

RIVER ISLANDS

C U R R E N T S



Susan Dell'Oso,
Project Director

OPEN LETTER FROM SUSAN DELL'OSSO PROJECT DIRECTOR

For the last few months, I have been ending my Open Letter for *The Currents* with the invitation for our residents to use a special email address, info@riverislands.com, for questions and concerns about our growing master planned community.

As it turns out, this e-mailbox has been productive in more ways than one. As originally envisioned, I have been able to provide our residents with answers to their questions about upcoming improvements to the development plan, roadwork, school updates, and project start dates and the schedules for estimated completion.

What I didn't expect was the beginning of so many conversations with neighbors who love their River Islands community and want to address the quality of life here, as we continue to grow. The importance of these individual conversations cannot be understated, so rather than address these questions with a single response, I would like to dedicate this issue of *The Currents* to updates on some of the many aspects of living together as a community. So many topics fit under that umbrella, such as safety, courtesy, adherence to rules and the steps in the development of a master plan. I would like to share these conversations with everyone who lives or works in our community.

Please read through this newsletter for the background on what I consider the most current and relevant community issues. Each story will provide an update on what River Islands Development has planned or is considering as a next step, and what we hope we will see from our residents as a response to changes that are proposed or in the works.

I hope that you will continue to use info@riverislands.com to inform and alert me about your concerns, as well as to get your questions answered. Although I cannot pledge to answer questions any more quickly than once a week, I do read everything that goes into that e-mailbox, and I will get back to you with a response.

Thank you for your input, your ideas and your enthusiasm for making River Islands a community of which we can all be proud.

All the Best,

Susan Dell'Oso
Project Director

LIVE LEARN BELONG

TWENTY NINE YEARS AND COUNTING: THE PLAN FOR RIVER ISLANDS

Back in 1989, a privately-held real estate investment and development firm called The Cambay Group made the decision to make a major real estate investment in the City of Lathrop, in the belief that this key location, at the junction of 1-205 and 1-5 could serve as a bridge between the economies of the San Francisco Bay Area and the Central Valley.

In the ensuing years, the real estate market has seen several downturns, but The Cambay Group has remained steadfast to its purpose of creating a mixed-use master planned community that can serve the Central Valley's business community as well as relocate businesses from the Bay Area; complement job creation with a range of housing types and prices; and provide education, entertainment and a sense of community to the master plan.

In pursuing this vision, The Cambay Group and its local team at River Islands Development has forged a strong partnership with the City of Lathrop and San Joaquin County, developed relationships with all of the surrounding counties, met with every state and federal agency concerned with water use, conservation, levee standards, wildlife protection, transportation, land use, agriculture, energy and education, to name a few. After 23 years in the making, Cambay finally saw vertical construction in 2012, when the first school on the site began.

While 23 years seems like a long time, we should note that it is not uncommon for a large master planned community to take decades in the planning process. Issues surrounding schools, flood protection, permanent water supply, land use, sewer capacity and so much more, have to be analyzed and solved before a project can move forward. Unfortunately for River Islands, all of those issues were resolved around 2006 (or about 17 years after our initial investment), which is when we were hit by the "Great Recession" and we saw land values plummet for eight years. While we were dismayed by this setback, it actually afforded us the opportunity to be even more creative in our approach to the project. That is when we started our Charter School program and came up with other great ideas that are still taking shape.

Today, River Islands is exceeding its development timeline, sometimes by years.

As a rule of thumb, in California the number of homes built in a community drives the development of amenities. As an example, elementary school construction was set to start at 750 homes. Yet the Cambay Group chose to invest in building major infrastructure during the last recession, so that the original campus of River Islands Technology Academy opened in 2013—a full year before any home sales began.

Last year, when it became apparent that the Technology Academy would have to move to a new campus site or be closed down, a new school was built in a matter of months. To have 450 homes and two grammar schools open and operational is unparalleled in California.

Designing and getting approvals for the River Islands master plan took the better part of 25 years. Now that we are under construction, we estimate another twenty years until the community is built out. During that time, we will design and open up a 5 million square foot business park—about 40% of the size of Bishop Ranch in San Ramon. We will design and build downtown retail, in accordance with what people want and need in our community. We will continue to build homes, parks and fields, trails, schools, restaurants, apartments and lifestyle enhancements as our community grows.

