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RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE

2021 Best Real Estate Projects: Main Street Plaza



Main Street Plaza is a 65-unit affordable housing complex for families, veterans and people with special needs, at the gateway to Historic Old Town Roseville. COURTESY OF MOGAVERO ARCHITECTS

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By Elaine Goodman – Contributor Sep 9, 2021, 5:51pm EDT

We're introducing you to our Best Real Estate Projects of the Year. This is the top affordable housing project.

A recently completed apartment project in Roseville is providing affordable housing for families and veterans and is a key piece in the city's efforts to revitalize the Historic Old Town area.

Called Main Street Plaza, the project consists of two fourstory buildings at the northeast corner of Washington Boulevard and Main Street. The 65-unit affordable housing complex, developed by Meta Housing Corp., also includes 3,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space.

The \$32 million project was completed in December 2020.

Aaron Mandel, executive vice president of Meta Housing, said the land at the gateway to Historic Old Town was "well-positioned for redevelopment."

"The site benefits from walkability to plenty of nearby retail, services and transit offerings, making it an ideal location to add high-quality affordable housing to the local community," Mandel said.

Mike Isom, development services director for the city of Roseville, said the project aligns with the city's Downtown Specific Plan, which aims to revitalize Historic Old Town through a mix of commercial uses, entertainment and housing.

"The plan envisions diverse residential options and a range of housing products at a variety of price points," Isom said. "The Main Street Apartments meet an important need at one end of the affordability spectrum." The project included the demolition of what the city of Roseville described as a "nuisance building" on Main Street, which had been racking up code violations for over a decade. The building housed the run-down Roseville Hotel on the second floor and empty commercial space on the ground level.

The apartments at Main Street Plaza are a mix of one-, twoand three-bedroom units. They are rented to low-income families, veterans and people with special needs.

Recognizing that many residents moving in had just been homeless, Meta Housing fully furnished 35 of the apartments. In addition, pantries were stocked with shelf-stable food through a partnership between the Roseville Housing Authority and Placer Food Bank.

Main Street Plaza includes a larger, almost doughnutshaped building on the west side of the 1.16-acre site. The building surrounds a barbecue-equipped courtyard available to residents. A community room inside the building, as well as offices for leasing agents and social service providers, open to the courtyard.

Other resident amenities are a playground, fitness center and two bike rooms. A second-floor outdoor deck overlooking Main Street gives residents another place to gather.

Nathaniel Sebok, a principal with Mogavero Architects, said one of the goals in designing Main Street Plaza was to tie together distinct parts of town. In addition to being at the edge of Historic Old Town, the site is just south of a neighborhood of single-family homes. Washington Boulevard, at the west side of the property, is a major thoroughfare into downtown Roseville.

"We had a big responsibility in terms of neighborhood context," Sebok said.

One way the project connected the different areas was by closing down a portion of Placer Street between the two buildings, creating a pedestrian plaza. Residents of the neighborhood to the north can use the plaza as part of their walking route to Main Street.

Building exteriors at Main Street Plaza feature brick at the ground level, reminiscent of the brick buildings in Historic Old Town.

Balconies bring energy to the street-facing sides of the buildings, while the project's 59 parking spaces are tucked in the back.

Among the buildings' environmentally friendly features is a rooftop solar water-heating system, which preheats water before it goes to a central boiler. All groundwater is managed on site.

Mandel with Meta Housing said financing Main Street Plaza was one of the project's biggest challenges. He said Meta found a way to finance the development in pieces while still completing the project "cohesively and on schedule."

Project financing included subsidized loans from the city of Roseville, federal tax credits to development investors and grants, according to the city.

Mandel said another challenge was completing the project in 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We are fortunate to have a nimble team that was able to pivot quickly to implement all protocols and keep construction moving forward," he said.

Fast Facts

Main Street Plaza

Details: A 65-unit affordable housing complex for families, veterans and people with special needs, at the gateway to Historic Old Town Roseville.

Completed: December 2020

Cost: \$32 million

Developer: Meta Housing Corp.

Contractor: Creekside Commercial Builders Inc.

Architect: Mogavero Architects

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