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Brookfield Residential Properties' Kissing Tree project in San Marcos will have numerous amenities, including The Mix, shown in this rendering, which will include an indoor/outdoor bar area and a biergarten. Homes are expected to be priced from about \$250,000 to \$500,000. BROOKFIELD RESIDENTIAL

## Builder targets boomers with 3,200-home project

### Ground broken for Kissing Tree at Hunter and Centerpoint roads.

By Shonda Novak  
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Brookfield Residential Properties broke ground Thursday on an estimated \$1 billion development in San Marcos that, once completed, will have 3,200 houses for people ages 55 and older.

The development, called Kissing Tree, will be on 1,332 acres at Hunter and Centerpoint roads, across Interstate 35 from the San Marcos outlet malls.

Brookfield said the project's name harkens to Sam Houston's gubernatorial speech in 1857 by an oak tree in San Marcos, where the story goes that he famously kissed several women who presented him with a Texas flag.

Kissing Tree will be the first age-restricted development in San Marcos, said Edjuan Bailey, vice president of sales and marketing for Brookfield Residential, a North American land developer and homebuilder. The project will be built in phases over the next 10 years or so, he said.

Homes are expected to be priced from about \$250,000 to \$500,000, Bailey said.

Brookfield plans to have model homes on the ground later this year. About 248 homes are slated for the first phase, Bailey said.

With an average price of \$300,000 for 3,200 homes, the project is estimated to be close to \$1 billion, he said.

The first homes could be ready for residents by the last quarter of this year or early next year. In addition to developing the project, Brookfield Residential will build the houses.



ROBERT CALZADA / STAFF

Amenities will include 15 miles of hiking trails, a biergarten, a community kitchen, an indoor/outdoor bar, tennis courts, an 18-hole golf course and an 18-hole putting course. Hundreds of acres will be reserved for parks, trails and

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# Kissing Tree

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green space, Brookfield officials said.

Eldon Rude, an Austin-based housing market consultant who has done extensive work for Brookfield, said he has been on the site and has monitored Brookfield's plans as they have moved through the development process.

"They have done extensive research on their targeted audience as they have approached the groundbreaking, and they have a proven track record of executing successful projects. I expect Kissing Tree to be no different," said Rude, who is not working as a consultant on the Kissing Tree project.

Rude said that while San Marcos historically has not seen a significant level of single-family construction – it has had about 200 to 300 new home starts over the last several years – "Kissing Tree will represent a very different type of community for the area that is primarily targeted at an audience that currently lives outside the area."

"The project's combination of Texas Hill Country terrain, the amenities planned for the community, its proximity to Austin and San Antonio, as well as the rapidly growing baby boomer population in Texas should com-

bine to make Kissing Tree a success," Rude said.

In Southeast Austin, Brookfield Residential is developing Easton Park, a large subdivision underway at McKinney Falls Parkway and East William Cannon Drive. Easton Park has become the subject of controversy at Austin City Hall over an affordable housing deal in which in which millions of dollars in fees, including water and wastewater fees, were waived to ensure that hundreds of homes in the community would be permanently affordable to low-income families.

Some Austin City Council members and city water officials said they were in the dark about the deal, which was struck between the developer and staffers in Mayor Steve Adler's and Council Member Delia Garza's offices.

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Eldon Rude  
housing market consultant