

POCKET NEIGHBORHOODS

2016 HOUSE REVIEW THEMES

FEBRUARY	Multigenerational Designs
MARCH	Starter Homes
APRIL	Multiple Exteriors for One Plan
MAY	Contemporary Designs
JUNE	Narrow Lot Designs
JULY	Pool Houses and Cabanas
AUGUST	Revising Best-Selling Plans
SEPTEMBER	Master Baths
OCTOBER	Luxury Homes
NOVEMBER	On the Boards
DECEMBER	Kitchens

Enclaves with smaller homes, front porches, footpaths, and tucked-away parking are in demand

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

A neighborhood that's walkable is one of the most important items on prospective buyers' checklists right now, across market segments. While pedestrian-friendly developments typically include retail, office, and housing, there's increasing interest in simple pocket neighborhoods that consist of smaller homes, with an emphasis on people rather than automobiles. Here, cars are often relegated to secondary locations, allowing residents to stroll through common courtyards, interacting with neighbors during the walk to and from home. In areas where attached garages are still deemed necessary, garages can be set on a rear lane. In many ways, the new pocket neighborhoods are a look back to residential planning and building of yore, before the automobile dominated. A return to narrow streets, wide sidewalks safe for walking and biking, and roomy front porches appears to be gaining favor. With an idea as innovative as a pocket neighborhood, it's important to adjust the details to suit your specific market. While each of the following concepts handles the automobile differently, each pays plenty of attention to the value of walkability.



This small site on the Atlantic coast, situated among very high-end custom homes, led us to create a quaint community of seven three-story cottages. Designed in a Coastal Craftsman style with an appropriate color palette, these homes are tall enough to afford views of the ocean over the sand dunes that provide privacy on the first floor. The homes feature three bedrooms, 3½ baths, and a den.

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Width: 25 feet
Depth: 47 feet 4 inches
Living area: 2,720 sf

BEACH COTTAGES



A Streetscape view

B Partial site plan

- 1 First floor has flexible space that can be used as a home office, media room, guest suite, in-law suite, or playroom
- 2 The second floor's open floor plan features a gourmet kitchen and a grand room for dining and living, all with a great ocean views. This level becomes the gathering hub, perfect for entertaining or family nights at home
- 3 The third floor is the private zone of the home, with the master suite and sitting area taking advantage of the view. The cottages were designed with aging in place in mind, including space for an elevator to be added later

B



[HOUSE REVIEW]

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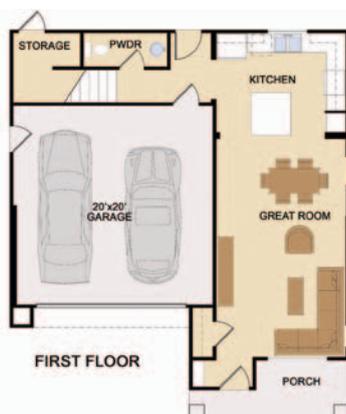
PLAN SIZE

Width: 35 feet
 Depth: 40 feet
 Living area: 1,500 to 1,975 sf

THE PARK VIEW



This entry won a competition sponsored by the city of Menlo Park, Calif., to convert a vacant 6-acre industrial site into a residential community. The site juts into the edge of an existing working-class neighborhood from an adjacent, unused railway. Requirements included a 1-acre park open to the surrounding community and at least 47 single-family homes. The park is centered on the site with one side open to the existing neighborhood. On the other three sides sit new homes with front porches overlooking the park. Some lots are as small as 3,000 square feet, to achieve density. Six floor plans are available, and all houses have front porches and garages pulled back from the front façades. Because the rail line is slated to become the alignment for California's high-speed train, houses at the site's rear must meet acoustic requirements.



- A Hamilton Park
- B Rail line and future high-speed train track
- C New Facebook headquarters
- D Existing neighborhood



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APRICOT COMMONS—BLENHEIM

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Width: 21 feet 6 inches
 Depth: 48 feet 6 inches
 Living area: 2,200 sf

