New Urbanism: Its Interpretation and Implementation

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NEW URBANISM: ITS INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

by

Sherri Marie French

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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ABSTRACT

New Urbanism: Its Interpretation and Implementation

by

Sherri Marie French, Master of Landscape Architecture
Utah State University, 2012

In recent years a new planning movement has emerged popularly known as New Urbanism. This movement has come about in response to typical subdivision design and implementation of single-use Euclidian zoning practices that have been associated with sprawling subdivisions and communities zoned for single uses, and which result in little diversity of income, neighborhoods devoid of any unique character that create a sense of placelessness, increased social isolation and dependence on the automobile, and increased consumption of land and other resources.

New Urbanism seeks to mitigate these and other problems through the manipulation of the built environment. Among other solutions, typical New Urbanist communities incorporate mixed use centers, emphasize design of streets and public space as well as parks and open space, provide a variety of housing types, and focus on transit-oriented development. However,
as is often the case with “new” or different ways of doing things, implementing New Urbanism can be difficult.

As such, the purpose of this study is to identify the barriers to successful implementation of key design characteristics of New Urbanist communities. Also of interest as the research developed were the reasons for the success of some communities in being able to implement important design features of New Urbanism.

To do this, a typology of spaces associated with New Urbanism and supported by the literature was established. Two communities in Utah’s Salt Lake Valley were then structurally evaluated against this typology. Daybreak and Overlake were the two communities selected, both of which were constructed according to New Urbanist principles. This evaluation informed questions used during interviews with key informants from each community. During these interviews key informants provided information on the original vision of each community, discussed differences between that vision and its implementation, identified barriers to implementing the original vision, and also discussed the gaps identified during the structural assessment.

(97 pages)
New Urbanism: Its Interpretation and Implementation

Sherri Marie French

New Urbanism is a popular development movement that combines old and new development strategies in an attempt to build unique and lasting communities of value. However, as this movement employs practices that are not currently considered typical, developing in this manner can be difficult. This research seeks to identify the common difficulties that arise during the development of New Urbanist communities as well as possible solutions for overcoming those difficulties.

Researching the barriers to implementing principles of New Urbanism is important as this movement may offer solutions to some of the challenges arising from current development practices such as:

- Sprawl
- Single-use communities
- Neighborhoods devoid of any unique character
- Social isolation and dependence on the automobile
- High consumption of land and other resources

If the barriers to implementing the principles of New Urbanism can be identified and solutions found to overcoming these barriers, then developers will be able to more successfully implement the principles of New Urbanism in their communities. As this happens, research can begin determining if the principles of New Urbanism actually mitigate the problems listed above. Determining this would allow for great strides to be made in changing and improving current development practices, which is beneficial not only to those inhabiting these communities, but to society as a whole.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Sherri Marie French
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INTRODUCTION

In recent years a new planning movement has emerged. This movement, popularly known as New Urbanism, has also been called among other names neo-traditional planning, smart growth, and traditional neighborhood development (TND). This movement has come about in response to typical subdivision design and implementation of single-use Euclidian zoning practices which encourage sprawling subdivisions and communities zoned for single uses that result in hundreds of the “same-size house and lot, producing little diversity of income, no local shopping, few destinations within walking distance, and households located too far apart to support public transportation” (Lecesse & McCormick 2000, 9). These problems create neighborhoods that are devoid of any unique character that create a sense of placelessness, increase residents’ social isolation and dependence on the automobile, and increase land and other resource consumption.

New Urbanism seeks to mitigate these and other problems through the manipulation of the built environment. Among other solutions, typical New Urbanist communities incorporate a variety of housing types to create a diversity of income and availability of life-cycle housing, a mix of uses such as residential, commercial, and office spaces, as well as allowing for prominent placement of civic buildings such as schools, churches, and government buildings. New Urbanist communities try to balance the emphasis between the automobile and alternative modes of transportation by creating an intricate pedestrian network, allowing for bicycle routes, and providing mass transit options within walking distance of homes. In short, New Urbanism seeks to mitigate problems caused by typical subdivision design and single-use zoning practices by understanding and addressing, through urban design and planning, the social and economic
implications of design decisions (Lecesse & McCormick 2000). However, as is often the case with “new” or different ways of doing things, implementing ideal New Urbanist communities can be difficult.

The purpose of this study is to identify the barriers to successful implementation of design characteristics of New Urbanist communities. It is possible that the most common barriers to implementing these design characteristics will be ordinances of local government, particularly zoning ordinances. Most cities codes and ordinances are based on Euclidian zoning which often limits or prohibits mixed use areas and restricts densities, two key characteristics of New Urbanism. Another common barrier may be the experience of the developer and or the builder. This is because design characteristics of New Urbanist communities are often different than typical communities therefore, a developers experience in implementing them effectively or in overcoming obstacles to their implementation may be limited and less effective.

To identify the barriers to successful implementation of design characteristics of New Urbanist communities a typology of spaces associated with New Urbanism was established as supported by the literature. Two Utah communities which were constructed according to New Urbanist principles, Daybreak and Overlake, were then structurally evaluated according to this typology. This structural evaluation helped to identify gaps between the typology of spaces identified and what was present in the existing communities. Interviews were then conducted with key informants for each community who provided information on the original vision of each community, discussed differences between that vision and the community’s actual implementation, answered questions regarding the gaps identified, and were able to identify difficulties impeding the implementation of the original vision and the ideal typology of spaces.
The results of this study are important in understanding the barriers to implementing New Urbanist principles in communities as they could distort the end product and potentially eliminate the desired benefits. In the building of future New Urbanist communities this knowledge may help developers to know which communities may be more open to implementing a New Urbanist design, and allow them to be better prepared for those difficulties in implementing key features of New Urbanism thereby preserving the desired results.
LITERATURE REVIEW

At the end of the 19\textsuperscript{th} and beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century “the idea of city planning was introduced from outside of the USA by social welfare reformers” (Akimoto 2009, 458). In its beginning stages city planning stood for and recognized cities as organic and as having a complex interdependence of diverse elements which included public facilities such as “the transportation system, the street system, the park and recreation facilities and the location of public buildings” (Akimoto 2008, 458). As the American city planning movement gained momentum it became more defined and specified its main objective to be comprehensive city planning. The practice of “zoning - the arrangement of land into sections reserved for different purposes (e.g., residence or business)” (Hiles and Schipper 2008, 747) was first discovered and used during this time as a tool to advocate city planning, and in response to population increases and related pressures, and to “prevent the direful congestion, maladjustment and land speculation for the benefit of working people” (Akimoto 2008, 458).

Though zoning was used during this era, it was not a major element of comprehensive city plans until decades later in 1926 after a Supreme Court ruling in the case of Euclid v. Ambler, and in 1928 after the New York Board of Estimates adopted a comprehensive zoning resolution (Akimoto 2008). At this point city planners no longer thought of a city as an organic and complex interdependent system, but as a “pattern of land use and population density” (Akimoto 2008, 475).

The ending of World War II marked a new age in city planning and suburban development as roughly sixteen million soldiers and sailors were returning home and were in need of homes (Jackson 1985, 204). In response to this,
Two days after D-Day, Congress passed the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 (more familiarly known as the GI Bill), which created the Veteran’s Administration (VA) and the VA Loan Guaranty Program. This program offered returning veterans easy access to credit for education, family support, and housing, all at low four percent rates of interest. Much of this money ended up being used to buy homes. However, in order to do this, there was one small string attached.

Rules for VA housing loans were similar to those that existed for FHA loans at the time. Both stipulated that loans could only be used on newly built, single-family, detached home. (Morris 2005, 186)

This made the American dream of home ownership a possibility to millions, but also “precipitated a mass exodus to the distant suburbs, places that had absolutely no amenities save for newly erected cookie-cutter homes” (Morris 2005, 186). This resulted in a sense of placelessness as regional considerations such as weather sensitive design and historic building practices were ignored, and local style, building materials, and forms were replaced with more universal counterparts. Single-use zoning, which had been used appropriately to separate pollution rich industrial sites from residential areas, continued to be applied. This process promoted individuality through separation rather than community by integration (Lecesse & McCormick 2000) and led to huge housing areas being built in isolation, without proximity to the goods and services necessary to support them. This was a stark contrast to suburban development prior to World War II which “created small towns that combined all the functions of life – schools, banks, stores, offices, restaurants, public transport, libraries, etc. – with housing for a variety of income levels and easily accessible public transportation” (Morris 2005, 5).

These issues compounded as “affluent citizens moved out, jobs followed. In turn, this attracted more families, more roads, and more industries. The cities were often caught in a reverse cycle” (Jackson 1985, 285). As businesses and taxpayers left, middle class housing
demands decreased and low-income housing demands increased. Municipalities levied higher
taxes to pay for the increased health care and social welfare services, but this only served to
further drive out middle-class home owners (Jackson 1985). This led to previously vibrant city
centers becoming deserted. Furthermore, traffic congestion increased as people were required
to commute to work and to find the necessary goods and services to sustain life. This isolation
of the suburbs therefore increased dependence on the automobile and decreased the
walkability of neighborhoods as there was almost a complete lack of destinations to walk to.

Though the changes discussed above caused by suburbanization and sprawl had
detrimental consequences, they were not without their benefits. Sprawl provided millions of
people with the mobility, lifestyle, and privacy that were previously only available to the upper
class (Bruegmann 2005). “The first and perhaps most often cited benefit of sprawl is providing
households with a lifestyle they desire. A key element of the American Dream—the ideal
lifestyle sought by millions of households—is owning a detached, single-family home with a
large yard in a safe neighborhood” (Burchell, Downs, McCann, & Mukherji 2005, 127). Similarly,
sprawling subdivisions tend to have lower housing costs as compared to areas nearer a city
center. Another lifestyle benefit attributed to sprawl is that often low-density neighborhoods
provide higher quality public schooling options as compared to inner-city counterparts. And,
though it may not necessarily be true, low density suburban developments are typically
perceived as having lower levels of crime. In addition, some research also suggests that though
suburban dwellers have longer commutes, the increase in total number of automobiles on roads
makes these commutes only marginally longer than more centrally located residential areas
(Burchell, Downs, McCann, and Mukherji 2005).
Nevertheless, the combination of previously discussed negative issues associated with suburbanization and sprawl sparked the New Urbanist or neo-traditional planning movement. This approach seeks to address the issues of sprawl, placelessness, and a decline in sense of community by understanding and addressing, through urban design and planning, the social and economic implications of design decisions (Lecesse & McCormick 2000). New Urbanism calls for restoring urban centers and towns with metropolitan regions and for the reconfiguration of sprawling suburbs. The purpose of which is to create communities of real neighborhoods and diverse districts, conserve natural environments, and preserve our built legacy (Lecesse & McCormick 2000).

On a regional scale, New Urbanism seeks to create a physical framework that is coherent and supportive of economic vitality, community stability, and environmental health (Lecesse & McCormick 2000). “The regional planning goal is to concentrate compatible residential and work populations within clusters of walkable neighborhoods to form towns, while locating less compatible activities, such as heavy industry or extensive open spaces, in between or beyond these clusters” (Lecesse & McCormick 2000, 44). Ironically enough, this is what single use zoning originally intended to accomplish. By separating incompatible uses Euclidian zoning was attempting to create a healthier framework in which to live and work and thereby increase economic vitality and create more vibrant communities.

On the neighborhood and community scale “New Urbanists believe that their residential design features can satisfy residents, encourage local walking and use, support pleasing neighborhood contacts, and bolster a strong sense of community, while increasing residential densities beyond the suburban norm” (Brown & Cropper 2001, 402).
Principles of New Urbanism may be, and commonly are, translated into physical features associated with New Urbanism that have intended outcomes, usually behavioral, associated with them. Highlighted below in Table 1 are some of the design features most commonly discussed in the literature and listed specifically in the Charter of the New Urbanism as reflecting New Urbanist Principles. The design categories are associated with common modes of implementation or design features as well as with a behavioral goal desired from their implementation. This table reflects a typology of spaces, the purpose of which is to be used as a guide in looking at our selected communities, Daybreak and Overlake, to determine if and in what areas they may be deemed as expressing or being based upon New Urbanist principles. This table represents the “design tools” of New Urbanism which are discussed individually below. It should be noted that these design tools are meant to encourage or discourage certain behaviors, rather than to determine them (Brown & Cropper 2001, 403).

