

WEST SACRAMENTO INTO LIVING

BY THEA MARIE ROOD

There are plenty of places in Northern California that offer new housing, new schools, new parks. There are towns filled with historic neighborhoods—think hardwood flooring, fireplaces and character. And there are other areas where you can find chic urban living—loft homes and pedestrian-friendly streets, close to nightlife and culture. Lastly, there are homes with water views, close-by marinas, private docks and easy boating.

But it's quite possible that West Sacramento is one of the only—maybe even the only—city that offers homebuyers all of these options, and more. In fact, as housing has boomed in West Sac, the choices have grown exponentially. “It’s been a wild ride,” admits Stephen Patek, director of public works and community development for the City of West Sacramento. “In 1999, we probably built 200 homes here, and by 2005, there were 1,400 homes under construction. This year, we have 2,800 building permits for homes.”

While there are charming, mid-20th-century neighborhoods here, the real explosion in residential construction took off after the Daniel C. Palamidessi Bridge was built in 1997, and the Southport area could be developed. A variety of exciting new neighborhoods appeared—some are still being built today—with all the amenities you’d expect: golf courses, water features, parks, neighborhood elementary schools.



Bridgeway Lakes

COURTESY OF THE CITY OF WEST SACRAMENTO

In fact, city leaders worked hard to get these types of family friendly neighborhoods in place. “I was born and raised in Bryte and Broderick, and there were almost no parks or activities for kids—we were just an unincorporated part of Yolo County,” says Oscar Villegas, West Sacramento city council member, who is currently raising two children here with his wife. “But now my kids are involved in every aspect—karate, soccer, tennis. You can horseback ride, rowing—everything I dreamed of doing is now available here in our little community.”

A few years later, as the Riverfront Master Plan gained approval, unique urban housing was created as well, with more on the way.

Whatever you choose—a mansion on the river, a loft with a view of Sacramento’s skyline or the 4-bedroom/3-car-garage family home within walking distance of your daughter’s first grade classroom—you’ll be in close proximity to all of West Sacramento’s amenities. Parks and soccer fields are near, but so are River Cats Triple-A baseball at Raley Field, IKEA, Nugget Market and river trails. An almost non-existent commute to midtown and downtown Sacramento, for work or for pleasure, makes West Sacramento an easy place to live.

Perhaps most importantly, you have a rare opportunity to make an investment in what will undoubtedly be an interesting and vibrant urban future. “Now’s the time to get in on the ground floor,” says Mark Johannessen, also a city council member, who suggests it’s wise on several economic levels to move to the area. For instance, the city’s emphasis on public transit could mean forgoing that second or third car. “Gas could go down,” he says, “but even if it does, public transit is a big reason why people will be attracted to the urban core, and West Sac is situated just right for that.”

Here are a few examples to get you started.

NEW COMMUNITIES

BRIDGEWAY LAKES

Bridgeway Lakes is a master-planned community in the Southport region of West Sacramento, and includes a 30-acre manmade lake with a fountain and boathouse. (Residents can kayak, paddleboat or sail.) There are also 13 acres of parks, and miles of trails to walk or bike on. Builders include Shea Homes (with the Catalina, Hideaway and Westport developments) and Meritage (with The Landing at Bridgeway Lakes).

Houses in these areas are traditional family homes, with anywhere from three to six bedrooms, plenty of bathrooms and big backyards. They also feature 2- to 3-car garages, some of them tandem or side loading, as well as generous square footage (ranging from 2,200 to more than 4,000). Within that space are a variety of gorgeous kitchens, studies, entertainment rooms, walk-in closets and the like. There are new, friendly neighbors, K-8 schools nearby, youth sports and neighborhood events.

