

Construction comeback in Calaveras

By Nick Baptista/ The Valley Springs News/ Friday, March 6, 2015

The construction industry once again has a pulse in West Calaveras County.

Home building has been near a standstill in the area since the financial crisis of 2007-08, but Ryan Voorhees, president and owner of CRV Enterprises, has resumed construction in two of his Valley Springs area subdivisions- Gold Creek and Olive Orchard Estates.

“We’re seeing signs of life in the market,” said Voorhees, but it’s not close to the housing boom prior to the Great Recession.

Housing prices are up in the metropolitan areas of Stockton and Tracy and that is attracting buyers to west Calaveras who are looking for similar homes, but at lower prices, Voorhees said.

He has started construction on some in-fill lots within the first two phases of Gold Creek Estates and semi-custom homes have been sold and are going up in Olive Orchard.

In all, his company has pulled 15 home building permits the last four months and has plans to construct more. The target is to build 50 homes a year over the next two years.

Voorhees has 30 in-fill lots within the initial phases of Gold Creek. The new homes within Gold Creek will range in size from 1,430 to 2,260 square feet and start in the low \$200,000s, said Scott Finn, Gold Creek Homes’ community manager.

Once those homes are completed and sold, Gold Creek will move onto Phase 3, with new models to choose from.

“If lucky,” Voorhees and Finn envision beginning work on the final phase of Gold Creek by the end of this year. Phase 3 has 170 lots.

Sales of new homes within Gold Creek are expected to begin in a month and a half, Finn said.

Olive Orchard Estates has 47 home sites on approximately five-acre lots. The model is up and nine homes have been sold.

“We’ve had a pretty good response so far,” Finn said, with half of the buyers being locals and the other half from more urbanized areas such as Stockton who are looking for more space and privacy.

“We’re pulling people from the valley,” he said. They want an alternative to Stockton and Valley Springs is affordable and still close to their jobs.

Olive Orchard's homes range in size from 2,000 to 4,310 square feet and begin in price at \$375,000.

Sales efforts are concentrating on selling all 18 lots on the south side of subdivision before moving to the north side, which has 29 lots.

With half of the south side sold, he believes sales for the north side could begin this summer.

"The community sells itself," Finn said. "The scenery, the lakes and no stop lights pull people from the valley.

Resurrection of the local home construction industry has brought new jobs. Voorhees is directly employing 10 people, while many more are working indirectly through contractors and subcontractors.

"We've hired pretty much the same crew back," Voorhees added.