### Mixed Use Centers

Having areas of mixed use, particularly at town or village centers, is extremely important in New Urbanist communities. “Local centers should be designed as community anchor points with the provision of amenities to meet the daily needs of local residents” (Falconer, Newman, & Giles-Corti 2010, 288). This provision of needed amenities is best provided by a mixture of compatible land uses such as commercial, public, and residential spaces (Brown & Cropper 2001; Miles & Song 2009). These mixed use areas also need to provide a variety of neighborhood activity options to appeal to people of different ages, interests, and to those who do and do not own vehicles (Brown & Cropper 2001). Properly configured these mixed use
Table 1: New Urbanist Design Categories, Their Implementation, and Intended Outcomes.

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<th>Design Categories</th>
<th>Implementation Types (Design Features)</th>
<th>Intended Outcome</th>
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| **Mixed use centers:**     | Variety of the appropriate mix of compatible land uses \(^4\) (e.g. residential areas mixed with commercial and public spaces \(^1\)) | • Provides opportunity for walking or cycling rather than driving to pick up consumables \(^3\)  
  • Creates live-work relationships  
  • Supports economic vitality  
  • Creates opportunities for social interaction and walking as part of daily routines \(^4\)  
  • Increases sense of community \(^5\) |
|                            |                                                                                                       | **Neighborhood activity options for young, old, car owners, and those who do not own cars \(^1\)** | • Increase physical activity and improve public health \(^2\)  
  • Decrease auto dependence |
| Streets/Public Space       | Pedestrian friendly streetscapes (street trees, sidewalks, front porches shallow setbacks, and interesting streetscapes \(^1\))  
  Provide district Features such as public spaces (e.g. plazas, sidewalks, important intersections)  
  Reducing car impact with accessible street forms (e.g. no cul-de-sacs), narrow roads, rear garages and alleys \(^1\)  
  Provide on street parking | • Encourages walking which additionally provides health benefits  
  • Greater sense of community  
  • Increases interactions with neighbors and therefore emotional connections \(^1\)  
  • Decreases driving speeds |
|                            |                                                                                                       | **Interconnected street network**                                                 | • Reduces number and length of auto trips  
  • Conserves energy/resources  
  • Enhances the ease of use of places \(^4\) |
| Parks and Open Space | Provide parks & open spaces | • Encourages social interactions$^6$
• Enhances/supports neighborhood life
• Supports more compact communities (regional scale)
• Supports civic ‘spirit of community’$^5$
• Provides destination and gathering spaces$^6$

| Housing | Range of housing types and price levels with a variety of densities (some higher) | • Houses owners & renters
• Brings diverse people into daily interactions$^1$
• Strengthens personal and civic bonds essential to community (increased sense of community)
• Provides greater opportunities for social interaction$^4$

| Residential areas mixed with commercial and public spaces$^1$ | • Provides an opportunity for residents to walk or cycle rather than drive to pick up consumables$^3$

| Windows, porches, and balconies close to the street/public space | • Creates safer environment
• Engages the pedestrian interest
• Enlivens the streetscape
• Creates opportunities for social interaction$^5$

| Transit-Oriented Development | Allow for and provide alternative modes of transportation. (Bicycle paths, sidewalks, mass transit options etc.) | • Decrease dependence on the automobile
• Conserve resources
• Increases public transit use

---

$^1$ Brown & Cropper 2001
$^2$ Centers for Disease Control 2005
$^3$ Falconer, Newman, & Giles-Corti 2010
$^4$ Miles & Song 2009
$^5$ Talen 1999
$^6$ Fleming, Baum, & Singer 1985
areas are meant to provide live-work relationships and the opportunity for residents to walk or ride a bicycle rather than drive a car to pick up consumables (Falconer, Newman, & Giles-Corti 2010). This “generates greater opportunities for social interaction and walking as part of daily routines” (Miles & Song 2009, 3). In addition “mixed land uses have been advocated as one component of a strategy to increase physical activity and improve public health” (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2005). Mixed use areas also support economic vitality, and decrease vehicle miles traveled (Lecesse & McCormick 2000) and therefore dependence on the automobile. “At the community level, town centers have a relatively high density in order to promote commercial viability and therefore a revived public realm. This new ‘realm’ translates into an increased sense of community” (Talen 1999, 1364).

Streets and Public Space

Public spaces can be classified in several ways, but as demonstrated in Table 1, with regards to New Urbanism, public space often refers to the street network or configuration, streetscapes, and sidewalks. This is explained in the Charter of the New Urbanism, which says that “rearranging neighborhoods into a highly connected street network radically improves the pedestrian environment-- sidewalks actually become the community’s premier public space” (Lecesse & McCormick 2000, 86). This is accomplished by reducing non-through streets such as cul-de-sacs and decreasing block sizes, allowing for greater pedestrian connections to community facilities. In this type of community “neighborhoods are characterized by permeability, the connectiveness of places to other locations, which prescribes a movement system through which people travel with ease”... “one that presents residents with a variety of
places to walk to within a comfortable distance, safe intersections, short residential blocks, streets with sidewalks, and easy access to public transit and connectivity between streets” (Miles & Song 2009, 3). Streets in this sense are “designed for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers to encourage the casual meetings among neighbors that help form the bonds of community” (Lecesse & McCormick 2000, 81).

Streets have an overt social purpose. They are to be thought of as public space—much more than voids between buildings—and therefore must be made to accommodate the pedestrian. Streets are designed to encourage street life, since any increase in pedestrian activity is thought to strengthen community bonds and promote sense of place. Streets are to be a place where pedestrians feel safe, so that residents are encouraged to use streets (sidewalks), thereby strengthening the chance for social encounters. (Talen 1999, 1364)

Public spaces provide a venue for chance encounters, which serves to strengthen community bonds. Neighbourhood gathering places ... serve as a counter-pressure to community fragmentation which results when communication is privatized. If public spaces are a pleasure to inhabit, they will be used, and their usefulness as promoters of sense of community will flourish. (Talen 1999, 1364)

Facilitating greater pedestrian activity is therefore a quintessential element in New Urbanist designs. Greater pedestrianism is meant to, among other things, decrease driving speeds, reduce the number and lengths of auto trips and the need to drive, encourage casual social contacts among residents enabling them to get to know each other, form bonds of community, and reinforce a sense of community. Consequently, greater pedestrianism may also help conserve resources and provide health benefits from walking (Lecesse & McCormick 2000).
Parks and Open Space

Parks and open space areas are an essential part of New Urbanism and must be provided in communities. In New Urbanism, environmental concerns for habitat, wetlands, open space, and farmlands, as well as the need for recreational open space are addressed on a regional scale. The idea is that preserving open space in a coherent manner can reinforce a development tendency toward more compact communities (Lecesse & McCormick 2000). Parks and recreational areas are also important on a community level as they can be areas of destination or places where groups can meet. Parks can encourage social interactions by allowing for casual meetings or passive social contact, which can be a factor in determining social networks (Fleming, Baum, and Singer 1985). A study done by Kim and Kaplan (2004) found that in a survey of a typical suburban subdivision and a nearby New Urbanist community the open space and natural features of the community were mentioned as key walking destinations, and rated most positive with regards to sense of community. Also, parks “serve as a symbol of civic pride and sense of place which promote the notion of community” (Talen 1999, 1364).

Housing

Housing plays a multi-dimensional role in New Urbanism. It is important not only as a living space, but also has economic and social importance. Economically it is important to provide a diversity of housing types and prices to bring in different social classes to support the commercial areas in the community as consumers as well as by providing a labor base. Architecturally and aesthetically, housing plays an important role in New Urbanism as well
particularly with regards to features such as front porches, recessed garages or garages accessed through rear alleys, and shorter setbacks. These design features were supported in the literature, however, not as strongly as anticipated based on their frequent association with New Urbanism. Though many articles mentioned these architectural features, few went into as much depth in regards to them as they did in other design features. This, is likely because the architectural features of houses in New Urbanist communities are also a major criticism of New Urbanism. This is reflected in an article by Emily Talen that states:

Critics, such as Michael Sorkin, continue to dismiss New Urbanism as “nostalgic,” and many believe that the New Urbanists have accomplished only a façade of social improvement, promoting instead quaint architecture and a “yuppie infantalist fantasy” for the upper-middle class. A recent article in The New York Times Magazine, “Battle for Biloxi,” dismissed New Urbanist plans... as quaint and irrelevant. (Talen 2008, 20)

However, it was still important to include the architectural featured associated with New Urbanist housing principles in the typology of spaces because both communities in this study implemented these design features as an important aspect of their design and there is documentation suggesting its importance as demonstrated by a study done in Seaside, Florida where participants expressed how the design of the community promoted a “distinctive experience of community” (Brown & Cropper 2001, 405). Specifically, “the architectural features, such as the front porches, and the town philosophy, including a focus on the needs of pedestrians, facilitated meeting and socializing with others, creating a feeling of membership in Seaside” (Brown & Cropper 2001, 405). The design of the homes in New Urbanist communities is also meant to have a social effect on residents of the community.

Social interaction is promoted by designing residences in such a way that residents are encouraged to get out of their houses and out into the public sphere. This requires a shrinkage of private space: houses are typically positioned close to the street, lots and setbacks are small, and houses have porches facing the street. Porches generate pedestrian traffic by projecting the
The design of houses can also play a role in residents’ sense of community as “a mixture of housing types, too, encourages random personal contact between people of different social classes. Communities become more nearly complete and integrated and, as a result, sense of community is established” (Talen 1999, 1364). This idea is reinforced in the Charter of the New Urbanism which states, “Within neighborhoods, a broad range of housing types and price levels can bring people of diverse ages, races, and incomes into daily interaction, strengthening the personal and civic bonds essential to an authentic community” (Lecesse & McCormick 2000, 89).

Sense of community and neighborliness are engendered by having small-scale, well-defined neighborhoods with clear boundaries and a clear centre. When smaller scales are juxtaposed with increased residential density, face-to-face interaction is further promoted. Personal space is, in a sense, sacrificed in order to increase the density of acquaintanceship, and this concentration nurtures a strong community spirit (Talen 1999, 1363). Thus a variety of housing types and densities is intended to play a vital role in sense of community, and is expected to have some connection with social interactions as well.

Transit-Oriented Development

New Urbanism deals with transit on multiple scales. New Urbanists communities strive to have a variety of transit options available to residents on the neighborhood and community scale such as walking trails, bike paths, and buses. “In New Urbanist communities,
transportation planning focuses on reducing dependence on the automobile, increasing public transit use, and developing a more flexible road system” (Lecesse & McCormick 2000, 8).

Though New Urbanists allow for various transit options at the neighborhood scale, their focus on transit overall is at the larger district and potentially regional scale (Falconer, Newman, & Giles-Corti 2010). “In principle, New Urbanism anticipates a high degree of regional integration (including integration of new neighborhoods with regional transit services), such that people are not beholden to cars to fulfill their transport needs” (Falconer, Newman, & Giles-Corti 2010, 287).

Whatever the scale, the overall goal of New Urbanism in promoting and implementing transit-oriented development is to “help reduce local traffic problems, conserve energy, improve air quality, and encourage people to walk, bike, or take the bus to get around within their neighborhood or district” (Lecesse & McCormick 2000, 8).

