

A VILLAGE APPROACH FOR AGING IN PLACE

Not-for-profit owner and operator Front Porch brings a new concept to the continuing care retirement community (CCRC) market with Walnut Village.

By Kristen Eichenmuller



▲ Consisting of 156 private residences featuring universal design, Walnut Village is a new continuing care retirement community (CCRC) from Front Porch.

Just blocks from “the happiest place on earth,” Walnut Village gives residents 62-years-of-age or older local access to the Anaheim, Calif. area. With extensive research for the design and development of this new community concept in senior retirement playing a major role, not-for-profit builder Front Porch utilized a unique village approach to emphasize community and to create convenience for residents to age in place.

With fresh and vibrant colors inspired from the Southern California area, the architects designed the apartment homes to look like individual row houses and designed the continuing care retirement community (CCRC) around a “central square,” including Mosaics Bistro, The Red Chair Lounge, The Book Nook, Clay’s art studio and much more. Residents can also enjoy the outdoor fireplaces or use the state-of-the-art gym or pool.

“At Front Porch, we like to say that each community is as unique as the individuals who live in them,” expresses Lee Ratta, senior vice president of organizational advancement group for Front Porch. The builder launched the plan for the new CCRC in 2004, opened its doors in October 2009, and received full certificate of authority from the California Department of Social Services early in 2010.



► The design of the community centers around a “central square,” where residents ages 62 and older can take advantage of outdoor and indoor amenities and entertaining spaces.



► Based on research, focus groups, and expressed interest from future residents, Front Porch added a piano bar to the Red Chair Lounge, a popular gathering spot with poker tables.





According to Ratta, the CCRC functions like an active adult community with assisted living delivered to a residence as needed. In addition, Walnut Village features the Summer House Memory Support Neighborhood and a skilled nursing and rehabilitation center on site. “At other retirement communities, residents move to an assisted living wing or program area. This is a very desirable aspect of Village life,” remarks Ratta. “Our residents have the freedom to enjoy life knowing that they will be fully supported in their quest for well-being in all its aspects, and their need for assistance can be accommodated in their residence.”

Walnut Village offers “continuing care contracts,” which provides access to services for the rest of a resident’s life — or the life of the surviving spouse — or until the resident chooses to leave the community, with 90 percent repayable options available. Entrance fees range from \$209,000 to the low \$700,000s for the 156 private residences, with monthly fees ranging from about \$2800 to \$6200, which includes costs of dining, housekeeping, maintenance, amenities, most utilities, programs offered, transportation, and a 24 / 7 available staff for care. Over 42 different floor plans are offered for the one- and two-bedroom units and three-bedroom cottages.

▲ El Capitan is a game room where residents can enjoy playing games like bridge, chess, or scrabble. They can also enjoy the connected Book Nook, a library next door.



▲ Residents can enjoy fresh California cuisine in The Grove or can reserve party space at San Andreas Vault, the private dining room located off the village square.

► Residents can swim laps or engage in water aerobics in the salt water Masters pool, which has shallow stairs and a Hoyer lift for those needing extra assistance.

The \$120 million project, which is currently in active fill up, was financed with a \$110 million public tax-exempt bond offering, executed in June 2007, and an equity contribution from Front Porch. “Because of Front Porch’s excellent reputation and stable BBB credit rating, the bonds sold out within minutes of going to market and are held by institutional investors who manage municipal bond funds,” says Mary Miller, chief financial officer for Front Porch.

“Best Continuing Care Retirement Community” isn’t the only accolade to its name. In 2010, Walnut Village design and marketing was recognized by NAHB’s 50+ Council, SAGE, Environments for Aging, The Nationals, and Mature Market Media. “It is our hope that we have built a community that will fulfill the retirement dreams of many generations to come,” responds Ratta.

As for the company’s 2010 plans, Front Porch has a couple of projects being considered, as well



as one in the pre-planning stages. “Front Porch Development Company complements the Front Porch brand and believes in the importance of developing communities that are economically sound, environmentally responsible, and supportive of community spirit,” says Bill Jennings, president of Front Porch Development Company. **50+**

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