

Mixed-Use & TOD

Connecting to communities

A Building's Like an Iceberg.

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What you don't see in a finished building are the activities and attitudes that went into its creation. **Collaboration, teamwork and creativity** are as important as bricks and mortar. At Taylor Kohrs, our clients can count on us to deliver more than meets the eye.

TAYLOR KOHRS
General Contractor & Construction Manager

25 YEARS OF BUILDING IN COLORADO

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Communities designed as part of a transit-oriented development are becoming a growing segment of Denver's multifamily market. There are a number of working definitions out there for TODs, most involving some metric describing walkability, some form of transit and, of course, some balance of mixed use.



Paul R. Campbell, AIA
President, KEPHART, Denver

As Denver's launch of FasTracks has emerged, development of TODs has occurred at many of the light-rail

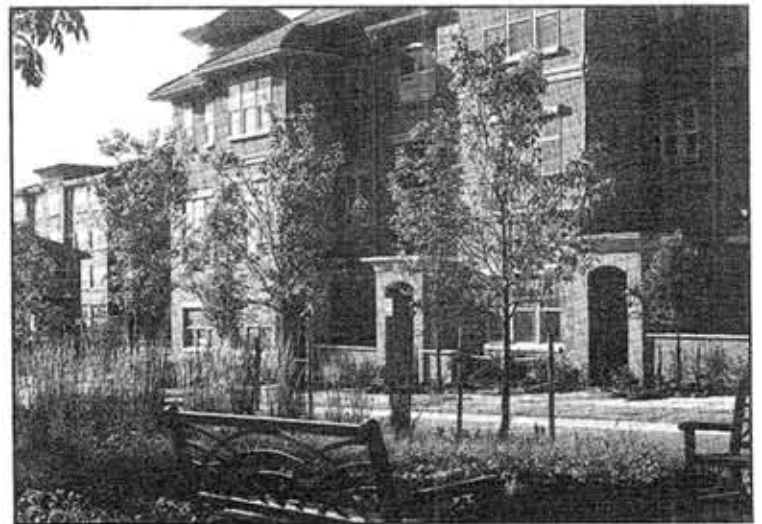


Photo courtesy of Steve Hinds © 2007
Vallagio at Inverness' median plaza is located in the neighborhood core.

stations. Our office, as well as others

in the design community, has designed a number of residential developments that have succeeded at these locations. These developments leased up well, they sold ahead of pro forma, and they continue to increase in value — on reflection, though, many of these earlier projects lack a sense of connection to the communities they were attempting to create.

As we have evolved our design of TODs, it has become clear that the more successful projects have been the ones that reach out beyond their property lines and allow for meaningful connections — both outbound, toward destinations in the vicinity, and inbound, providing for pedestrian circulation through the community. In fact, we have begun to drop the term TOD from our vocabulary in favor of TOC: transit-oriented community. Thinking of development in terms of placemaking is a strong start toward creating community. Just as important as placemaking is allowing for connections to adjacent developments — the neighbors. We believe that as designers and their clients continue to recognize the value of community over project-centric development, better places for people will result.

Located adjacent to the Dry Creek Station on light-rail's southeast corridor, Vallagio at Inverness, developed by Metropolitan Homes, is a good example of a TOC. Looking around the metro area, there are no other locations that link resort-style living, loft living, retail, a golf course and office park within easy walking distance to a light-rail station. Vallagio has been detailed with a system of landscaped and hardscaped outdoor spaces that are interconnected throughout the community; Nuszer Kopatz thoughtfully detailed these spaces and the result is a community with unique gathering spaces — places — for residents as well as neighbors to enjoy.

