

IN BUSINESS Las Vegas  
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# Structures



A special supplement to In Business Las Vegas



# Building blocks

## Energy efficiency, eco-friendliness, sustainability increasingly incorporated into architecture

By Damon Hodge/Staff Writer

Years of clamoring by environmentalists to build eco-friendly structures and admonishing by conservationists to harness Nevada’s renewable energy resources is coming to a head as more companies are creating sustainable developments.

The telecommunications building at the Community College of Southern Nevada is the first LEED building in Nevada. An acronym for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, LEED emphasizes sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, selecting environmentally friendly material in building the facility and maintaining a healthy indoor climate.

The two-story telecommunications building includes a tree-lined pedestrian walkway that connects to the heart of the campus and ties into several existing buildings. Its lobby extends the pedestrian arterial. Energy-conserving materials were chosen for the façade. The mechanical system is designed to minimize noise in classrooms. There’s room to expand the central plant to implement more cost-saving energy features.

Matthew Ryba hopes that such future environmentally sensitive approaches to designing and building facilities becomes the rule. Hoping to lead by example, Ryba’s company, TWC Construction, recently built the largest photovoltaic solar electric system generating system in the state at Your Vitamins Inc., a manufacturing plant at 430 Parkson Road in Henderson. The \$1.8 million system includes a rooftop 23,000-square-foot photovoltaic array composed of 1,430 four-foot-square



An artist’s rendering shows the downtown Parkway Center project, which was designed by the Molasky Group of Companies.

solar panels, with two 75-watt modules mounted on each panel.

“The array will generate 300-mega-watt hours per year, enough to power 30 average-sized home for a year,” said Ryba, TWC’s chief executive officer. “This eliminates need for Nevada Power to burn fossil fuel to power 30 homes.”

The benefits don’t stop there. Said Ryba: “We generate the most power when the pick is at highest demand, like in July when it’s scorching hot, which offsets peak demand by rest of neighborhood. Over 25 years of the system’s life cycle, we’ll save 30,000 barrels of crude oil, which lessens our dependability on petroleum-producing nations, and save

14 million gallons of water, which is great because we’re in a drought.”

Building LEED facilities can be pricey. Fortunately, TWC blunted the financial impact by using Renewable Energy Credits (RECs), state-approved financial incentives companies can use to for green projects. Ryba hopes the TWC has started a trend.

“We must offset fossil fuel burning or we will be at the mercy of petroleum-generating countries,” he said. “This is something that has to be done by responsible people who don’t mind spending more for being socially responsible.”

If there is a poster building for eco-friendliness, it’s probably the new Animal

Foundation, a regional campus at 655 N. Mojave Road that includes sustainable design and energy-reducing concepts.

There are wind turbines and photovoltaic solar cells that can generate up to 20 percent of the electric consumed. The mechanical system is 80 percent more efficient than a conventional system, further reducing energy consumption. The passive ventilation system heats the dog kennel when it’s cold and cools the facility in warmer climates. Water conservation is achieved via the reuse and recirculation of grey and black water cleaned in an on-site water reclamation system known as a “living machine.”

SEE LEED, PAGE 7A

### FROM THE EDITOR

Cutting-edge design and progressive thinking have helped Las Vegas grab worldwide attention in the field of architecture. Millions of people annually visit our city and marvel at some of the innovative ideas and buildings along Las Vegas Boulevard.

What most of them miss, however, are the structures found off the Strip. It is there where some of the city’s innovative office spaces lie, as well as pioneering school construction, “green” buildings and avant-garde lofts.

In this, our sixth special publication devoted to “Structures,” we examine the state of architecture in Southern Nevada. A shortage of qualified employees plagues the industry and competition for talented people is becoming more and more aggressive. “There is a lot of cannibalism going on right now,” says one executive. “Other firms will dangle a carrot, and when they slow down again, out the door you go.”

We also take a look at some of the changes going on with the influx of high-rise condominiums to the Las Vegas skyline. Additionally, we delve into the project that entails converting the old Holsum Bakery into a “lofts” project that will include mixed-retail, residential, restaurant and gallery space.

We hope this section gives our readers a taste of the changing trends in architecture and a look into the future.



Rob Langrell

*Rob Langrell*

Editor of Special Publications

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# Labor shortage, rising costs hurt local architects

By Lisa McQuerrey/ Contributing Writer

Despite rising construction costs and a dwindling availability of buildable land, the Las Vegas architectural business is booming. Firms' biggest concern right now: where to find more qualified employees.

"There's only one solution," said Domingo Cambeiro, sole principal of the Domingo Cambeiro Corp. (DCC). "You work late, and you work Saturday and Sunday!"

Cambeiro said hiring is actually a regional issue right now, noting that when Las Vegas has been in building-boom mode in the past, other neighboring states, including California, Arizona and Utah, were in building lulls, allowing local firms the opportunity to lure away talented people. Cambeiro said his firm has advertisements running in a variety of cities to try and recruit qualified individuals.

"There's a lot of cannibalism going on right now," he added. "Other firms will dangle a carrot, and when they slow down again, out the door you go."

Brad Schulz, principal of KGA Architecture, agrees with the issue of talent shortage and said his firm is always looking for qualified people. He said the local cost of living is beginning to hamper some of his recruitment efforts.

"It's getting more and more expensive to own a home in Southern Nevada," noted Schulz. "Prices are up to buy and property taxes are increasing. There's more pressure on wages."

