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HOUSING DEVELOPMENT COMES WITH ITS OWN FARM

 AGRICULTURE & ENERGY

A new housing project delivers mixed-income housing and an on-site farm that produces low-cost food for residents

Spotted: We have seen a lot of ideas lately for the 15-minute city – where people live within a 15 walk or bike ride from work, shops and schools. But how about living within a few minutes of your own farm? A development in the suburban Silicon Valley town of Santa Clara has broken ground on a complex that will provide not only affordable housing but affordable food as well.

The project, dubbed Agrihood, includes apartments for low-income seniors and veterans and below-market units, alongside market-rate units and a 1.5-acre farm that will be capable of growing up to 20,000 pounds of produce a year. The farm will be managed by urban farming company Farmscape, and will be sold on-site to residents at a deep discount from what they could expect in the supermarkets.

The Agrihood development was funded in part by a county-wide affordable housing bond and inspired by Santa Clara’s history as a farming community. The project’s urban location means that the farm will be using organic and regenerative methods, and will avoid the use of pesticides by planting native hedgerows and using composting and vermicomposting.

Citing a farm right next to housing could also encourage residents to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Vince Cantore, vice president of development leading the Agrihood project, Core Companies, [explains](#) that “Not only are we providing a really unique living experience for the residents that live on the property, but we’re also taking a very deliberate approach to encouraging the health and wellness of our residents by incorporating the farm, hopefully, into their daily and weekly lifestyles.”

Agrihood is just one of a number of innovation projects we have seen recently that attempt to make towns and cities more liveable and human-centred. Some of the other developments and concepts include a sustainable [urban village](#) in Aberdeen and a plan for a self-contained [garden city](#) outside Paris.

Written By: Lisa Magloff

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Takeaway:

This project could well represent the future of our cities, in which people not only have shops, work, schools and recreation activities right on their doorstep, but also the bulk of their fresh food. In addition to reducing food miles and making fresh food more affordable, the incorporation of a farm in a housing development could also foster a greater connection between residents and the environment. Construction on the first phase of Agrihood is expected to be completed in 2023, with the first tenants moving in shortly after.