

STARTER HOMES

2016 HOUSE REVIEW THEMES

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- AUGUST Revising Best-Selling Plans
- SEPTEMBER Master Baths
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How do you deliver a home within reach that excites the imagination of a first-time buyer?

By Larry W. Garnett, FAIBD, House Review Lead Designer

Most builders will agree that the starter home has become an extremely challenging product to design and build. As land, labor, and material costs increase, the number of first-time buyers continues to drop, creating a serious long-term situation for the home building industry. The starter home, after all, is a major link in the overall housing chain. Without these initial investments by young buyers, the move-up market and the down-sizing Baby Boomer market are both in trouble. While the following designs present exciting concepts for starter homes, it's worth mentioning that first-time buyers must also be realistic regarding a home's finishes and amenities. For a generation that grew up assuming that granite countertops and home theaters were standard features, today's starter-home buyers probably need to adjust their expectations. Although they may need to get used to the laminate countertops of their parents' first house, at least they won't have to endure harvest-gold kitchen appliances.



Conceived with the vision of creating a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood of small cottages for first-time buyers, Harmony at Black Hill Farm achieves a density of 10 homes per acre while maintaining generous open spaces. Front porches, functional floor plans, and two-car garages along rear lanes combine with an assortment of outdoor living spaces to provide appealing and affordable starter homes.

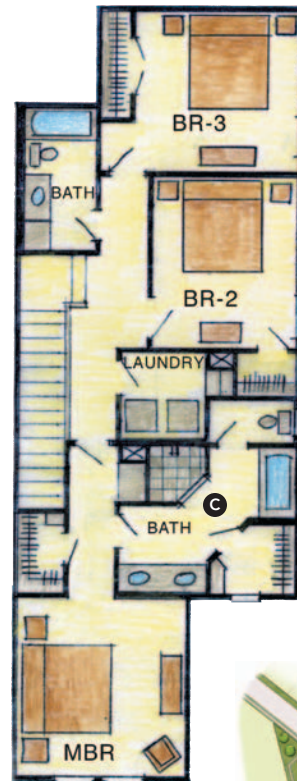
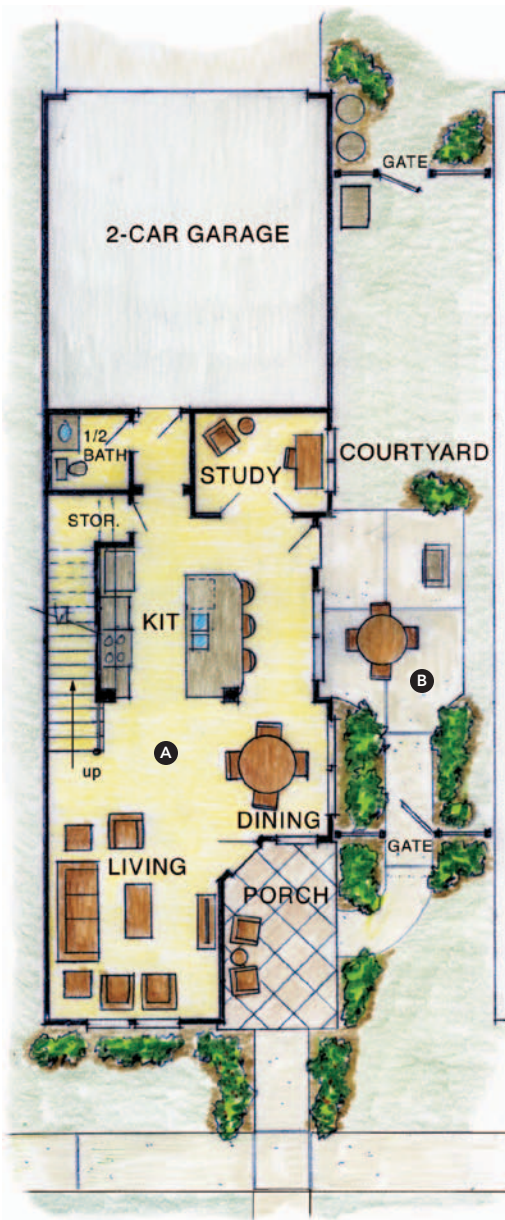
THE MARIGOLD