Curt Carlson, partner and director of design for Swisher & Hall AIA, Ltd.,

said his firm tries to control its growth to 15 percent per year, but said it's been difficult to find enough professionals to grow even by that modest rate.

"We always face a difficulty in trying to recruit because Las Vegas is a hard sell for architects," Carlson said. "They look for culture, museums, legitimate theater. They're a little trendier and they look for things like a strong university system and arts programs."

Some local firms are being more selective in the projects they take on, rather than adding more employees to their payroll. Several commercial firms say they're even being approached by residential home developers these days.

"This is the first time in my career I can remember being contacted for residential work," said Craig Galati, principal and partner of Lucchesi Galati Architects (LGA). "Prices are going through the roof, and we foresee a potential labor shortage, which will continue to drive up construction prices."

Galati said his firm is comfortable with its 25 staff members and won't grow just to grow.

Of course, rising construction costs continue to be of concern for the architectural community. Clients who started planning projects several months ago and established a budget are now looking at cost increases of 20 to 30 percent. Their options are limited: delay the project, scale back the design or find the resources to go forward with the original plan

SEE LABOR, PAGE 11A

## Las Vegas architecture takes spotlight as host of 2005 AIA convention

More than 25,000 architects from around the world are expected to converge on the Mandalay Bay Convention Center May 19-21 for the American Institute of Architects (AIA) 2005 National Convention and Design Exposition.

"This is the first time the AIA is having its national convention here," said Domino Cambeiro, sole principal of the Domingo Cambeiro Corp. "They're going to get a great experience of architecture in Las Vegas."

Members of AIA Las Vegas are enthusiastic about the opportunity to showcase local architecture to the rest of the world. Area professionals believe the perception of the city will change for many architects when they have the opportunity to experience the latest in design trends, particularly for projects that are taking place off the Strip and outside of the national spotlight.

"This is a big positive for our industry," said Curt Carlson, partner and director of design for Swisher & Hall AIA, Ltd. "It'll be an eye-opening experience and it will be a good recruiting opportunity. When we do conferences, people are amazed at what we're doing here with the number of projects and the technology."

AIA Las Vegas will host tours of Hoover Dam, Yucca Mountain and Zion National Park as well as some of the Clark County School District's facilities. Attendees will also get a lesson on building in the desert, showcasing designs that are both energy and water efficient and environmentally sound.

—Lisa McQuerrey



The Centennial Hills Corporate Center was built with an uplit crown — an identity element for the entire site.

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Developer Jeffrey LaPour has turned the 2.6-acre site of the former Holsum Bakery into a project that will help revitalize downtown Las Vegas. The building will contain mixed-retail, residential, restaurant and gallery space.

# Loft project receives finishing touches

Conversion of 1950s bakery is major coup for continued downtown redevelopment

By Deborah Roush/Contributing Writer

When developer Jeffrey LaPour toured the old Holsum Bakery building for the first time, he knew immediately he was going to buy it. He just didn't know exactly what he would do with the property that, until it piqued his interest, sat for eight months without a buyer.

"I had just driven past it and saw the (for sale) sign. I was really personally interested in the bone structure of the building ... I could see it had a barrel vault roof," he said.

As it turns out, La Pour has turned the 51-year-old landmark on 2.6 acres at 211-299 W. Charleston Blvd. near I-15, into the Holsum Lofts, the first historical building repositioned for mixed-retail, residential, restaurant and gallery space in Las Vegas. The building will be complete in the next couple of weeks and is already 70 percent leased.

"The response has really been overwhelming. It has been a very successful project. The building is so unique and when you combine it with 70,000 cars per day at the intersection it sits at with the identity that comes with being in the building, you have a very powerful combination," LaPour said.

But it was no easy or inexpensive task to reinvent the bakery, which was built in the early 1950s and used to make Holsum bread until 2002.

Thanks to local architect Stephen Jackson and contractor TWC Construction, the loft building now boasts a hip, urban look. It has dozens of skylights for natural lighting and concrete-finished floors, but maintains some of the existing feel and structure, including exposed heavy timber ceilings.

Sharon Allen, director of business development for TWC Construction, said there were few existing plans and drawings for the original building, which cost \$6.5 million to renovate. "We didn't always know what we would uncover when we would do something," she said.

"Most people would just demolish it and start new. This took a lot of extra effort — it was a labor of love. Of course, you get a lot of extras you don't get when you start from scratch," Allen said.

Putting windows in the thick, masonry block walls was a challenge, and so was the intense demolition need to "get rid of what we did not want in the building in an environmentally (friendly way)," she explained.

But the biggest obstacle was gaining direct road access to the site, which was only accessible to Charleston Boulevard via a back road.

LaPour worked with the Nevada Department of Transportation to eventually extend the road and gain the needed access. "It was a very expensive addition to the project. We had to pay the entire \$400,000," LaPour said.

However, Allen said the undertaking has helped pioneer the way developers can work with the city of Las Vegas on future redevelopment projects so that everyone benefits.

"This is such a positive thing. It was an old, derelict building that has been made useful and alive again," she said.

LaPour, too, is proud of the project. His firm, LaPour Partners Inc., specializes in light industrial and flex space. "But it was kind of a personal passion that I had to work on a historic building. It has been

very exciting, fun and rewarding," he said.