All of the above discussed design features of New Urbanism emerged as the Charter of the New Urbanism and additional literature was reviewed. Based upon these findings a typology of spaces was created as outlined in Table 1. That typology was used to determine how the communities of Daybreak and Overlake compare to it, and what barriers to its implementation were experienced as these communities were developed.
RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of this study is to identify the barriers to the successful implementation of key design characteristics of New Urbanist communities. In the course of the research other questions are addressed though they are considered to be secondary questions. Those of particular interest include: Were the barriers to implementing certain design characteristics the same for each community? Why or why not? And, what were some of the indicators for successful implementation of key design features?

In order to answer these questions several methods of analysis were used. The first was a quantitative approach using literature to document the key design characteristics most commonly associated with New Urbanism. Once these features were documented, communities would be evaluated against these features to determine if they could be considered New Urbanist communities or at least that they contained enough characteristics associated with New Urbanism to be useful to this study. In addition, comparing communities to the key design characteristics of New Urbanism would not only determine areas in which the communities successfully implemented the key design characteristics of New Urbanism, but also areas in which they did not.

Areas where successful implementation of key design characteristics of New Urbanism did not occur prompted additional analysis to determine why they were not implemented. This analysis was done qualitatively using interviews with key informants. Key informants were used for their specialized knowledge of each community and the circumstances surrounding each community’s development. These methods of analysis were selected because they were best suited for accomplishing the goals of this research.
It is quite possible that the most common barriers to implementing design characteristics of New Urbanist communities will be ordinances of local government, particularly zoning ordinances. Most cities codes and ordinances are based on Euclidian zoning which often limits or prohibits mixed use areas and restricts densities. Another common barrier may be the experience of the developer and or the builder. This is because design characteristics of New Urbanist communities are different than typical communities and therefore a developers experience in implementing them effectively is likely to be limited.

The communities selected as the setting of this research are Daybreak and Overlake, two planned communities in Utah’s Salt Lake Valley that demonstrate characteristics of New Urbanism important to this study. These characteristics were developed through the review of New Urbanist text and additional literature and are distilled in Table 1. Figure 1 shows the location of these two cities in Utah’s Salt Lake Valley.

Figure 1. Context map showing location of Overlake and Daybreak. (Maps 2011).
Daybreak is located on the Salt Lake Valley’s west bench, west of South Jordan, and against the Oquirrh Mountains. It is a fairly new development, not yet completely finished. Construction began in 2004, and to date twenty-eight hundred homes have been built in five villages.

Overlake is “just 30 minutes southwest of Salt Lake City via Interstate 80 and Highway 36, Overlake Community is located in Tooele, Utah,” and “has fabulous views of the nearby Oquirrh Mountains and the Great Salt Lake” (Overlake 2011). Overlake is not yet finished, though construction began in 1997, much earlier than in Daybreak. To date there are “currently over 500 developed lots with over 450 houses and 1,300 residents” (Overlake 2011).

Each of these communities were evaluated against the design categories and features found in Table 1. This evaluation was done qualitatively through personal site visits, photographs, and the use of satellite images and community maps. An initial “pre-site visit” was done using community maps, satellite imaging, and Google Earth street view software to analyze the site. In particular this software allowed the researcher to more easily look at the larger street network and its connectivity, the overall layout of parks and open space relative to homes, and evaluate the location of mixed use areas relative to homes. Additionally, Google Earth provides tools to draw and calculate the length of a line which was used to estimate street widths. Satellite images and Google Street View were used to find areas where on-street parking was and was not provided. As areas of interest or concern were identified, for example where a dead-end street existed, a note was made to verify these findings during the actual site visit. Shortly after doing this pre-site visit, a physical site visit helped to verify findings and further assess each community. This site visit consisted of driving and walking throughout the community, taking photographs, and again noting on a community map features of interest.
This qualitative analysis of each community served to inform the discussion below as well as the questions for interviews with key informants by identifying areas in which these communities were both able and unable to successfully implement the key design features outlined in Table 1.

Key informant interviews were used because key informants “often have more knowledge, better communication skills, or different perspectives than other members of the defined population” (Gall, Gall, & Borg 2007, 243). As such, the key informants for this study were chosen based upon their involvement in the community’s conceptual creation, implementation process, and their familiarity with current conditions in the community. Interviews with key informants were done using a semi-structured interview format which “involves asking a series of structured questions and then probing more deeply with open-form questions to obtain additional information” (Gall, Gall, & Borg 2007, 246). This approach was used because it has “the advantage of providing reasonably standard data across respondents, but of greater depth than can be obtained from a structured interview... which involves a series of closed-form questions” (Gall, Gall, & Borg 2007, 246). Questions were drafted based on information found during the structural analysis of each community. Once drafted, these questions were reviewed and, based upon recommendations from committee members, were revised as needed until final approval was reached. The interview questions used for each community are provided in Appendices of this document.

Once key informants were selected and an interview appointment was made, informants were sent an electronic copy of the questions to be asked and an email explaining interview protocol. This is a common way to prepare key informants for the interview as it provides “the respondent an opportunity to review the questions and prepare for the interview”
(Gall, Gall, & Borg 2007, 246). Interviews were conducted over the phone or in person as per the key informants’ request and schedule availability. All interviews were recorded with permission from each key informant to allow the researchers to review the recordings at a later date. All copies of these recordings were destroyed within sixty days of the completion of this research.

The process of reviewing the interviews included organizing key informants’ responses into a table under each corresponding question. Similar responses among key informants could then be easily seen allowing the researcher to identify themes among responses and thereby find answers to the questions of this research including: what are important barriers to implementing the identified design features associated with New Urbanist communities.
RESULTS

Analysis of the sites was first conducted using satellite images from Google Earth, and personal site visits documenting site features with community maps obtained from community websites and on site information kiosks, photographs, and personal observations. Each community was assessed using these tools and will be discussed individually below in regards to the design categories and featured listed in Table 1. This structural assessment of each community helped shape and inform the interview questions posed to key informants by identifying areas where important design characteristics were lacking or not present. Key informants were then able to identify reasons for these discrepancies.

Daybreak- Structural Assessment

According to the above established typology of spaces important to New Urbanism each community will now be evaluated and discussed in terms of the design categories and their key design features included in this typology, beginning with Daybreak. A copy of the design categories and design features are displayed in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Categories</th>
<th>Implementation Types (Design Features)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixed use centers:</td>
<td>Variety of the appropriate mix of compatible land uses(^1) (e.g. residential areas mixed with commercial and public spaces(^2)).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neighborhood activity options for young, old, car owners, and those who do not own cars(^3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streets/Public Space</td>
<td>Pedestrian friendly streetscapes (street trees, sidewalks, front porches shallow setbacks, and interesting streetscapes(^4)).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide district features such as public spaces (e.g. plazas, sidewalks, important intersections).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reducing car impact with accessible street forms (e.g. no cul-de-sacs), narrow roads, rear garages and alleys(^5). Provide on street</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mixed Use Centers

The first design feature in this category is a variety of the appropriate mix of compatible land uses (e.g., residential areas mixed with commercial and public spaces). In regards to commercial areas, Daybreak does have an established commercial district called SoDa Row, shown in Figure 2, located almost at the geographical center of the entire community.

As Daybreak is still under construction, only a handful of businesses inhabit this space. Though that number is growing, during the timeframe of our research SoDa Row only had twelve businesses listed in its merchant directory (Daybreak 2010a). Though these businesses are diverse, they are segregated into a single commercial district that may not be considered within walking distance of all the homes in Daybreak, particularly those located on the northern border of Daybreak. However, the community website does claim that it is within “no more than a 10 minute bike ride of the farthest reaches of the community” (Daybreak 2010c).

Commercial space is only one component of mixed use centers. Daybreak does provide a wide array of other public spaces and amenities scattered throughout the community that support the second design feature in this category which is: Neighborhood activity options for
Figure 2. Daybreak community map.
varying ages and those who do and do not own cars. Some of these options include parks of varying sizes within a five minute walk of every home, an artificial lake, a community center, a community pool, community gardens, a community information center, schools, playgrounds, walking trails, and civic buildings such as churches and a Latter-day Saints temple. In addition, community council-sanctioned groups or clubs can be formed at the Glass House community center. Currently eleven groups or clubs are in existence varying in subjects from team handball, Bible study, wine tasting, and homeschooling, to indoor volleyball, Bunco, and dinner clubs (LiveDaybreak 2009).

**Streets and Public Space**

Public spaces in this sense deal primarily with the streetscape, district features in these spaces such as sidewalks, plazas, and important intersections, and the street network. According to Table 1, pedestrian friendly streetscapes consist of street trees, sidewalks, front porches, shallow setbacks, and interesting streetscapes. At the time of our study, roughly nine thousand trees had been planted in Daybreak (Ulam 2010). However, this number includes all the trees planted along streets, parks, and other public spaces. Upon visiting the site one immediately notices that street trees do not yet line all residential streets, and, as shown in Figure 3, that they are currently so small that they do not perform their proper function of adding to the character of the place or in creating shade for a more pleasant pedestrian experience. It is acknowledged that this photograph was taken in the winter so the trees have few if any leaves, and that the community has plans for adding thousands more trees, one hundred thousand in total (Daybreak 2010d), but at the time of our research their current condition was not ideal.
The streetscape in Daybreak does however provide ample sidewalks throughout the entire community. Also, as shown in Figure 3, the majority, if not all, homes in Daybreak have a front porch and “are generally set back 15 feet from the lot lines, within hailing distances of the sidewalks” (Ulam 2010, 105). This allows for people sitting on their front porches to interact with those walking along the sidewalks in their neighborhood (Ulam 2010), though any instance of this actually occurring was not observed during visits to the site.

![Streetscape. Photo credit: The author](image)

Figure 3. Streetscape. Photo credit: The author

District features are provided and emphasized in Daybreak in several different ways. For example, major intersections are highlighted by large roundabouts, and important public spaces are emphasized with signage and prominent placement in the community. In fact, “Daybreak’s most prominent lots have been reserved for public buildings instead of being sold off for the development of premium private residences” (Ulam 2010, 98). Some of these prominent lots have already been used as sites for religious buildings such as the Oquirrh...
Mountain Temple, and the centrally located Oquirrh Lake. Sidewalks connect these features easily to surrounding spaces, providing easy use and access to these spaces. In addition to the prominent placement of public buildings, individual neighborhoods and districts in Daybreak have defined architectural styles, which include having garages behind the homes with access by alleys. This gives a unique identity to each neighborhood or district which may contribute to a stronger sense of community among residents.

Reducing the impact of the car occurs in Daybreak in several ways. Though Daybreak is not designed using a gridded street pattern, it does have an interconnected street network in that it does not contain any cul-de-sacs or dead end streets and also has reduced block sizes. Daybreak also provides on street parking throughout the community, and residences often have rear or side loaded garages accessed through alleys as depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Access to garages through rear alleys. Photo credit: The author
One area in which Daybreak falls short in this design category is in the widths of its streets. This is typical in Utah which is a state “characterized by large lots, wide streets, and large blocks” (Encyclopedia of Mormonism 1992). Though Daybreak has taken care to create smaller lots and blocks, many streets in this community remain wide.

Sidewalks are provided along all residential streets in Daybreak, and the community currently boasts twenty-two miles of trails which were shown in Figure 2. This trails system occasionally includes sidewalks, but is primarily made up of asphalt paved trails that create circuits around neighborhoods, are usually enclosed by green or open space on at least one side, and connect parks and other important public spaces in each village. These trails are delineated on a community map available to anyone at the Glass House community center and also on-line.

