



INNOVATION OFFICE PARK: RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE

Just as companies placed a priority on healthy work environments, Innovation Office Park opened as the first open-air office village designed for wellness. Its 28 creative loft-style buildings, connected by a central pedestrian pathline, attract innovators like independent game studio Frost Giant. “The sunshine pours through one end of the building with the breeze blowing in,” the company says. “It allows us to work with one another so much easier.”

BUSINESS » PAGE 4

SPECIAL INSERT THE VALUE OF IRVINE’S VILLAGES

Irvine’s neighborly feel is by design. More than 50 years ago, Irvine’s Master Plan conceived of “a city of villages” where residents would be connected to each other and the environment by schools, shops and parks, all close to home. “The villages make Irvine feel like a small town within a city of 310,000 people,” Northwood Village resident Stephen Kimbrell says.



Village celebration

TIMELINE

See what year each of Irvine’s 24 villages opened, from University Park in 1966 to Eastwood in 2016.



WHY I LOVE MY VILLAGE

Residents describe what they love about their village. Says one dad: “I get to bike to work whenever I want.”

MEET THE MASTER PLANNERS

Peter Walker, who helped master-plan University Park and Woodbridge, later helped design New York City’s 9/11 memorial.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Game changer in education

As the Irvine Public Schools Foundation celebrates its 25th anniversary, CEO and President Neda Eaton talks about its hundreds of after-school and summer programs, its innovation grants that helped students launch two satellites and how IPSF rose to be California’s No. 1 educational foundation. PHILANTHROPY » PAGE 15



A guide to the great outdoors

Brian Hughes, who trains docents for the Irvine Ranch Conservancy, says one of his favorite hikes on The Irvine Ranch is Baker Canyon. It’s one of the few places you’ll see both of Southern California’s two main habitats: coastal sage scrub and chaparral. See his tips for your next hike. OPEN SPACE » PAGE 19



Entrepreneur chef does it all

Next time you dine at Goo-Yi 9.2 Korean barbecue restaurant in Northpark Plaza, you may recognize the man serving you dinner. Chef/owner Andrew Kim leads an international tax-consulting firm, directs OC’s Korean American Federation and owns five popular OC restaurants – and still serves diners when he gets the chance. DINING » PAGE 5

IRVINE STANDARD PAID U.S. POSTAGE ECRWSS PRSRT STD

AROUND TOWN

HOUSING

New homes open for first-time buyers



Several families toured their new homes at the grand opening of Sage Park, a neighborhood of 68 affordable townhomes for first-time homebuyers in Portola Springs.

The new two-, three- and four-bedroom homes, starting in the low-\$400,000s, attracted over 6,000 interested buyers, who then were selected by lottery.

“Utter joy,” is how one couple described their feelings while walking through their new home.

Built by the Irvine Community Land Trust on land donated by Irvine Company, Sage Park will include a park, community pool and recreation center.

The community will serve essential workers such as nurses, teachers and recent graduates.

“We’re proud we can offer them homeownership for the first time and help them thrive in Irvine,” says Mark Asturias, who runs the nonprofit trust.

RECREATION

New pedestrian bridge will extend Venta Spur Trail

The city has begun building a \$6.8 million bike and pedestrian bridge over the 133 toll road and Marshburn Channel that will extend the Venta Spur Trail across the city, from Northpark to the Great Park. The bridge will connect what is now considered the end of Venta Spur Trail, at the intersection of Sable and Emberglow in Woodbury East, with a new trail along Benchmark in Beacon Park. The bridge is scheduled to open next winter.

ENRICHMENT

Education expert to helm Pretend City

Pretend City Children’s Museum has hired educational equity expert Ellen Pais as the new executive director.

Pais was recently the CEO of the Los Angeles Education Partnership, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving educational equity by offering programs such as building school readiness in children age 5 and younger.

As Pretend City’s executive direc-



AN IRVINE MOMENT The snow-capped San Gabriel Mountains loom in the distance as a jogger runs along a trail on French Hill in Irvine in early January. Several trails crisscross the scenic hill, which also features a popular lookout point that the city recently named Sunset Point. The hill can be accessed from Chaparral Park in Turtle Rock Village.

tor, Pais will develop and maintain community and business relationships while working in tandem with the board of directors to provide direction for the children’s museum.

Pretend City, which opened in 2009, is a kid-sized “city” that lets children play different roles and learn how a community works.

To learn more about Pretend City, visit pretendcity.org.

MUSIC

Irvine siblings perform at Carnegie Hall



Irvine siblings Sarah and Samuel Parigela recently performed at the prestigious Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Sarah, 17, played a violin piece by Polish composer Henryk Wieniawski, with Samuel, 12, playing the piano.

Sarah has performed as a concertmaster and principal at various concert halls, including a nationally televised performance for the 2019

ESPys at the Microsoft Theater.

She also founded a music charity with a friend to teach classical music to underprivileged children in Orange County and donate instruments to underfunded music programs.

The sister and brother regularly perform at homeless shelters and rescue missions. Both attend a music conservatory school in Orange County.

HIGHER EDUCATION

\$44 million project at Irvine Valley College

Irvine Valley College has broken ground on its long-envisioned \$44 million Arts Village that will feature rehearsal rooms, dance studios and a gallery.

The complex will house the School of the Arts in one main area of campus, while allowing room for future expansion. It will consist of three new buildings totaling 62,471 gross square footage and a quad area, which will feature native plants, artistic displays and sculptures.

The village will be home to studio arts, art history, music, digital media art, interactive media arts, dance, individual music practice rooms, rehearsal rooms, two dance studios, painting studios, digital and interactive media, printmaking,

ceramics, sculpture, assembly space and a gallery.

The complex is scheduled to open in summer 2023, directly southwest of the Performing Arts Center and next to Parking Lot 6.

INNOVATION

Irvine EV startup unveils its latest design concepts



Alpha Motor Corp., an Irvine-based electric vehicle startup, has unveiled the concepts of its fifth design, receiving praise from industry experts for its retro-inspired aesthetics.

Alpha’s Saga Estate is an electric crossover, which offers a more comfortable ride and better fuel economy compared to truck-based sport utility vehicles.

Saga Estate will have an estimated front and rear combined cargo volume of 35 cubic feet. The vehicle will be equipped with a 450-volt dual motor, all-wheel-drive system powered by an 85-kilowatt-hour lithium-ion battery pack for an estimated range of 300 miles.

CONTACT US

Share story ideas of special people or places in Irvine.

editor@IrvineStandard.com



She'll light up the Lantern Festival

Irvine's South Coast Chinese Orchestra leads community in celebrating the Year of the Tiger

BY LORI BASHEDA

Lunar New Year festivities have just begun, but be sure to save the date for the Lantern Festival, which marks the final day of the two-week celebration.

The lantern lighting tradition, which can be traced back 2,000 years, is a way for people to “let go of the burdens of their old selves and express their best wishes for both themselves and their families for the future.”

This year, the South Coast Chinese Cultural Center in Irvine is partnering with the Pacific Symphony to host a family-friendly Lantern Festival on Feb. 26. Floating lanterns will transform the lobby of the Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Costa Mesa. There will be food, art, dance and music.

Emily Chien is among the performers. The Irvine mother will be playing with the South Coast Chinese Orchestra.

Chien, 53, came to America from Taiwan when she was 13. She raised her two sons in the Oak Creek neighborhood.

It wasn't until her dad died in 2015 that she decided it was time to do some of the things she always wanted to do but kept putting off – like playing the cello.

So she began taking cello classes at the South Coast Chinese Cultural

Center in Irvine.

Chien is now a member of the center's South Coast Chinese Orchestra, whose mission is “to present a vivid and contemporary aspect” of traditional Chinese music. She plays the cello as well as the guzheng, a Chinese plucking instrument similar to the zither.

“What I like most about the orchestra is that we have some people who have been playing forever, and then people like me who have been playing for five years,” Chien says.

In addition to varying skill levels, members' ages are all over the map, from elementary school kids to seniors in their 70s.

“We are like a big family,” Chien says. “We're not perfect, but we just enjoy playing music together.”

The orchestra has been practicing for the Lantern Festival every Wednesday night at the center's Irvine campus. Members will perform a half-dozen songs, ranging from traditional Chinese to a piece from “Game of Thrones.”

The conductor of the South Coast Chinese Orchestra is He Bin, who has recorded music for both Disneyland and Shanghai Disneyland, as well as video games and movies.

Tickets for the Lantern Festival are free but must be reserved. Visit: pacificsymphony.org/tickets for information.



DANCE

BALLET MEETS CIRCUS AT BARCLAY THEATRE

See the bodies of 10 fearless acrobats hurl, twist and collide as the Australian-based performance troupe, Circa, takes the stage this month at Irvine Barclay Theatre.

Seen by over 1 million people in 39 countries, Circa is at the forefront of contemporary circus. Its

diverse range of thrilling creations “redraw the limits to which circus can aspire,” the Australian newspaper The Age described.

Igor Stravinsky's “The Rite of Spring” has inspired dances and ballets for over 100 years, but never circus – until now. In this

first-ever circus setting of “The Rite of Spring,” Circa weaves together powerful acrobatics with poetic tenderness and raw emotion – penetrating the senses and stirring the soul.