Move-ins have already begun at the Holsum Lofts, which has leases signed from everybody from a high-end plumbing supply showroom and renaissance furniture showroom to three art galleries. A café is scheduled to open April 1.

And LaPour said he hopes the project

will be a significant addition to the downtown Las Vegas revitalization.

"It proves that old buildings can have a new life and be very successful in doing it. And it will greatly enhance the surrounding area and help with the wave of regentrification that is happening," he said.



This exterior photo shows when Gail's Famlee Bread operated out of the building.



# Miami-based engineers move to serve high-rise market in Vegas

By Deborah Roush/ Contributing Writer

Mark Baker, president of Miami-based IBA Consultants, compares what his firm can do for a high-rise project to that of a "skin doctor."

"We specialize in the outside of the building from the bottom of the feet to the top of the head," Baker said, explaining what IBA provides owners, developers, architects and construction managers in the high-rise construction industry.

IBA's engineers are the exterior wall, roofing and waterproofing specialists who make "double-sure" a project is done correctly — that the building is properly protected from the wind and the windows won't leak, Baker said.

On March 1, IBA will open an office in Las Vegas to serve the fast-growing high-rise condominium market.

"If a developer wants to build a 50-story building he'll hire an architect to specifically look at the function and the layout, and design the overall look of it and how people will move around.

"But there are so many components of the project, and the exterior is one of the most important. We may be hired — either by the developer or architect — to work on materials, systems and components and the interaction of them — like how a window will fit in the wall or how the wall attaches to the roof," he said.

Baker, who started IBA about 15 years ago, said his specialized engineering consultants could help from the design stage through the final building inspection.

The first step, he said, involves reviewing the building design. "We want our clients to get what they pay for, but not more than they need," he said.

Next, Baker's engineers take models of the building and test it to "make sure it's going to do what it is supposed to do. That it won't break in a 110-mile wind, for example," he said.

That is done scientifically — in a laboratory where the engineers can simulate the effects of wind and water.

Baker's firm also does "good, old-fashioned quality control," testing the buildings exterior in every step of construction. "We want to make sure that the right sealants are used, that materials are not being substituted or something is left out. We'll test randomly and report back to the owner or architect," he said.

And with portable testing equipment and a mobile laboratory, IBA can also administer on-the-job tests. "Once they start putting in the windows for example, we'll test one. If it fails, we'll find out why, repair it and then retest. Then we'll go up 10 floors and do it again," he explained.

"It's a quality and liability issue and a comfort level for developers. It is better if a problem can be fixed up front before the condo association has to come in and you have to tear down and start over again," Baker said.

Baker said there are only a handful of companies like IBA that are recognized

SEE IBA, PAGE 6A



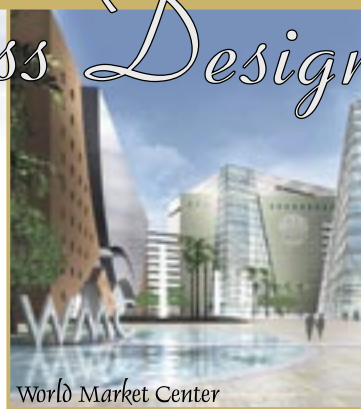
Mark Baker, right, is the owner of IBA Consultants. He will open a Las Vegas office next month.

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Turnberry Place, one of Las Vegas' first high-rise projects, is a longtime customer of IBA Consultants.

### IBA, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5A

nationally. When the Las Vegas office opens next week it will be the company's fourth — they already maintain three offices in Florida.

"In relationship to the (condo market), Las Vegas is absolutely the next Miami. There are 100 high-rise towers in different planning stages — that's exactly like Miami was 10 years ago," he said.

In fact, Baker said he is working with many developers in Las Vegas who were clients in Miami. "This is the perfect market for us. There are seasoned developers who are coming from our town who we already know and guys who don't know what they are doing yet who can benefit from our expertise," he said.

Baker said the architectural community in Las Vegas has been receptive to the news that his firm, which has consulted in projects from The Venetian's Palazzo to a couple of MGM towers, will now have local presence.

Architects have come a long way when it comes to recognizing the importance of specialists like IBA, Baker said.

"It has been interesting how views toward (using our services) have changed. At first, many years ago, architects rejected us, thinking they didn't need our advice. Over time we have won them over, and now they probably represent 30 to 40 percent of our business.

"They recognize that the skin of a building is a sophisticated component and if it fails it is pricey," he added.

"The costs of mistakes are so expensive, especially in high-rise condos, with delays in construction and inability to close. If you have to tear something out and do it again it can cost 10 times what it would have if it had been done right the first time. Then there are lawsuits and settlements," Baker said.

Baker said the biggest goofs his firm sees are in workmanship. "The architects know how to write the specifi-

cations, and they don't usually specify the wrong product — that's not the problem. But the contractors do make mistakes, and our job is to catch them," he said.

Most errors, Baker said, lead to water damage of some kind. "We see a lot of water leakage; that's probably half of what we find. Then there's glass distortion, glass breaking, air leakage and structural failures where the walls wouldn't be able to stand a high wind load. Or, there's improper materials or strength of materials, like glass thickness," he added.

Baker said his firm could save money in the building of high-rise projects. "The proof of that is that 90 percent of our clients call us back again after they hire us the first time," he said.

In fact, that's why IBA is opening in Las Vegas next week. "One of our long-time customers is Turnberry Associates, which is based in Miami. We did a number of their projects there, and also flew back and forth to work on all of their projects since their first Turnberry tower in Las Vegas," he said.