Daybreak also employs a “5 minute rule” which is described below:

Studies have shown that most suburban-dwelling Americans are willing to walk a quarter mile to get where they want to go...a quarter mile adds up to about a five-minute walk. At Daybreak we’ve taken this observation to heart and turned it into a guiding principle for the planning of the community. The idea here is to bring everything in close, right into the neighborhoods, so that when you step out your front door, you’re within a five-minute walk of a park or a trail. Perhaps a school or a community center or a village center’s shops and restaurants. Maybe a light rail station, where you can catch a ride downtown. Possibly even a big lake. It just makes sense that the more places you have within walking distance, the more you’ll walk. The more you can accomplish on your walk. And the better you’ll feel. (Daybreak 2010b)

Parks and Open Space

Daybreak currently has 16 parks listed in their directory, and is “designed in accordance with the American Planning Association’s open-space standards, which call for having a park within a quarter of a mile of every residential unit” (Ulam 2010, 105). These parks range in size and function including pocket parks, dog parks, and parks with community gardens and recreational opportunities such as a pool, tennis courts etc. Also, at the center of the entire
community is Oquirrh Lake. Oquirrh Lake covers roughly sixty-seven acres and allows for passive as well as active recreation with walking trails, fishing sites, and boat rentals available. Additional public amenities are provided in parks and open space throughout Daybreak such as basketball courts and a community center.

Housing

A variety of housing options and prices are available in Daybreak. Prices range from approximately $150,000 to nearly $1 million. One criticism of the homes in Daybreak might be that though there is a mixture of housing prices, lower income housing is excluded in this range. This may be in part because the average income level of South Jordan City, of which Daybreak is a part, is unusually high compared to other cities in the state of Utah, with a median annual household income of $94,248 (U.S. Census Bureau 2010).

Though single-family units like those shown in Figure 5 are the predominant housing style in Daybreak, other housing options include apartments, lofts, flats, and townhomes. An example of one multi-family housing option is shown in Figure 6. Housing densities in Daybreak vary among housing types, but due to smaller lot sizes, densities are slightly higher in Daybreak than other more typical subdivisions.

Additional design attributes of Daybreak housing have been previously mentioned, but include: houses with front porches that “are generally set back 15 feet from the lot lines, within hailing distances of the sidewalks” (Ulam 2010, 105) which allows for people sitting on their front porches to interact with those walking along the sidewalks in their neighborhood. Additionally neighborhoods and districts have defined architectural styles, which include having garages behind the homes with access by alleys. This gives a unique identity to each
Figure 5. Single family style housing. Photo credit: The author

Figure 6. Multi-family housing. Photo credit: The author

neighborhood or district. This unique identity can help contribute to a sense of community among residents.
Mixing residential and commercial areas does not occur often in Daybreak. The only existing commercial center in Daybreak currently is SoDa Row. Therefore residential areas only mix with commercial space in this area. However, residential areas are intermixed with other types of public spaces throughout the community such as parks, community centers, a swimming pool, schools, religious buildings, etc.

**Transit-Oriented Development**

Allowing for and providing alternative modes of transportation is an important part of transit-oriented development. Alternative modes of transportation include, bicycle paths, sidewalks, and mass transit options. Daybreak provides pedestrian friendly infrastructure in the form of sidewalks and trails. These trails can also be used by cyclists, but bicycle lanes delineated along roadways are scarce, and located only on the largest roadways throughout the community. The smaller neighborhood roads do not have delineated bicycle lanes. Mass transit options currently do not exist in Daybreak, but will soon be coming to the site in the form of a light rail line which is scheduled to open summer 2011.

**Conclusions**

As an example of New Urbanism, Daybreak is not perfect. Its commercial area is limited and only in its infant stages, public space in the form of streetscapes and open spaces lack mature trees to provide shade and character, roadways are sometimes wide and lack bicycle lanes, and housing types exclude low income options. Some of these issues will be mitigated with time, such as the size and number of street trees, and additional commercial businesses may also move into Daybreak as the population of Daybreak grows. Reasons for other
discrepancies such as the lack of bicycle lanes and low income housing will be explored during the interviews with key informants.

Daybreak effectively implements other important design features of New Urbanism including a large pedestrian network, interconnected street pattern, a large number of parks and open space areas in close proximity to homes, and housing design that varies in density, price range, and style. As Daybreak has been very successful in implementing the majority of key design features identified in Table 1, it will be important for this research to not only identify the barriers that prevented implementation of key design features, but also how Daybreak was successful in implementing so many others. It is possible that one reason Daybreak was able to implement key New Urbanist design features was because of who was developing Daybreak, and the amount of land and capital they had to invest. Kennecott Land, which is part of the global Rio Tinto company, owns over ninety three thousand acres of land along Salt Lake Valley’s west bench which they have begun developing with Daybreak, and which they intend to continue developing in the future. Obviously with such a large company and so much land, they, Kennecott Land, were prepared to make a sizable investment. In addition, Kennecott Land wanted to develop in such a way as to “build(s) enduring communities” (Kennecott Land 2011). As such, it is possible that the government agencies were more willing to work and negotiate with them than they would have been to work with smaller developers with smaller land holdings. In addition, Daybreak is near the Salt Lake City metro area, so development pressures from people moving into this area were likely high, which would generate income as the community was built and homes began to be sold helping to keep the project’s development moving along.
Next Overlake will be evaluated and discussed with regard to how it compares with the
design categories and their key design features included in the established typology of spaces.

**Mixed Use Centers**

As demonstrated by Figure 7, it should be noted that the developed portion of Overlake
is much smaller than the developed portion of Daybreak, with Overlake consisting of only five-
hundred developed lots, and roughly thirteen-hundred residents. As such, it was not surprising
that there were far fewer parks and public spaces in Overlake than in Daybreak. However, the
ratio of parks to people in Overlake is still considerably smaller than in Daybreak, with Daybreak
providing one park per four-hundred and forty-one people and Overlake providing one park per
six-hundred and fifty people.

Overlake does provide several mixed use centers. Overlake has a corner store shown in
Figure 8 that provides a small bakery and a salon. In addition to this commercial area, Overlake
has two parks located centrally in the development, as well as a church. The entire Overlake
development is only three-quarters of a mile across, so these sites are all located within walking
distance of the homes in Overlake, though not all homes are within one-quarter mile of each of
these features. Figure 7 also shows a small office and commercial plaza located on the eastern
border of Overlake, as well as additional commercial development located just outside Overlake.
However, this commercial development is not accessible to Overlake residents in a pedestrian
friendly manner due to street layout and lack of pedestrian connections; rather these areas
must be accessed by an arterial road that lacks sidewalks, or by walking through large
undeveloped fields. Though not technically inside the development, elementary and junior high
schools are located directly across the street from Overlake. Neighborhood activity options such as community groups are currently unknown. The Overlake website mentioned that community
activities focus on bringing individuals, families, and neighbors together”, however, the site visit and additional searching on the website didn’t reveal any community clubs or organizations currently organized.

**Streets and Public Space**

Regarding the creation of the creation of a pedestrian friendly streetscape, Overlake’s website states “streets and sidewalks are designed for the safety of the pedestrian instead of the speed of the automobile” (Overlake 2011). Streets in Overlake are lined with sidewalks and street trees. “All of the homes must have a front porch, landscaped yard and a side loaded garage or recessed front garage” (Overlake 2011). The exception to this is in the townhome area located southwest of the corner market. This area does not provide any sidewalks except in one small gathering area, in addition on street parking is prohibited and front yards are so
small as to be almost devoid of any function. In all other areas of Overlake on street parking is provided, and an interconnected street network is present with the exception of three cul-de-sacs. District features are emphasized mainly through location and signage. The main entrance to Overlake is emphasized by a large round-about and prominently features the corner store. The additional entrance to Overlake is emphasized with signage, as is Parker’s Park which is also centrally located. In contrast the Linear Park is poorly defined, and has no signage associated with it. No other important intersections were found in the development, this is likely because of the small size of the development and therefore a smaller number of district features, not because of a lack of emphasis on the features themselves.

Parks and Open Space

There are currently only two parks in Overlake; Parkers Park shown in Figure 9, and the Linear Park. The locations of these parks relative to the community are shown in Figure 10. The small number of parks is probably due to the small size of the community. However, this number seems inadequate particularly because of the poor design of the Linear Park which provides very few activity options because of its very narrow shape, and lack of features. Additionally, these parks are not within the quarter-mile walking distance of all the homes in the community.

Considering the population of Overlake in regards to the number of parks in Overlake creates a ratio of six-hundred and fifty people per park. For comparison purposes, Daybreak has roughly four-hundred and forty-one people per park. The situation in Overlake does improve to four-hundred and thirty-three people per park if the open space provided by the schools located just outside of Overlake is considered.
Figure 9. Parkers Park. Photo credit: The author

Figure 10. Overlake parks. Based on: (Overlake Map 2011).
However, because of the wide road separating these spaces it is less likely that the community takes full advantage of them. Additional parks and open space have been planned for in this community but have not yet been developed.

In fact, the portion of Overlake that has been built is roughly one-tenth the size of the overall master plan for Overlake. This was shown in Figure 7 that highlighted the actual built portion of Overlake in relation to the master plan. Reasons for this halt in development will be addressed later in key informant interviews.

**Housing**

This design category calls for a range of housing types and price levels with a variety of densities. Overlake provides each of these. Housing types and styles vary greatly in Overlake, particularly when considering the small size of the community. Townhomes, duplexes, fourplexes, and single family detached homes are all available in Overlake. Though the majority of homes in Overlake are still single family detached, there is a wide variety of sizes and styles available in this housing category as shown by Figure 11 and Figure 12. These sizes and styles are intermixed wonderfully creating a loose and natural feel. Areas for townhomes and multifamily housing are well defined and though adjacent to single family homes are segregated by street layout and a lack of pedestrian connections. However, this adjacency does provide a mixture of housing densities within Overlake. And, as previously mentioned, all of the homes in Overlake do have front porches and/or balconies, side loaded or recessed front garages, and shallow setbacks.
Transit-Oriented Development

This design category is fairly straightforward calling for features that provide or allow for alternative modes of transportation including walking, biking, and mass transit options. As
discussed previously, a pedestrian network is provided along all streets with adequate sidewalks except in the townhome area southeast of the corner market. However, this is the only design feature from this category present in the community. There were no delineated bike paths and no mass transit options available. In fact, the nearest bus route is provided by Greyhound, but does not even enter Tooele.

**Conclusions**

Overlake was lacking some design features in every design category with the exception of housing. Overlake currently has only developed one-tenth of its master plan, with about five-hundred lots being developed. This population may not be large enough to support more commercial or public spaces, particularly when there are many commercial and public spaces nearby that would compete with those areas located in Overlake. Additionally, mass transit options may not be feasible for Overlake because of its remote location and small population, even in the surrounding city. The small size and population of Overlake may also contribute to the small number of district features and parks and open space. Development pressures may have also played a role in this, as it may have been more profitable to provide additional housing versus additional open space. Overlake overall had an interconnected street network with pedestrian friendly streetscapes, but exceptions to these could be found in a few places throughout the community. It is possible that some of the areas in which Overlake falls short in regards to key design features of New Urbanism would be mitigated with the completing of Overlake’s master plan. However, in light of the information discussed in later sections with key informants, this is unlikely.