THE RIVERS

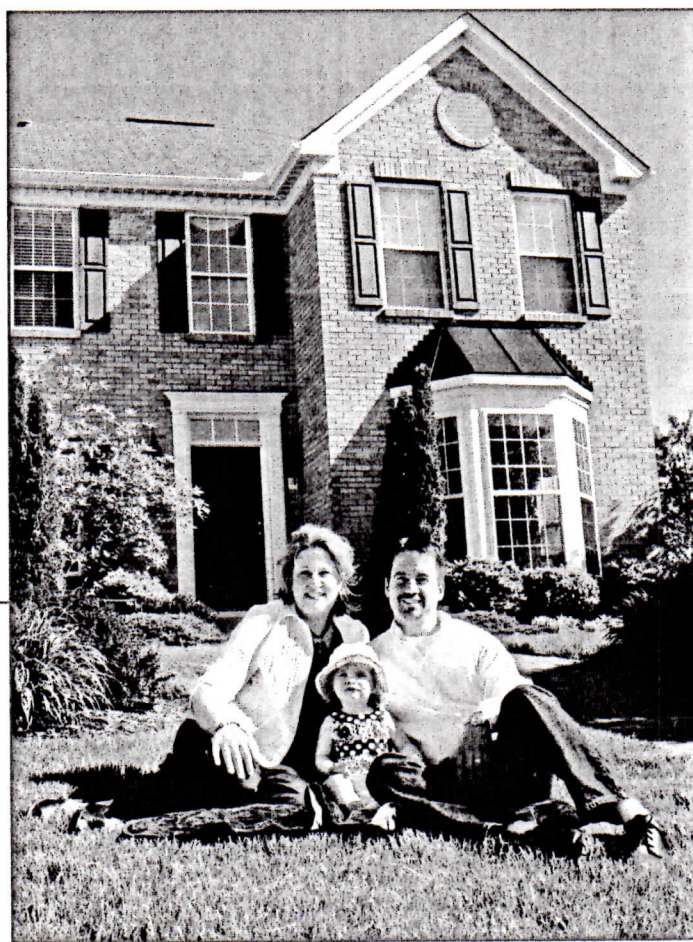
The Rivers is a 200-acre master-planned community being developed by Grupe Co. off Lighthouse Drive on the north side of West Sacramento. The Sacramento River forms the north and east boundaries of the project, so a river motif appears

throughout the development, with meandering walkways, sitting areas and a fishing dock.

Other amenities include a practice golf green, sand volleyball courts, 40 acres of private parks with play equipment, gated entrances and 24-hour security. Residents can also enjoy The Village Club, with three swimming pools (one with a water slide), a meeting room and lounge areas. Future plans include a K-8 school and an aquatic center.

Watercolors is one neighborhood in the area, with traditional detached 3- to 6-bedroom homes ranging from 1,614 to 2,788 square feet. Homes in Regatta at The Rivers are also available. These upscale condominiums have two to four bedrooms and range from 1,400 to 1,800 square feet, with attached 1- or 2-car garages. Prices start in the upper \$200,000s and top off in the mid-\$400,000s.

When all three phases of the community are built, it will include more than 1,100 homes.



RIVERCREST

Rivercrest is a small, unique neighborhood with charming “cottage” architectural design located on Linden Road, just off Jefferson Boulevard. Built by K Hovnanian Homes (formerly Forecast Homes), when completed it will consist of 168 homes with shutters, porches, angled rooflines and in certain cases, back-loading garages (via an alleyway). Existing homes, from 1,200 to 1,800 square feet, have two to four bedrooms, and great rooms are included in nearly every floor plan. Many of the homes also feature upstairs laundry rooms and private master suites. Prices start in the low- to mid-\$200,000s.

THE URBANIST PROJECTS

IRONWORKS

Being developed and built by Regis Homes of Sacramento, Ironworks is a 196-unit loft, half-plex and single-family home project in the Triangle area of West Sacramento, bordered by the Sacramento River and downtown Sacramento. The contemporary Ironworks Lofts have up to three stories of natural light-filled space, are 500 to 1,300 square feet and range from two to three bedrooms, with optional dens and bonus rooms. They include alley-loaded 1- or 2-car garages.

Ironworks Homes' striking designs come in half-plexes and houses that range from 900 to 1,600 square feet, with great rooms and walk-in closets. These also have alley-loaded garages.

In addition to the sleek architecture, the location is idyllic, with views of the water, Old Sacramento and the downtown skyline. It's easy to walk to a River Cats game, walk or bike to work, and be instantly in the capital city for art exhibits, community center performances, parades and festivals, or just dinner out.

Plans for the Triangle area also include future shops, cafes and restaurants riverside, as well as more walking and biking opportunities.

METRO PLACE AT WASHINGTON SQUARE

Metro Place is a 3-acre mixed-use residential/commercial site also built by Regis Homes of Sacramento, bordered by Third, C, Fourth and B streets in the Washington Square area of West Sacramento, near the terminus of the I Street Bridge. There are 44 single-family homes, 10 work/live lofts and 4 apartments, all with stylish, contemporary architecture and design. Regis built the houses first, which sold out immediately, and then broke ground on the urban live/work lofts, a new concept for the area. The lofts initially sold out quickly, as well as the apartments, but any could be listed on the market via private sale.

