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# First Senior Living Facility in Decades Breaks Ground in Irvine

South Bay is building a 370 unit high-end independent living facility, the first to come to the market in 22 years.

By Kelsi Maree Borland | January 11, 2019



## Irvine, CA

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Developer **South Bay Partners** is bringing the first senior living facility in 22 years to the Irvine market—and it is aiming to totally redefine the asset class. The developer has partnered with **LAMB Properties** to build a 370-unit high-end, mid-rise project with a massive amenity package that rivals high-end multifamily. The property will include 200 independent living units, 110 assisted living units and 30 memory care units.

“We feel there is a significant unmet demand for all types of senior living in Southern California,” **Patrick McGonigle**, president of South Bay Partners, tells GlobeSt.com. “In Irvine in particular, there hasn’t been a new senior living project built in more than 22 years. We think there is pent-up demand in the market. Plus, this specific location is right across from the District, and that makes it a very walkable site for our residents. We want to be between retail and rooftops, and this is that transitional site. It fits perfectly with what we want to do.”

This project represents a new wave in senior living, with a focus on healthy living and socialization options for seniors. “This is an upscale senior living community that promotes holistic living and a healthy lifestyle, and there are a lot of activities and a lot of different options,” explains McGonigle. There will be more than 50,000 square feet of common areas in the building with a movie theater, multiple dining venues and a pool and spa. It is really trying to encourage seniors to make the decision sooner to leave the house and move into our centers to have a better life. We want it to feel more like high-end multifamily rather than a senior living facility.”

The aging baby boomer population—the target demographic for the property—has higher expectations for senior living and the age group is living a more active life longer. This trend has sparked a need for this kind of high-end highly amenitized community. “We are all talking about getting the baby boomers, and they want options,” says McGonigle. “We want to be able to provide that. The industry has changed significantly, and we have to be able to find all of those options. South Bay has been developing senior living for 25 years. We have seen various stages of evolution, and this is our latest.”

California has a pent-up demand for senior housing in general, but seldom sees this type of project come to market. That is largely because Southern California is land constrained with significant development barriers. “Most of what you see in California is assisted living. You don’t see a lot of independent living,” says McGonigle. In Irvine, most of the product is older, and other new construction projects are further south in Orange County.

Like all of its developments, South Bay plans to hold this long term. It is also building a similar project in Woodland Hills, which will break ground in April.

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