Neither Overlake nor Daybreak demonstrated perfectly all of the design features outlined. A summary of how each community compared to the design features outlined is
contained below in Table 3. This table represents the results of the structural analysis of each community as compared with the typology of spaces and subsequent design features identified and outlined previously. This table is not meant to be conclusive; rather, it highlights areas in which each community fully implemented the design features discussed, as well as areas in which they did not. This information was used to help develop questions for key informant interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Categories</th>
<th>Implementation Types (Design Features)</th>
<th>Daybreak</th>
<th>Overlake</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mixed use centers:</strong></td>
<td>Variety of the appropriate mix of compatible land uses (e.g. residential areas mixed with commercial and public spaces).</td>
<td>Yes, though commercial space is limited and not fully developed or within ¼ mile walking distance of entire community. Variety of other public spaces such as parks, schools, gardens, etc.</td>
<td>Yes. Though commercial area is small and not within walking distance of entire community. A few other public spaces provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neighborhood activity options for young, old, car owners, and those who do not own cars.</td>
<td>Yes. Parks within ¼ mile of every home, and a wide array of other activity options scattered throughout the community including a variety of clubs to participate in.</td>
<td>Few activity options. No organized community groups or clubs could be found. Parks and commercial area did not provide a wide array of activity options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Streets /Public Space</strong></td>
<td>Pedestrian friendly streetscapes (street trees, sidewalks, front porches shallow setbacks, and interesting streetscapes).</td>
<td>Yes, except condition of street trees was inadequate or completely absent in some areas. Sidewalks provided throughout entire community.</td>
<td>Yes, except in townhome area where there are no sidewalks or consistent street tree plantings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Open Space</td>
<td>Provide parks &amp; open spaces.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Poor. Few parks, and their poor design inhibits having a wide array of activity options.</td>
</tr>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Range of housing types and price levels with a variety of densities (some higher).</td>
<td>Yes, though options for low income housing are unclear.</td>
<td>Yes. Townhomes, duplexes, and a variety of detached single family options exist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residential areas mixed with commercial and public spaces.</td>
<td>Yes, though commercial spaces are limited and not fully developed.</td>
<td>Yes, though commercial spaces are limited within the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Windows, porches, and balconies close to the street/public space.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit-Oriented Development</td>
<td>Allow for and provide alternative modes of transportation such as bicycle paths, sidewalks, mass transit options etc.</td>
<td>Marginal. Few bicycle lanes delineated. Mass transit options not currently available, but will be available soon.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Daybreak Key Informant Interviews

The following results and discussion are based upon information found during key informant interviews. Though some answers may be attributed to a single key informant, most of this discussion represents themes found among the responses of several key informants. As the interview questions dealt with broad concepts outlined in the initial idea development of each community as well as narrower questions regarding reasons for specific design and implementation decisions, it was important to find key informants who were involved at both levels of the development process. For Daybreak, four interviews were conducted. The first key informant worked for two years as Kennecott Land’s community relations manager dealing particularly with stakeholder relationships. Additionally, this key informant also worked for several years in neighborhood planning with an emphasis in community amenities for Kennecott Land. Their experience gave them expertise in dealing with various stakeholder groups throughout the development process, as well as expertise and knowledge in dealing with the difficulties in implementing specific design solutions. The second key informant interview for Daybreak was a principle emeritus of the firm charged with doing the parks and open space design at Daybreak. This key informant had specialized knowledge of the parks and open space design of Daybreak, but was also involved in meetings dealing with visioning and broader concepts at Daybreak. The third key informant was the current manager of planning and community design for Kennecott Land. Additionally, this key informant previously worked for Kennecott as the manager of design review, a primarily architectural role in the beginning that expanded to urban design and planning. This key informant was involved with Daybreak from the beginning and continues to be involved today. As such he had a wealth of knowledge regarding the broad concepts outlined during the initial visioning process, as well as how those
concepts translated into physical form, and the barriers associated with implementing these forms. The fourth key informant is currently part of the planning staff for South Jordan city, and offered critical insights into the relationship between the staff of Kennecott Land and the City of South Jordan. This key informant continues to have weekly meetings with staff from Kennecott Land and was involved in design guideline review for various aspects of Daybreak including subdivision plats, commercial site plans, and review of design guidelines, etc. A fifth interview was attempted with the current president of the Home Owners Association at Daybreak to get a sense of how design features were being used, their perceived success in the community, and residents’ feelings about Daybreak. However, as this person had been employed at Daybreak for only six weeks at the time of our study and was also new to the state of Utah, it was determined that they would not have the knowledge needed to answer the questions involved in this research. The previous president of the Home Owners Association may have been more helpful; however, at the time of our research there was no contact information available for him. As mentioned earlier, each interview was conducted by telephone and was recorded with the consent of each key informant. Interview outlines for Daybreak are included in Appendices A and B. Interviews lasted on average about one hour.

As outlined in the introduction the interviews will be discussed below in five categories: Original vision of each community, barriers to achieving and implementing that vision, differences between the vision and its implementation, discussion of the gaps identified during the structural analysis, and conclusions.

**Original Vision of Daybreak**

“Rio Tinto is a leading international mining group” (RioTinto 2011) and owner of Kennecott Utah Copper, a mining company that has been working along the West Bench of the
Salt Lake Valley for years. As the company foresaw that it would be closing the mines in this area in the future they began to develop a plan for post-mining operations on all of their land holdings in the Salt Lake area, roughly ninety-four thousand acres. With Utah being one of the fastest growing states at the time and with development pressures moving west in the Salt Lake Valley, Rio Tinto saw an opportunity for value creation and profitability by developing their massive land holdings.

With a company mandate already in place requiring that the company operates in a sustainable manner, including post-mining operations, Rio Tinto gave Kennecott Copper funding in 2001 to begin a feasibility study for developing their land holdings in this area. Unable to find a development company whom they felt understood and would be able to implement their vision of a sustainable community; Rio Tinto formed their own development company called Kennecott Land. Once formed they hired Peter Calthorpe, a planner and one of the pioneers in New Urbanism and Smart Growth initiatives, to help them outline and create Daybreak. This community of roughly four-thousand acres would serve as a showpiece for how Rio Tinto’s remaining land holdings would be developed.

The city of South Jordan was unaware of these undertakings but had identified a portion of Kennecott’s land holdings as a logical extension of their city and a place for future growth to occur. As such, they formed a long range planning committee to explore and outline how these lands might be developed in the future. These original plans were based on what has been discussed as typical Euclidian zoning principles that outlined single use areas such as residential, industrial, and commercial properties. Part way through this process Kennecott approached the city of South Jordan with their plans for developing their land holdings. It then became a
collaborative effort between Kennecott Land and the city of South Jordan to determine how exactly this development would occur.

Though the two parties involved had built plans based upon different principles, the “two visions weren’t as far off as you would expect.” Similar traits could be found between the two plans such as the inclusion and location of a large commercial area or town center that would connect with the larger region. However, Kennecott’s plans did have “much more detail on mixes of uses” and included higher densities than were typical for South Jordan.

Additionally, Kennecott’s original vision and goals for Daybreak were very broad and based on Smart Growth principles which included “multi-modal transit, multi-nodal regional urbanism, the creation of urban and town and village neighborhood centers, compact and walkable communities.” Developers wanted to “create a network of human scale amenities” to “provide people with options.” Creating this network and providing options were a driving force behind housing, commercial areas, parks and open space, and even transportation. Several informants described how creating community was discussed in the original vision. It was “definitely an intention. It was a motivating factor from the beginning...we had that vision clear in our minds when we started.” Creating community “was definitely a goal” and the developers of Daybreak went through a process to learn how to create this community by better understand the needs of their customers. This process included doing a number of value surveys in the market which showed that there were a lot of needs in the area, which included:

Safety, security, great schools, a place to play, parks & open space, the whole nine yards. Kind of typical stuff. The real question was: what does that mean in physical form? And how do you respond to the needs of the market in a way that doesn’t duplicate what’s already there. So the whole sense of community was really critical...Our goal here was to step back a little bit and not try to meet the needs as they were currently being met, but try to figure out how do we differentiate in the market place.
Understanding these needs and how they were currently being met allowed developers of Daybreak to create a framework for community to occur that was different than what already existed in typical surrounding suburbs. Some of the ways this framework and goals were physically manifest were discovered as the community developed. However, a few were outlined from the beginning such as: “Taking the garage off the street by having it recessed or accessed through a rear alley. Putting the front porch back on the street by including it on all houses and having shorter front setbacks.” In addition, key informants mentioned connecting Daybreak to regional transit, providing neighborhood scale commercial and mixed use areas, and developing at a pedestrian friendly scale by de-emphasizing the automobile through use of traffic calming devices, decreasing street widths, and providing pedestrian infrastructure as other ways in which the developers accomplished their goals. Clearly outlining and understanding the vision and goals of developers in the beginning was extremely important as informants indicated that doing so helps keep the vision

...from eroding as you go through the process of implementing it...you need that as you go along... because in these daily conversations with builders, or contractors, or internal budget people... it wants to erode those principles and that vision down. So if you don’t have it in the beginning, you’re not going to make it.

By framing the vision early on and taking a holistic systems approach to community planning Kennecott Land hoped not only to operate more sustainably, but to create interconnected systems and networks that provided a framework to support community, maintain quality of life, and meet the needs of consumers in a way different from typical subdivisions. Doing so proved very effective as will be discussed in more detail in the following sections.
Differences Between Vision and Implementation

Key informants had a difficult time addressing any real changes between the vision and the implementation of Daybreak because the original vision for Daybreak was a collection of broad principles rather than detailed prescriptive solutions. The vision allowed for flexibility in implementation which allowed for the developers to adapt to industry standards, governmental requirements, and market demands without changing or losing the original vision.

The original vision was a series of really loose lines on a map and a whole number of principles. In the entitlement process we created what was called a community structure plan, which really is: What are the major streets? Where are they located? How do they work? And in that sense, yes, the plan has changed and adapted, and frankly gotten better because as it gets more detailed, it gets improved over time. We have learned definitely how to create neighborhood better than we did when we first started, because we have had to figure out who do we have to work with and how do we build on their strengths. So I would say that over time the plan has actually gotten richer. It hasn’t been diluted at all. And everything is done around the original tenants of the vision.

The key informants acknowledged that compromises were made and the ideal physical manifestation of the principles was not possible in every case.

Design happens all the way through a project. You don’t conceive a project and then build it as it was conceived. You find through the process you are always having to adjust and adapt. You’re not necessarily adjusting and adapting the vision itself. You’re adjusting and adapting how it manifests itself based on the needs of the people.

For example, there was a much stronger demand than developers had anticipated from consumers wanting larger garages.

This is something we hadn’t anticipated; we didn’t think there would be a need for three or four car garages...we’ve had to find creative ways to make neighborhoods compact and still store cars...Our hope has been that over time that the need will actually diminish when people recognize that they can get around and work in this context without so many vehicles. So we’re not really pro-actively trying to accommodate vehicles that way. We are trying to promote a reduced vehicle miles traveled model.
The idea here is that the developers accommodate, even if not proactively, the demands of the consumer without compromising the vision of the community. In this instance their creative solutions for storing vehicles included locating larger garages behind homes in alleys. This accommodated more vehicle storage without compromising the pedestrian scale of the street. Promoting on street parking was another way to provide vehicle storage while reinforcing the goals of calming traffic by decreasing the scale of the street. The recession has also helped in decreasing this demand as it has been more difficult for people to afford so many vehicles. Adaptations such as these were not mandated but were internal choices of the developers to meet the needs of consumers, improve their development patterns, and still remain true to the vision and principles of Daybreak.

**Barriers to Implementing the Original Vision**

Development of communities at this scale is always complicated, but this process is further complicated when trying to develop in a manner that is not typical. The groups that offered some of the greatest or most critical challenges were local municipalities, builders, and the consumer.

Stuff like this doesn’t move very fast, particularly at (this) scale. There is so much work to be done just in the land planning; but then there is so much work to be done with the local governments too. Particularly in a place where they’re not used to developing that way… so it takes a lot of work to get the local governments on board to even do the right planning.

Having to work with typical industry standards particularly those of local governments was the primary barrier or complication to implementing principles of New Urbanism as expressed by two of the three key informants. “Some of the barriers to accomplishing goals would be standards... so not only do we have barriers in the market place, but we have barriers
in terms of zoning and the systems that cities have in place. And some of those barriers are still barriers frankly.” Typical Euclidian zoning has been discussed in this paper, as has its conflicts with principles of New Urbanism. In Daybreak, the conflicts arose from intentions for mixed use areas with varying densities. In addition, requirements for street widths and layouts became a challenge because Daybreak had planned an interconnected street network rather than the typical hierarchical pattern. Daybreak also had a different system for classification of streets. For example, rather than having arterial roads, Daybreak wanted to have urban boulevards. These boulevards would handle the same amount of traffic flow but rather than having one extremely wide, fast moving street an urban boulevard would consist of two one-way streets going in opposite directions separated in the center by commercial areas with round-abouts and pedestrian bump-outs at each end. This new classification of road would accommodate traffic, but increase safety for the pedestrian, decrease the scale of the street, help create vibrant commercial areas, and create a more pleasant experience both for the drivers and the pedestrian. This different classification system created difficulties with South Jordan City as well as the Utah Department of Transportation.