For more information about “Sacre” by Circa, visit thebarclay.org.

BUSINESS

OPEN FOR INNOVATION

The first open-air office village is attracting top talent in Irvine

BY TOM BERG

Tim Morten, CEO and project director of Frost Giant Studios, needed a headquarters for his growing team of e-sport game designers, programmers and innovators.



Tim Morten

His criteria: creativity, collaboration, Irvine.

“We really wanted to find a space that matched the creative sensibilities we have as a team,” Morten says.

He landed at Innovation Office Park, an open-air office village.

The company is among the first to occupy the initial phase of the tree-studded campus, visible from I-5 at Sand Canyon Avenue. Amenities include electric roll-up doors, an open-air cafe, outdoor workspaces and an indoor/outdoor fitness center.

Frost Giant moved in this past year, and Morten’s vision of motivating employees with a creative, collaborative space is already paying dividends.

“We’ve got these amazing roll-up doors,” Cara LaForge, the firm’s business operations lead, says. “The sunshine pours through one end of the building with the breeze blowing in. It allows us to work with one another so much easier.”

The burgeoning company is now one of about 400 tech firms in the business community known as the Irvine Spectrum District. They’re part of a tech boom happening across Irvine, drawn especially to tech-centered office campuses, like Innovation Office Park.

“We’ve got these amazing roll-up doors. The sunshine pours through one end of the building with the breeze blowing in. It allows us to work with one another so much easier.” – Cara LaForge, Frost Giant

According to Indeed.com, more than half of Irvine’s open tech jobs pay over \$100,000 in sectors like medical technology, cybersecurity, gaming, artificial intelligence and electric vehicles.

National real estate giant CBRE ranks Irvine and the surrounding region as the fastest-growing tech-jobs market in North America, faster than perennial stalwarts like Silicon Valley and Austin, Texas.



Offices and amenities at Innovation Office Park open up to the outside to create the first open-air office village.

AN OFFICE CAMPUS WITH 2,600 TREES

About 2,600 trees will be planted at Innovation Office Park when it’s complete, and each has a unique story.

Look for the old-growth ancient olive trees, named so because they come from the oldest groves in California. Many were planted more than 100 years ago, with some planted not long after Irvine Company was founded in 1864. These trees wear their age remarkably well, with graceful gnarls twisting upward to a

sprawling green-gray canopy. Despite their age, they still have about another 100 years of life remaining.

Standing tall above the buildings are the Aleppo pines. While younger than the olives, their age is also important. These newly planted trees are about 25 years old now, far more mature than the typical trees planted in other cities. Known for their teardrop canopy, the Aleppo pines hail from the Mediterranean climes of south-

ern France, Greece and Middle Eastern countries.



“There’s a gravitational pull for companies to move here,” Colin Yasukochi, executive director of CBRE’s Tech Insights Center, says. “Large tech firms, in particular, are locating here to tap into recent graduates

who are coming out of UC Irvine or other tech-centered universities.”

For leasing information about Innovation Office Park, visit irvinecompanyoffice.com.

Hyundai to develop flying taxis in Irvine

Hyundai Motor Group plans to develop a four- to five-passenger flying taxi, ready for service in 2028, at its new headquarters in Irvine, according to the Orange County Business Journal.

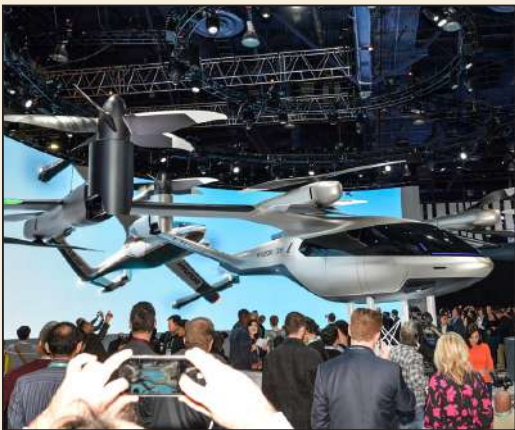
The auto giant has leased a 105,600-square-foot building in Irvine Spectrum District as the engineering headquarters for its newly formed Supernal division, which will build the electric-powered vertical takeoff-and-landing vehicle, known as an eVTOL.

“We’re working on technology at Supernal to power an entirely new dimension of mobility,” Ben Diachun, the company’s chief technology officer, told the Business Journal.

Regulatory certification for the vehicles could come as soon as 2024. Supernal is in the early stages of hiring an expected workforce of 300 to occupy an entire building at Irvine Company’s Discovery Park.

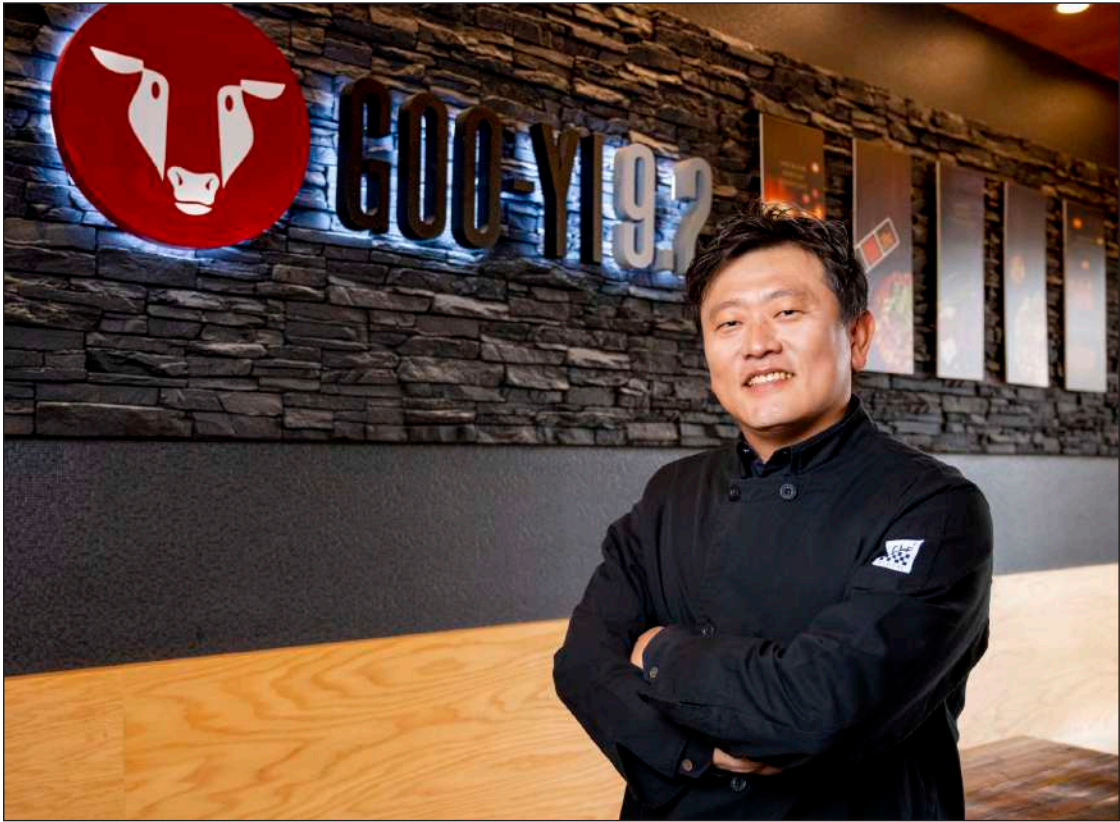
“Tech talent is critical to making advanced air mobility a reality – and that makes Irvine a great place for our engineering headquarters,” Diachun told the Business Journal.

Supernal forecasts a 24-minute trip from Anaheim to downtown Los Angeles. Pricing is expected to run about the same as a ride in luxury car service Uber Black. Other electric aircraft will be used for delivery service.



A prototype of Hyundai’s S-A1 air taxi at last year’s Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

DINING



Goo-Yi 9.2 owner Andrew Kim is an international executive and community leader who runs five OC restaurants.

Chef, executive and community leader has the hottest Korean BBQ in town

BY BENJAMIN EPSTEIN

Servers at Goo-Yi 9.2 set up elegant grills and cook all items at your table, which partly accounts for the restaurant’s unusual name.

Grill in Korean is goo-yi; the number 9.2 is also pronounced goo-yi. So, in Korean, the name is goo-yi goo-yi, which translates to “grill grill” or “barbecue barbecue.”

Since its opening at Northpark Plaza in 2020, Goo-Yi 9.2 has quietly taken its place among the county’s elevated Korean barbecue experiences.

The prime boneless short rib is a top-seller, and the prized prime rib-eye cap is limited to five orders per day. The beef tartare can easily feed four, and the shareable steamed-egg starter is a must.

Lunch combos include a spicy pork-belly bowl with kimchi stew and banchan sides. Adventurous eaters might enjoy cheese tripe fried rice or the three-cut beef-intestine combo; four of those cuts are available a la carte.

Owner Andrew Kim’s restaurant portfolio also includes highly regarded Korean pancake destination Gob Chang in Buena Park and three Irvine locations of the fast-growing Korean chain bb.q Chicken – at Quail Hill and Cypress Village shopping centers and the same center as Goo-Yi 9.2.

