, NewVistas communities are designed to make it easy to walk or bike rather than riding to get from place to place. This lifestyle change has the potential to improve individual health as well as substantially reduce residents' carbon and energy footprint. This in turn helps stimulate increased local social and economic interaction, another intended outcome for the NewVistas model.

Janitorial Services

While residents in each household are responsible for picking up after themselves and pushing buttons to reconfigure living and workspaces over the course of the day, use of the NewVistas janitorial service is built into the lease for households and businesses, with a baseline fee billed automatically. Additional services may be requested at additional cost.

Pets

As currently planned, NewVistas will include pet blocks and outside areas where small pets are allowed—for example, cats or cat-sized dogs—but not larger pets. Instead, larger pets would be housed in kennels where residents can easily spend time with them and take them out for walks, but where they are not shut up inside an apartment most of the day.

In addition to kennels for pets, NewVistas businesses might also include other related services in the agricultural zone (see chapter 7), such as a horse stable. Residents who enjoy riding horses could pay a monthly fee or by the hour to spend time with the animals.

Expanded Use of Rental Services

As a society, we place a lot of emphasis on owning things as a marker of personal success and even worth, even though psychologists and religious leaders tend to agree that this isn't good for our spiritual and emotional health. While membership in NewVistas won't change human nature, NewVistas living subtly encourages a general shift from owning a lot of things—houses, cars, appliances, clothing, furniture—to having on hand those things you plan to use, which individuals might choose to own but more likely would rent or lease on a short-term or long-term basis.

Living in NewVistas will encourage expanded use of rental services for items such as furniture, appliances, recreational equipment and vehicles, and even clothing, as opposed to private ownership. This way of doing things brings a lot of practical advantages. Needs, tastes, and interests change over time. Sometime people want to engage in activities that require specialized equipment that might get used only once or twice a year. By renting instead of owning, families and individuals avoid tying up their capital—and their storage space—but still have access to things they want to use.

Instead of owning clothes, residents might choose to use a clothing rental service that provides the clothes they expect to need in a given week, then takes them away for washing, dry cleaning, and any needed repairs. Imagine never having to do your own laundry—and doing away with the need for a washer and dryer! NewVistas makes that a viable option. Similarly, people might rent eating utensils and dishes, which would then be collected and cleaned by a local small business.

Less Cooking, More Order-in

As described above, each resident in NewVistas has access to a workstation that can function as a kitchenette, in addition to myriad other uses. Additionally, each apartment will include a shared workstation and common area that can be used as a kitchen if desired.

At a basic level, the kitchenettes provide facilities for basic cooking, microwaving, and other food preparation. These facilities can be expanded if desired into something more closely resembling a traditional kitchen by bringing up food preparation ingredients, tables, and larger-size appliances from storage under the flooring, if residents so choose. However, it's anticipated that many people will take advantage of the lower overall cost of living in NewVistas to cut back on the amount of cooking they do and take advantage of other options instead.

One such option is eating out. It's expected that a lot of the small businesses in the NewVistas communities will be small local restaurants. Eating out in NewVistas will provide many options within easy walking distance. More convenient still is the option of ordering in. As noted above, the NewVistas communities are literally built to facilitate delivery service. In the NewVistas neighborhoods, it will be easy for residents to order tasty, high-quality food from a variety of different local businesses that can deliver food hot at mealtimes or frozen, a week's worth at a time, for easy reheating later.

Some people may not want to cook on a regular basis, but like the idea of personally preparing a large meal for birthdays, Thanksgiving, or other special occasions. NewVistas can accommodate that desire for occasional cooking without the need for a family to keep specialized cooking equipment on hand that sees use only a couple of times a year. Instead, they can choose to rent fully equipped kitchen and dining spaces within the community for special events—or lease equipment on a short-term basis for their own apartments, whichever best suits their needs and wants. In addition, people who like to cook could work part time in a restaurant or even start their own food business, with others to help.

It's all about options. Residents living in the NewVistas neighborhoods can still choose to cook traditional meals for themselves and their families if that's important to them. However, they don't *have* to do so.

Managing the Greenspace

Part of what makes the NewVistas neighborhoods enjoyable places to live is the extensive incorporation of greenspace within the community design, including both the terraced gardens behind the houses (draining down to the pond area) and the streets themselves, which are planned to include trees, shrubs, vines, and raised gardens—"groves," in the terminology of the original 1830s plat.⁹ Several unusual features about these greenspaces make them different from what most of us may be familiar with:

- The NewVistas commitment to sustainable, small-footprint living means that instead of taking up space with purely ornamental landscaping, greenspaces will be planted with varieties that produce edible fruit, nuts, vegetables, or other crops.

⁹ <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/plat-of-the-city-of-zion-circa-early-june-25-june-1833/1?highlight=grove>

Pleasant appearance and natural beauty are still goals—especially in public areas such as the streets—but they will be combined with productivity.

