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Cannery Project Grades Dirt, Moves to Reality



It's hard not to notice this kind of local history in the making.

Although mostly a sea of graded dirt right now — sprinkled with neatly stacked lengths of pipe, parked construction vehicles and other accoutrements of building from the ground up — The Cannery development is visibly in full swing alongside East Covell Boulevard at J Street.

It's the first housing development of its scale in the city in 20 years.

Once the final grading is done with truckloads of dirt from the surface water project construction site in Woodland, The Cannery's already award-winning, 547-unit mixed-density housing development will begin taking shape. First up are community buildings and amenities, then, later this year, workers will start building model homes for The Cannery's individual neighborhoods.

For now, the developer, The New Home Company, is deep in the details of building for the site, eyeing potential interested home builders that meet the bar for building top green construction projects as negotiated with the city.

"The Cannery is going to be a very special place, a community unlike any other in the greater Sacramento region, so it is no surprise that home builders want to be a part of it," Kevin Carson, president of the Northern California region for The New Home Company, said in a prepared statement.

"We have extremely high expectations to deliver the one-of-a-kind community the The Cannery is envisioned to be. Therefore, we will be very thorough in our approach to selecting home builder partners. We expect to make announcements in the near future on which companies have been selected to help carry out our vision."

The Cannery is slated to have affordable homes and apartments, as well as other market-rate residences, built with trademarked Livable Design features, a 15-acre mixed-use area and a 7.4-acre farm.

It's being billed as California's first farm-to-table new-home community. The development also will provide restaurants and area neighbors with fresh, seasonal produce in a nod to the site's history as a Hunt-Wesson tomato cannery facility.

One key aspect of the new subdivision will be its Davis-centric emphasis on alternate modes of transportation, from bicycles to buses, and a focus on pedestrian ease and electric cars. There will be a transit plaza in the southern part of The Cannery that's also been designed as an outdoor gathering space within easy reach of the project's future retail businesses.

The New Home Company also points out that there will be covered bicycle parking and dedicated places to charge and park electric vehicles.

The development's roster of partners includes the city of Davis, the Center for Land-Based Learning, JD+A Architects of Granite Bay and Robert Hidey Architects of Irvine.

While the dirt gets smoothed and packed, The New Home Company reports that The Cannery was awarded a Gold Nugget "Grand Award" for the best on-the-books site plan at PCBC in San Francisco.

PCBC is a convention of the country's most prominent builders, developers, architects, building scientists, lenders, investors, marketers and product manufacturers. According to the PCBC website, the event at the Moscone Center June 25-26 showcased 47 categories for Awards of Merit.



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