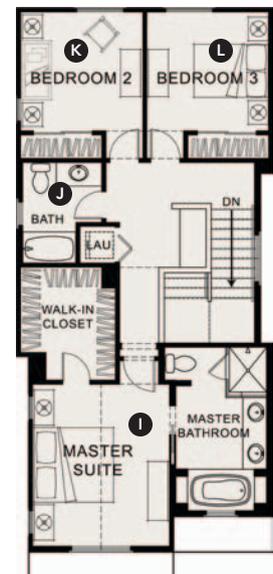
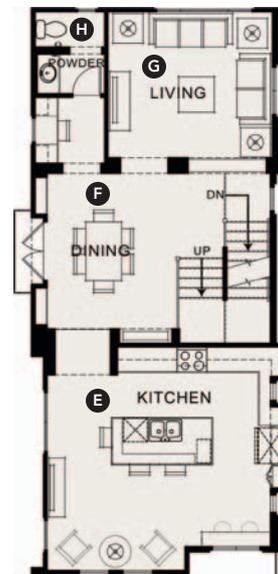
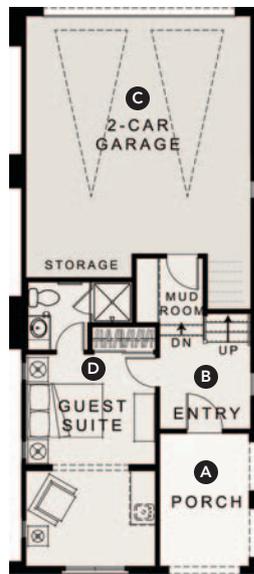


This three-story, single-family housing development is on a 1.4-acre lot in a lively Silicon Valley suburb near a freeway transition road. A dedicated bioswale at the center will serve as a pocket park and gathering place for families. Inspired by Bay Area architects Julia Morgan and Ernest Coxhead, the homes were designed in a Spanish style to attract affluent high-tech couples.

The largest of four plans has been organized for a young family while affording ample space to grow into. Each home has a private side yard created by a reciprocal-use easement with its neighbor, providing extra storage and barbecue areas.



- A A porch creates a welcoming feel
- B Spacious entry foyer has an open staircase
- C Attached two-car garage is accessed off the loop road and has a mudroom for dropping gear before reaching entry
- D Generous guest suite with bath, bedroom, and sitting room can accommodate a boomerang child in the future
- E Kitchen has a breakfast nook, arched entry, high-end finishes such as a marble-topped island and wood floors, and an opaque glass window to preserve privacy on small lot
- F Glazing on all four sides fills dining room with natural light
- G Living room is intimate in scale
- H Ample closet space is provided between powder room and dining room
- I Painted wood gabled ceiling and windows recalling Northern California cottage style grace the master suite with its walk-in closet and en suite bath
- J Hall bath is shared by two adjoining bedrooms; laundry is conveniently situated on this floor
- K Bedroom 2
- L Bedroom 3



[HOUSE REVIEW]

THE EMPTY NEST

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Width: 36 feet
Depth: 60 feet
Living area: 1,450 sf



This infill community of six paired homes is ideal for the lock-and-leave buyer. Big function is packed into small square footage: a pocket office (everything essential for the business of life is steps away), a family foyer with hooks and cubbies, a walk-in pantry, access from the master closet to the laundry, and a sitting alcove in the owner's suite. Even the pets are provided for in this plan. A private fenced courtyard provides the outdoor space needed for outdoor dining, grilling, and Fido (buyers in this category are very likely to have a dog). The "Goldfinch" and the "Chickadee" create the perfect empty nest.

- A A private outdoor courtyard encourages outdoor living, including a small private outdoor area for pets
- B The open plan unites living, dining, and kitchen in a triangle plan, allowing for easy communication between the three main living areas
- C The pocket office is the right size for a computer, printer, and files. Bills and letters are hidden by a low wall, but the office still has a view to the courtyard and living areas



[HOUSE REVIEW]

ROUGH CREEK

DESIGNER

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PLAN SIZE

Width: 35 feet 9 inches
 Depth: 57 feet 2 inches
 Living area: 1,775 sf



Several parcels of land adjacent to existing homes allowed the creation of a pocket neighborhood featuring 11 cottages that range from 950 to 1,800 square feet. Each home has two parking spaces, one of which is in an enclosed garage. As residents walk from their cars through the common courtyard or along a sidewalk, there is opportunity to visit with neighbors who are relaxing on their front porches. The narrow streets are designed to provide inset guest parking in addition to slowing down traffic speed, ensuring a pedestrian-friendly environment. A nearby walking trail leads to a neighborhood park.



- A** Each home has a large front porch overlooking a common courtyard or narrow street
- B** Narrow streets have inset parking, sidewalks, and trees
- C** Detached garages and open parking allow neighborly interaction
- D** Each home features an open living, dining, and kitchen layout
- E** Private side courtyards and yards expand living space, providing a place for children and pets to play
- F** Second floor features a second bedroom and a bunkroom with four fold-down beds. A sliding rail door provides privacy