- As part of this focus on productivity, NewVistas will eliminate the grass lawns that are such a standard—and wasteful—feature in today’s suburbs. Doing this will not only free up space for more productive planting, but also will reduce water and fertilizer consumption and time needed for lawn care, while increasing the community’s biodiversity. Parks and playgrounds might still conceivably include some grass areas, but more likely will feature lower-maintenance ground cover materials that are better suited to the specific use of the space, such as sand, wood chips, or rubber playground mulch.
- Maintenance of the greenspaces will be contracted with farmers and other local businesses, or to families and individuals living in the community who want their own garden and are willing to pay for the privilege. They also must be willing to keep up maintenance on their leased space—no weedy gardens, or they lose their lease. Individuals who want to do some gardening but aren’t ready to take on the responsibility for managing their own space can choose to work a few paid hours a week for a local farmer.

Moving into the Future

Creation of complete economic and physical NewVistas communities is still years or even decades in the future. However, the path to NewVistas includes many steps along the way—some of which are taking place now, and some of which will need to happen in the future as part of building toward the complete NewVistas model.

Conceptual Work

The first step forward is the creative mental work of figuring out what the NewVistas communities should be like, the guiding principles and goals. Much of this work has already been done, as expressed both in this chapter and in the other chapters of this book. However, modifications and refinements to the model are ongoing, as teams and individuals work together to generate new insights, as ideas are tested both conceptually and in practice, and as new possibilities become available due to new research and technology.¹⁰

An important next step is translating the NewVistas principles and goals into practical plans, blueprints, and designs. The specifics outlined in this chapter summarize some of the best current thinking of the NewVistas design team in these areas. As part of this effort, individuals connected to NewVistas have generated a wide range of patents for technology to help meet the specific challenges of the NewVistas design. This work continues in many areas related to plans for the NewVistas neighborhoods, particularly with respect to design of the houses and their features.

¹⁰ For example, recent announcements about micro gas turbines suggest that this technology might enable communities to be powered on the level of the individual house, as opposed to the village or district level. NewVistas engineers plan to investigate this technology further to determine its potential.

Prototypes and Independent Development

Together with the conceptual work is development of prototypes and other proofs of design for every aspect of the NewVistas neighborhoods, ranging from faucets and shower heads to building layouts. Prototype development and testing is ongoing in many of the areas described in this chapter, plus others besides. The plan is to test each component piece and test the viability of each design element independently on a small scale before attempting to build an integrated NewVistas village, let alone a district or a complete physical community.

A significant advantage of this pattern of development is that component technologies and systems created for NewVistas can prove their worth and start helping improve the world incrementally, without needing to wait until all parts of the model are ready to be implemented. In fact, NewVistas can start with just one housing module in the backyard of an existing suburban house.

Construction of NewVistas Buildings

NewVistas can come about through a gradual process from low-density housing to high density. Individual, standalone household modules can start out in suburban backyards and later be combined and stacked into larger groups. The modular design of the household modules makes it possible to build partial or full apartment buildings anywhere, and then disassemble and move them to a new location when it's time to put together a complete NewVistas community. It's also anticipated that buildings constructed according to the NewVistas pattern will be offered on the open market to companies and municipalities wanting to take advantage of its efficient and innovative design.

Some adjustments will be needed for use of NewVistas apartment buildings outside the context of a complete NewVistas physical community. For example, when a NewVistas-pattern house is built in today's urban or rural sprawl, space can be allotted for residents to park their cars. Alternatively, some buildings might include a fleet of cars that residents can rent on demand, helping prepare future residents for living in a carless community. In addition, NewVistas buildings can plug into existing power, water, and sewage systems.

As noted above, it's also anticipated that standalone NewVista-pattern buildings will be attractive to some businesses and families that want to live more efficiently and sustainably without joining NewVistas. Thus, some NewVistas-pattern buildings might be managed as commercial ventures that lease space to anyone, not just NewVistas participants. In addition, a NewVistas community could potentially license NewVistas blueprints to other developers to use and adapt as they see fit.

From Buildings to Communities

As physical buildings are being constructed, the next step is to start putting them together in larger organizational units for a NewVistas community.

As NewVistas participants begin moving into NewVistas houses in any location, NewVistas groups, villages, and districts can begin to form. For example, if 10 NewVistas apartment buildings are in close enough proximity, they can start to function together as a village, even if the houses aren't yet physically joined together in the planned NewVistas pattern. As a next step, five or 10 NewVistas houses could be assembled as row houses contiguous with each other, in the same formation as will be used in a full-sized NewVistas

physical community. If four villages are near enough to each other, they could form a NewVistas district and erect a public multipurpose building. As noted above, these buildings can all later be moved, as necessary, to fit into an eventual full-sized community. This is possible because the buildings consist of mass-produced elements that fit together like LEGOs and can be taken apart and reassembled.

Obviously, creation of complete NewVistas physical communities will involve challenges in other areas besides construction. Land must be purchased within existing urban sprawl. NewVistas economic communities must begin to be organized before there's a physical community to move into (for more on this, see chapter 3). Local zoning and codes that were designed with more traditional housing options in mind may need to be changed and permits acquired. From fixture to module, to building, to village, to district, to community, creation of NewVistas spaces for living and carrying out the vision of the 1830s documents is an ongoing and ever-evolving project.