"With what Turnberry is doing here, plus the word-of-mouth business that it has generated, it made sense to be here," he added. "We've done work in Mexico, Asia and Europe, but we like to be like to represent ourselves as local consultants and be as close as possible to the people we service.

It's a business plan that's paying off — even before IBA opens its doors.

"We've got 12 proposals out in Las Vegas right now. We leased space in the Marnell Corporate Center and they hired us to be consultants on their next building," he said.

"That's how it is. On every project we meet three people — the owner, the architect and the general contractor, and we might hear from all three of them on their next projects," he said.



## LEED, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2A

While it may not be the crown jewel of the prized 61-acre downtown parcel — which is also slated for an academic medical center and, if Mayor Oscar Goodman has his way, a pro sports stadium — the Parkway Center may very well be the best designed of the projects. The parcel designed by the Molasky Group of Companies will contain a 90,000-square-foot IRS building and a 220,000-square-foot office building. The latter will be the largest LEED facility in Nevada and one of the largest one in the West, according to Rich Worthington, president of the Molasky Group of Companies, the project's developer. Worthington said the master plan for the 61 acres mandates developers build projects that are friendly to the environment.

The IRS building is being constructed using a tilt-up column system — creating pre-cast, concrete panels that, when put together, form the hull of the building. Viewed as cost effective, the tilt-up process reduces construction time, up to 20 percent in many cases, and allows developers greater control over color and consistency. Worthington said the IRS building's façade is low maintenance and weather resistant, able to withstand the harsh Las Vegas summers.

"Tilt-up is a very progressive way to build ... the parts for the IRS building were made in California and shipped here, we put the four-story high panels together sort of like Legos and the shell went up in 2 weeks, as opposed to two to three months," Worthington said. "It was a challenge with not making the building look like a cheap concrete box. These structures can be very nice. We wanted to emulate the look of a federal courthouse, like the Lloyd George building. We think we've done that. We think we've created a wonderful-looking facility."

Much as they did when researching the development of hi-rise dwellings — Molasky firms built the immensely popular Park Towers at the Howard Hughes Center at Flamingo and Paradise roads — Worthington said company officials would look outside Las Vegas for examples of the best-designed LEED office projects.

Aside from using solar panels, Worthington said other design quirks could include more efficient air conditioning systems, automated toilets, daylighting (using windows and high ceilings to bounce light into structure's core) and bins for wood, steel and other materials that could be recycled on-site during construction. Taken together, all these moves enhance work environments, Worthington said, making for more productive employees and contented tenants. The office's first occupant will be the Southern Nevada Water Authority, which has lead the push for increased water conservation efforts.

Equally exciting is what Worthington says is the thrilling future of eco-friendly design. Various technologies

hold promise for use here, including cogeneration plants (which simultaneously produce electricity, hot water and steam) and burning grease from cooking oil discarded from hotels to power electricity-creating turbines.

"It's fun to look at all these things," Worthington said. "With the IRS building, we had to engineer it over and over because we had to make sure, that with all the light we were letting in, that we kept the place cool without burning tremendous amounts of energy. It makes sense to invest in technology and conservation," Worthington said. "LEED buildings cost more than traditional buildings, but the tangible savings are significant. This is good business and it's the right thing to do."



The Molasky Group of Companies planned Parkway Center with an eco-friendly design in mind.

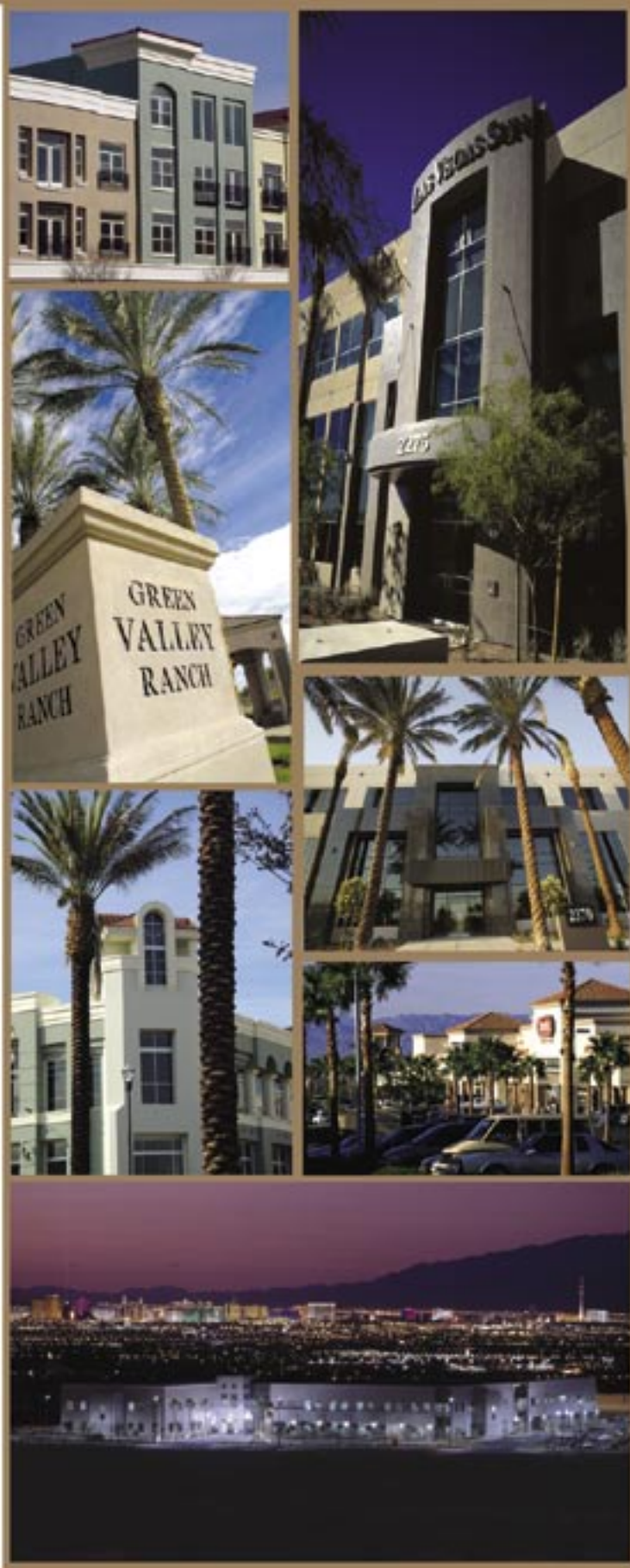
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An artist's rendering illustrates the Marnell Corporate Center, located south of McCarran International Airport.