DESIGNER

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PLAN SIZE

Width: 20 feet
 Depth: 65 feet
 Living area: 1,635 sf



- Ⓐ Open floor plan with multiple windows faces the side courtyard
- Ⓑ Gated side courtyard provides private outdoor living space and secure area for children and pets
- Ⓒ Master bath features two closets, tub, and shower
- Ⓓ 24-foot-wide street with additional inset parking provides for slower traffic and tree-lined streets. Two-car garages are located along rear lanes
- Ⓔ Small open areas (parks) are placed throughout the neighborhood, offering safe outdoor spaces for children to play
- Ⓕ All homes have front porches facing sidewalks or common courtyards, allowing interaction with neighbors or watching children play

[HOUSE REVIEW]

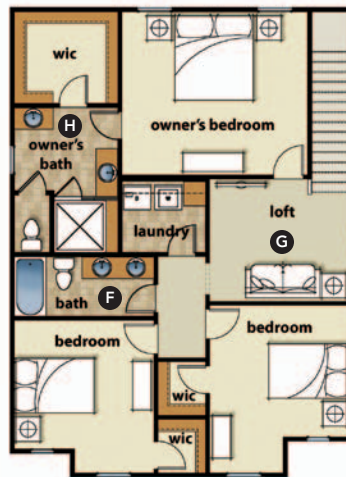
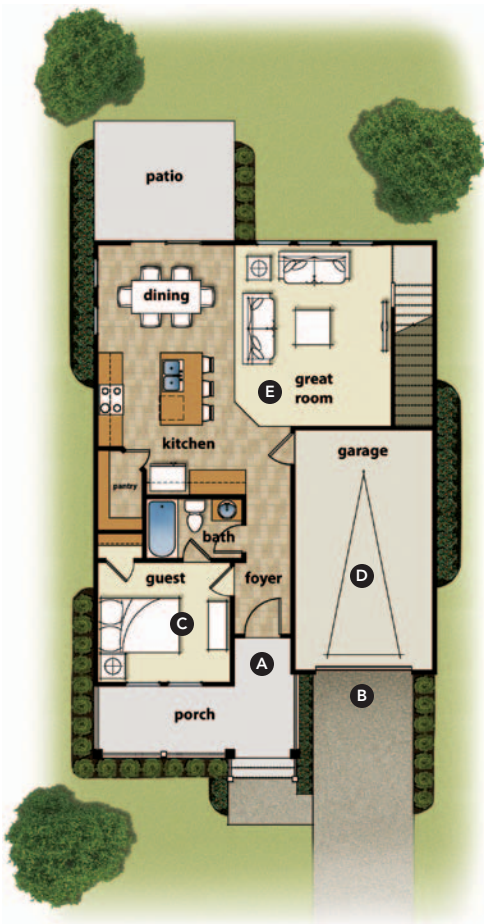
THE NEW HANOVER

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PLAN SIZE

Width: 29 feet
 Depth: 42 feet
 Living area: 1,795 sf



Starter homes can sometimes lack compelling design touches, but this one breaks the mold in the form of an inviting contemporary farmhouse elevation. The home is efficient to build, with exterior walls that fully stack on three sides. Although this is an open plan, there are short floor-joist spans and minimal need for beams. Today's starter-home buyers are different from buyers in the past and often have extended family living in the home. The plan accommodates this need by providing a guest room on the first floor. The main living space has interconnected living, dining, and kitchen areas, and the second floor offers a great point of arrival at the top of the stair that then leads to three spacious bedrooms.

- Ⓐ Full-width front porch
- Ⓑ Garage is set back from front of house
- Ⓒ Full bedroom on first floor
- Ⓓ One-car garage
- Ⓔ Open plan includes kitchen, dining, and great rooms, all connected
- Ⓕ Baths and laundry are centralized to reduce plumbing cost
- Ⓖ Open loft offers family gathering spot
- Ⓗ Shower-only owner's bath reduces cost

THE INDEPENDENCE

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PLAN SIZE

Width: 24 feet
Depth: 38 feet
Living area: 1,895 sf

Starter homes are all about creating affordable value. This Millennial-targeted starter home is part of an infill project in Utah. The plan provides value without compromising good design by following the seven standard rules of cost control:

- 1 **Standardization:** Using a kit-of-parts approach to designs, such as standard window sizes, door sizes, and building material sizes, reduces labor and waste
- 2 **Stackability:** Aligning bearing walls, deleting "carry beams," and maximizing square footage helps decrease volumes
- 3 **Specifications:** Perceived value finishes allow buyers to touch, see, and feel, but establish a firm budget and stick to it
- 4 **Simplification:** Detailing (using a one-piece ceiling crown instead of a three-piece crown; combining three window openings into one), streamlines construction phasing and scheduling
- 5 **Systems:** Designs should centralize mechanical runs and unit locations. Use lighting as a sales tool to brighten your interiors, but do so in a considered fashion
- 6 **Structure:** Maximize floor spans, remain on two-foot framing modules, and consider alternative construction methods such as panelization
- 7 **Square footage:** Obviously, the bigger the home, the higher the cost. But, per square foot, a bigger home may be less expensive to build