Marble, a Korean steakhouse that Kim describes as “very high-end,” is scheduled to open at Woodbury Town Center later this year.

Amazingly, Kim also heads up a tax-consulting firm, SongHyun, which has 40 locations in the U.S. and Korea. He lives in Irvine with his wife and two young sons.

“My company is a big one,” Kim acknowledges. “I work there from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. After that, I am in the restaurant.”

When he’s in the restaurant, he cooks. In fact, all of the recipes at Goo-Yi 9.2 are Kim’s.

When he’s not cooking, Kim says, “I serve.”

The local Korean community is very familiar with Kim; in fact, he is director of the Korean American Federation of Orange County and vice chairman of the county’s multicultural Arirang Festival.

“They know about me, what I’m doing. They know when I’m opening my next restaurant,” he says. “When I serve the table, they feel special. It makes me feel good, too.”



The prized prime rib-eye cap, shown here with banchan sides, is limited to five orders per day.



There’s plenty of patio seating to enjoy Goo-Yi 9.2’s elevated Korean barbecue in Northpark Plaza.

FOR YOUR VALENTINE

Our top three picks for a romantic dinner this Valentine’s Day.



HABANA

Irvine Spectrum Center

Lush Habana presents its pan-Latin menu amid sultry palazzo-like surroundings with vintage wrought-iron tables and a 1-ton chandelier. Valentine’s specials, served Feb. 10-14, include a pan-roasted tiger-prawns-and-calamari black risotto, a wagyu rib-eye “de corazon” for two, a grilled Caribbean lobster tail and a heart-shaped red velvet cake for two. Kick-start the evening with a Passion de Cuba cocktail or Al Centro, Pa’ Dentro, served in a coconut.



AGORA CHURRASCARIA

Venture Park

Brazilian steakhouse Agora Churrascaria sets the stage for amor, offering Roederer Estate Brut Rosé to start and a procession of skewer-roasted meats sliced tableside to individual preference by servers in traditional gaucho attire. Sixteen cuts include the coveted picanha (top sirloin cap) and succulent corazon – chicken hearts, a Brazilian favorite; the fried-bananas side is a must. Share a soul-stirring flan and chocolate-covered strawberry to finish.



CHA CHA’S LATIN KITCHEN

The Market Place

Cha Cha’s Latin Kitchen presents its Valentine’s Day specials in a strikingly designed indoor-outdoor dining room accented with Latin tapestries. Choose among entrees such as lobster tacos with heirloom pico de gallo, guajillo-braised short rib quesadilla with jalapeño crema, and carne asada chimichurri. Spice up the evening with a blackberry-serrano daiquiri or mango-habanero margarita; conclude with the transporting tres leches cake.

– Benjamin Epstein

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is meant
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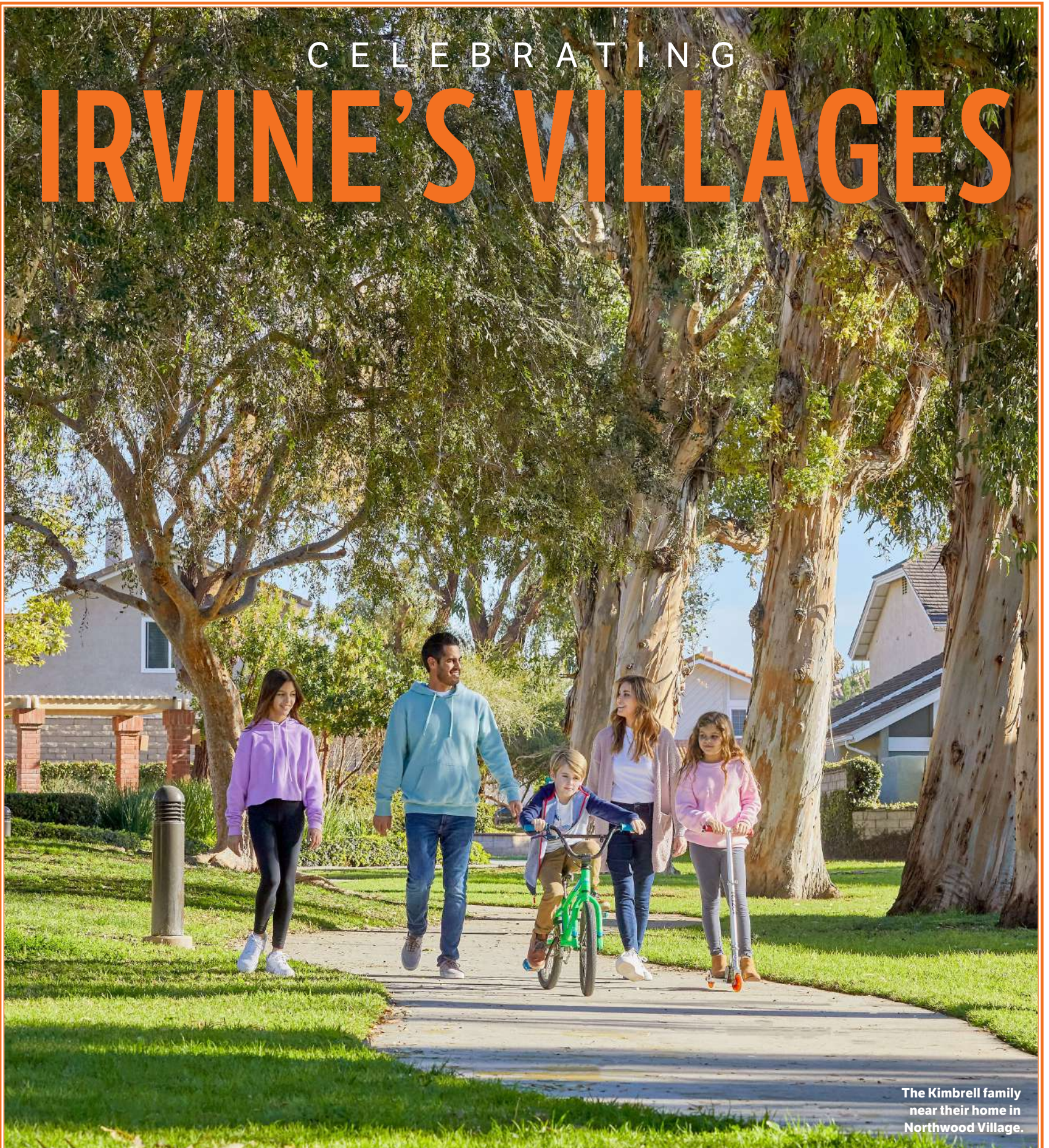
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CELEBRATING IRVINE'S VILLAGES



The Kimbrell family
near their home in
Northwood Village.

Community by Design

How Irvine's villages have created one of America's most livable cities

Ask Irvine residents where they live, and you'll often hear: "Turtle Rock" or "Oak Creek" or "Portola Springs." That's a testament to the Master Plan's vision to create a city of villages.

Each of Irvine's 24 self-contained communities – from University Park, built in 1966, to the latest, Orchard Hills – is valued for a simple reason. The smart design and distinct sense of place makes life easier and more sociable.

"The villages make Irvine feel like a small town within a city of 310,000 people," says Stephen Kimbrell, the lead pastor at Grace City Church.

Six years ago, Kimbrell and his wife and three children moved to Northwood Village from New Bern, North Carolina, (pop. 29,895). "After just a few months, we were blown away by how many people we knew who we'd see at the grocery store," he says. "Even coming from the South, I didn't see that kind of community back home."

That neighborly feel is a leading reason why a recent survey found nearly 90% of Irvine residents rate their quality of life as "excellent" or "good," versus just 1% who

are unsatisfied. The independent researcher that conducted the survey noted the positive numbers were "unprecedented" in the firm's decades of work in cities throughout the country.

The village design also has led to consistently strong property values. Irvine homes appreciate faster during good times and depreciate slower during more challenging periods than many comparable cities. Since 2010, Irvine's new-home values have increased over 40% more than the average new home

in Orange County, according to the market intelligence firm Zonda.

‘This is precious land’

From the start, Irvine Company officials appreciated their historic opportunity to create a brand-new city from scratch.

“This is precious land,” former Irvine Company President Raymond L. Watson once said. Watson and his colleagues determined they would pursue a master-planned vision, rather than subdivide land to other companies, and went to great lengths to figure out their approach.

from the war, were developing “New Towns” – rigorously planned small communities meant to ease congestion in major metropolises.

Both efforts were influenced by the “garden city movement” that had emerged in the United Kingdom in the early 1900s. Several European New Towns incorporated key elements of those early communities, including concentrically designed neighborhoods set off by greenbelts, abundant local parks and nearby opportunities to play and shop.

In 1965, Watson joined William Pereira, the architect overseeing the

“Even coming from the South, I didn’t see that kind of community back home.” – STEPHEN KIMBRELL, RESIDENT

Along the way, they consulted with sociologists and focus groups to gain insights into how people most wanted to live. Watson soon learned how important it is for people to feel part of a society. He began referring to his team as “master community builders.”

