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PATH RELEASES CONCEPT HOME DESIGNS
Flexibility Key to America's "Home of the Future"

The Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing (PATH), a public-private partnership led by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, recently released the prototype plans for its Concept Home Demonstration Project.

"New innovations that create flexibility enable homeowners to customize their homes to meet their needs and express their lifestyle," said David Engel, Director of Affordable Housing Research and Technology within HUD's Office of Research and Policy Development. "The PATH Concept Home uses technological innovation with an eye to affordability to show us how to face change and create homes that meet our needs now and in the future."

PATH's "home of the future" combines design features and building systems that make optimal use of labor, material, time, and money. Innovations include flexible floor plans that accommodate family changes, customizable designs that give the home the quality and curb appeal of a custom-built house without the high cost, and improved production methods that speed construction and enhance long-term durability.

Extensive market research with consumers and the building industry was done to evaluate needs and demands. Greater energy efficiency, increased affordability, and flexible design topped the list as the most important features for homes of the future according to a recent online industry survey on www.buildingsurvey.org, an online research site operated by Newport Partners.

The lead architects, Mark Bombaugh of Torti Gallas Partners and Alex Grinnell of Steven Winters Associates, also relied on a panel of industry experts for periodic feedback and direction as they developed the building plans and specifications according to a series of principles to create flexible, affordable, high quality, durable, and energy efficient designs. Occupancy scenarios were utilized in the designs for two different home models, a single-family detached home and a townhouse. Both sets of plans included flexible spaces that can be easily changed, the ability to add accessible features such as an elevator, and wireless technologies like self-powering light switches. Each plan also features specific technologies and layouts that meet the needs of the families that might live there.

"The plans offer different design styles and settings," added James Lyons, Concept Home project manager and a Senior Engineer at Newport Partners, LLC. "The townhouse was designed for urban infill and the technologies integrate well with the clean lines of modern design that appeal to a more cosmopolitan market. The single-family home is equally innovative and the traditional arts

and crafts style within a new planned community has amenities that work well for families with children.”

To see the plans, visit www.newportpartnersllc.com. Then tell us what you think by completing a survey.

PATH is an alliance between the federal government and the U.S. housing industry that focuses on emerging housing technologies to improve the affordability and value of new and existing homes. Through research and development, information dissemination, and barrier analysis, PATH seeks to accelerate the development and use of advanced technologies to radically improve our nation's housing. For additional information about PATH, please visit www.pathnet.org/concepthome.