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Big Red A bright and different color palette helps Laureate Park stand out.

SUCCESS STORY

Laureate Park Laurels

A colorful community grows in the shadow of Orlando's Medical City.

Lake Nona's Laureate Park started out with all the location advantages a new community could want. It's minutes from Orlando International Airport and has direct access to a loop road around the metropolis.

But its biggest new advantage can be seen through some of the windows of the community's brand-new model homes—the impressive towers of Medical City, six new medical and research facilities that will soon be the workplace of 4,000 new employees.

The new University of Central Florida College of Medicine, the Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute, Nemours Children's Hospital, MD Anderson Cancer Center, the Orlando Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and the University of Florida Research and Academic Center at Lake Nona are in the pro-

cess of opening next door on what was a cow pasture in 1996 when Tavistock Group bought the 7,000 acres in Southeast Orlando that it grew into Lake Nona.

Lake Nona was a success even before Medical City came to be. But Laureate Park, Lake Nona's newest 2,700 lot community, planned specifically for Medical City employees, is becoming a blockbuster success story. By the end of April, 50 homes had been sold in the first stage of 350 lots. After the Christmas holidays the sales pace for the community jumped to close to 10 homes a month for its three builders.

It would have been easy for Tavistock Group to duplicate the success it has had with its other communities in the Lake Nona area, building the kinds of homes that most people expect to see in Florida.

But Tavistock wanted something fresh and different at Laureate Park, says Rob Adams, a Lake Nona vice president. While the community's bones form a traditional neighborhood development—alley-loaded garages in the back, porches in the front, and community parks as focal points—the architectural flesh of the neighborhood is decidedly different. It's traditional, but stripped down to give it a contemporary edge, and with a color palette devised by designer Robin Wilson that diverges from the beige homes that dominate most of Orlando's landscape.

The most extreme color example so far is what has become known as The Big Red House, an Ashton Woods model on a prominent corner of the fledgling streetscape. The design is a nod to a Midwestern farmhouse. But its color is punched-up beyond barn red.

"Everybody loves Big Red," says Mike Roche, Ashton Woods' vice president of sales and marketing for the area. He says Ashton Woods gladly agreed to paint its model home a "wild card" color. "We like to push the envelope. It's had rave reviews."

Ashton Woods has been selling an average of five to six homes a month at Laureate Park with a mix of single-family homes such as Big Red, as well as duplex lofts, and, just recently, homes on estate lots.

All Laureate Park homes are certified green by a Masco program and are branded with GE Ecomagination. More unusual is that the entire neighborhood is wired with fiber optic cables that allow "unmatched" Internet connections 10 times faster than is typical, Adams says. Plus, the fiber optic cables help "future proof" the homes, he adds.

David Weekley Homes has also been selling well in the community, about four homes a month, "and we've yet to hit our stride," says Ken McDonald, Weekley's Orlando division president.

Sales for K. Hovnanian's homes got off to a slower start as the builder took a little longer to get an on-site sales team in place. "But this is a long-term play," says Scott South, Hovnanian's Orlando division president. "This isn't something you get anxious about. We will be up to speed shortly, and we'll be out there for years." — TERESA BURNEY

Project Laureate Park at Lake Nona

Developer Tavistock, Orlando

Date opened for sale Late October 2011

Builders Ashton Woods Homes, David Weekley Homes, K. Hovnanian Homes

Location Orlando, Fla.

Total units at build-out 2,700

Starting price range Low \$200s to \$600s

To see a slideshow of Laureate Park, go to <http://go.hw.net/bol-laureate-park-laurels>.

Courtesy Lake Nona