

Here's the latest on Avenir, Gardens' sprawling new development out west



The future site of a Toll Brothers neighborhood inside the Avenir development is marked with a sign. [RICHARD GRAULICH/palmbeachpost.com]

By Jodie Wagner



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Construction is underway on a portion of the 4,763-acre development on western Northlake Boulevard.

PALM BEACH GARDENS -- Every time Rosa Schechter drives through the massive [Avenir](#) development on the western edge of the city, she notices something new.

A covered rest stop has been erected. Trees have been planted. Land is being cleared.

Construction finally is underway on the 4,763-acre development, more than seven years after Avenir Holdings closed on the former Vavrus Ranch property off Northlake Boulevard.

"I can't tell you how excited I am," said Schechter, Avenir Holdings principal. "Every time I come out here and I see a bench, I'm like 'Oh, my gosh.' For us, it's been a long time."

When complete in approximately 10-15 years, Avenir will include 3,900 homes, roughly 2 million square feet of office space, 400,000 square feet of commercial space and 200,000 square feet of medical office space.

Plans also call for 300 hotel rooms, two Crystal Lagoons, a high-end golf course, 115 acres for a park/civic area, 15 acres for a City Hall annex, 20 acres for agriculture and 2,407 acres for conservation.

For now, though, work is underway on the first phase of development.

That phase will include the construction of two main entrance features; residential communities on the eastern portion of the property; a town center with a Crystal Lagoon and private beach club; a clubhouse; and golf cart and walking paths.

The main entrance features will be completed first, Schechter said. The twin, 35-foot structures should be finished within the next several months.

Composed of hand-cut oolite stone, it will include built-in benches beneath trellises so visitors can sit and enjoy the views.

“The entrance features, to me, are the coolest things in the community,” Schechter said. “It’ll be interactive.”

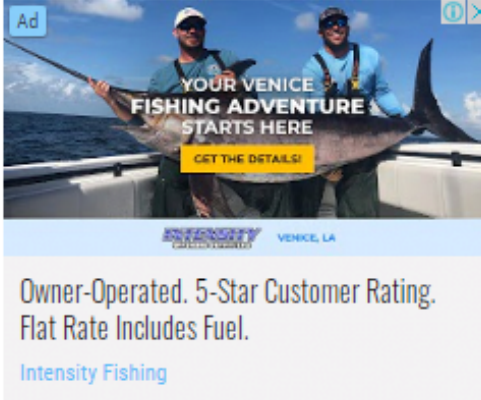
Work also has started on building 1,600 housing units on the four easternmost parcels of land within Avenir.

Builders Toll Brothers, Kenco Communities, DiVosta and K. Hovnanian Homes have received site plan approval for the lots, and have cleared much of the land.

Some homes might be complete by the end of the year, Schechter said.

The first phase of the 84-acre town center district is awaiting site plan approval from the city, Schechter said.

Planned as a gathering area for residents and visitors, the town center will be surrounded by a 7.5-acre Crystal Lagoon, townhouses, recreation and commercial development.



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Separate site plans have been submitted to the city for the Crystal Lagoon and the townhouses surrounding it.

The Crystal Lagoon is a man-made, resort-style beach bordered by clear water where people also can practice water sports.

The swimming portion of the lagoon will be private, Schechter said, but visitors will be able to shop and dine in a boardwalk area around it.

A second, larger Crystal Lagoon will be built on the northwestern side of the development.

"The town center area is a very exciting piece of the puzzle for us, because it's the doorway to the project, to the commercial piece of the project," Schechter said. "We're excited about the design features, especially bringing the lagoon to this part of Palm Beach County."

Further along in the development process is a 13,000-square-foot clubhouse that will feature tennis courts, pickleball courts, other facilities and a dog park.

The facility has been platted and approved, Schechter said, and construction could begin in a few months.

There is no date for the completion of Avenir's first phase, Schechter said. The project's second and third phases, which will include development of the site's northern and western lots, are in the planning stages.

"This has been a long time coming, but it's still years away from really being a living, breathing community," Schechter said.

For information on Avenir, visit <https://bit.ly/37Hc0xZ>.

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