



by Barbara Cutsinger
Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership

Lifestyle to Workstyle Bay Area's a Shore Thing



Proposed rendering of Endeavour Parkside in Pasadena.

Waterfront Style

Quick! Name the most exciting and fastest growing region of Houston for office, residential, and waterfront lifestyle. It's Bay Area Houston, of course. The facts for living here stack up like poker chips.



El Lago Marina condominium project at 4321 NASA Parkway.



Planned in Nassau Bay:
The Launch at NASA , 175 units.

A primary or secondary home on the water, plus having the convenience of being next to a major metropolitan city, is an unbeatable combination. Waterfront living on the East or West Coast is far more expensive than the Gulf Coast – a great investment. The advantages that high-rise condominiums provide - low maintenance and a beautiful view - will be enjoyed by an array of buyers like young professionals, baby boomers and empty-nesters alike.

And, once the NASA Bypass is completed in 2008, residents along NASA Parkway will be able to reach the Gulf Freeway quickly and head for the destination of their choice.

But, when you own a home like one of these, why leave at all?

Along the Parkway

From the Bay Area's target industries of aerospace, biotech and specialty chemicals, the region's well-educated professionals are looking to buy into a lifestyle;



Under construction in Webster: Coral Bay Condominiums, a mid-rise structure of 195 units.

not just another subdivision. It's fortunate that all the cities represented by Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership – Dickinson, Friendswood, Houston, Kemah, La Porte, League City, Pasadena, Nassau Bay, Seabrook and Webster – have creeks, lakes or the bay as waterfront amenities.

Travelers going east on NASA Parkway from the Gulf Freeway will go through five cities – Webster, Nassau Bay, Pasadena, El Lago and Seabrook. You'll experience a 'small-town' feel along the water's edge in Bay Area Houston, plus the excitement of having NASA Johnson Space Center in your backyard.

Smaller communities see the value in high-density projects; they're a fresh income source for a built-out city, adding additional tax revenue.

Rising Towers

The 17-floor Marriott Apollo will be built on a 4.5-acre tract in the 2300 block of NASA Parkway in Seabrook. The 225-room tower will be anchored by a first-floor "launch pad," nine floors for a full-service hotel and the remaining eight as privately-owned condominiums. Since the Apollo program ended in 1972, 72 condominiums will be built in tribute.

Carlos Buchanan, CEO of Buchanan Ventures said, when the project started, they were considering a boutique hotel, condominiums or both. "After PKF Consulting completed their study, it was clear that the market would bear a full-service hotel and luxury condominiums, taking advantage of the beautiful view of Clear Lake."

N Sky Living, aka Endeavour Partners (Robin Parsley, Carlo Marzano, Steve Hartstein and Roy Hockenberry), have begun the first high-rise in the area. Located in Pasadena on Clear Lake, the building will soar 30 stories.

EndeavourClearLake will use tunnel-form technology, a construction method in which concrete is poured

into two half-tunnel forms that together form the walls and ceiling of a room. Also included is Solarscreen Low-E glass and a one-inch overall insulating glass providing ultraviolet protection with at least a 120-mph blow-out feature.

The 80-unit tower is slated for completion by summer 2007. As of mid-April, 31 units are still available from \$400's to \$1.95 million. All four penthouses have been sold - three to residents in the Clear Lake area.

The \$3-million sales center, with a mock-up of an actual two-bedroom unit, is one mile down the road from the construction site.

Recently, the Endeavour partnership teamed up with Sun Resorts International, Inc. and Parsley Family LP to redevelop Parkside Marina. Endeavour Parkside will be a \$35-million project with 34 stories of residential condominiums.

On NASA Parkway, adjacent to Clear Lake Park in Pasadena, the 125-unit tower will feature six floor plans

ranging from 750 to 3,000 square-feet.

Garson Silvers owns two tracts of land in El Lago that he would like to develop as towers in the sky. His view is that vertical neighborhoods (high-density structures) are less invasive on the environment than a standard subdivision would be.

Silvers said that a well-built, class-A condominium, will survive a storm surge and can withstand the fury of Mother Nature. Empty nesters can travel and know their possessions are safe during their absence.

First to start are 54 units at 4011 NASA Parkway; a more than \$20-million project by Hamilton / Silvers Development. Currently in the design process, construction could begin within six to nine months.

The Class - A tower will be environmentally friendly with national "green" standards, concrete walls and missile-proof glass, a standard for flying objects used in Dade County, Florida.

Silvers said the most important factor in this project was the engineering. The exterior "skin" is the last item to be decided. Unit size starts at 1,800 square feet with super-sized 250-square-foot balconies equipped with kitchen amenities. The first level may include a restaurant or retail, while the next three levels are for parking and the fourth for common amenities. Residential living starts on the fifth floor.

Silvers bought the El Lago Marina, 4321 NASA Parkway, some time ago; he hopes to build another condominium in the future. The structure would be in the 20-story, \$70 – 100 million range. Significant infrastructure will be required for this project.

Mark Smith, Aqua-Land Development, has an eye for the sky also. Spencer Partnership Architects have drawn up the Launch at NASA, a 175-unit structure, at 3002 NASA Parkway. Next to Nassau Bay's Hilton-Houston-NASA-Clear Lake, the 21-25 story tower will feature 1,000 to 2,500 square feet condominiums from

the \$300's. Smith plans a 175-boat-slip marina, an opportunity for every resident to dock their boat. Best of all, the marina's location will be shielded from the hot afternoon sun. Talks are in progress with interested restaurateurs at this site.

Lester & Associates, LLC, has a \$40-million mid-rise project under construction on Egret Bay Boulevard in Webster. Coral Bay, a Tuscan-inspired condominium village of 195 units, will begin with the Mansion at Coral Bay, a European-styled clubhouse complete with a wine cellar and a full catering kitchen. Eight floor plans are offered ranging from 1,010-2,724 square feet, \$190's to \$500's, featuring two-story loft designs, two and three bedrooms. A private marina will give residents easy access to Clear Lake, Galveston Bay and the Gulf. Lush tropical and traditional landscaped gardens plus authentic Tuscan architectural features will benchmark this community.

What's next?

What else is on the horizon? Seabrook's Mayor, Robin Riley, is excited about two more projects in the works. The first is a \$50-million mid-rise; a six-story, 99-unit project in the South Seabrook Marine District near "the Point" located close to the SH 146 bridge. Then, at the Seabrook Shipyard, two 20-story towers will be rising soon.

What a view this will be – Galveston Bay on the east and Clear Lake on the west. Anticipated groundbreaking for both potential projects is within a year.

As Riley said, with the top-notch medical facilities we have in our own backyard, there won't be a reason to leave the area.

Few would bet against him or the lifestyle in Bay Area Houston.

Barbara Cutsinger joined Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership's marketing department in 2003. She is responsible for developing, managing and implementing a program to retain, expand and recruit jobs and industry to the Bay Area region. Barbara is also publisher of the organization's e-newsletter, the Business Development Update. Barbara can be reached via email at barbara@bayareahouston.com.