Roots in Europe’s ‘garden cities’

The early 1960s, when Irvine was still on the drawing board, was a thrilling time for urban developers all over the world. U.S. planners, in the midst of a budding environmental movement, were seeking creative alternatives to suburban sprawl and smog. Europeans, still rebuilding

Irvine Master Plan, along with chief planner Al Treviño Jr. on a two-week journey through New Towns in six European countries. Of note, future Irvine Company Chairman Donald Bren also participated in the tour.

Having studied the garden city movement at Harvard, Treviño says he already intended to incorporate several of their features. But he also envisioned departing from the model by including a variety of housing, such as affordable rental townhouses and apartments. Irvine’s new communities could thereby benefit from having more diverse types of residents – including essential workers such as police officers, teachers,



The design of Irvine villages was influenced by Europe’s “garden city movement,” which set off neighborhoods with greenbelts, parks and trees.

Through the decades
Master planning
Irvine’s 24 villages

1960s

1966 UNIVERSITY PARK
A village of firsts, University Park is home to Irvine’s first library, school and shopping center.



Home sales at University Park

1970s

1970 EL CAMINO REAL
1970 NORTHWOOD
1972 RANCHO SAN JOAQUÍN

1967 TURTLE ROCK
Irvine’s first hillside community offers a tranquil setting for families to relax and enjoy nature, with over 100 acres of parks, 30 miles of trails and dozens of playgrounds.



1980s



1975 WOODBRIDGE
Two central lakes and a lakeside shopping center make Woodbridge the most recognizable Irvine village.

and nurses – than was standard in U.S. suburbs.

It was around this time, according to Watson, that the team landed on a word for the new small communities they envisioned. “We started calling them villages,” Watson said.

Unique to Irvine: Schools at the heart of villages

Watson determined that Irvine’s small villages would differ from the European versions in another key manner. Whereas the New Towns were built around a central park and city offices, he proposed that Irvine’s villages be built around schools, which he understood as fulcrums of U.S. family life.

As Irvine students went on to set high performance standards, the new school district’s success attracted more high-achieving families, creating a virtuous cycle for anyone with an Irvine address.

Irvine becomes the ‘ultimate model’

More than half a century after Irvine planners flew to Europe to see what they could learn, community planners now journey to Irvine to learn of its unmatched success, notes urban expert Joel Kotkin, the author of several books, including “The Human City: Urbanism for the Rest of Us.”

“Planners around the world today look at Irvine and see it as the ultimate role model,” Kotkin says.

The reasons go beyond the hardy economic value of Irvine homes. Many Irvine residents say they trea-

Study: Villages make Irvine America’s safest city

As young cities grow and begin to reach maturity, they sometimes deal with issues like an increase in crime. Yet, the opposite has occurred in Irvine. It has become more safe.

Property crime is roughly one-third of what it was in the ‘90s. Violent crime has sunk to 15% of that of an average city.

For 16 consecutive years, Irvine has been ranked as the safest U.S. city of its size, with more than 35% less property

crime and more than 50% less violent crime than forecast for a city of its size.

What gives?

In a 57-page report, timed to commemorate Irvine’s golden anniversary last December, two UCI criminologists explore the mystery.

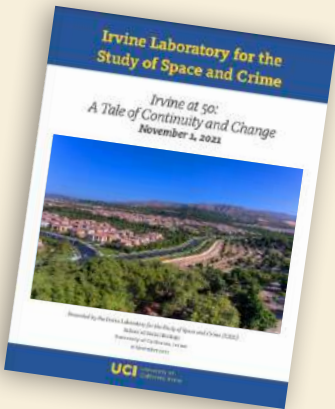
They point to several contributing factors, from a community-minded police force to how well the city is maintained. But one major crime-fighting strength appears to

stem from its master-planned village design.

The design, which encourages walkability and includes a central gathering place for each community, “creates more cohesion,” write the authors, John Hipp and Charis Kubrin, co-directors of UCI’s Irvine Laboratory for the Study of Space and Crime.

“Greater cohesion in neighborhoods increases the likelihood that residents will look out for one another, and

keep an eye on what is occurring in the neighborhood,” the authors note.



sure the local cohesiveness that has helped make Irvine the safest city of its size for the past 16 years, according to FBI data.

People meet up on local hiking trails and at pools and playgrounds. Besides that, an abundance of green space and the ability to walk or bike to

schools, shops and jobs – with some of the shortest commutes in the country – give residents an edge in staying healthy and fit.

“This is the lifestyle that 80% of Americans desire,” says Kotkin, who cites several new communities, including developments outside Houston, Dallas and Columbus, Ohio, that have tried to take pages from Irvine’s book. “It’s exceedingly clear that these kinds of developments are hugely popular with people,” he adds, “but I haven’t yet seen any of them that are as evolved as Irvine.”

More than half a century after Irvine planners flew to Europe to see what they could learn, community planners now journey to Irvine to learn of its unmatched success.

1987 WESTPARK

Westpark’s award-winning design introduced a new look to The Irvine Ranch: that of a Mediterranean village with coral-colored homes, terra cotta tiles and palm trees.



1997 WEST IRVINE

1998 OAK CREEK

1999 NORTHPARK

2001 NORTHPARK SQUARE

2003 QUAIL HILL

2003 TURTLE RIDGE

2006 PORTOLA SPRINGS

2009 WOODBURY EAST

2014 ORCHARD HILLS

Sitting atop the city, Orchard Hills was designed around working avocado orchards that sweep down from the Lomas de Santiago Hills.



1990s

2000s

2010s



1997 WALNUT

This family-oriented village retains its agricultural heritage with leafy parks, trails and open space, including Harvard Circle Park.



2001 SHADY CANYON

This secluded oasis of 400 custom-home sites is one of Orange County’s most exclusive communities.



2004 WOODBURY

Named “Best Master-Planned Community of the Year” in 2005, Woodbury was designed to reflect the look, feel and charm of small-town America.

2010 STONEGATE EAST

2011 LAGUNA ALTURA

2011 STONEGATE

2013 CYPRESS VILLAGE

2016 EASTWOOD

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

‘Every day there’s a new adventure to explore.’

Lori Stewart fell in love with Turtle Rock the moment she saw it three years ago. “I turned to my husband and said, ‘This is where I want to live.’” Why? All the green parks, trails and open space. Irvine villages are master-planned so that each resident lives within a few hundred steps of a local

park that leads to bigger parks that, in turn, lead deeper into wilderness preserves. “I can walk out my front door to Bommer Canyon and right down to Crystal Cove,” says Stewart, who’s often outside with her husband and three children. “Every day, there’s a new adventure to explore.”



The Stewart family hikes on French Hill in Turtle Rock.

4 WAYS
VILLAGES
MAKE LIFE
SPECIAL



David Lim bikes from Eastwood Village.

JOBS

‘I get to bike to work whenever I want.’

Two years ago, David Lim began biking to work for exercise. Now, he regularly pedals from his home in Eastwood Village to his job in the Irvine Spectrum District. “I get to see the sun over snow-capped mountains and hear birds singing on my way to work,” says Lim, a director at a

med-tech firm. Irvine’s Master Plan has created job hubs that provide more jobs-per-resident than any city in America – making it easy to bike to work on the city’s 364 miles of bikeways. “I’m lucky,” Lim says. “I get to bike to work whenever I want.”

‘Our scho

One reason Ana Tran and her family moved to Portola Springs was so that her children could attend Irvine schools – ranked among the best in California by review site Niche. “The level of community involvement here,” she says, “is why a lot of parents, myself included, would



‘Woodbridge

As an independent business owner, Spitz always needs a place to host business meetings and get some work done. That’s why she’s a regular at the Village Center. “It’s my go-to spot.” The center’s \$30 million upgrade

EDUCATION

School is the heart of our village.'

When her husband moved to Irvine, Tran and her daughter Anh started at Loma Ridge Elementary. "There's a strong sense of community," Tran says. "That's why I've stayed, volunteered in

the classroom and with the PTA." At Loma Ridge Elementary, Anh works with robots, 3D printing and other technology. More than that, she tells her mom, "It feels like home to me!" Irvine's villages were designed around schools, Tran says. "And it feels like our school is the heart of our village."



Ana and Anh Tran pose at school in Portola Springs.



The Spitz family enjoys a makers market at Woodbridge Village Center.

SHOPS & RESTAURANTS

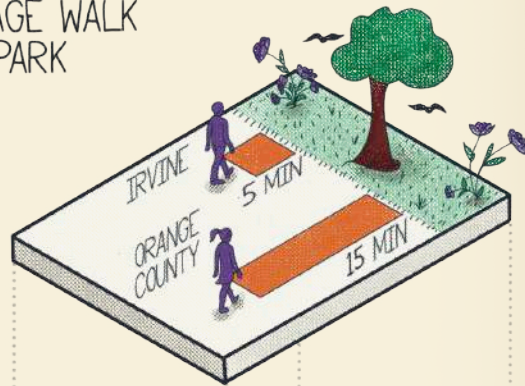
The Village Center is my go-to place.'

Owner, Alexandra Spitz, says she loves to grab lunch, hold a meeting, or come alone-time to relax at Woodbridge Village Center. "It's my go-to place," she says. "I've been here since I moved in 2019 and it's part

of Irvine Company's continuous reinvestment of retail centers throughout the city. Spitz frequents The Lost Bean for her morning latte; she brings the kids to Yogurtland for treats; and she relaxes in the deck chairs overlooking the lake with her husband. "I'm there all the time," she says.

