

# Camino Nueva Vida

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Camino Nueva Vida is a design project in Las Pintitas, Mexico, just outside of Guadalajara. The development is an education center to teach vocational skills, entrepreneurship, management, community building and life skills. The neighborhood of Las Pintitas is high poverty, high density, high crime, and low opportunity. The project goal is a facility that embodies a sense of opportunity through education, community, and a clear direction for a new life. The design goals for Camino Nueva Vida (currently under construction) focus on engaging the client and the community through the impact of services provided within the building, the configuration and functionality of the spaces, and the construction of the development. It was decided early on that the palette of materials would be as exclusive as possible to items available within the community of Las Pintitas, both in terms of products and labor. Pulling inspiration from the traditional vernacular of the Hacienda, the project would also focus on the use of natural passive systems, roof top planter gardens, and the development of skilled labor to become self-sufficient with a low carbon footprint and the potential to move "off the grid" over time. The process began with simulation in the programming (discovery) phase to drive formative qualities and spatial relationships by building quantifiable data to inform the design potential within the local climate.

The core design idea for Camino Nueva Vida came directly from the client who wanted the design to stay in the vernacular of the Hacienda. Looking specifically at the Hacienda typology, it is important to note several key concepts directly influencing the project's design: First, the Hacienda was a self-sufficient design, meeting all the core needs within the development. Camino Nueva Vida was designed with the spatial capacity to provide all of the food for the employees, students, and visitors as well as the ability to grow enough food to generate income. The capability of providing all power requirements (the current design takes advantage of passive systems) are currently being developed, as well as water retention, storage, and filtration. This will take the focus off of consumption within the development while emphasizing the quality of providing for the community. Second, the Hacienda combined productive activity with living spaces. All the spaces are designed with an emphasis on action, activity, and multiple uses. This creates an economy of size, will allow for future growth, and will seek to accommodate general activities over specific functions that will not be permanent as the services within the building begin to shape the community. Third, the project diverges from the Hacienda by reversing the physical and organizational pattern of the inner courtyard as an exclusive space for the Haciendado. Preserving the inner courtyard's location maintains a familiar typology, while opening the courtyard on the major circulation axis evokes a sense of opportunity and equality.