The Cambay Group is unique in that it is an active owner, involved in all aspects of the planning and development of River Islands. It is this kind of participation that breathes life and color into what was only a land plan three short years ago. The Cambay Group supports River Islands Development's belief that we will only succeed as a master plan if every neighborhood adds character to the community-at-large. That is why you will see some builders' names on several neighborhoods while others are noticeable by their absence. We on the development team have a vision for the community, and only builders who share in that vision are ultimately the right fit for us.

LET'S TALK: TRAFFIC

As our community grows, so does concern about the safety and well-being of our residents. Traffic is a major topic of conversation, so let's take a look at our situation today, and how to get to a better and safer flow of automobiles through River Islands in the future.

First, the backstory: Our two-lane Lakeside Drive is used by residents, teachers, school car pool drivers and construction vehicles. Yet how many of you know that this is only a temporary use for what is actually just a neighborhood road?

River Islands Parkway, a four lane road, has always been in the plan to provide access and egress from River Islands to Lathrop and I-5 at Louise Avenue. The entrance that we use today, off Manthey Road at Stewart, was approved as an alternate entrance into this initial phase of the master plan. River Islands Parkway will deliver traffic to the future retail area, schools and the backbone of the future development areas. Once Bradshaw's Crossing Bridge opens in early 2017, non-residential traffic will be rerouted to that entrance, and the neighborhoods that are accessed by Lakeside Drive will see a dramatic reduction in the traffic load. Once the bridge is opened, we anticipate that most of the outside school traffic will access the bridge and most of the construction trucks too.



Having said this, the only way for the neighborhoods to feel safe is for all of the drivers within the community to slow down and obey the rules of the road. First, remember that the residential streets are posted for speeds not to exceed 25 miles per hour, especially around the school site.

Second, drivers at the roundabouts must look to their left before entering. It is not the responsibility of the cars already in the roundabout to slow or stop for a car entering—yet that is what we see on a daily basis. Not cutting corners and staying in the lanes in the roundabouts will reduce the damage to our landscaping as well.

River Islands Development has met with the City of Lathrop and its police department about these problems. As a result, we have installed an additional stop sign on Commercial and will be posting speed warning signs. In addition, we will be installing speed detectors within the community as a visible reminder about speed limits and how often drivers exceed them.

We are also expediting the opening of River Bend Road so residents can enter Marina from the north. A final step is being taken, that of River Islands providing the funding for extra police officers to ticket offenders within our community. Each of these changes should have a positive impact on driving within our community and enhance the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists as well.

Q & A WITH GLENN GEBHARDT, CITY ENGINEER, CITY OF LATHROP

Q: Recently, we have seen a variety of striping and signage changes around our community, and we understand that they are being directed by the City of Lathrop. What are the City's plans?

A: *The City has been made aware of increasing complaints about speeding in River Islands, particularly at the roundabouts on Lakeside Drive. After studying the situation, the City responded by installing small speed bumps on the inner circle of the roundabouts as an interim action. It has already achieved the results of slowing down vehicles and making drivers aware that there is a yellow line that should not be crossed in the inner circle of each roundabout.*

Q: What about signage near the schools?

A: *The City will be placing signs stating "25 MPH When School is in Session" on Academy and Marina, in compliance with state law. The signs currently standing, stating that speeds should be restricted to 15 MPH, were not installed by River Islands or the City, and will be removed.*

Q: Are there other signs slated for removal?

A: *Yes, the signs stating "Slow Children at Play" signs will be removed in keeping with state law, which does not allow for such signage in the public right of way.*

Q: How are "School Crossing" signs different from "Pedestrian Crossing" signs?

A: *School Crossing signs must be yellow and follow specific criteria as to their location, based on anticipated pedestrian flow and the distance to the nearest school. School Crossing signs will be removed from the roundabouts on Lakeside Drive because they are too distant from the school campuses.*

Q: What current roadway changes are under construction?

A: *Somerston Parkway will be expanded to a 4 lane arterial road, from River Islands Parkway south to the site of the future fire station. River Islands Parkway will be extended from McKee Avenue over the San Joaquin River to Somerston and beyond. A number of roadways are under construction west of Somerston. We recognize that many of the students attending school in River Islands come from outside the community, and use Stewart Road/Lakeside Road for drop off and pick up. The additional roadways mentioned above will change the current travel patterns, and put more traffic onto River Islands Parkway and the soon-to-be-open two lane bridge across the river.*



CC&Rs ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT IS FORMED TO UPHOLD COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

One of the questions that comes up in conversations in the community is the issue of how to hold the few households who do not live in accordance with the CC&Rs to the standards that protect ALL of the households in River Islands.

