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years in a 3,000-square-foot home in the historic Hayes Barton neighborhood.

Miles, an accountant who grew up in Philadelphia, had a bit of culture shock when his job transferred him to Raleigh from Washington, D.C. Downtown didn't have much to offer.

But downtown Raleigh is finally ready for him, and he and his partner are looking forward to the end of outdoor maintenance - and also a rooftop view. Their 1,700-square-foot townhome will offer privacy and also space for their 90-pound golden retriever.

"With a condo, you really do give up a lot of privacy," Miles said. "It's a different lifestyle."

West + Lenoir, and many of the other new townhome pro-

jects, feature modern architecture - a sign of Raleigh's urbanization and shift toward "vertical living."

Souheil Al-Awar, who studied architecture at N.C. State University, designed The Saint, a 17-unit townhome complex on St. Mary's Street that will likely be finished in 2019. Sizes range from 2,800 to 4,500 square feet, and prices range from \$960,000 to \$1.7 million.

Al-Awar describes the four-story homes as "rural-modern" that fit in with the historic Boylan Heights neighborhood. The exterior black brick will be triple-glazed, and 10-foot windows will let in lots of sunlight. Custom-made closets are coming from Italy, as are the faucets and tile. Recessed lights cost about \$200 each, Al-Awar said.

In Montreal, where Al-Awar lives when he's not in Raleigh, tall townhomes are considered luxurious, he said. He wants to

see denser growth here.

"I've always believed in a high-density core," Al-Awar said. "It's taken Raleigh kind of a long time to adjust to that."

On Davie Street on the eastern edge of downtown, construction just got started on 15 townhomes as part of Transfer Co. Olde East, where a warehouse is being converted into a food hall and grocery store.

The units will feature chef-inspired kitchens to keep in line with the food theme, said developer Jason Queen.

"It's always been a really cool urban design," Queen said. "We kind of went on that."

Another project with a modern design, 10 Arros, will feature 10 townhomes on New Bern Avenue.

The units, about 1,500 square feet, will feature black, white and gray colors inside and out, said Linda Lavis, a project man-

ager with JDavis Architects. Flat-front cabinets and "clean, linear" lighting add to the modern design. Buyers can expect to pay up to \$485,000.

New development in the city's core has drawn criticism from some who worry about the loss of affordable housing and a change in character.

It's important for Raleigh to preserve more of its history and push for landmarks to be placed on the statewide list of historic sites, said Ernest Dollar, director of the City of Raleigh Museum and the Pope House Museum.

But Dollar said a changing downtown landscape was inevitable, including a shift from large Victorian homes to smaller townhouses.

"It's a hallmark of Raleigh becoming a modern city," he said. "This is how cities handle a large influx of people."

Healy, from Hargett Place,

said recent downtown real estate trends represent "the next step in a marketplace." For years, downtown Raleigh has seen a boom of new rental apartments.

"I believe a city is a mix of uses," Healy said. "For our city to grow right, we needed for-sale housing where owners move in and care for their homes."

Many of those owners have one thing in common: They want a good view.

The biggest selling feature for downtown townhomes is a rooftop terrace, said Johnny Chappell, a Realtor who is working with Lambert Development on West + Lenoir.

"If you put a rooftop on it, it's a big deal," Chappell said.

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