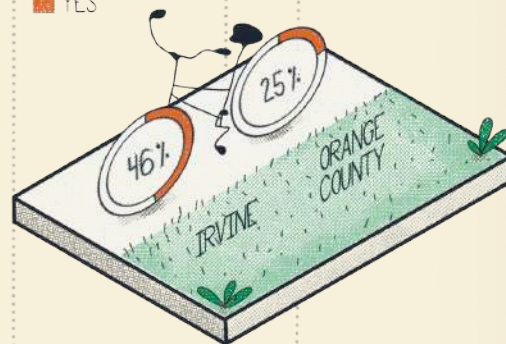
HOW IRVINE VILLAGES STACK UP

AVERAGE WALK TO A PARK

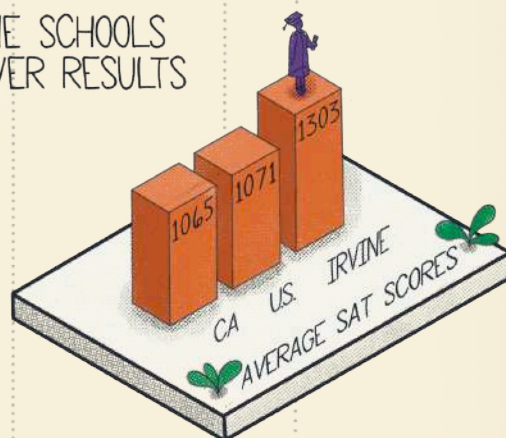


DO YOU LIVE AND WORK IN THE SAME CITY?

YES

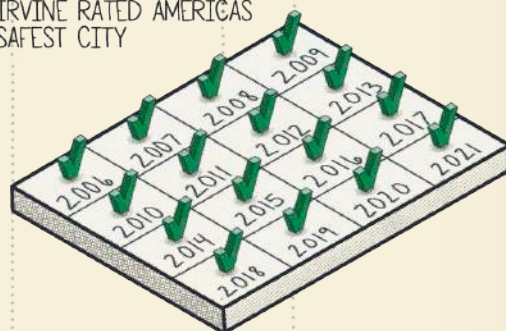


IRVINE SCHOOLS DELIVER RESULTS



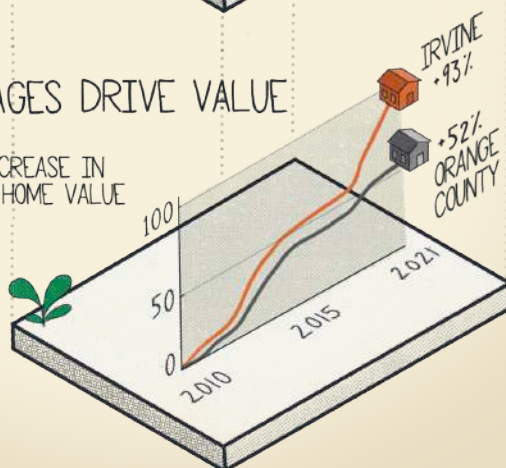
SAFETY FIRST

IRVINE RATED AMERICA'S SAFEST CITY



VILLAGES DRIVE VALUE

% INCREASE IN NEW-HOME VALUE



World-famous landscape architect left his mark on Irvine's first village

BY ALAN HESS

Long before Peter Walker helped design New York City's September 11 memorial, Stanford University Medical School and the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, he joined the team that planned Irvine's first village.



Peter Walker

More than 50 years later, you can still see the qualities that set Walker's design apart from every other suburban neighborhood at the time.

"It was such an exciting time," Walker recently told the Irvine Standard. Walker was hired in 1965, less than

a decade after earning his master's degree from Harvard's Graduate School of Design and partnering with a former professor, Hideo Sasaki.

Irvine Company planner Al Treviño's confidence in the young landscape architect's work soon paid off. The Company was so pleased that it hired Walker's firm to plan Woodbridge Village a few years later.

A daring idea for suburban development

Walker and his colleagues tested innovations such as reducing lot sizes, clustering homes into rows of townhouses, and eliminating side yards, while collecting the land that was left over into broad greenbelts that were common property. There was room for pools and playgrounds that everyone could use.

It was a daring idea for suburban development in that era.

"They were ambitious about what could be done," Walker said of his colleagues, "and it ended up changing the kind of development we had in Southern California."

Walker designed the greenbelts so that every home looked out onto broad, grassy spaces threaded with walking trails, sculpted into pleasing topographies, and landscaped with handsome trees.

Today, University Park's greenbelts have



Irvine's University Park introduced the concept of greenbelts connecting every home in a village.



Former Irvine Company planning consultant Peter Walker helped design the 9/11 memorial.

matured into a magnificent park-like setting with vistas everyone can enjoy.

Many of Walker's ideas are now common in suburban development, in and outside California. But Irvine was the leader in introducing them in its Master Plan. Making excellent design a priority has resulted in decades of high-quality living.



Walker also helped design the indoor Canopy Park at Singapore's Changi Airport.

Irvine resident Alan Hess has authored 20 books on architecture and community planning and is researching another on the Irvine Master Plan. He is an architect, a commissioner on the California State Historical Resources Commission, and was a National Arts Journalism Program Fellow at Columbia University's School of Journalism.

The concept of villages dates back 10,000 years

BY KATHERINE ELLISON

People first learned the value of living in a village roughly 10,000 years ago, when several thousand nomads put down roots in a Turkish marsh.

The settlers of Catalhoyuk ("Chah-tahl-hew-yook"), widely considered to be the world's first village, reaped transformative benefits. Crops offered a more stable diet. Language became more complex. People began to live longer.

That ancient impulse is all the more relevant today, amid growing and global concern that community ties are fraying. Technology keeps making people more physically comfortable – and more socially

isolated. In a 2020 survey, 3 in 5 Americans said they were lonely.

Yet Irvine has a natural advantage, thanks to its "master community builders," who designed a city that caters to social ties through a village-centered plan.

Scientists have found increasing evidence that adults with close friends are at less risk for depression, high blood pressure and obesity. Social integration (your daily interactions with people) and social support (your ability to depend on each other) also offer protection from viral infections, research suggests.

Both of these qualities are embedded in Irvine's Master Plan, says UCI assistant professor



The ancient ruins of Catalhoyuk, considered to be the world's first village.

Kate Ryan Kuhlman, who studies psychological influences on the immune system. "Breaking up a large city into these village communities makes that combination of social integration and support more feasible," says Kuhlman, who lives in University Hills.

"It really makes a difference if you feel part of a community, where you feel safe, and where you can call a neighbor if you need support," she adds.

After all, it's the way humans have chosen to live – for the past 10,000 years.



Irvine Pacific invented the California Great Room with panoramic sliding glass doors that make indoor/outdoor spaces an extension of the home.

Trendsetting home features in Irvine

BY TOM BERG

The Irvine Master Plan defined a new way of suburban planning. Even the homes within Irvine's villages have set trends to meet the needs of today's buyers and create an elevated sense of comfort and convenience.

Three new design features embody the residential innovation happening here in Irvine.

Conservatories: As space has become increasingly important, Irvine Pacific began incorporating window-filled conservatories – among the only new homes in Orange County that offer this feature. These first-floor rooms welcome sunlight with expansive windows, while serving as either an office, kids space or reading room.

Expanded living: Indoor/

outdoor living space is also a key feature of most new Irvine homes. Panoramic doors – often called accordion sliders – can open from the California Great Rooms (a now-national home style feature invented right here in Irvine) to covered outdoor yard space. This expands living areas and takes advantage of Irvine's California coastal climate.

Open spaces, inside: Inside the home, the need for space is also an emerging trend. Many of Irvine's new homes feature volume ceilings. These ceilings reach upward of 20 feet above open floor plans to provide a sense of openness inside the home. New flex spaces in the homes have also been incorporated into new homes to become work or school spaces, as needed.

Buyers today can find these innovative features in



Indoor-outdoor living spaces are ideal for Irvine's Southern California climate.

just a few remaining new-home communities in Irvine.

In Orchard Hills, five neighborhoods are currently selling: Ravello, Lago, Fresco, Verdi and Como. Just to the south, Portola Springs has three neighborhoods actively selling: Hillside, Bluffs and Highland. And at Eastwood, one neighborhood – Fresco – is now selling homes.



Discovering hidden gems while walking Irvine neighborhoods

BY TOM BERG

Last year, my wife and I spent our weekends walking through the Villages of Irvine.

