

NEW: New homes popping up north and south



A home under construction in Woodbrook, a Neal Communities development in Manatee County. Neal marked the completion of the company's 9,000th residence on Wednesday, July 3, 2013, with a ceremony at the home of Stephanie and Dane Martinez.

Company President Pat Neal estimates that 500 employees and subcontractors are working for the company at any one time.

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PARRISH - Two residential developments now steering through the permitting process could bring nearly 4,000 new homes to the northern edge of Manatee County, the latest in a rush by builders to capitalize on Southwest Florida's blooming home market.

The massive projects joins new developments from Parrish to Punta Gorda that signal the restored confidence among builders, who are breaking ground on new homes at the most rapid pace since the Great Recession battered the industry nearly seven years ago.

More builders also are turning to areas east of Interstate 75, where developable land is less expensive and more readily available.

With planned infrastructure improvements in northeast Manatee, including the widening of U.S. 301 and extension of Fort Hamer Road, Parrish has become a prime target for future growth.