After much discussion, the decision has been made to create an enforcement department to provide warnings to those not in compliance with the CC&Rs. Some of the issues in the community are not just a CC&Rs matter, but are also in violation of the codes of the City of Lathrop. The enforcement department will make the City aware of code violations; the City may ticket or fine according to its regulations.

Within River Islands, those issues that stem from CC&Rs violations will be dealt with in two steps: a warning about the violation, and then appropriate measures to take care of the violation, with the attendant cost being charged back to the homeowner.

The CC&Rs were written are not only to preserve the beauty of the neighborhoods; they also represent community safety. After many months of sending letters and making on-site visits, River Islands has determined that upholding the CC&Rs is of the utmost importance, and is working to create the legal mechanisms to support their enforcement.



POWER SUBSTATION IS OPEN AND OPERATIONAL

River Islands is now providing electrical power to our residents, independent of PG&E. This has been one of our goals since the early days of project planning, and more than \$12 million dollars was set aside in the initial development budget to construct and outfit a state-of-the-art power supply source for all of our existing residents and the next 5,000 homes.

The new power station operations management will alert residents about any planned shut-downs, which are necessary to bring new neighborhoods into the grid, well in advance of their occurrence.

NEW PARKING PLAN PROPOSED FOR THE BOATHOUSE

The Boathouse has been more successful than we ever imagined. The side effect of its popularity is the need to create defined overflow parking, to keep drivers out of the neighborhoods in its immediate area.

River Islands Development is looking at constructing a large second parking lot at the site of the Business Park, on the other side of the lake. A pedestrian bridge may be built to connect the parking lot to the restaurant. In this way, patrons will be able to access the Boathouse without creating congestion along Lakeside Drive or parking in the neighborhoods.

In addition, we are looking at the idea of creating neighborhood parking stickers, to easily identify homeowners versus Boathouse patrons who use the neighborhoods as their parking access.

We will be reaching out to all residents at some time in the future to discuss Boathouse parking and resident decals to improve the situation. Once set, the meeting will be announced in *The Currents*. Please note that building a new parking lot will take months of design, approval and construction, but we hope to have it in place at some point next year.

WELCOME CENTER IS NEW POLLING PLACE!

For the first time, this year the River Islands Welcome Center will be an official polling place. On Nov. 8th you will be able to vote from 7 AM until 8 PM. If you are in line to vote at 8 PM, the polling place will stay open to allow you to cast your ballot.

IF YOU CHOOSE TO VOTE BY ABSENTEE BALLOT, YOU NEED TO MAKE THAT REQUEST BY NOVEMBER 1. ABSENTEE BALLOTS SHOULD BE MAILED OR DROPPED OFF AT A POLLING PLACE BY NOVEMBER 8, ELECTION DAY!



RIVER ISLANDS RESIDENT RUNS FOR LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD

Receives endorsement from River Islands Development



One of River Islands' first residents has declared her candidacy for the Governing Board of Banta Elementary School District. Kati Bradley is a unique mix of the old and the new, coming from a family with deep roots in the Banta Elementary School District. In fact, her grandparents met in 2nd grade at Banta Elementary in 1936!

Kati was educated in local Tracy and Manteca schools, and went to Fresno State to earn her degree in Political Science. She is a credentialed substitute teacher in the State of California.

Many of the residents will recognize Kati as the Assistant Manager of the Welcome Center. Kati also is the lead market research person for River Islands Development.

In a recent interview, Kati said, "As a mother with a young son about to start T-K next year, quality education for ALL children in the Banta Elementary District is a primary concern to me. Currently, the Banta district has two schools—Banta Elementary, just outside of Tracy, and the STEAM Academy at River Islands in Lathrop.

"In the future, River Islands will build as many as EIGHT more schools—and they will be operated as part of the Banta District. I want to represent your point of view in how the schools are envisioned, how the curriculum is developed and how these new schools will be operated. I also want to report back to you about the progress of the two schools already in the Banta district. Transparency is critical when it comes to issues concerning our children's education."

Kati can be reached at www.votekatiBradley@gmail.com

LIVE LEARN BELONG