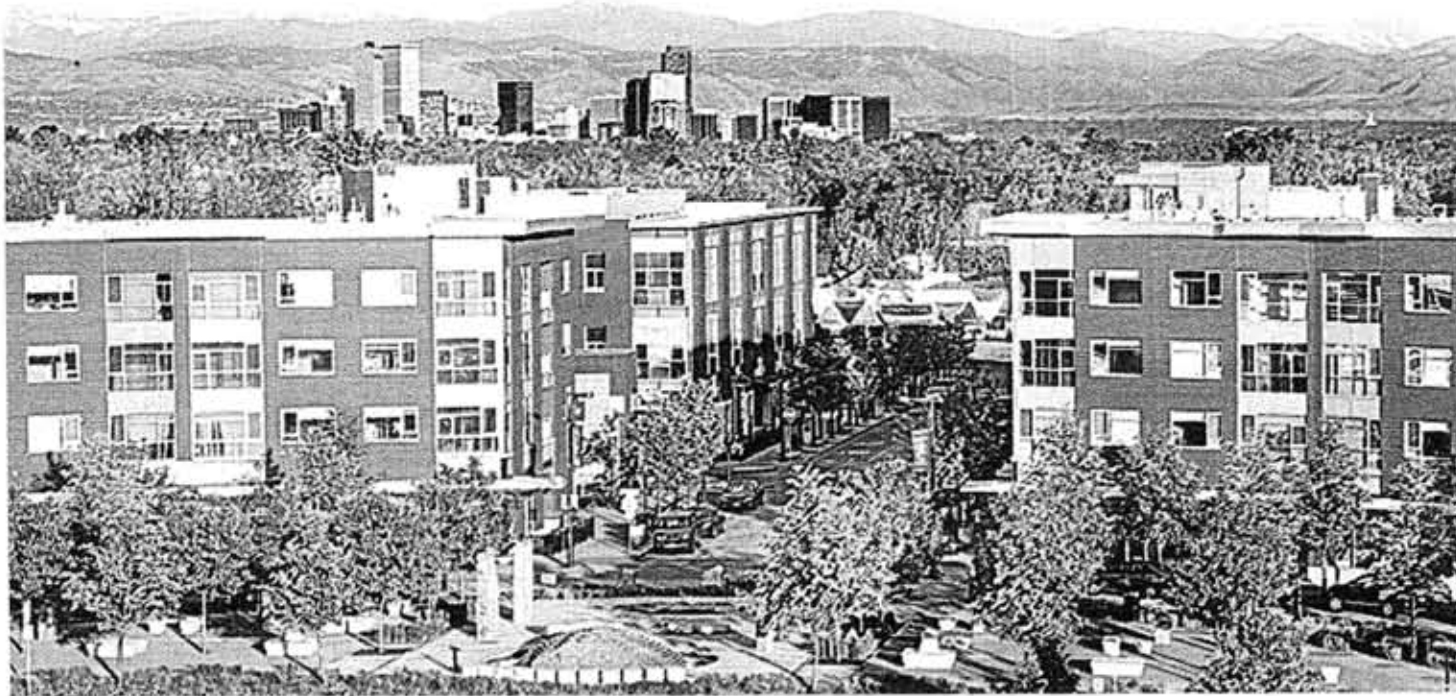
Another example of a TOC is Arista in Broomfield. Klipp's vision for this master plan truly embraces the idea of community. A thoughtful mix of large and intimate scaled gathering spaces permeates the site and in turn adds value for those building in this community. Our design for Trammell Crow Residential's Alexan apartment community takes advantage of park spaces located north and south of the property, resulting in the park amenity stretching through the

Please see Challenge, Page 9AA



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Continued from Page 6AA

community. This same strategy, if employed by others at Arista, will yield greater livability for residents and visitors to the

community.

If you are considering a TOD right now or have one under way, step back and take a look at it in the context of the surrounding community, as a TOC. This

approach could mean adding a sidewalk, or a pocket park, or increasing a setback to allow for enhanced pedestrian-scaled detailing; quite often a series of small-scaled adjustments can

yield results that are greater than the sum of its parts. As more of us consider our work in terms of "transit-oriented communities" rather than "one-off" developments, Denver's light-rail sta-

tions will evolve into a series of sought-after places to live, work and play. These communities hold their value over time and create greater livability for their residents. ▲