[HOUSE REVIEW]

SOUTH LA PROTOTYPE

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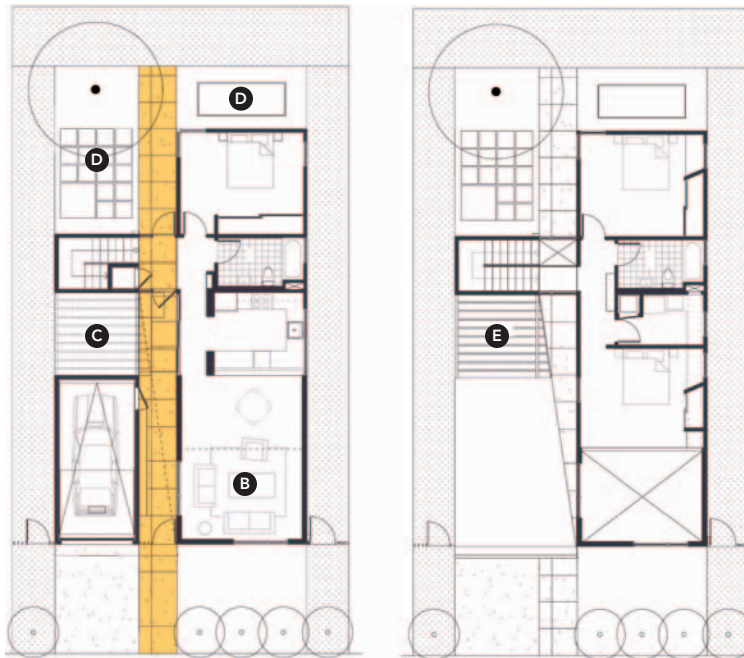
PLAN SIZE

Width: 32 feet
 Depth: 50 feet
 Living area: 1,300 sf

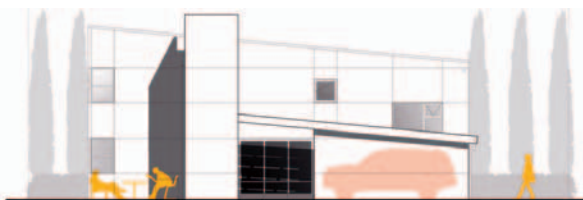


Set in tough Los Angeles neighborhoods and built on narrow lots within extremely tight budgets, these new prototypes for urban-infill and affordable homeownership provide amenities and spatial qualities rare to income-qualified housing. The design of these homes aims to honor the rudiments of good living typical to Southern California, such as abundant natural light, indoor-outdoor connections, vivid colors, and gracious processional spaces.

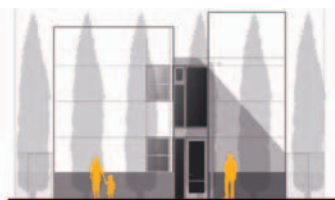
The design provides for integrated and defensible space while maintaining openness, grace, and fluidity. The prototypes take the optimistic view that dignity, sense of luxury, and healthy living are not just for those at the top of the social ladder.



- A View from street
- B Double-height living room makes the home feel much larger than its modest footprint
- C Indoor-outdoor terrace offers airy and protected outdoor space
- D Backyard setup includes xeriscape planting and permeable surfaces
- E Trellis offers overhead shelter for outdoor area



SIDE ELEVATION



REAR ELEVATION



FRONT ELEVATION

[HOUSE REVIEW]

THE MEADOW VIEW

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Width: 27 feet, 4 inches
 Depth: 46 feet, 4 inches
 Living area: 1,454 sf



Most first-time buyers are on a tight budget and in search of a home that meets their needs without breaking the bank. With this in mind, the starter homes we propose are simple, affordable, and relatable to Millennial buyers.

- A** Modest great room feels larger than expected due to the open stair rail and its relationship to the kitchen
- B** Dining area is set in an alcove allowing for a sense of formality in an informal setting
- C** Kitchen is planned for generous cabinetry in a smaller space
- D** Powder room is set for both easy access and privacy for guests
- E** Simple plan form allows for cost-effective building yet creates drama
- F** Narrow plan form allows home to fit on small lots
- G** Owner's suite is private, with a huge walk-in closet
- H** Circulation space is efficient and eliminates excess hallway space

