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Grand opening set for Westgate Apartments

By Kevin Smith, Staff Writer

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A grand opening was held Wednesday, May 19, 2010, for Westgate Apartments in Pasadena, a 480-unit community, developed by the Sares-Regis Group. The complex will include apartment homes, townhomes, flats and lofts with mezzanine space. (Courtesy Photo)

PASADENA - In today's struggling housing market, it's rare to see a new apartment complex come on line.

And it's rarer still when that complex is transit-oriented, smoke-free and loaded with "green" features.

Westgate Apartments in Pasadena can lay claim to all three. And people who want to see the development will get their chance on Wednesday when a grand opening is held for the 480-unit

community, developed by the Sares-Regis Group.

Westgate is located at 231 S. De Lacey Ave. in Pasadena's historic district just two blocks from the Del Mar Station of the Metro Gold Line. The complex offers modern and spacious apartments with designer finishes amid a climate of upscale community amenities.

Valued at more than \$100 million, the complex includes an expansive clubhouse, a resort-style pool and spa, five themed courtyards and a fitness center.

And plenty of variety.

Westgate incorporates three styles of apartment homes - townhomes, flats and lofts with mezzanine space, with 30 floor plans ranging from studio apartments to two-bedroom townhomes as large as 1,464 square feet.

"It consists of nine buildings," said Nate Carlson, development manager for the project. "The first one opened in November of 2009 and the fourth building opened this week. All of the units will be completed in February of 2011."

Nearly 200 apartments have been leased and 157 are occupied, according to Sares-Regis.

Mike Winter,

senior vice president of Sares-Regis' multifamily development division, said residents at Westgate are attracted by the property's greenness as well a

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s its easy access to transportation corridors, key job centers, shopping, dining and entertainment.

"It adds up to create a textbook example for the new-era of modern urban planning and design," Winter said.

Westgate has a variety of green features, including 174 bicycle parking spaces clustered near elevator lobbies throughout the subterranean garage, two charging stations for electric vehicles, and preferred parking spaces for residents who take part in car-share and rideshare programs.

Sares-Regis is also in the process of partnering with Zipcar or similar car-share providers to set up its own car-share program for residents.

Westgate's no-smoking policy has proven to be one of the development's biggest selling points, and Jack Kyser, founding economist for the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp., can see why.

"You've got a lot of people out there with sensitive noses, like me," Kyser said. "When I get into an elevator in my building where someone has been smoking ... I can smell it."

Kyser said the recession prompted

developers to significantly scale back their activity.



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"It's been very tough in the homebuilding sector," he said. "We've seen somewhat of a recovery with single-family building permits, but the apartment market is somewhat saturated."

Carlson said Sares-Regis was able to incorporate the green features without boosting rental prices at Westgate.

"It's actually done the opposite," he said. "Most people's utility bills will be lower as long as they don't leave their windows open and turn the AC on."

Irvine-based Sares-Regis Group is one of the leading developers and managers of commercial and residential real estate in the western United States.

kevin.smith@sgvn.com

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