



EAST BEACH

A Simple Life on the Chesapeake Bay

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EAST BEACH SELECTED AS ONE OF TOP FIVE SUSTAINABLE LAND DEVELOPMENTS IN U.S. *Land Development Visionary Awards recognize best practices*

NORFOLK, Va. – (May 2008) – East Beach, Norfolk’s New Urbanist Community on the Chesapeake Bay, has been selected as one of the top five most visionary sustainable land developments in the United States and the only one in the Mid-Atlantic region. The Land Development Visionary Awards are designed to recognize excellence in creativity, vision and the implementation of best practices in land development. The awards are given by **Sustainable Land Development International**, an industry-led organization that promotes responsible, sustainable land development around the world, and the top five developments will be featured in the upcoming issue of *Sustainable Land Development Today* magazine.

The award recognizes not only the planning and design of projects, but also focuses on the development process. Criteria for the award include effective leadership, team building, public relations successes, sustainable principles, contribution to the community, innovative applications of solutions, financial success, along with uniqueness and beauty of the project.

“Everyone involved in the creation of East Beach, from the Mayor, City Council and NRHA Commissioners, to the City staff, our development team and our consultants, have strived for excellence in every facet of East Beach,” says Bart Frye, managing partner for East Beach Company, LLC. “This award helps validate what we already knew, that we are creating something extraordinary here that will set standards for Virginia for generations to come.”

East Beach is considered a success by a number of measures. The area where East Beach now stands was once a blighted section that cost the City of Norfolk more than \$2.5 million annually in health and safety costs than were collected in real estate taxes each year. By the 1980s, the East Beach area had become a slum of 1,600 housing units, only 21 of which were owner occupied. The City of Norfolk and NRHA committed in 1999 to transform this property into the crown jewel of the Norfolk coastline.

By completion of the project, East Beach is projected to become a positive \$6 million annual revenue generator for the city. The private developer, East Beach Company, LLC, has funded 100% of the cost of infrastructure improvements (approximately \$32 million). The total private investment is expected to surpass \$500 million.

The master plan, designed by Duany Plater-Zyberk, created a new street grid. The major transformation was that all of the streets that run north and south were shifted one-half block to the east. The result was significant, and the mature trees in the neighborhood, formerly in private back yards, became a highlight for the public parks that now grace the neighborhood’s streets.

At the north end of each street, public bayfront greens were dedicated as parks. These greens enhance the connection to the water, as they allow views of the Chesapeake Bay from deep within the neighborhood, and create a beachfront address for residents living south of the bayfront.

The character of the neighborhood changes from the north to the south. At the north end of the site near the bay, the character of the homes is predominantly beachy, featuring grand wide porches, increased front setbacks and shingle-style architecture. Heading south, the use of brick is introduced, smaller front setbacks occur and the architecture leans more towards arts and crafts and colonial revival. The character gradually changes again as it spreads to the south toward the existing boat yards and slips, where marina-related shops and restaurants are being built, with condominiums above.

To enhance the change in character as one moves from the beach to the marinas, the street cross sections change from casual, flush curbed winding streets in the north, complete with gravel parking aisles, to a more formal, linear street pattern to the south, consisting of full height curbs, straighter, wider streets and linear sidewalk patterns.

The quality of the architecture at East Beach is also a major factor in its success. The East Beach design code mandates a high quality of architecture rooted in classical and historical forms. The code prohibits the use of materials like vinyl siding and PVC porch railings. The impact is readily apparent when one walks the streets in East Beach. The homes provide a richness and warmth by virtue of their variety and quality.

The extraordinary care taken in implementing the master plan design and the quality housing product has resulted in high sales value and strong sales volumes. Homes in East Beach are selling for 32% more on the average than the typically-designed adjacent subdivision development, despite the fact that they enjoy the same beach, marinas and restaurants, and are the same general housing types and sizes.

Even in a slow real estate market, sales in East Beach continue to be strong as homes are selling for the highest price per square foot of any neighborhood in Hampton Roads. Home sales in 2007 exceeded the number sold in 2006. Today, East Beach is home to CEOs, military generals, admirals and other community leaders.

A home in East Beach was selected by *Coastal Living* magazine as the 2005 Idea House, and in both 2006 and 2008, it was named "Community of the Year" by Tidewater Builders Association. In 2007, East Beach was named one of the best restored beaches in America by the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association. In 2008, one of the East Beach homes was honored with the "Best In American Living" award by *Professional Builder* magazine.

East Beach is situated on 100 acres along the Chesapeake Bay in Norfolk. Surrounded by water, the neighborhood is fashioned after classic Southeastern seaboard coastal villages. The master plan for this \$500 million development includes 700 residences, neighborhood restaurants, boutique shops, a Bay Front Club and offices. Public space, walking paths and bayfront greens enhance the vistas and create open spaces for the beachfront community. Boating, fishing and water sports of all types are steps away from the neighborhood. East Beach is a unique initiative between the developers, East Beach Company LLC, the City of Norfolk and Norfolk Redevelopment & Housing Authority. Visit eastbeachnorfolk.com for more information or call 757-333-6650.

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