# Office space evolves to meet diversified needs

by Lisa McQuerrey/Contributing Writer

It's 9 a.m. You slip into a comfy leather chair with your newspaper in hand. Soft music is playing in the background. You glance out your window at a beautiful courtyard, crack the window and listen to the wind gently rustling through the trees. Your neighbor stops by with a cup of gourmet coffee and a fresh Danish pastry. She asks if you'd like to rollerblade in the atrium during your lunch hour.

Is it possible you're actually at work? It is in today's progressive office environment.

Long gone are the days of cramped, windowless office cubicles, harsh fluorescent lighting and stuffy conference rooms. Many of today's office dwellers are working in ergonomically designed, often lavish workspaces, created to encourage collaboration, teamwork and creativity in a relaxed setting. The result? Managers say employees are happier, turnover is lower, ideas are flowing and clients are impressed with the level of product and service they're receiving.

Today's office design trends focus on creating workspace that is functional, flexible and inviting.

"Tenants are always involved in their own space planning," said Brad Schnepf, president of Marnell Properties. The real estate development and management company's projects include Marnell Corporate Center, the master-planned class "A" office development located in the airport sub-market; McCarran Marketplace, a 75-acre community retail center; and Marnell Airport Center, a 75-acre mixed-

use development adjacent to McCarran International Airport.

"We're designing buildings that didn't exist in Las Vegas before," Schnepf added. "We're utilizing unique design features such as radius-type elements and glass and steel construction. We're developing a leading-edge look that is convenient, easily accessible, classy, yet comfortable."

Schnepf said his goal is to build in flexibility at all levels while providing owners with both private space and an open design.

"Tenants today are looking for high quality class "A" corporate campuses that are not so institutional," Schnepf explained. "They are more discerning, and they want a higher quality of product."

R&R Partners has garnered national recognition for its ability to integrate that high-class feel while also showcasing the creativity the firm is known for. The company has grown through seven different buildings since 1974. R&R's previous workspace was a collection of small "satellite suites" encircling the executive offices.

"It wasn't conducive to interaction between all of our departments," said Mary Ann Mele, president and chief strategy officer. "Plus we had people sitting in hallways, closets, even entryways just to accommodate our rapid growth."

Working with Lucchesi Galati Architects (LGA), R&R decided the focus

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SEE OFFICE, PAGE 9A



## OFFICE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8A

of the new facility's design would be on three key needs: defining the company's brand, "stitching" the community back together and providing flexible space that inspires creative thinking and problem-solving. LGA also surveyed managers to get a better understanding of each department's functions and to get a feel for future needs.

"Community was a great metaphor for R&R," said Craig Galati, principal and partner of LGA. "While organized in departments (neighborhoods), their multi-dimensional team service delivery process required collaborative and flexible spaces to work."

Features of the 44,000 square-foot building, which opened in mid-2002 at 900 S. Pavilion Center Drive, include a "main street concept" in which a street circulation space is fronted by each department in the form of a downtown building façade. A "town center" concept supports a flexible working space that all of the other departments feed through and serves as a central meeting place for gatherings and staff meetings.

Another local creative agency took its office inspiration from world-class advertising firm ChiatDay.

According to Andrew Hosak, executive vice president of Virgen Advertising, whose new building is located in The Park at Warm Springs and is slated to open in March, the company was in the design process for a new building, and after visiting ChiatDay's west coast office, threw out the original plans and started over.

Virgen went on to design an open,

fluid space where the offices have no doors, an effort to improve communication and accessibility. A "central park" provides an impromptu meeting space and invites activities such as rollerblading. A video wall displays recent ad campaigns and company events, and in the unlikely event the atmosphere gets a little dull, the entire interior of the facility can be turned into a disco, complete with mirrored balls, flashing lights and a top-notch sound system.

"It's designed to get people up and out of their chairs," Hosak explained.