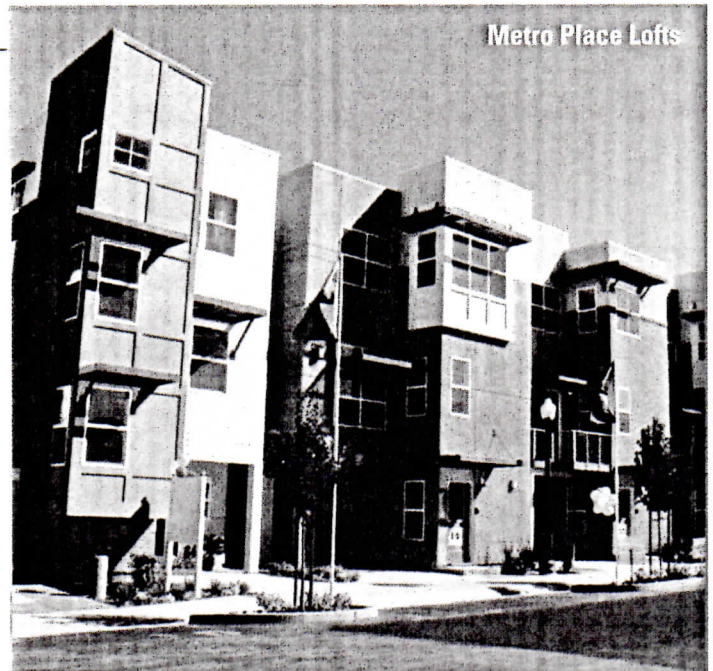
RIVER'S SIDE AT WASHINGTON SQUARE

River's Side is also a mixed-use project, located in the Washington Square area at the foot of the I Street Bridge. Developed and built by Leonard Development Co., Inc., it consists of 25 three-story single-family homes, and a 3,850-square-foot commercial building. On the corner of Third and C streets, this building has about 2,000 square feet of restaurant/retail space, with four loft units above. It fronts the river, and is a five-minute walk to downtown Sacramento.

This project won two prestigious area awards: the 2006 ACRE/NAIOP People's Choice Award for best new development of the year, and Sacramento Business Journal's Judges Choice Award, 2006 Real Estate Projects of the Year.

THE "GOOD" PROJECT BY LJ URBAN CO., INC.

Being developed by LJ Urban Co., Inc., this is the first "eco-urban community" in the Sacramento urban core. It will consist of 35 entirely "green" homes located in the Washington Square neighborhood. Tankless water heaters, solar panels, Night Breeze fresh-air intake air conditioners, low VOC interior paint and recycled materials for flooring and countertops will be the norm.



Metro Place Lofts

COURTESY OF THE CITY OF WEST SACRAMENTO

"PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, YOU HAVE A RARE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE AN INVESTMENT IN WHAT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE AN INTERESTING AND VIBRANT URBAN FUTURE."

The "Good" Project



COURTESY OF THE WEST SACRAMENTO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

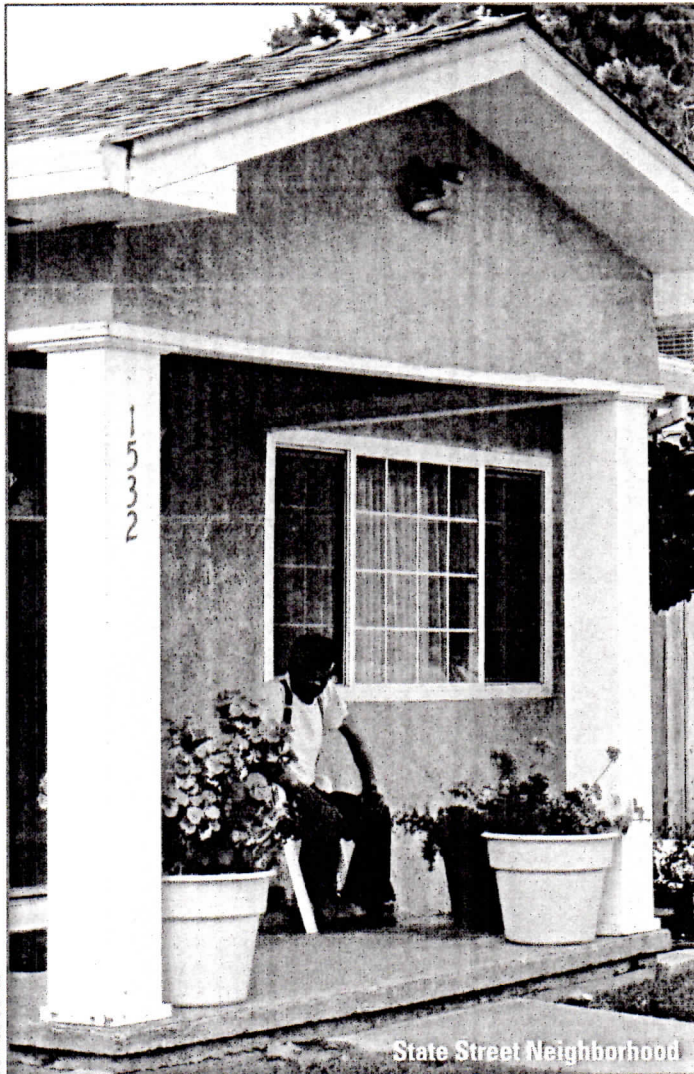
ON THE HORIZON

YARBROUGH VILLAGE

This large, 700-acre, master-planned community will be located in the Southport area, will be bordered by Bridgeway Lakes and will cross both sides of Jefferson Boulevard. Recently approved by the city council, it will eventually consist of more than 3,000 homes, 150,000-square-feet of commercial space, an 18-hole public golf course, and a 75-acre interconnected lake and canal system known as Lake Park. It is expected to have a village core with shopping, dining and office space, all of which will be accessible via pedestrian-friendly trails and sidewalks. There are also plans for an interesting mix of housing styles. The neighborhoods will have a diverse and distinctive look with some traditional, some attached and some with back-loaded, alley-entrance garage models.

