

California Construction

A Woman's Touch Three Women Oversee Fontana Library Construction



Plus:
Elk Grove School Project
CSU Channel Islands Library
San Francisco's
High-Rise Green Project

From left, Anet Willingham, Kate Diamond and Joanna Heinrich at the job site

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Lessons Learned

A combination high and middle school project in Elk Grove reuses design

By Robert Carlsen



Construction crews work on one of the 27 buildings planned for the campus (photos courtesy of Lathrop Construction).

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The Elk Grove Unified School District is using designs from an earlier school project to build its new \$80 million Cosumnes Oaks High School/Elizabeth Pinkerton Middle School. Expected to open in fall 2008, the two-school campus is being built by general contractor Lathrop Construction with Stafford King Wiese serving as the architect.

Though housing starts have stalled recently, Elk Grove continues to be one of the fastest growing cities in the country, and the pace of school construction belies that growth.

A two-school project—numbers 60 and 61 on the Elk Grove Unified School District campus roster—is now underway in the southern Laguna Ridge region, which is expected to house tens of thousands of new residents in the coming years.

The district, currently the home to 60,000 students, has opened 23 schools in the past 10 years and plans to build 19 new schools to meet a projected enrollment of 80,000 students by the year 2010.

With the cost of building schools continuing to rise, driven by soaring land prices and construction expenses, the school district is using a design tactic that is saving it major dollars.

The \$80 million, 209,000-sq.-ft. Cosumnes Oaks High School/Elizabeth Pinkerton Middle School project design is borrowing from original designs made four years ago with the Franklin High School/Toby Johnson Middle School project.

And the same team that last year completed the Pleasant Grove High School/Katherine Albani Middle School project—general contractor Lathrop Construction of Benicia >>

and architect Stafford King Wiese of Sacramento—have worked out just about all the kinks in this new project.

“The district is saving lots of money by reusing the design,” said Carmine Faro, construction manager for Stafford King Wiese. “The classroom buildings are pretty much the same, as is the configuration of the campuses. Maybe some of the roofs are different.

“One of the major design challenges is that the site has a collection of old oaks trees that are staying. We had to work around those.”

Faro and Lee Leavelle, senior construction manager for the school district, both agreed that the lessons learned in last year’s project work in their favor.

“Everything is on schedule,” said Leavelle. “Lathrop is doing a bang up job, their second one for us. The lessons learned in the earlier project are paying off now. We’re very fortunate they won the bid.”

Dave Piper, project manager for Lathrop, confirmed that everything is on plan and on budget. At press time, he said more than half the buildings have been framed and infrastructure work is continuing. The project site was formerly farmland, so everything has to be installed—from sewer and water to utilities.

Cosumnes Oaks and Elizabeth Pinkerton is the district’s fourth version of the combined campus plan. “It’s one huge project,” said Faro. “Twenty-seven buildings in all, with separate classrooms and administrative offices, plus a stadium, track and soccer field. The two schools will share the library and performing arts center.”

The two schools will be separated by fences and gates.

The schools site is part of the Laguna Ridge area. Under the city’s Madeira Specific Plan, the 1,900 acres will eventually have 8,000 homes as well as a



The Cosumnes Oaks High School/Elizabeth Pinkerton Middle School is reusing a design for another middle/high school campus in the Elk Grove Unified School District.

civic center, office park, fire station, parks and retail. Currently, Sparks, Nev.-based Reynen & Bardis Development is doing infrastructure work on a couple of developments for Pulte Homes and Morrison Homes.

However, with home construction slowing down in Elk Grove, the school district put a halt to the Cosumnes Oaks/Elizabeth Pinkerton originally scheduled opening of August 2007 in order for the housing—and new residents’ children—to catch up. Only 400 homes are expected to open by next year. The new scheduled opening is fall 2008.

But the delay in opening is not affecting the building plans, according to Lathrop’s Piper. “We’re moving along and hoping to get much of the work done before the rains start.” <<

The Project Team

Owner: Elk Grove Unified School District

General Contractor: Lathrop Construction

Architect: Stafford King Wiese

Major subcontractors: Bay Cities Paving and Grading (earthwork, utilities, paving), Concrete Services, Taylor Structures (wood framing for the high school), McClone Construction (wood framing for the middle school), Construction Specialties (plaster and gypboard), Performance Contracting Inc. (acoustical ceilings) and Protech General Contracting Services (erosion control/storm water pollution prevention)