Virgen Advertising also used furnishings to define the atmosphere they were trying to achieve. The semi-transparent circular conference room — referred to as an "anti-conference room" — uses individual contemporary pieces, such as connected modular tables that can be moved around to accommodate smaller meeting groups. A "war room" contains a full library of reference books. Other perks include pinball machines, a soda bar and popcorn machine.

"It's all designed for creativity," said Hosak, explaining that construction of this unique facility was not necessarily more expensive than a traditional office space, simply because the open spaces use less construction materials. "When people walk in they see a space where they know something creative is happening," Hosak added. "Clients gain confidence that we'll be delivering a great product."

In the world of academia, designers are faced with slightly different challenges. Architects charged with developing educational facilities and offices must meet the specific educational needs



Marnell Properties recently completed building "MCC3," which is nearly 100 percent leased.

of today's students, while retrofitting existing facilities whose purpose or focus has changed over time. David Frommer, director of planning and design for University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV), said university buildings are designed to have a strong relationship to those who reside in them.

"Almost everything we build for academic research or student life is designed for specific educational purposes," Frommer explained. "Over time, the uses of these buildings change. For example a chemistry building built in the 1950s was designed for a specific educational purpose, but today, research activities have changed, so we need to go back and upgrade the facilities."

Frommer said during the planning

process, he considers both the use and maintenance of a facility and its relationship to the overall campus design. "We work with the master plan, consider the need for open space and design the aesthetic factor as well as pedestrian and vehicular movement."

Sustainability issues are also considered in institutional design. Rising construction costs are adding an additional challenge, with designers trying to plan projects with an estimate of what the inflation rate will be during the life of the project.

"It's a challenge," Frommer said. "During programming we align the needs with our budget and try to come up with a good understanding of what overall costs will be."

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# Higher learning

New campuses combine smart design, sensible layout to enhance educational experience

By Damon Hodge/Staff Writer

It's only fitting that as schools evolve to meet students' needs that new ideas continually emerge on improving the buildings they learn in.

During the last few years, school districts nationwide have begun implementing architectural innovations outlined in the federal Energy Department's EnergySmart Schools initiative, which champions energy-efficiency ideas like "daylighting," environmentally-friendly moves like aggressive recycling as well as tapping renewable energy sources, particularly solar and wind power. The Clark County School District recently joined the fray, employing some of the suggestions in EnergySmart's 12-pronged approach to building high performance schools.

One example is Bishop Gorman High School. When the 2006-07 academic year begins, the only Catholic high school in metropolitan Las Vegas will be in a new facility, at Hualapai and Russell roads, which mixes parts of the old Maryland Parkway campus with new architectural enhancements. Faculty and students will see a replica of the street-fronting tower that jutted into the sky and walk by courtyards reproduced to mimic the 51-year-old campus. Other innovations will be subtler.

Craig Forrest, a senior designer for KGA Architecture and project designer for the Bishop Gorman job, says the 190,000-square-foot main facility is being built via the Clearstory concept, using high ceilings and replacing skylights with windows and walls. The subsequent "daylighting" effect creates apertures in the building that allow the infusion of light, but without the glare. Clearstory design will be featured in the administrative building, chapel and two groupings of classrooms. The National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities (NCEF), a school-maintenance group created by the federal Education Department in 1997, notes the positive psychological impacts of daylight on student performance.

"The high ceilings and windows are

also traditional elements of Catholic high school architecture," said Forrest, noting that Gorman's football field will be one of the only few in town without a track. "We looked at other private schools around the West and many of them had a stand-alone football field, making it a football stadium, really. The track will be located in a separate soccer stadium."

Other unique features include a 200-seat stand-alone chapel that could be converted to a 300-seat facility with chairs from a nearby classroom and four courtyards between the gym, theater, chapel and main buildings. There'll be alumni plaza named after St. Viator; an arts courtyard for students; space adjacent to science classrooms that will allow room for outdoor projects and a garden outside the chapel.

Meanwhile, Phase III building plans for the Andre Agassi Preparatory Academy on the west side of town are progressing. Full-day kindergarten and first-grade classrooms will open August, three years ahead of schedule. After reviewing research touting the importance of a good, early educational foundation, administrators fast-tracked the lower grades, which were originally to be implemented after the opening of an \$18 million high school annex. The buildings will feature the same daylighting concepts that Carpenter-Sellers Architects introduced during the second phase.

"Research shows the benefit of light on students," said Rob Gurdison, a Carpenter-Sellers designer who worked with Rick Sellers and Mike Delgado on the second and third phases at Agassi Prep. (Phase III will attach the high school to the middle school and connect with the multipurpose area and the elementary).

Particularly challenging for Carpenter-Sellers was weighing land constraints — fitting kindergarten through 12th grade on a 7.8-acre site; a typical high school can take up to 12 acres — with security issues, all while meeting demands of Agassi administrators to create a campus



The Andre Agassi Preparatory Academy in West Las Vegas was designed as a university-style layout.

unlike any other in the nation. The result: a university-style layout, with multi-story buildings, buildings facing inward (for security purposes) and meandering vistas.

"There's a vista from the elementary school to the high school, but this path represents way-finding. This design has created a campus that symbolically celebrates the matriculation process of the students; each class of students can look ahead to the next phase and see where they are going but the whole picture is not to be realized at once," Gurdison said. "The buildings were designed around the programs and not vice versa. We day lit a lot of the classrooms because research shows the benefit of light on students and we designed buildings for community learning. We also designed learning tools in the building, so students can learn about things like direction or the Big Dipper."