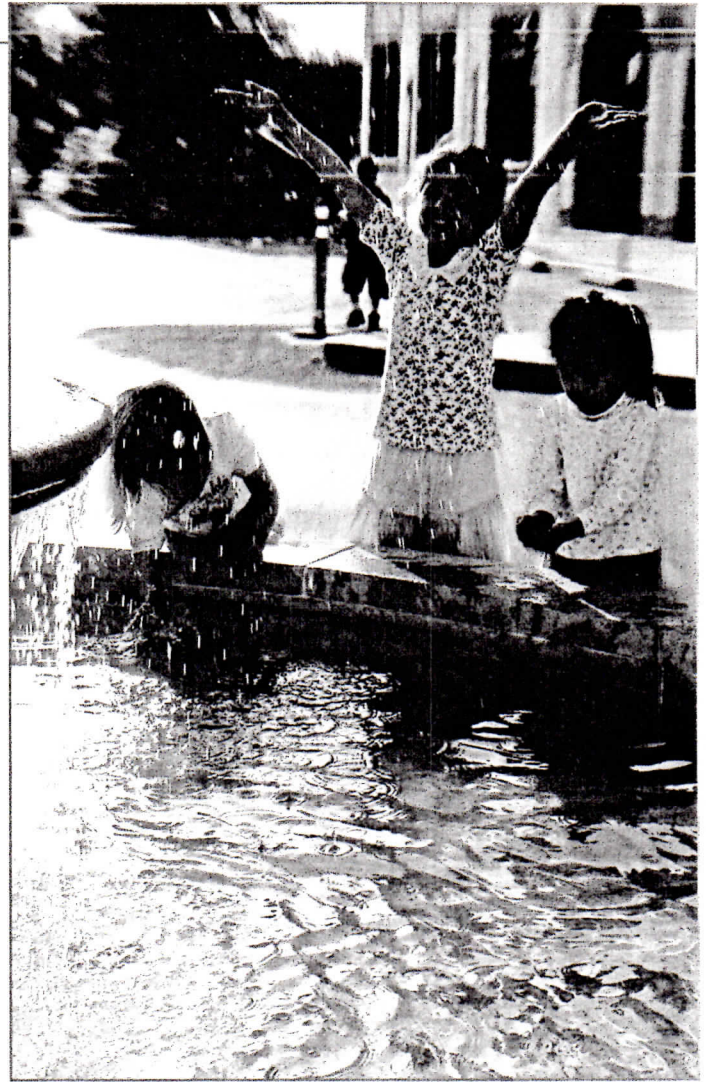
RIVER PARK

Being developed by Richland Communities, this 400-acre master-planned community is located in Southport, just south of Davis Road. At build-out, it will consist of 2,785 homes, a 37-acre community park, 30 acres of open space and trail systems, a 10-acre elementary school site and a marina. Like Yarbrough, it is expected to include a mix of architectural styles surrounding a village core, and will be pedestrian-friendly.



DENISE SEALS

State Street Neighborhood



COURTESY OF THE CITY OF WEST SACRAMENTO

LONGTIME FAVORITES

STATE STREET/WESTMORE OAKS

Long before the Palamidesi Bridge or city master plans, West Sacramento's industry and proximity to downtown brought residents to the area. As a result, there are some original neighborhoods in West Sacramento that are attractive to first-time home buyers, people seeking to downscale, or those just looking for the opportunity to join the lifestyle of baseball games, boating and popping over to Old Sacramento for dinner.

The State Street neighborhood (all the streets are, charmingly, named after states: Virginia, Carolina, Alabama) was built in the 1940s and '50s and was once the "uptown" side of West Sacramento. Here you'll find vintage hardwood floors, built-in fireplaces and bookshelves, in mostly 1-story, 2-bedroom stucco bungalows, with 1-car detached garages.

The Westmore Oaks neighborhood was built a bit later—in the late 1950s and '60s—so the houses are a little larger than those on State Street (1,300 square feet compared to less than 1,000, for instance). Many have three bedrooms and two bathrooms. Hardwood floors are common, as well as other endearing mid-century architectural details. Homes in both areas start from the low- to mid-\$200,000s. ●