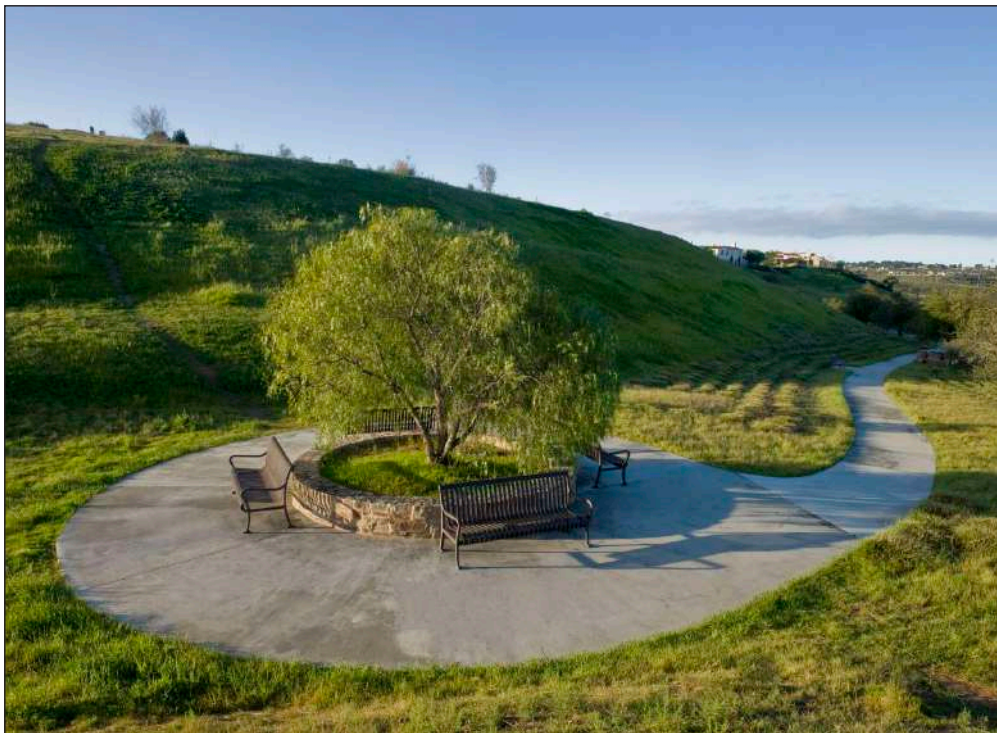
Our journey took us to secluded spots where you couldn't see a home. And public places where every shrub and flower was so beautifully cared for that it left us feeling like we were in a resort.

As we moved throughout the city, it was fascinating to watch how the landscaping changes from south to north. In south Irvine, pine and cypress trees accentuate the coastal Mediterranean climate.

In the northern foothills, we hiked beneath canopies of heritage oaks and parks shaded with massive sycamores.

Our yearlong experiment left us thankful for the Master Plan that provides so many opportunities to enjoy the sunshine, fresh air and nature all around us.

We discovered hidden gems in every village, but one that stands out is atop a Turtle Ridge



We found hidden gems in every village, but one standout is Sepulveda Vista Point in Turtle Ridge.

hill known as Sepulveda Vista Point. Talk about views: We gazed over the ocean to Catalina Island, up the coast to Palos Verdes, and then over the entire city of Irvine to the San Gabriel

Mountains capped with snow. And because this is a spot you wouldn't come across unless looking for it, we had the whole hilltop to ourselves. Just another gem among the Villages of Irvine.

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PHILANTHROPY

Since taking the reins of the Irvine Public Schools Foundation in 2009, President and CEO Neda Eaton has transformed it into the No. 1 educational foundation in California.

Its mission: enrich the education of each child in every school by providing programs, raising funds and uniting the community to support Irvine educational excellence.

We recently spoke to Eaton, the mother of two teenagers, about IPSF and her role as CEO and president.

Q. Tell us a little about yourself.

A. I am a product of Irvine schools. I graduated from University High School. I left for college and graduate school, and then, after getting married, we moved back to Irvine to raise our kids here. It was important to me that they go to public schools in Irvine.

Q. What drew you into the nonprofit world?

A. My family moved here from the Middle East when I was 10. I didn't speak English, so it was hard for me to make friends the first couple of years. I always valued the support system that schools provide. That drew me toward helping children and social services.

Q. How did you get started at IPSF?

A. While working at Boys Town USA in 2009, I was approached about this position. I fell in love with the mission. It's so focused on the kids and the schools and this great master-planned community that was built around our schools.

Q. How has IPSF grown since you took the reins?

A. Back in 2009, the foundation was in its infancy. Fundraising wasn't a huge part of what we did. So we focused on that, specifically from businesses and corporations. At the time, Irvine Company was the only corporation supporting the foundation. We now have about 300 corporate supporters. And we've become the largest, most successful educational foundation in the state of California.

Q. What exactly does IPSF do?

A. We raise money for the Irvine Unified School District, unite the community in supporting educational excellence,



PROFILE | BY TOM BERG

Neda Eaton

Irvine Public Schools Foundation CEO and president says her job is to unite the community to support education

and we provide over 500 summer classes – from cooking to coding to robotics. We also provide hundreds of after-school programs, from basketball to mobile-app development to speech-and-debate.

Q. You also provide \$10,000 innovation grants to teachers. What have those produced?

A. Our Cubesat satellite program started as a small idea at one school and then it blew up to what it is. We were the first

school district in the country to partner with NASA and launch a satellite into space. We've launched two, and our third should be launched in 2022. This program is now a model for other schools across the country.

Q. How does the foundation's work benefit the city?

A. We get well-rounded children who grow up to become leaders in the workforce. It makes our community a healthier, more positive environment to live in. The stories we hear from our alumni is that their success is a result of their education in Irvine schools. You can't put a price on that.

Q. What have you learned about Irvine families?

A. They are smart and savvy. They do their research. I cannot tell you a single donor or parent that hasn't told me, 'Oh, we wanted to make sure that once we had kids, we raised them in a community that was safe' – safety comes up a lot – 'with great public schools.' These are families that believe in the power of public education.

Q. Are your programs available to all students?

A. Yes. From our inception 25 years ago, providing access to all students, regardless of their ability to pay, has been our mission. So we always have a built-in scholarship component for all of our programs and services.

Q. What do you do during your time off?

A. We like to hike. The Quail Hill Loop Trail has been a thing in our family for a long time. We also like going to the restaurants at Irvine Spectrum. Habana is my favorite. Their roasted chicken is so good that I order it every time.

Q. What percentage of students participate in IPSF programs?

A. I bet it's close to 100% for those who attend all 12 years in Irvine.

Q. How does that make you feel?

A. It's a beautiful feeling knowing that you're making things better. We work with the city, with businesses and corporations, with parents and teachers and students – and bring all these entities together to make things better. That's fulfilling.

National STEM award winner credits IPSF

When 14-year-old Hailey Van isn't practicing ballet or walking her dogs, she's studying computer coding. Or marine biology. Or computational analysis.

That dedication won her a spot in Broadcom's 2021 national STEM competition, where she won the \$5,000 Broadcom Coding with Commitment Award.

"It was a completely new award, so I was excited – and really thankful," says the Portola High freshman.

She entered her first science fair in sixth grade. Her eighth grade project

(called "Multi-stressor Analysis of Carbon Dioxide on Oceanic Ecosystems") earned her a spot in Broadcom's STEM competition.

She's grateful that the Irvine Public Schools Foundation helps fund Irvine's annual science fair.

"That fostered my interest in science," she says.

Her advice to younger girls interested in science? "Build your communication skills and don't be afraid to do what you like to do."



Portola High freshman Hailey Van won a \$5,000 coding award.

SPORTS

Irvine goalkeeper is ready to repeat

BY TOM BERG

OC Soccer Club goalkeeper Patrick Rakovsky is known for shutouts – and high-fives. In last year’s championship season, he set the club record for “clean sheets,” as shutouts are called in soccer. And after each game, he’d run behind the goal to high-five his cheering section.

“Our fans supported us and pushed us all the way through the playoffs,” he says. “It felt good to deliver them a championship.”

The defining moment of the season came in the 20th minute of the Championship Final, with 7,000 Tampa Bay Rowdies fans hammering Thundersticks in support of a penalty kick in a scoreless game.

“We were definitely the underdogs,” Rakovsky says. “I remember thinking, ‘If I don’t save this now, it’s going to be hard to win.’”

OCSC was ranked seventh in the playoffs but was riding a nine-game winning streak, thanks to Rakovsky’s 92.5% save percentage, winning most of those games 1-0.

“I watched their player put down the ball,” Rakovsky says. “I watched which way he was facing and how he ran at it, and I committed to the right side. Fortunately, that’s the side he kicked to.”

Rakovsky leaped sideways, fully extending his body, to save the goal – and the game.

Tampa Bay, the overwhelming favorite, fell back on its heels while OCSC took to the attack – scoring three goals in 25 minutes, eventually winning 3-1.

It was the team’s first championship, and also the first for Rakovsky, who played for nine years in Germany and Finland before joining OCSC last year.

“That first night, you can’t sleep because you’re so excited,” he says. “The next two or three days, you still can’t believe it. And now?”

Before he can answer his own question, a golf cart pulls up beside him just outside of Championship Soccer Stadium in the Great Park, where the team plays. A maintenance worker turns off the cart and



Goalkeeper Patrick Rakovsky returns this season after leading the OC Soccer Club to the title last year.

yells triumphantly: “You won the game! That penalty kick save was incredible. Seriously, thank you.”

With that, the worker starts up the cart and drives off down the path.

Rakovsky smiles and says, “I’m ready for next season.”

