

# PLANNING THE PERFECT COMMUNITY

What would a perfect community look like to you? Over the years, people have planned and started communities. They believed their communities would be different and better than the ones they came from. Some people even hoped the communities would be utopias. A utopia is a kind of paradise, an imagined community that is supposed to be perfect. Here are a few from the past, present, and future.



An original  
New Harmony cabin

↑ In the 1820s, Robert Owen had an idea. He wanted to start a community based on cooperation, equality, and free education for all. So

Owen bought land in Indiana and named it New Harmony. About 1,000 people settled there. But many didn't know how to farm or run small businesses. And some just didn't get along with others. In just a few years, Owen's community failed.



**If people built a colony in space, could they grow or make all they needed to live there? That was the question behind Biosphere 2. Biosphere 2 was a big science experiment built in Arizona. The building held a rain forest, a desert, a farm,**

**and other environments. Eight people were sealed inside. They stayed for two years. But during that time, they ran low on oxygen and couldn't grow enough food. Today, the Biosphere 2 building is a science research center.**



↑ **Walt Disney** planned more than Disney World. He also planned an actual city that he named EPCOT. The letters stand for Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow. EPCOT was Disney's vision of what cities of the future could be like. He saw EPCOT as a

place to show off American industry and imagination. Walt Disney died before he could put his plans into action. The Disney Company went on to build EPCOT as a theme park.



↑ **People still search** for ways to improve communities. The Center for Architecture and Design in Philadelphia wants ideas for improving city neighborhoods. So each year it has a contest called the Better Philadelphia Challenge. In 2016, the winning design showed ways to

help residents get healthier. In the design, restored row houses are used for both homes and businesses. Community gardens grow healthy food. New playgrounds are places for children to exercise. And special vans deliver food, home repairs, and health services.