A few blocks away from Agassi Prep is Wendell Williams Elementary and, 10 minutes to the east, Hollingsworth Elementary — both inaugurating a multi-story design concept brainstormed several years ago to combat a burgeoning land crunch. An ancillary effect of the \$3.5 billion school construction and modernization bond issue passed in 1998 — which financed the building of 88 schools — has been fewer and fewer places to situate schools, especially in landlocked urban areas. So Clark County School District officials began talking about "going vertical" in 2000, a concept the NCEF touts both for its intrinsic (reducing crowding, creating a sense of together) and extrinsic (lower construction costs, less land used, energy savings) benefits.

Early returns have been heartening. The district's first two-story campus, Wendell Williams Elementary was built around the shell of Madison Elementary's new multipurpose room. "That was a one-of-a-kind design that may never be duplicated again," said Fred Smith, director of construction management for the Clark County School District.

Even with its unique design quirks, Hollingsworth Elementary is more typical of the multistory prototype the district plans to use in the future, Smith said.

First, the quirks. It is located at Bruce and Fremont Streets, in the heart of a downtrodden area rife with drug deals, prostitution and petty crime, and required additional security measures. Thus, all outdoor areas are secure; kindergarteners have a separate, protected play area with its own entrance. Next, the underground parking. Though only two stories are visible, the school is actually three stories in height — the top two floors comprise the education structure; the ground floor, which is at grade with 18th Street, serves as an underground garage. School staff takes an elevator to the upper floor.

Smith said Hollingsworth fits the multistory blueprint in terms of minimizing land usage. It was built on 4.5 acres, nearly one third of the normal 12 acres. Despite higher construction costs — multistory campuses average \$14 million, as opposed to \$12 million for single-story campuses — going vertical can ultimately reduce energy and maintenance costs.

"That's the only real downside is that they're more expensive to build," Smith said. "We're extremely happy that we have a design that allow us to build schools in areas that don't have large parcels of land."

Slated to open in August, Thiriot Elementary will feature tweaked version of the multistory concept involving fitting a school designed in the shape of a square into a rectangular site. It's the antithesis of normal layout — fitting a rectangular project into a square format.

"It's a prototype, so we'll see how it works," said Smith, noting that the multistory approach will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Thiriot is the only one of the seven elementary schools opening in August with a multi-story design. The concept is also being touted for middle schools.

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The Henderson Basic & Water Development project developed by Swisher & Hall spans 3.5 acres.



Parkway Pointe is a Class A office building located in Summerlin at Town Center and Hillwood drives.

LABOR, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3A

and pay the additional costs.

“Construction costs are a huge, huge issue,” emphasized Carlson. “And we have absolutely no control over it. The fear is that costs could go up another 20 percent in the next six months. Subs are bidding at 80 to 100 percent and we’re not getting as many bids as we were a year ago. There’s so much construction going on in the valley that contractors and subs go toward the casino projects first, which tend to pay a little better than general contractors, so that’s taken a big part of the workforce.” Added Carlson, “I’ve even heard stories of contractors charging clients to hold a place in line for their project for three to six months.”

Carlson said some clients are stopping projects and others are cutting back. “It’s forcing us to do a lot of redesign work,” added Carlson. “Clients don’t want a generic box, but we’re taking off architectural detail because they can’t afford it. It’s stretching the limits of what we can do.”

According to Carlson, his firm is doing third party cost estimate reviews more frequently than usual to keep owners up to speed on quickly escalating costs.

There are several theories for the rapid rise in the cost of construction materials, from the complex issue of rebuilding Iraq to talk of greedy suppliers taking advantage of the existing climate.

“It’s a seller’s market right now,” Cambeiro said. “The spike in construction costs has nothing to do with the cost of materials. It’s supply and demand. Everyone is busy and they’re putting a higher price on their materials.”

“We’ve got plywood and concrete going over seas,” Carlson said. “China’s building boom is using concrete, and plywood is going for building and rebuilding in Iraq. While some of that has slowed, we’ve now got problems with local suppliers keeping pace with demand.”

While commercial clients are obviously concerned about the bottom-line costs of their projects, architects have the added concern of the standard of work they’re able to do if a client asks them to reduce the quality of materials or change their design in such a way that reduces the overall look, feel and sustainability of the finished project.