OC Soccer Club’s home opener is March 19 against Rio Grande Valley FC Toros. Tickets available at orangecountysoccer.com.



Orange County won the championship game 3-1.

IRVINE SPORTS ROUNDUP by TIM BURT



WOODBIDGE H.S.
Soccer team seeks playoffs

The Woodbridge High girls’ soccer team is making a push for the CIF playoffs this month. The Warriors started

the season winning their first seven games. Top players include senior forward Jacque Choi and left defender Amber Lee. “Jacque Choi has been leading our attack and goal scoring every game,” Coach Jackie Farber said. “Amber

Lee takes charge of our back line and is also an incredible leader on and off the field.”

NORTHWOOD H.S.
Event honors Coach O’Brien

Former Northwood High boys’ basketball coach Tim O’Brien, who died of cancer in 2020, was honored during the North-South Challenge at Tesoro High. The event, featuring eight games, was dedicated to O’Brien, the first coach at Northwood. Northwood was not in the event, but players and Coach Christian Manalo came by for one of the games. “He taught his players more than just basketball,”

Northwood senior guard Devon Huang said. “He taught us life skills – the value of confidence and perseverance and never giving up.”

IRVINE H.S.
Goalie signs with S.D. Aztecs

Irvine High goalie Mandy Lagerlof signed a national letter of intent to attend San Diego State University to play water polo for the Aztecs. “Mandy is the anchor of our team,” Irvine Coach Ray Wong said. “After receiving team MVP and all-league recognition her sophomore year, she has continued to push

herself to be even better. I’m excited for her collegiate career.”

IRVINE H.S.
League MVP linebacker signs

Irvine High running back/linebacker Tate Zimmerman signed a national letter of intent with the University of New Mexico to continue his football career. Zimmerman was the MVP of the Pacific Hills League and led the Vaqueros to the league title. Zimmerman will play linebacker for New Mexico. He will be reunited with his older brother and former Irvine player, Kade, who transferred to New Mexico.

A case for housing

Irvine employers and residents say housing is needed for nurses, teachers and young professionals



BY BRYAN STARR

Irvine’s economy is as diverse as it is innovative. In tech, the city is home to the world’s biggest brands and important companies that deliver high-paying jobs across multiple industries.

In health care, we’re fortunate to have world-class medical institutions with Hoag, Kaiser, MemorialCare, UCI Health and soon, City of Hope serving our community.

We are also home to Orange County’s largest employer: UC Irvine and its 25,000 employees. And Irvine Unified School District is home to 2,000 teachers and staff.

As diverse as these industries are, there’s one thing I consistently hear from all of them: Their employees (nurses, teachers, and all those STEM students who graduate from Irvine schools) need homes closer to their work so they spend less time on the road and more time keeping our economy strong and our city thriving.

Put simply: Irvine employers list housing needs as their No. 1 priority to attracting and retaining top-tier talent.

Irvine’s residents, perhaps motivated to have additional options for their children to remain close to home after graduation, also appear to support more housing.

We recently partnered with the independent research firm Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) to ask residents to share their beliefs on hous-

ing required to address the needs of Irvine’s workforce.

The results largely match what we hear from Irvine’s employers.

According to FM3, nearly 90% of residents supported building a variety of residential units for recent graduates, educators and essential workers.

More than 70% agreed that Irvine needs more attainable and well-located residential options for our workforce.

And placing housing near job centers and transportation corridors where

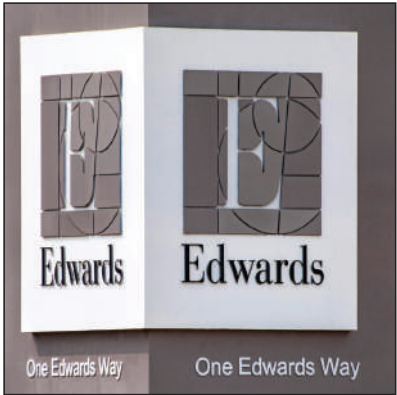
existing infrastructure can support such smart growth – rather than within existing neighborhoods or by building on open spaces – was the location that 7 out of 10 Irvine residents preferred.

The brilliance of Irvine’s Master Plan is its balance. We are fortunate to have the best residential neighborhoods in the country, but also an economic base that provides good jobs for our residents and generates tens of millions of dollars each year to help fund our police department and maintain our

parks and roads. We have a responsibility to provide the housing that’s needed to maintain this economic base and the quality of life we all enjoy.

The Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce is committed to continuing our role as a convener of Irvine stakeholders – from city leaders, our members, property owners, and residents – to respond to this important need.

Bryan Starr is president and CEO of the Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce.



IRWD builds resilience by going local

BY TOM BERG

The “go local” movement is in vogue. Just look at a grocery store. Crafty signs often tout fruits and vegetables as “locally grown” – a nod to the importance and sustainability of local products.

In Irvine, the “go local” movement extends beyond food – it’s the foundation of a resilient and sustainable water supply, as well.

“Local sources of water are important elements for ensuring a safe and reliable supply of water to our customers,” says Irvine Ranch Water District General Manager Paul Cook. “We have a long history of investing in new and drought-proof sources of water. Combining these investments with our cus-

tomers doing a great job using water wisely, IRWD is able to fully meet the water needs of our community.”

Since 1990, IRWD has reduced its dependence on imported (or non-local) water from 66% to 18%. In that same period, the district doubled recycled water production and added an entirely new source of local water – treated groundwater – that now makes up about 20% of its total supply.

Now, more than 80% of IRWD’s supply is sourced in and around Irvine. And the benefit for local residents is immense.

An imported supply is inherently at risk. Earthquakes threaten supply lines, while persistent drought reduces the amount of imported water available. Imported supplies also require more energy to move throughout California, so they typically come with a larger carbon footprint.

Facing those realities, IRWD has spent years planning and building a local, resilient and sustainable supply.

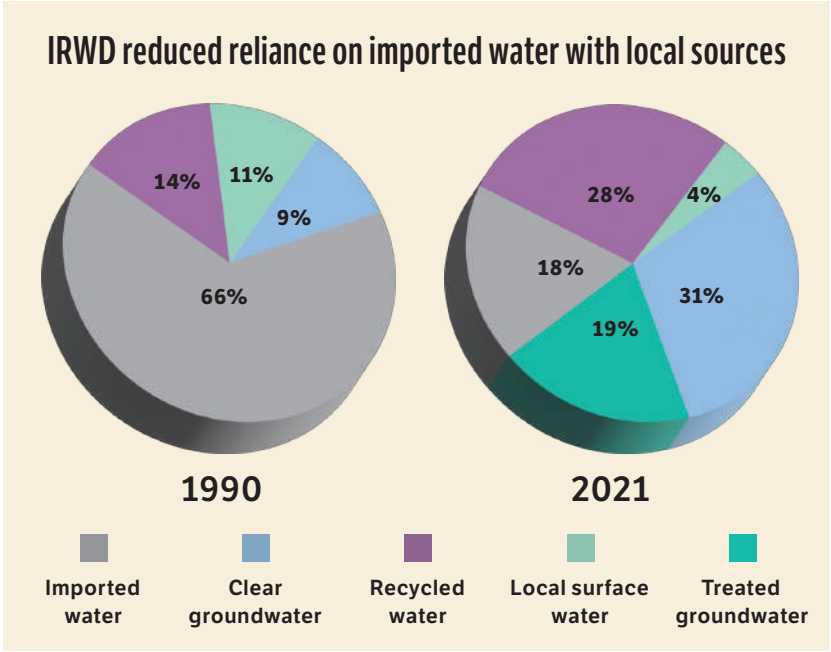
“We were pioneers in recycled water way back in the 1960s,” Cook says. “That changed the game in regard to increasing our local reliability and