Working with builders to create the homes of Daybreak was also a barrier. One informant indicated that finding a group of home builders who would agree to develop in a manner consistent with the visions of Daybreak was difficult. The principles behind housing in Daybreak were to create quality homes that related to the lot, the street, and the landscape, de-emphasized the automobile by recessing the garages or accessing them by alleys, and provided interesting architecture, etc. Several informants felt that it was difficult at first to get builders to fully commit to these principles because they had years of experience building one way, and this approach was completely different to them. In addition, builders lacked market confidence that
houses built in the manner would sell. The process of the builders learning new styles and
gaining market confidence took time.

At first many of the home builders were sort of one foot in, one foot out. So we
couldn’t really ever capture the benefit of the land plan because the housing
was trying to be sort of typical conventional suburban and New Urban at the
same time. And so it’s taken a while for us to get the plans to a point where the
lots are being utilized well, and the homes live well and relate to the yard and
relate to the front street... And that’s something that we have to overcome
every time we bring a new builder on board.

It’s hard for people to change. People tend to want to evolve rather than
change. Evolving from a conventional suburb to a New Urban context is actually
going to hinder your success. It almost has to be a revolution, because
everything is compromised in an evolutionary approach because you adapt
things slowly, and builders would be better off, frankly, if they just changed all
at once and rethought how their plans work.

An example of an evolutionary approach that would compromise results that occurred
in Daybreak was the addition of a front porch onto a home. One informant indicated that at
first:

Some builders would put a token porch on that’s not really functional but it
looks like a porch on the front of the house. Other builders will build a porch
that’s like a room that’s like eight feet deep and fifteen feet wide, then buyers
pick it... and it’s that type of learning that has helped change the attitudes of
builders.

Working with the consumer was also an interesting challenge. It may seem odd that
this group is listed in this section, but as mentioned earlier, Daybreak was developed as an
opportunity for value creation and profitability so its success requires market buy in. This is
because even if Kennecott was able to implement perfectly and ideally every principle outlined
in its original vision, it would fail financially and in being able to create community if consumers
were not willing to purchase homes in Daybreak. Though this group does not have a written set
of standards that developers of Daybreak had to work with, their unwritten expectations and
desires had to be accommodated in order for them to purchase homes in Daybreak and thereby create the community intended in the original vision.

It’s not just local governments. Its utilities companies and it’s your actual builders who come and build in your community, and to some extent in this market it’s even the buyer because there’s certain perceptions in a marketplace like South Jordan which is primarily large lot subdivision type development, large square footage homes, big backyards. And Daybreak is in many ways is the antithesis of that.

One informant felt that Kennecott’s ability to deal with these expectations and desires in a manner that was acceptable to buyers but that remained true to the original goals and visions of developers was one of the reasons for its success, and that success was demonstrated by the market. “It’s the premier development. I don’t mean that just in terms of volume, (though) in terms of volume it is the premier development. I think the market is telling us it’s the leader... I think the markets said its number one and it’s a success.” Homes sales in Daybreak currently account for twenty percent of the market which further supports these sentiments.

Ironically, each of these barriers once overcome were also mentioned as a reason for Daybreak’s success. One informant described how this happened in regards to working with the city of South Jordan when he said:

From the outside looking in, they did something that is just a fundamental component of every large successful community, and that is they appeared to treat the city as a partner. And I am sure that everything they did with the city, they discussed it and came to an understanding about the city and Daybreak’s mutual needs, and crafted solutions that worked for both of them.

This informant further indicated that “the larger the project and the longer the relationship, the more sense it makes for a developer to treat the city as a partner.” The fact that this working relationship began early on and has continued throughout the development process was mentioned by all key informants as an important factor in Daybreak success. This
fact may seem fairly insignificant, however, as is later noted, this “is a fundamental way for a responsible developer or builder to do business. And I think some do, but most don’t.” The reason “most don’t” is because an ongoing relationship like this is not only unusual, but it is difficult to maintain. Constant talking, negotiating, and educating had to occur between the city and Kennecott to make it possible to meet the needs of both parties. However, this was critical to the success of Daybreak, because as a result of the support they had from the city, they were able to rezone their entire property into a planned community (PC) zone which allowed for mixed uses and a variety of densities. In addition, and probably most important to Daybreak’s success in this area is that they were able to go through an Entitlement process, which one key informant explained essentially let them outline and commit to development principles upfront, but allowed them enormous flexibility in how they implemented those principles. This saved developers of Daybreak from having to constantly apply and wait for variances, conditional use permits, rezones, etc. The flexibility allowed by this process also allowed developers of Daybreak to adjust their actual lot layouts and housing configurations to market demands as they developed each new phase. The fact that Kennecott was able to make such an agreement is evidence of the partnership they had with South Jordan City from the beginning of the development process.

The challenges associated with working with builders were overcome in three ways. First, “you start with the builders, and we handpicked them. When you own that much land and it’s in that part of the valley that is hot with development... you have builders lining up to be a part of the party, and we picked maybe a dozen to come and build there.” This allowed developers to work with those builders they felt were most suited to understand and implement the vision of Daybreak. Second, they again went through a process of talking, negotiating, and
educating other builders about their vision for the housing in Daybreak, and how they saw and wanted that vision to be manifest. Third, several informants described that when challenges with aesthetics persisted, developers designed pattern books to be given to builders that outlined architectural features, materials, and styles to be used for the home, the landscape, and the street. Additionally, as part of the education process, time was needed to allow builders to gain market confidence that homes built to these new standards would sell and that builders could still make a profit.

Overcoming challenges associated with consumers and market demands began long before Daybreak was ever developed. Work done by Envision Utah years prior to the developing of Daybreak helped lay the groundwork for this type of development not only with consumers, but with public officials and builders. In addition to this groundwork, the developers of Daybreak did a lot of marketing in an effort to educate consumers on the benefits of this new type of development. Also, creative solutions were thought of to accommodate market demands without contradicting the original vision and goals of Daybreak.

Discussion of the Gaps

Three main gaps identified at Daybreak during the structural assessment were addressed during interviews with key informants. First was the limited commercial area, SoDa Row, which was only in its infant stages and not within walking distance of the entire community. Informants noted that the SoDa Row is only one of six or seven neighborhood commercial areas planned in Daybreak, and that the timing of building commercial areas is very important as a certain population is needed to sustain them. SoDa Row is fairly new, and more businesses are expected to come into this area, but this growth will happen as growth in the community can support it. This is the case with other commercial areas planned in Daybreak. In
addition to these small neighborhood scale commercial areas, a larger regional commercial area is planned near the new freeway corridor that will be built along the current western portion of Daybreak. This design and installation of this commercial area and freeway corridor will be of interest when completed to see if it will still adhere to the principles of New Urbanism, or if it will mimic more typical development practices. However, due to this areas incompleteness at the time of this study, the characteristics of the freeway corridor and commercial center were not able to be compared to the typology of spaces during the structural assessment of Daybreak.

Second, road widths were identified as seeming too wide during the structural assessment. This may have been an incorrect assessment as key informants mentioned that smaller road widths were achieved in many areas throughout Daybreak including a recently built 16’ wide road. One informant mentioned that twenty to thirty different street cross sections were used throughout Daybreak depending upon the scale of the area the streets were in. The rest of South Jordan City uses only seven different street widths. In general key informants indicated that residential streets were typically thirty to thirty-two feet wide curb to curb. However, when visiting Daybreak it did seem that many of the road widths were too wide for a pedestrian friendly scale. This may be for two reasons. The first is that the street trees are immature which may make the street seem larger; as these trees mature it is likely that they will make the scale of the streets seem more pedestrian friendly. In addition, though on street parking was allowed on most streets; relatively few streets were actually lined with vehicles during visits to the site. This would make the streets seem wider but may not be typical of the streets in Daybreak as one key informant indicated that the city of South Jordan often receives
complaints from residents of Daybreak that on street parking on both sides of the street poses a problem for two-way traffic.

The third gap was the apparent lack of low income housing. The existence of this gap, as pointed out by key informants, is actually dependent upon the definition of low income housing. If the definition is based upon an income bracket, which key informants felt that it was, then it has been accommodated for in Daybreak with smaller single family homes and with apartments. However, if the definition of low income housing is below market rate or government subsidized housing, then there is no low income housing in Daybreak. When the question was originally written, no housing cost or type was outlined as being “low income”, nor was it intended to mean government subsidized housing. Therefore the gap of not providing low income housing in Daybreak does not exist as originally thought. In addition, it may be difficult to provide government subsidized housing in New Urbanist communities or communities with strong and distinct aesthetic styles due to stipulations for how government subsidized housing is built, and what it looks like, etc., making it very difficult to integrate these housing units into the community. Daybreak therefore integrated low income housing into their community in a way that its developers felt made sense for this area.

Overlake Key Informant Interviews

Finding key informants for Overlake proved to be very difficult. Due to complications which will be elaborated on later in this discussion, the firm behind the development of Overlake is no longer in existence, and no HOA currently exists in Overlake. Eventually, contact was made with the owner and developer of Overlake, but he had no additional contacts or contact information for anyone he had worked with on the project. Attempts were made to
contact the planning and architecture firm located in Seattle, Washington who had worked on Overlake. However, these attempts were unsuccessful. As such, only two key informant interviews were conducted for Overlake, one with the owner and developer of Overlake, and one with a principal of Planning and Development Services, the private-sector planner contracted to assist the City of Tooele with the Overlake project. Due to the key informants’ positions, the interviews were very informative; however, it should be noted that with a lack of additional key informants to corroborate their stories, the views expressed are one-sided and therefore represent a limitation in this research. The outlines for these interviews can be found in Appendices C and D.

**Original Vision of Overlake**

Interestingly, the original vision behind Overlake and how it was intended to be developed was very similar to Daybreak. In 1997 the developer and owner of Overlake began developing Overlake with an initial fifty-four lot subdivision. With Overlake being just less than 3,000 acres, he realized that the size of the property provided the opportunity for holistic, quality planning. He also realized that how he developed the initial phases of Overlake would greatly affect or determine the value of the remaining land. He knew that he wanted to develop in a manner consistent with traditional neighborhood development (TND) principles, a sister term similar to and sometimes interchangeable with New Urbanism and Smart Growth principles. In particular, the owner stated that the ones that were most important to incorporate were, creating mixed use areas and a walkable, pedestrian oriented development. In an effort to educate himself and those he was working with on the best way to use these principles and apply them to Overlake the owner, his architect, project manager, engineer, and a photographer set out to visit nine notable developments which were built after the manner of
traditional neighborhood development. These developments included: Northwest Landing in Seattle, Washington, Harbor Town in Memphis, Tennessee, and Celebration, Florida, among others. At the conclusion of that trip, the owner and his team again outlined the principles they felt were important to include in Overlake, and a few ways in which they felt those principles were best physically manifest which included: Reducing lot sizes, providing pocket parks and amenities to get people out of their homes into the community and to feel safe doing so. Also, creating architectural and landscape design features for vertical structures, building side-loaded garages or in some cases garages accessed by rear alleys, and including front porches on all homes were important physical elements as well.

The developers then approached the county first because the land on which Overlake was to be built was located outside of Tooele’s city limits. The county encouraged the developer to get into contact with the city and to include the property boundaries within the city because it would be easier to receive municipal services such as water sewer police, parks, etc. This arrangement would prove beneficial to the city as well because of the amount of future growth that this land could accommodate if it were developed. Eventually the property was annexed by the city and was placed in a “P” zoning designation which allowed the owner to suggest various uses and densities to the city. However, the developer and city would have to mutually agree on the uses, infrastructure, levels of development, and the type, size, and configuration of what would be allowed. This was originally seen as a healthy agreement because it allowed for flexibility.
Differences Between Vision and Implementation

It is immediately apparent upon visiting Overlake that much of its vision has not been implemented, and much of the community itself has not been built. This is apparent because of surrounding vacant lands that have roads aiming towards them but that are unfinished and stop abruptly. In addition, Figure 7 shown previously showed the master plan of Overlake, and the completed portion, which is only one-tenth of the overall plan. The developer acknowledged the incompleteness of the community, and stated that the vision had essentially been lost because of barriers to implementing it in even the small area of Overlake that has been built.

