



PROJECT OF THE YEAR MID-RISE

Harbor Square

Bainbridge Island, Wash.

There's no doubt about Harbor Square Condominiums most important residents: The "Heritage Trees," which have been stretching out their roots at the Bainbridge Island, Wash., development site for 100-plus years. Legend has it that the largest of the two red oaks and cluster of horse chestnut trees was brought from England by the original pioneers of the Seattle area.

Be that truth or tall tale, historic preservation of the trees into a 1-acre city park was nonetheless a key component of the mixed-use development, which also boasts 180 high-end condos with 37 separate floor plans incorporated into 10 mid-rise buildings on the remaining 3.3 acres of the site.

With the exception of 16 spaces for the 15,000 square feet of ground-level retail, all of the parking was built underground to maximize space and empha-

size the walkability and village-like design of the Puget Sound community. Owners lucky enough to have landed one of the condos might be inclined to ditch the car altogether—the Bainbridge Island ferry terminal and a 30-minute cruise to downtown Seattle is just one block away.

"Because we could come in at a lower price point, we thought we'd pick up a lot of people from Seattle looking for that 30 minute wind-down," says Opus senior director of real estate Andy Taber. Indeed, a marketing push onboard the ferry helped to sell out half of Harbor Square's units prior to construction. Additional out-of-state buyers were drawn in by pricey ads placed in the onboard magazines of Alaska Air and United Airlines.

While Harbor Square is "a great community for commuters," Taber says he's more pleased that Opus could maintain a high-density construction plan and still blend in with Bainbridge Island's decidedly local appeal. "It is a



high-wage-earner community," Taber says. "But it is a different pace of life here, and many residents never even leave the island." And as long as Opus is in charge, the list of long-time locals will continue to include the Heritage Trees. —C.W.

Fast Facts

Builder: Opus NW Contractors

Developer: Opus Northwest

Architect: Stephen W. Cox

Opened: July 2006

Units: 180

Unit Mix: One-, two-, and three-bedroom

Prices: \$200,000 to \$850,000

Judge's Verdict

THE OPUS TEAM CREATED A GREAT NEW NEIGHBORHOOD THAT WORKS WELL WITH THE EXISTING COMMUNITY AND ALSO HAS A LOW IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT BY ENCOURAGING NON-AUTO COMMUTING. SAVING SO MANY OF THE TREES, CONCEALING PARKING, AND MAKING GROUPS OF WELL-SCALED BUILDINGS THAT SENSITIVELY RESPOND TO VIEWS, CLIMATE, AND CONTEXT SHOWS HOW MUCH THOUGHT AND TALENT THE DEVELOPERS INVESTED IN THIS PROJECT. —K.C. Dutton, senior associate, Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn Architects