

## Centerhouse

Ontario, Calif.

Trumark Homes, Newport Beach, Calif.,  
with Kevin L. Crook Architect, Irvine, Calif.

Attainability didn't come by accident or good fortune at Centerhouse, an attached townhome development on an infill parcel at the intersection of two state highways.

But what the lot lacked in location, builder Trumark Homes made up for by optimizing its rectangular shape, with a site plan that delivers 114 units from 1,440 to 1,946 square feet priced from the high \$300s to the mid-\$400s, attainable for first-time and move-down buyers in the market.

"If you put Centerhouse on a price chart among homes in this market, it would be along the lower band," says Richard Douglass, president of Trumark Homes' Southern California division in Newport Beach. "That was our target from the beginning, but we had to make it work."

Matching the parcel's shape with a land-efficient site plan, "Allows you to do great things," Douglass says. "The capacity you get through that efficiency gives you more latitude to operate."

Trumark also diligently attacked design elements and construction costs that added little or no value, such as lowering roof pitches and simplifying their design. "Why throw money into something nobody sees or appreciates?" Douglass says.

In addition, multiple "walk-throughs" of the plans on paper weeded enough out of the budget to afford high-impact elements, namely 9-foot plates and large windows that bring more natural light into the attached units than competitive projects do.

"Value engineering is not just a grim process of trimming things down, but wringing out waste and stashing some of that money



**The townhome clusters at Centerhouse not only offer dimension, texture, and color on the exterior for visual interest (above), but also high ceilings and large windows (left) that afford more natural light and help make living spaces live larger and belie buyer perceptions.**

to make an impact or offer something standard instead of as an option," Douglass says, noting that Centerhouse buyers have commented specifically on the openness of all three plans.

Centerhouse also follows the Trumark practice of offering a trio of "designer package" options, which give buyers ample choices in a cost-controlled environment. Even so, the homes remain within FHA mortgage loan guidelines, though Douglass says few of the 57 units closed (among 74 contracts) since Centerhouse opened in April 2018 have used that financing tool.

Going forward, Douglass sees Centerhouse as a model for future Trumark projects. "From a pure design standpoint, this is a product we'll use in more affluent, higher-priced areas," he says. "These homes live better than the majority of detached, high-density cluster homes. It just nails it."