

Q2: 2015

A PUBLICATION BY

**THEREGISTRY**

BAY AREA REAL ESTATE

**THE**

**COMMERCIAL  
& RESIDENTIAL  
REAL ESTATE**

**UBIQUITOUS  
TECH | PG. 28**

**THE MODERN  
DAY DEVELOPER  
DOWRY  
| PG. 9**

**THE DOWNSIDE  
OF SURGING  
TECH DEMAND  
| PG. 34**

**APPROACHING  
THE PEAK  
| PG. 48**

[www.theregistrysf.com](http://www.theregistrysf.com)

# FOSTERING GROWTH

A community on the Peninsula  
transforms itself into a Boomer amenity

**A**fter more than a decade of plans, discussions and false starts, the site long referred to as “the 15 acres” in Foster City is being transformed into a master-planned senior housing community.

There were “a lot of bumps and bruises” on the way to this project, said Foster City Mayor Art Kiesel at the recently held official groundbreaking at the site, located between Foster City and Shell boulevards.

Master developer The New Home Co. paid \$30 million to purchase the land from the city, then sold portions of it to developers Atria Senior Living, MidPen Housing and Lennar Corp. to build senior housing communities at the site, now dubbed Foster Square.

The project, which sits next to City Hall, will include 200 market-rate condominiums built by Lennar for buyers age 55 years and older, 150 assisted-living units by Atria, and 66 affordable-housing units constructed by MidPen. A central plaza will be included, along with about 33,000 square feet of retail space along the ground floor of Atria’s and MidPen’s buildings.

Developers were drawn to the site in part due to its setting within walking distance of amenities such as the local library, Leo J. Ryan Memorial Park, Central Lake, a recreation center and

the Peninsula Jewish Community Center. The community center offers its members indoor and outdoor swimming, a fitness center along with a variety of community programs and events.

“It’s a tremendous location,” said Curtis Banks, Foster City’s community development director. “It’s right in the heart of the community.”

The site originally was slated for a high school, and more recently a senior housing community planned for the site fell through as the economy struggled in 2010, Banks said. In 2011, the city put out a request for proposals and agreed to terms with The New Home Co. in 2012.

“[Providing] senior housing was a conscious decision,” Banks said. “This fills a great need in the community.”

The senior population is “one of fastest growing demographics in the entire area,” and this community will help them age in place, he said.

Affordable housing was a key piece of Foster Square as it is “important to the community,” and the city wanted to ensure

**WORDS** Nancy Amdur  
**RENDERINGS** courtesy of The New Home Company

It's rare to have this infill location where you have so many city and other amenities that are walkable.

MARK ALEXANDER, THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF REDEVELOPMENT AT LOUISVILLE, KY.-BASED ATRIA



it would be part of the first phase of development, Banks said. MidPen gained funding from various sources, including tax credits and city and county dollars.

Atria's site will include 21,000 square feet of retail space, expected to include dining along with some services, such as a bank, said Mark Alexander, the senior vice president of redevelopment at Louisville, Ky.-based Atria.

Incorporating retail into a senior community is one aspect of the project that makes it stand apart from typical senior living facilities, he said.

"It's very unique," Alexander said. While many senior housing communities are located in suburban areas, this project will allow residents "to be part of a more urban environment."

"This will be a trend-setter," he added. "It's rare to have this infill location where you have so many city and other amenities that are walkable."

Retail and open space also will benefit Foster City, Banks said, as the town square provides a place for city events. "The site was designed and intended to be something the whole community could use as well," he said.

Danville-based Blake Hunt Ventures Centerstreet Properties will own and operate the retail portion of the project.

Miami-based Lennar Corp., which joined the project in November, liked Foster Square's location, centered on the mid-Peninsula near Highways 92 and 101, allowing access for still-

Recent groundbreaking of Foster Square.



working seniors ages 55 to 75 years old to easily commute to work in Silicon Valley or San Francisco, said Gordon Jones, Lennar's division president for Northern California.

Lennar also wanted the opportunity to serve the senior population. "We as a company have been really interested in age-qualified neighborhoods," as that demographic is rapidly growing, Jones said.

Baby boomers, ages 55 to 74 years old, comprise 21 percent of Foster City's population, and an additional 15 percent of the city's population are 65 years or older, according to a 2013 Commercial Market Analysis report prepared for the city by BAE Urban Economics, Inc.

Foster Square will be the first local project for Foster City-based nonprofit MidPen Housing, whose affordable housing units were the first to go vertical at the site with completion expected around summer 2016. Lennar's first 50 units should open in early 2016, and Atria expects to start construction in June with completion in about 18 months.

As the communities are being built, The New Home Co. is working to construct the infrastructure, including the center road, plaza and parking lot. The first phase of street improvements will be complete around year-end, said Brian Olin, a Walnut Creek-based senior vice president of the Aliso Viejo, Calif.-based New Home Co.

"For generations to come, people will enjoy Foster Square," Olin said. 