

# River City High School

## Joint Use School Creates Community Ties

When Washington Unified School District unveiled its new River City High School, it knew the school would positively impact the education experience for both students and teachers alike. What it didn't fully appreciate was the true impact the school would have on the entire West Sacramento community.

River City High School, home to 2,400 students, features a unique, flexible design that allows some academic spaces and athletic facilities to be shared with residents of the growing West Sacramento community. To create these shared spaces, DLR Group architects, worked hand-in-hand with the school district and the City of West Sacramento to design River City as a comprehensive high school with shared facilities the city could use as a modern community recreation center. Turner Construction was the General Contractor.

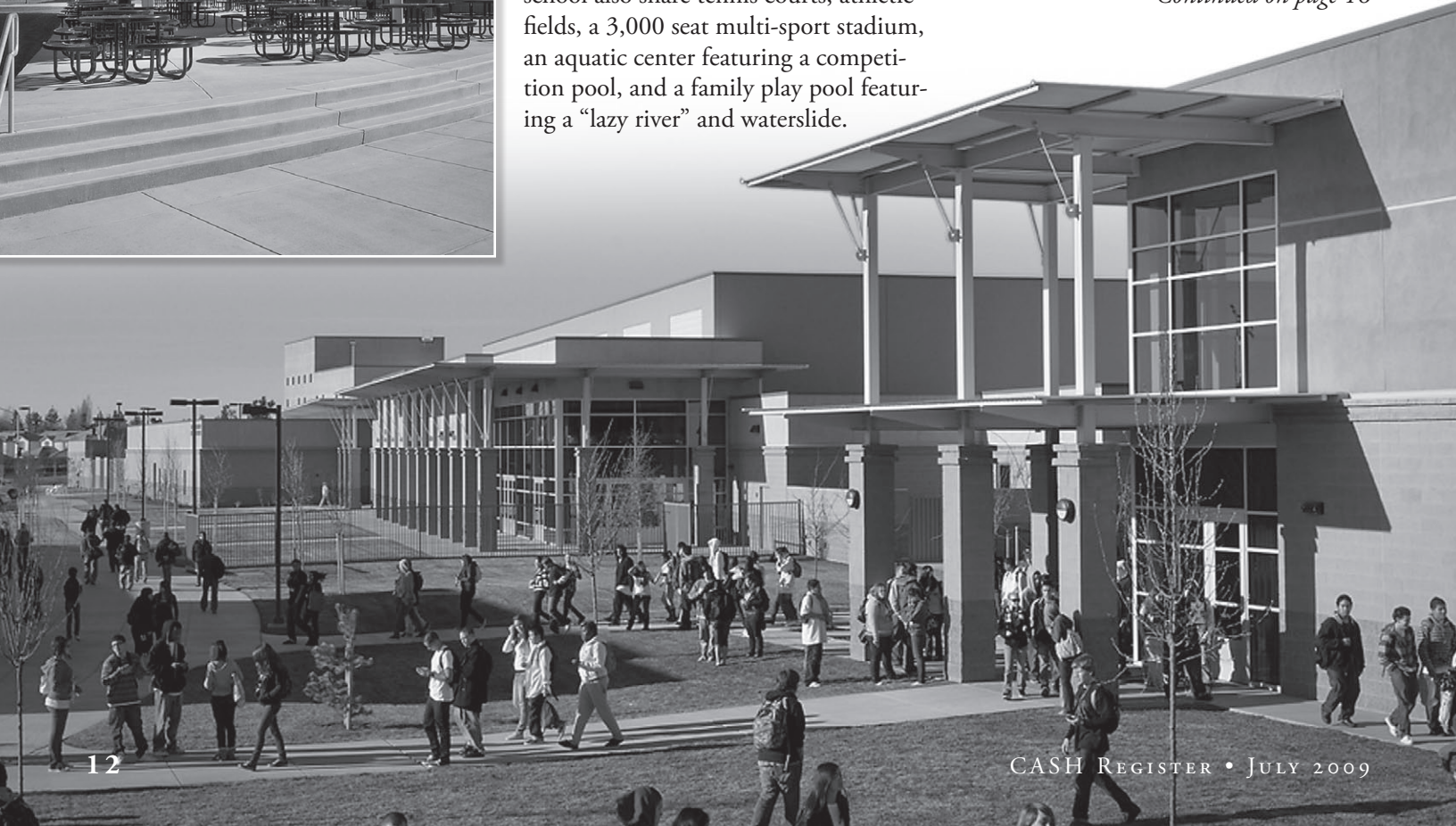
The uniqueness of the design is the inclusion of a full-service, fee-based recreation center for the public on the campus of a 21st Century high school.

Operated by the City of West Sacramento, the recreation center is the largest joint-use facility for the city. Its signature 32-foot high freestanding rock climbing wall is displayed behind a full wall of glass. The recreation center and school also share tennis courts, athletic fields, a 3,000 seat multi-sport stadium, an aquatic center featuring a competition pool, and a family play pool featuring a "lazy river" and waterslide.

"The aim of the school design was to positively impact the entire West Sacramento community – both students and the public," said Chris Brown, DLR Group designer. "Academic performance came first and careful consideration was given to the organization of the site and controlling access between public and private spaces during school hours. The result is a flexible design that services the entire community." Fencing allows the public to use the recreation center areas during the school day while maintaining a safe and secure school campus.

The school design features eight major buildings in a circular layout to form a large central courtyard. This interactive space acts as the main student circulation between buildings and features a covered pavilion for dining with scattered seating areas. The multiple building concept helps to reduce the scale of the 319,000 square foot facility while allowing students

*Continued on page 16*



## River City High School

*Continued from page 12*

to enjoy the mild California weather between classes and during lunch. Based on the built-in flexibility in the design, Administration can organize the campus as a traditional comprehensive high school while providing the flexibility of other curriculum delivery concepts in one or more of the 35,000 square foot, two-story buildings.

In addition to creating a premier facility, this project also met site challenges on the 63 acre campus, dealing with train tracks on the east side and 20 acres of retention area. These issues were resolved in positive ways for all stakeholders, using creatively sustainable solutions. The 7.5 acres surrounding the train track was turned into a pedestrian riparian habitat. And the state's Reclamation District (RD 900) developed reclamation of the retention area.

River City High School unleashes a full complement of educational, cultural, and recreational facilities creating synergy among the student population as well as the growing West Sacramento community and its surrounding environment. 