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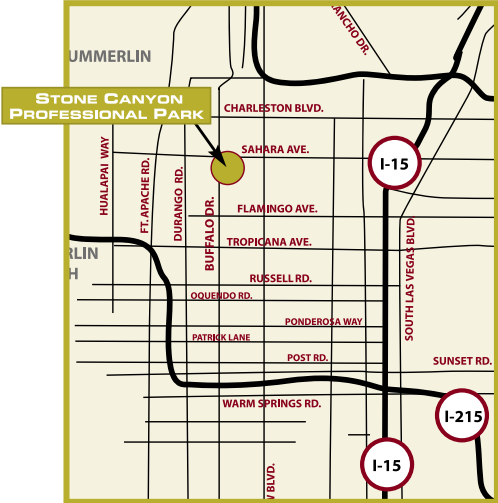
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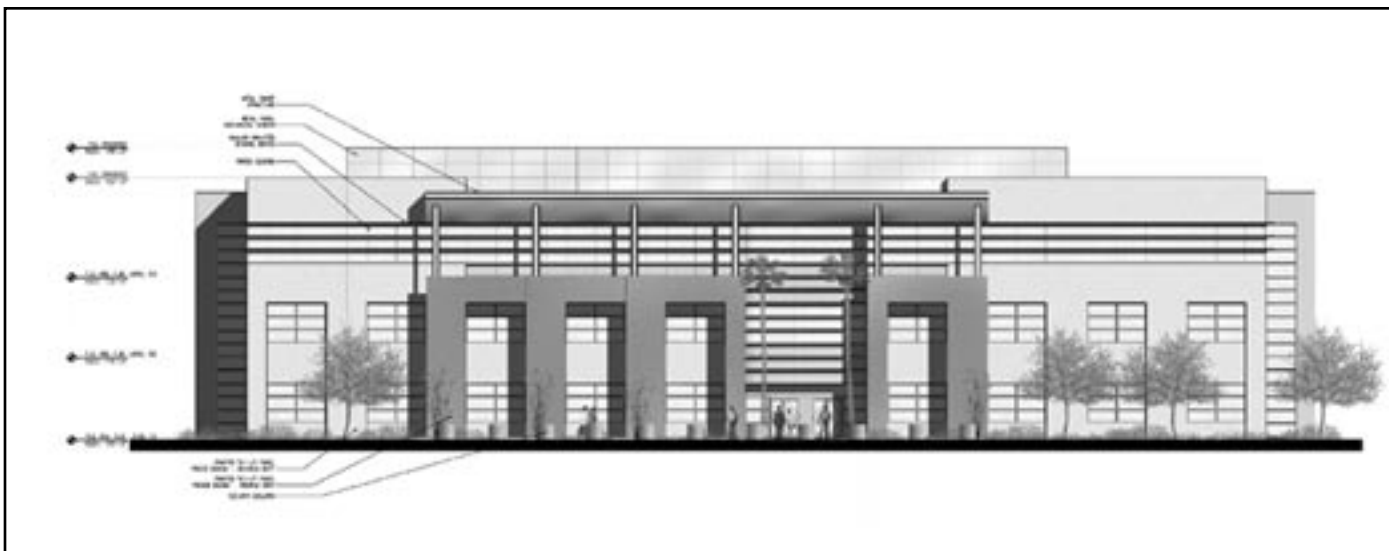
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The Clark County School District's Capital Program Management Building is a 60,000-square-foot office building that will house approximately 300 employees.

#### LABOR, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3A

"Clients end up doing alternate plans, leaving portions of a building unfinished or they don't build a second phase right away," Cambeiro said. "Others bite the bullet. I think the hype will level off soon."

"This impact on our business is getting our clients to understand those increases," Schulz noted. "Buildings are simply more expensive to construct than they were a few years ago. Clients don't fully understand that a building they may have produced a few years ago can cost significantly more per square foot today. There is a tendency to blame the architect, thinking they have over-designed or added cost to the building, when the factors are simply out of the architect's control. All we can do is inform the client early in the process of the situation, and through value engineering, produce the best project for their budget."

Despite personnel shortages and escalating building costs, most firms are enthusiastic about current design trends.

According to Cambeiro, one trend in the architectural community is a move toward more mixed-use planning. "Buildings are many variations of commercial, residential, retail and related amenities," Cambeiro said. "Another hybrid is retail with the hotel/gaming and condominium component. This has all been found in big cities, but it's the first time we're seeing it in Las Vegas."

Cambeiro said at last check, there were 48 land parcels in the Las Vegas area zoned for this type of mixed-use development.

"It's a tremendous building program," he added. "We're bringing the high rise to Las Vegas and we're no longer limited to the Strip. We'll see this happening near major thruways, like I-215."

Of course, one of the reasons design-

ers and contractors are going vertical is because of the issue of land availability. Cambeiro, who has watched Las Vegas' growth spurt over a 43-year period, has several predictions.

"This is the start of the next boom in Las Vegas," Cambeiro said. "Bellagio started one and I think Steve Wynn will do it again. There's lots of talk about development on South Las Vegas Boulevard, heading toward Los Angeles. Of course Summerlin and Aliante will continue, but I see growth in the next 10 years going south. Jean will become the middle of the Las Vegas Valley and we'll stretch out as far as Primm within 15 years."

"There is an emphasis on new urbanization in the Las Vegas Valley," added Schulz. "The idea of putting home, business and play in closer proximity. We see a new wave of high-density multi-use projects. High-rise condominiums that

are being built on the strip are catering to more affluent buyers who are looking for a second or third home. Projects are being built downtown with more modest budgets in an attempt to draw young professionals back to the downtown area."

The term "sustainability" is also gaining significance within the local architectural community. Designers said they've been working to educate clients about sustainability issues for years and feel they're finally getting the message through.

"Energy is a priceless resource we have to conserve," Cambeiro said. "Owners have ignored that in the past, but we're getting the point across about sustainable design, so they're more aware. As a group, we're preaching that it will save money down the line. It's a lifecycle cost."

To that end, many architects are embracing the agenda of the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), the nation's foremost coalition of leaders from across the building industry, which works to promote buildings that are environmentally responsible, profitable and healthy places to live and work. The agency developed the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system, which is based on accepted energy and environmental principles and strikes a balance between known effective practices and emerging concepts.

"The practice is gaining much more acceptance," Carlson said. "We consider the use of recycled products and use of natural day lighting, as well as indoor air quality and water and energy conservation efforts."



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