

## Workforce housing complex opens

Amelia Court is a 256-unit mix of market rate, affordable housing

BY RYAN GILLESPIE

Creative Village has been cranes and construction crews for years. But finally, residents are starting to arrive, with a slew of others on the way soon.

The Amelia Court at Creative Village apartment complex, a 256-unit mix of affordable and market-rate units, is now open, with one tower fully leased and occupied. The second tower will be the same by the end of the month, the developer said.

The opening of the building marks the first at Creative Village, though next month will bring the arrival of the 15-acre, joint UCF and Valencia campus there, bringing about 8,000 students as well as faculty and staff to the neighborhood west of downtown. Classes start Aug. 26.

"We're bringing families back to Parramore," Mayor Buddy Dyer said Friday at a ribbon-cutting ceremony. "Most of the units here are three-bedroom units, so it's going to give an opportunity for families that can't afford really high-end apartments to be able to live right here in Parramore and actually live in one of the most exciting growth areas of our entire city."

The apartments are across the street from the public Academic Center for Excellence, a public K-8 school, near the college campus and also close to a stop for the LYMMO circulator bus.

The complex at Amelia Street and Parramore Avenue is considered mixed-income, with 177 units set aside for renters making less

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than the area's median household income of \$48,600 a year, said Scott Culp, executive vice president of Winter Park-based Atlantic Housing Partners, which developed the project. Those affordable units are divided up according to income level and household size.

So a single person making \$14,580 a year would pay \$476 a month to rent a one-bedroom apartment, while a family of six bringing in \$64,480 a year would pay \$1,343 a month for a three-bedroom, according to a chart distributed by the developer.

Among market rates apartments, rents range from \$1,199 to \$1,529.

"This is not student housing," Culp said, despite its proximity to the campus. "But that rent range is really broad, so we could have that same unit renting for somewhere around \$500 and that same unit renting for \$1,500 depending on where that family falls on that

household income."

Commissioner Regina Hill, who grew up about two blocks from the site and represents Parramore, said the city has found success in mixed-income complexes, where children from low-income families can see businessmen and women, teachers and other professionals go to work each day, and develop relationships across economic backgrounds.

"For a period, this particular area was filled with crack and drugs and unemployment. To see it now being transformed to hope, to a hub for education and now adequate and safe housing with diversity is phenomenal," Hill said.

The Creative Village is seen as a transformative landmark for Parramore by city officials, creating an educational hub in downtown with graduate, bachelor, associate, certificates and job training programs. The campus is bounded by Livingston Street to the north, train tracks to the south, Parramore Avenue to the west and Hughey Avenue to the east.

The school will have a 15-story tower with housing for about 600 students as well as academic spaces and retail. UCF and Valencia students will attend some classes together, with classrooms, library, financial aid and dorms shared between students. The dorms are about 76% full, said Jamie Giller, UCF Downtown's marketing director.

The campus will be home to a dozen graduate-level programs and eight undergraduate majors, including legal studies and communications. Ten of Valencia's associate programs will also be at the school.

Also in Creative Village, are two other planned market-rate apartments: Parcel M, which has 409 units and another 300-unit market rate project, which is under contract with Mill Creek Residential.

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