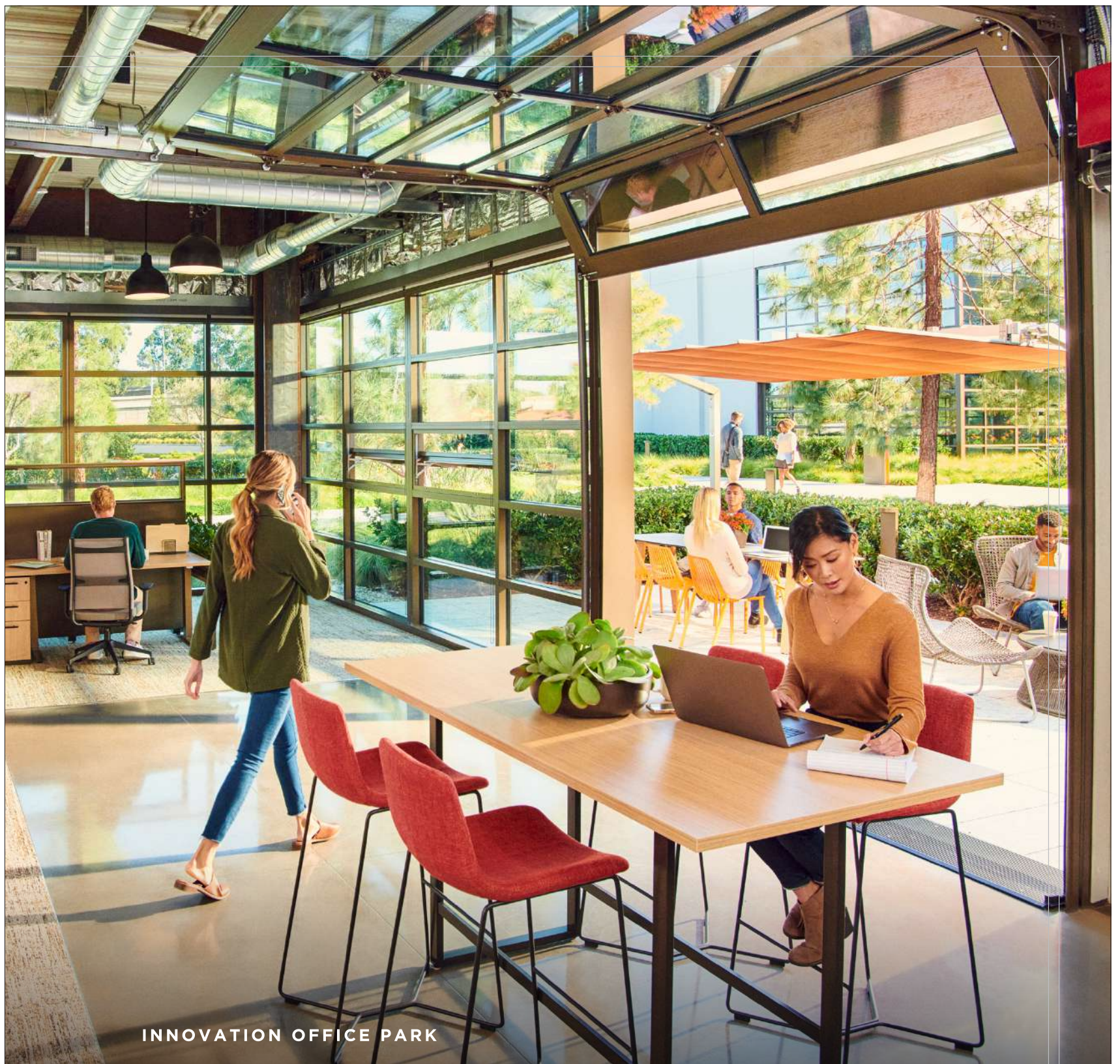
keeping communities green – even during drought.”

In addition to recycled water, which makes up 28% of all the water used in the district, IRWD has developed treated groundwater systems that, when combined with clear groundwa-

ter, now form about half of the district’s water supply.

“It’s all about developing a resilient, local supply of water for our customers,” Cook says. “That helps ensure that we’ll be secure – now, and in the future.”





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LAND OF SAGE AND CHAPARRAL

Baker Canyon: One of the rare places you can explore where these two landscapes converge

BY TOM BERG

If you’ve hiked much in Southern California, you’re probably familiar with its two main habitats: coastal sage scrub in low-lying coastal regions and chaparral as you move inland into the foothills.

But did you know there are places where both habitats thrive side-by-side?

Baker Canyon, just east of Irvine Lake, is such a place, providing a rare opportunity to see a biodiversity hotspot up close and personal.

“In Baker Canyon, you have two completely different habitat types mixing together,” says Brian Hughes, who trains docents for the Irvine Ranch Conservancy. “It’s a really pleasing experience to see this mosaic of shrubs and flowers of every size, shape and color – all on one hike.”

This diversity of habitat also attracts a diversity of wildlife, making Baker Canyon a birder’s paradise. Native birds (acorn woodpeckers, scrub jays and red-tailed hawks) are plentiful year-round, while migratory birds visit each spring and fall.

Not only that, but Baker offers stunning vistas of Black Star Canyon’s Red Rocks – one of the most popular hiking destinations on The Irvine Ranch.

“The Red Rocks are so striking that many people feel they could only be seen in Arizona or Utah,” says Hughes, noting that the rock turns red due to iron deposits that rust with exposure to the atmosphere. “To experience this here in Orange County, they’re blown away.”

As far as spring wildflowers, mariposa lilies are prolific, as are poppies and purple lupines. When conditions are right, you can even see rare chocolate lilies adorning the north-facing hillsides.

Baker Canyon takes its name from a bit of Wild West history – named for Constable Charles Baker, who was killed there in an 1857 gunfight while pursuing a gang of outlaws.

Today, it is part of OC Parks’ Irvine Ranch Open

Space, which includes 20,000 acres of wildlands that Irvine Company donated to the county in 2010. These sensitive lands, accessible through Irvine Ranch Conservancy-led guided tours, are part of 57,500 acres of open space on The Irvine Ranch – land set aside and managed in perpetuity for the benefit of the public.

Baker Canyon has it all, Hughes says – a diversity of plants, flowers, birds, terrain, trails and views –

all so pristine that it’s been designated both a U.S. National and California State Landmark.

“It’s appealing on so many levels,” Hughes says. “We offer family hikes, long-distance hikes and cardio hikes. There are ridgeline views and intimate oak woodlands. And you’ll see a mix of healthy sage scrub and chaparral habitat unlike anywhere else.”

Visit letsgooutside.org to register for free programming offered by Irvine Ranch Conservancy.

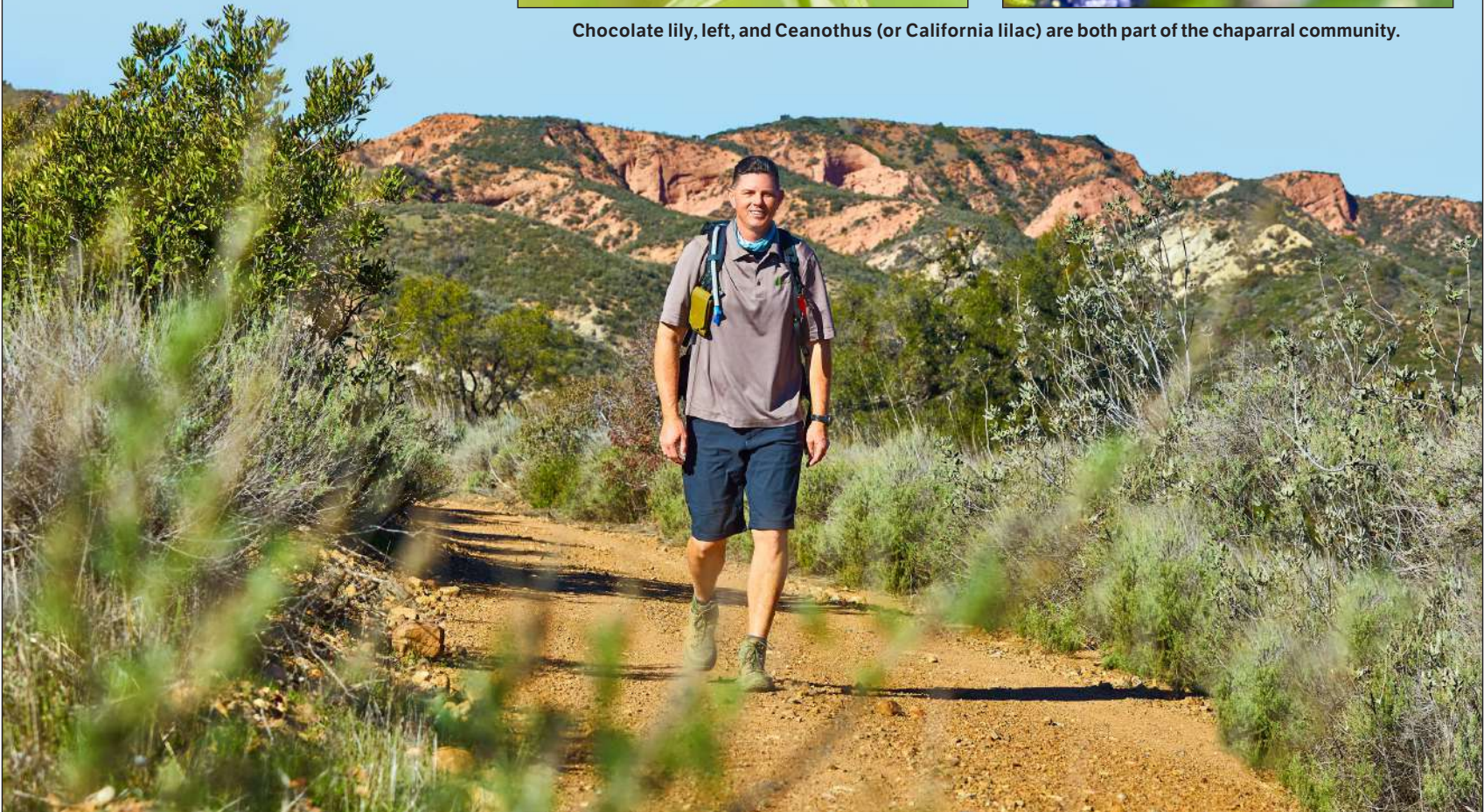
SoCal’s two distinct habitats: Coastal sage and chaparral



White sage, left, and California buckwheat are both part of the coastal sage scrub community.



Chocolate lily, left, and Ceanothus (or California lilac) are both part of the chaparral community.





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