In addition to the gaps identified previously, the developer specifically mentioned not being able to implement narrow streets, the limited mixed use area, the signage used, and the location and design of the elementary and Jr. High School as areas that were not able to be implemented according to the original vision and goals. Reasons these features were unable to be implemented according to the original vision will be discussed in detail below.

Barriers to Implementing the Original Vision

The idea of narrowing the streets in Overlake was ill received. In fact, both key informants identified the narrowing of streets as the largest and most controversial point of contention between the developers of Overlake and the City of Tooele. The volunteer fire department in particular had concerns about the narrow streets proposed by the developer because it would limit adequate access by fire trucks. This was a difficult and controversial issue, which was not fully resolved for both parties. The city felt they compromised reasonably by making allowances in other areas such as allowing alley ways. However, the developer felt otherwise. “We didn’t want to have long wide residential streets that would encourage high
vehicle speeds. But we ran into stiff resistance from the city because of the city’s volunteer fire department... their position was we tell you what street widths are, you don’t tell us”. Efforts were made to educate the city on the benefits of walkable roads by creating educational materials to demonstrate their importance which included a pamphlet that described how other cities were implementing them, and a seminar arranged through Envision Utah to be done by a former fire chief promoting pedestrian oriented roads and discussing why cities and fire departments should welcome narrower residential streets. “It didn’t work. In fact the fire department even bowed their backs more because it was as if we were encroaching on their authority.” In the end, “they wouldn’t approve anything less than thirty-six feet face of curb to face of curb.”

“The other thing that we ran into problems with was of course the mixed use nature and the walkable nature. We ran into a lot of opposition from city officials on those concepts, though we were somewhat more successful in accomplishing that.” Their successes in these areas were discussed in the structural evaluation previously as their pedestrian infrastructure and their ability to have mixed use areas which included the corner store, a church, and a small office and commercial plaza.

Including a school in Overlake was viewed as a desirable feature by the developers. When the school district approached the owner about building a school in Overlake he was willing to accommodate them. However, the developers wanted to work with the school district to create some architectural and landscape standards that would reflect those previously outlined by the developer in their visioning process. In addition, the informant requested that they would “like to see you build a vertical elementary school. Two story minimum and maybe even three story elementary school because we would like our educational institutions to be
important and to have a vertical presence.” The school board’s architect said that this was impossible, but developers of Overlake looked into it further and found that it was possible, though there were restrictions in the grade levels that could be housed on each floor. In addition, they tried to educate the architect on the benefits of building a multi-level school such as “it saves land use, it gives more space for your parks and your ball fields, it gives you greater security” etc. In addition you could limit the bus service because all the kids going to this school would live in Overlake and because of the nature of the community they could walk to school. Members from the school district did not buy into this style of building and as a result ended up buying land across a major collector street immediately outside of Overlake. Figure 13 shows the location of these schools.

The developer of Overlake felt that complications working with the city increased as an administration change part way through the development in Overlake resulted in further loss of support from the city. Additionally, disagreements over the proper allocation of funds assessed from park impact fees on Overlake residents agreed upon in the 1997 development agreement eventually turned into a lawsuit in 2002. The lawsuit further strained relations between developers of Overlake and the City of Tooele. The key informant from the government side could not go into detail on the relationship between the developers of Overlake and the city staff particularly concerning when and why it deteriorated; only confirming that initially during the late 1990’s it was a very healthy relationship. This developer felt that this strained relationship affected his ability to implement even small design features. For example, unique but uniform signage was a small design feature developers desired to implement in Overlake. This signage was agreed upon but once the litigation process had begun and inspectors visited the site they said the signs did not meet code, so they were unable to use them.
The litigation led to a very contentious environment for inspections and lots of other things... it just basically deteriorated and the original members of the city council and the planning commission were gone and I was dealing with a whole new set of people. Essentially the whole thing got poisoned and those people were really unhappy about the fact that I had sued the city and it essentially shut down our project.

Figure 13. Location of schools in Overlake. Based on: (Overlake Map 2011).
The complete halting of development in Overlake left nearly 90% of the master plan unfinished. The litigation is ongoing, but regardless of the outcome Overlake will never be finished for two reasons: The first is that the original development agreement for Overlake has expired and the city is not interested in renewing it. The second is because as the owner stated:

Even if we win, at this point in time, neither myself nor my partners are interested in going back and fighting the city on street widths and mixed use etc.... For us it was one battle after another battle, after another battle, and at this point in time we would not try to do anything like we tried to do before... We get no credit for any of [the] things that we do, and we just end up butting heads, which means that it ends up being more expensive, more time consuming, and we would never try to do it again, simply because out here they don’t value it at all.

Based upon the complications discussed above, the single greatest factor preventing the implementation of the original vision of Overlake was the inability of the developers of Overlake and the local city government to work together and find compromises that met both of their needs. This is not surprising as working with the city was also one of the greatest challenges in the implementation of Daybreak. However, in the case of Overlake, this barrier proved insurmountable. As such, it played a role in preventing the implementation of nearly every principle and goal outlined in the original vision. Furthermore, one informant indicated that these failures affected and counteracted areas in which developers of Overlake were able to successfully implement their goals. In regard to being unable to narrow the street widths, “frankly that in and of itself is such a negative impact that it really counters a lot of the other stuff we did.” For example, developers were able to build homes with recessed garages or garages accessed by rear alleys to improve the pedestrian friendly environment. However, “there are no cars parked in the street, and when there are no cars parked in the street and you’ve got a thirty-six foot wide street, you’ve just got a great big wide street. It doesn’t look
right. It’s out of proportion to the rest of the development.” The wide street therefore contradicts the principle of the vision to create a walkable, pedestrian oriented community.

Discussion of the Gaps

Four gaps were identified during the structural assessment of Overlake: a lack of commercial space, a lack of mass transit, a limited number of parks, and a lack of pedestrian infrastructure in the multi-family areas. The lack of pedestrian infrastructure and streetscapes in the multi-family area was unaccounted for as the developer could not remember the reasoning behind their doing so. The lack of commercial space was attributed to being unable to complete the master plan of Overlake. The existing corner store was meant to be an entry feature with an additional mixed use commercial area that was much larger and centrally located to the entire community planned in the future. This area was never built.

Mass transit options were originally thought of; however, with no mass transit existing in Tooele to tie into because of its remote location and small population, it was unrealistic to attempt in Overlake.

The limited number of parks in Overlake was attributed again to complications in working with the city. “Because we wanted to have pocket parks we were going to exceed the standard of park to property ratio, and it was a higher ratio than the rest of the city. So the idea was, why should the city build and service more parks in Overlake than in the rest of the city, and that would be a burden on the city.” To try and solve this problem the developers offered to permanently reduce the price of park property to the city to only a fraction of the current market rate to offset any increased maintenance costs. This solution eventually evolved into an agreement between the developers and the City of Tooele, which allowed the city to exact impact fees from residents of Overlake to be used to build parks in Overlake. The claimed
misuse of those funds has resulted in the current litigation between the developer and the City of Tooele. This litigation began in 2002 and is still ongoing.
CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to identify barriers to implementing principles of New Urbanist communities. In completing this research it is clear that one of the greatest barriers to implementing principles of New Urbanism in communities is in gaining the support and cooperation of the parties involved in the development process, most importantly the local government. This was the largest barrier that both communities experienced in implementing the principles of New Urbanism. The ability of Daybreak to overcome this difficulty is the chief reason for its success, and Overlake’s inability to overcome this difficulty is the chief reason for its lack of success. Interestingly, both communities tried to overcome this barrier in the same way through education and negotiation, but with very different results.

Additional barriers included working with the right builders and educating them on the goals the developers are trying to achieve and the desired product. Again education, negotiation, and time were needed to overcome this barrier. And finally, getting market buy in was also a difficult barrier. This barrier was overcome with the help of work done by Envision Utah to educate and familiarize people with new development styles that included principles of New Urbanism. This helped lay the groundwork for these types of developments to occur in the housing market as well as in the political realm, but additional marketing and adjusting to market demands and expectations while still maintaining the original vision were needed to fully overcome this barrier.

Though similarities were found in the barriers each community experienced to implementing principles of New Urbanism, one question remains. Why, when using the same techniques of education and negotiation, are some developers able to overcome these barriers and gain the much needed support from local governments to implement principles of New
Urbanism, and some are not? Reasons for Daybreak’s success in this area may include: First, the city of South Jordan and Kennecott were both looking to develop this land. The city saw the area where Daybreak currently sits as a logical extension of the city and as an opportunity to increase the city’s population and tax base. In this respect the city and Daybreak shared a vision. Not necessarily the same vision, but both parties had a vested interest in turning this land into a quality development that would draw people to it, and perhaps even be a showpiece for South Jordan as well as for Rio Tinto and Kennecott. This vested interest, as well as mounting development pressures moving west, motivated the city to work with developers of Daybreak, even if that meant adjusting the typical development process, or moving into unfamiliar territory.

Second, Kennecott had been operating in the Salt Lake Valley for years, though not as a land developer, and their company had massive land holdings in the area totaling almost ninety-four thousand acres, making them a major economic and political power within Utah. A fact that actually caused the city of South Jordan some concern as one key informant stated that the major fear the city of South Jordan had was that if they did not work with Kennecott in developing their land holdings, that Kennecott would want to create their own city rather than be a part of South Jordan. These fears eventually subsided, and the same key informant stated that Kennecott’s influence actually brought other benefits to the city such as the Trax Line which was originally not intended to have a stop in South Jordan but is now anticipated to have at least two.

Third, one key informant stated that it was refreshing for the city of South Jordan to be working with a developer with “deep pockets” because it allowed for amenities such as parks and trail systems to be built first and provide a benefit to South Jordan even before all of the
housing was complete. Most developers cannot afford to develop amenities until the end of the project leaving city’s wondering what benefits they are receiving from the project until it is completely finished.

Similarly, Overlake was built on a significant amount of land located outside of the city’s boundaries. The city recognized that if this land were developed it could accommodate a large amount of future growth. Overlake was given a zoning designation that would allow for flexibility and a mixture of uses as agreed upon by the developer and the city. Thus far the process seems very similar to what occurred with Daybreak. However, it is here that the contrasts start to arise which may be reasons why the developers of Overlake and the City of Tooele were unable to create a more cooperative partnership. The first of which is, the distinction between attitudes of how each city approached working with the developers. The city of South Jordan was excited about the project and anticipated it happening before the developers ever approached them. The City of Tooele seemed to work with the developers more out of necessity as described by the key informant who worked for the City of Tooele saying, if the City of Tooele didn’t deal with it (the Overlake development) in some way, or resisted, the county would have. Some level of development would have occurred either way, but if the city didn’t work with them; they wouldn’t have the ability to regulate how it happened. This does not mean that the city wouldn’t work with them, but that the process of collaboration and discussion was approached with an attitude of “we want to accommodate this development without compromising our public goals and policies.”

In addition, one informant indicated that there was an administration change part way through the development of Overlake and that the new administration had run on a campaign
that was not as favorable to growth which further complicated and strained the situation. The informant described the attitude of the city officials as a ‘my way or the highway’ approach.

Another major difference in the development process of each community was found on the side of the developers. In the case of Daybreak, not only did the city of South Jordan seem more open and willing to work with Kennecott, but Kennecott was willing to work with the city. Obviously Kennecott could not win every “battle” or disagreement with the city, so when education and negotiations didn’t outweigh the needs of the city, Kennecott looked to what would be the next best solution that would meet both of their needs. For example, if it was not possible to narrow a street, Kennecott would look to other solutions such as implementing traffic calming devices like pedestrian bump-outs and round-abouts. Conversely, this willingness for developers of Overlake to work with the city was mentioned, but after negotiation and education were attempted and failed there was no indication of the developer offering additional solutions that recognized the desires of the city and still met their own needs.

Further on in the development process Kennecott was also able to include the city and other involved parties in their success. This was done for example, by inviting them to ribbon cutting ceremonies where they could see the finished product and finally understand what the developers were envisioning, how it would work, and how it was a good solution. In fact, one key informant said that this led to certain innovations that were once unique to Daybreak, such as round-abouts, being implemented elsewhere in the city. In contrast, including the city in their success was never mentioned by developers of Overlake. This is likely because the developers were never able to create what they felt was a successful end product to share with the city, because, as was mentioned previously by a key informant, the small successes they experienced were overshadowed by failures elsewhere in the project.
In addition to all of these reasons, the existing ordinances for each city play a major role in what is allowed in terms of development guidelines. In South Jordan, the existing ordinances would not have allowed for a development like Daybreak to occur, so the city worked with an outside consultant hired by Kennecott to draft new zoning ordinances that would allow for more flexibility in development. Also, the entitlement process that developers of Daybreak went through allowed them enormous freedom and flexibility not typically granted to developers. In addition, the city of South Jordan has also allowed developers of Daybreak to come up with their own design guidelines for things such as housing and signage as long as it is approved by the city council. This process and the amount of freedom it gave Kennecott is certainly not typical of what other developers experience, and was motivated by the previously discussed desire of the city to work with Kennecott in developing their land.

Similarly, The City of Tooele looked to the area where Overlake is now located as a place for expansion in the future. The land was also given a special zoning designation which would allow for a mixture of uses. However, this designation did not allow for major variations from the city’s other requirements governing things such as street widths and signage, though the city did feel that they made adequate concessions to meet the desires of the developer while still adhering to their own requirements.

We have determined that establishing a cooperative partnership with the local government is essential to being able to successfully implement the principles of New Urbanism. Based upon the previous discussion and key informant interviews the following seem to be key elements of establishing that partnership. The first is to begin communicating with the local government, which we will call the city, early on. Part of this communication includes sharing a clearly outlined vision and goals with them so they understand what you are trying to
accomplish. Second, is to recognize that the city has needs and requirements that are valid and based upon reason as well. Engaging the city by allowing them to voice their wants and needs in the initial visioning process would be helpful to establishing a partnership with them. This would also help the developer recognize where conflicts may arise so that they can be better prepared to find creative solutions that will meet the needs of the city as well as their own. Third, it may be true that larger companies with larger land holdings and more financial backing may have a better chance of gaining cooperation from a city. This is because, as indicated by key informants, projects that implement New Urbanist principles typically require much more time and effort than typical developments. Doing a development based on New Urbanist principles that requires all this extra effort but is only 100 acres may not seem worth it to the city. However, a project involving thousands of acres has the potential to be iconic and recognized, so the extra effort may seem more valuable in that regard.

Establishing a partnership with local governments is only one piece of the puzzle of how to overcome barriers to implementing principles of New Urbanism. Additional efforts must be made to get the right people on board from all areas of the community development process including: builders, architects, planners, engineers, and the consumer. This requires not only picking the right people, but being willing to educate, negotiate, and compromise with each of them as needed throughout the process. Finally, getting market buy in, sharing your success with the stakeholders and other groups involved, learning from mistakes, and improving as you move forward were also essential elements of being able to successfully implement principles of New Urbanism in developing communities.

In addition, key informants from both communities and sides of the development process agreed that, outside of creating a cooperative partnership between the city and the
developer, developing communities based upon the principles of New Urbanism is most likely to be successful in a community that already has one to three successful examples of this type of development. One key informant indicated that the city of South Jordan is now looking for developers who are willing to do developments that have higher densities, are transit-oriented, and contain mixed use elements. This key informant also indicated that doing such a community in the future will be much easier because of what the development of Daybreak has accomplished including: adjusting zoning ordinances and the general plan to allow for these types of development, the existence of city staff that are trained in working with these types of developments, and less public opposition to these types of developments because citizens have a built example of what they look like and how they function. If a developer is developing in an area where successful examples are not available, the developer will need to be prepared for the development process to take significantly more time than anticipated due to the added complexities inherent in these types of projects.

Additional research is necessary and would be particularly helpful in regards to the structure and wording of laws and ordinances that allow for the implementation of these principles as well as those that prohibit it. Furthermore, circumstances outside of those looked at and discussed in this research may also affect a developer’s ability to successfully implement the principles of New Urbanism. The actions identified in this research are not all inclusive, but represent a framework meant to increase the likelihood of success in implementing the principles of New Urbanism.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES
Appendix A. Daybreak Interview Outline
Daybreak

Questions:
1) Talk to me about the original vision of Daybreak? What were some of the goals the designers wanted to accomplish?
   a. How were these goals physically manifest? (e.g. goal: increase pedestrianism, accomplished by creating a connected pedestrian network)
   b. How did the idea of community play into the initial goals and concepts of designers?

2) Did the designers run into any complications or barriers to accomplishing these goals?
   a. If so, what were they? How were they overcome?
   b. What were the most difficult concepts and features to implement?
      i. Why were these most difficult?
   c. What lessons did you learn through the process of designing and developing Daybreak?

3) What changes were experienced between the original vision of Daybreak, and how it was actually built?
   a. What were the reasons for some of these changes?
Daybreak

a. Did these changes affect the original goals of designers?

b. Did they affect how these goals were implemented?

4) What do you think are some of the reasons for Daybreak’s success?

a. Was working through the appropriate paperwork, permitting, etc. with government entities difficult?

b. If so, what portions of the process were difficult and why?

c. What lessons did you learn through the process of developing Daybreak?

d. Do you think planning design features at the community level them to be more successful at Daybreak than if they were done at the smaller neighborhood scale? (e.g. designing parks and open space for the community as a whole, vs. letting each neighborhood create them as growth occurs. Or providing a variety of community activity options (community gardens, community center, trails system etc.) rather than letting them spring up with demand)

5) What were the design concepts behind the development of the variety of housing types, styles, and prices in Daybreak?

a. Were types, styles, and prices outlined in the original plan? Or was growth more based on demand?
Daybreak

a. Is there any low income housing available in Daybreak? If so, where?

b. If not, was it ever considered? What was the reason for not including it?

6) What were the design concepts behind the development of the commercial area (SoDa Row) in Daybreak?

a. Were options ever considered for dispersing smaller commercial areas throughout the different villages?

b. How were those options viewed? (Why was one location favored over smaller dispersed locations?)

7) What were the design concepts behind the development of the parks and open space in Daybreak?

8) What has been done at Daybreak to de-emphasize the automobile and emphasize other modes of transportation such as walking, biking, etc.

a. Are there any pedestrian or biking connections from Daybreak to surrounding communities?

9) Biking is one alternative mode of transportation. How is it accommodated at Daybreak?

a. Some bike lanes are located along major streets, were bike lanes ever considered on smaller residential streets?
Appendix B. Daybreak Administrative Interview Outline
Daybreak Administrative Key Informant Interviews

1- The original vision of Daybreak included developing in a manner that may not be considered “typical”. Did the city have any concerns about the manner Daybreak desired to develop, or about what developer’s envisioned for this new community?

2- Can you explain what the entitlement process was, and why was it used in developing Daybreak?

3- Is this process commonly used with other developers? Why or why not?

4- Did any of the existing ordinances make it easier or more difficult to allow this type of development? (e.g. Euclidian zoning, requirements for street layout and patterns.)

5- How did the city go about addressing and achieving their goals, while still working with what Daybreak wanted to accomplish?

6- What desires of Daybreak’s developers were particularly hard to accommodate, and why? (e.g. narrower street widths, mixed use areas, varying densities, etc.)

7- Did the size or reputation of Kennecott Copper or Kennecott Land have any effect on the city’s desire or willingness to work with them in developing Daybreak?

8- Did the amount of Kennecott’s land holdings in the area have any influence on the city’s desire or willingness to work with them in developing their land holdings?

9- Were there any factors that made the city want to or not want to work/cooperate with the developers of Daybreak as compared to a more typical developer/development?

10- How would you describe the relationship of the developers of Daybreak with those they worked with in the City offices? Is this typical, why or why not?
Appendix C. Overlake Interview Outline
Overlake

Questions

1) Talk to me about the original vision of Overlake? What were some of the goals the designers wanted to accomplish?

   a. How were these goals physically manifest? (e.g. goal: increase pedestrianism, accomplished by creating a connected pedestrian network)

   b. How did the idea of community play into the initial goals and concepts of designers?

2) Did the designers run into any complications or barriers to accomplishing these goals?

   a. If so, what were they? How were they overcome?

   b. What were the most difficult concepts and features to implement?
      i. Why were these most difficult?

   c. What lessons did you learn through the process of designing and developing Overlake?

3) What changes were experienced between the original vision of Overlake, and how it was actually built?

   a. What were the reasons for some of these changes?

   b. Did these changes affect the original goals of designers?
Overlake

c) Did they affect how these goals were implemented?

4) Were any community activity options programmed into Overlake? (community gardens, pools, civic buildings, community center, and organization of clubs or groups)

a. If not, was this idea ever discussed?

5) What were the design concepts behind the development of the parks and open spaces in Overlake?

a. Were lots for parks assigned and the community decided on the activities in each park, or were the parks planned in more detail by the designers of Overlake?

6) What were the design concepts behind the development commercial areas in Overlake?

a. What is the function of the corner store located in Overlake? (Meant to be a neighborhood center, an entry feature, just for convenience?)

b. How, if at all, did the presence of nearby commercial areas effect commercial areas were designed in Overlake?

7) What were the design concepts behind housing development in Overlake?

a. Were types, styles, and prices outlined in the original plan? Or was growth more based on demand?
8) What has been done in Overlake to de-emphasize the automobile and emphasize other modes of transportation such as walking, biking etc.

   a. Sometimes as a way to de-emphasize the automobile is by narrowing the street width. Was this option ever considered at Overlake?

   b. If so, what considerations led to it not being implemented?

9) What were the design concepts behind the development of the pedestrian infrastructure at Overlake?

   a. Was the idea of pedestrian connections to the surrounding community ever explored?

   b. The townhome and multi-family areas in Overlake do not have the same pedestrian infrastructure that is found elsewhere in the community. Is there a reason for this?

   c. Additionally, on street parking is also different in the townhome/multi-family family areas then in the rest of the community, why?

10) To emphasize other modes of transportation, were mass transit options ever considered at Overlake?

11) Will the lawsuit between the developers of Overlake and the city of Tooele affect the completion of Overlake?

   a. What kind of effect will it have upon the Original vision/Master plan of Overlake?
Appendix D. Overlake Administrative Interview Outline
Overlake Key Informant Interviews

1-- The original vision of Overlake included developing in a manner that may not be considered “typical”. Did the City of Toole have any concerns about the manner the developers of Overlake desired to develop, or about what developer’s envisioned for this new community?

2- Did any of the existing ordinances make it easier or more difficult to allow this type of development? (e.g. Euclidian zoning, requirements for street layout and patterns.)

3-- How did the city go about addressing and achieving their goals, while still working with what the developers of Overlake wanted to accomplish?

4- What desires of Overlake’s developers were particularly hard to accommodate, and why? (e.g. narrow streets, mixed use areas, walkable community, the signage used, etc.)

5- How would you describe the relationship of the developers of Overlake with those they worked with in the City offices? Is this typical, why or why not?

6- Were there any factors that made the city want to or not want to work/cooperate with the developers of Overlake as compared to a more typical developer/development? (e.g. size of land holdings, reputation of the developer?)

7- Is there anything the developers of Overlake could have done that would have allowed them to develop more fully their original vision for Overlake?

8- What would need to happen for a project like this, a New Urbanist community or planned community, to be implemented more successfully in the future?