

Pompano Beach luring some big fish: Developers transforming skyline with ultra-luxury towers



Crews paint the sign at the Fisher Family Pier in Pompano Beach on March 5. The redesigned pier along with new shops and restaurants have helped transform the area into a landmark destination. (Joe Cavaretta/South Florida Sun Sentinel)

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Pompano Beach, an oceanfront town long known for its low-key vibe, has more of a high-class swagger these days.

After decades of living in the shadow of boomtowns like Miami and Fort Lauderdale, Pompano is now the darling of developers willing to build seriously upscale projects along its beach. We're talking five-star luxury projects like The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Waldorf Astoria Residences and W Pompano Beach Hotel & Residences.

The metamorphosis — cultivated by the city and [fueled by developers](#) — is bringing dramatic change to the Pompano skyline, generating buzz locally and beyond.

“Really this whole area has undergone a tremendous change in reputation,” said Patrick Campbell, executive vice president of the condominium division at Related Group.

“It’s funny,” Campbell told the South Florida Sun Sentinel. “I ran into a client the other day from New York. They’d been at a dinner party and said they were coming to Fort Lauderdale. And people said, ‘Do you know where Pompano is? We’re hearing all about it.’ It’s really a success story. It shows over the years how Pompano has become a place to be.”

The town, home to nearly 120,000 residents, was named for the tiny, tropical game fish known as pompano. According to legend, a surveyor for Henry Flagler’s Florida East Coast Railway came up with the name in 1896 after he got to town and had the fish for dinner. The city was founded a dozen years later, in 1908.

Jorge Perez, who has helped shape [South Florida’s skyline](#) as Related’s founder and CEO, had to be persuaded to invest in the town named for a fish.

“I had to convince Jorge Perez that Pompano Beach was a place worth investing in,” Campbell said. “To us, we viewed it as the in-between area between Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale that had been, not left behind, but had not had the gains of all the other communities.”

Related bought its first property in an auction on the courthouse steps in 2011. That property became the site for Solemar, a condo that opened in 2023. Next came Casamar, opening in 2025.

Now Related is working on the Waldorf project, already under construction and expected to open in 2027. Then there’s the W Pompano, another Related project waiting to break ground just steps from the beach.

City officials say they helped set the stage for the transformation by investing \$80 million in improving the beachfront. The investment included a [redesigned pier](#), a new four-story parking garage and streetscape improvements.

The city also partnered with developers to create the popular Pompano Beach Fishing Village. A thriving destination, the [Fishing Village](#) ushered in changes with its casual and upscale dining, tiki bar, shops, Hilton-brand hotel and four-story parking garage, city officials say.



Inside the W Pompano sales gallery on March 5 stands a three-dimensional model showing what's to come: A sleek high-end condo tower expected to break ground this fall. (Joe Cavaretta/South Florida Sun Sentinel)

Lou Moshakos opened two popular restaurants on the beach: Oceanic and Lucky Fish.

A veteran restaurateur, he owns a total of 35 restaurants from South Florida to Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee.

He says he got a call 10 years ago from a broker hoping to entice him to open a place in Pompano Beach.

“I told him, ‘You’re crazy to think I am going to go to Pompano Beach,’” Moshakos told the Sun Sentinel. “There was no way I was coming to Pompano Beach. And he convinced me. He told me Pompano Beach is changing. He told me to come down and take a look.”

Moshakos said he flew down from North Carolina and was impressed by what he saw.

“The city had invested in the streetscape,” he said. “I went to City Hall and they showed me the plans they had. They have a beautiful beach, but they needed some life. The Fishing Village brought in some life. The old Pompano had no restaurants, no shops, no hotel, no nothing on the beach. Just a surface parking lot. Now it’s an area with restaurants and shops. It’s a destination now.”

On one recent breezy day, young moms strolled along the beachfront sidewalk pushing baby strollers. Tourists walked along the pier taking selfies. Bartenders mixed drinks at restaurants built right on the sand.

“What you see today was built on top of a parking lot,” Nguyen Tran, director of the city’s Community Redevelopment Agency, said while touring the area with the Sun Sentinel.

“Before, it was like an outdated beach area from the 1970s,” Tran said. “The new hotel, Tru by Hilton, sits on what used to be a parking lot. This is a success story about how we transformed a sleepy village into a world-class destination. This development on the beach has spurred development all over the city. Now other developers want to be here.”



(Mike Stocker/South Florida Sun Sentinel)

The Ritz-Carlton Residences is shown under construction on A1A in Pompano Beach on Feb. 26, 2025. The upscale tower is one of several on the rise in Pompano Beach. (Mike Stocker/South Florida Sun Sentinel)

Here's just some of the new high-rise towers that have already been built or are on the way:

Solemar: A 21-story luxury condo tower with 105 residences at [1116 N. Ocean Blvd.](#) Amenities include a wine-tasting salon, spa treatment rooms, covered pavilion with bar, two swimming pools, a beachside promenade with lounge chairs and umbrellas, fitness center and yoga studio. Developer: Related Group. Opened 2023.

Casamar: A 21-story luxury tower with 118 residences at [900 N. Ocean Blvd.](#) Amenities include fitness facilities, a lobby, lounge and two-story parking garage. Ground-floor commercial and residential spaces also offer private beachfront access. Developer: Related Group. Opened September 2025.

Waldorf Astoria Residences: A 28-story luxury condo tower with 92 residences at [1350 S. Ocean Blvd.](#) Beachfront cafe with room service, resident lounge, pool, jacuzzi and cabanas with poolside dining, wellness facilities and nearly two dozen

boat slips. Developer: Related Group. Tower is completing vertical construction on May 1, 2026. Estimated completion: Mid-2027.

W Pompano Beach Hotel & Residences: A 24-story luxury condo tower with 77 residences and 303 hotel/condo units at [20 N. Ocean Blvd.](#) Amenities include a spa, two restaurants, shops, three pools, sports courts and banquet facilities. Developer: Related Group and BH Group. Estimated groundbreaking: October 2026.

The Ritz-Carlton Residences: Two towers with a total of 205 residences at 1380 and [1381 South Ocean Blvd.](#) Beach Tower has 32 stories (117 residences) and Marina Tower overlooking the Intracoastal has 14 stories (88 residences). Amenities include lush landscaped areas, pools, spas, lounging areas, a pavilion and 14 private boat slips. Developer: Fortune International Group and Oak Capital. Estimated completion: Later in 2026

Salato: Nine-story luxury condo with 40 residences at [305 Briny Ave.](#) Amenities include swimming pool with bar, spa, fitness center and 24-hour white glove concierge. Developer: U.S. Development. Estimated completion: End of April 2026.

With four upscale towers already built or in the pipeline, Related Group is helping change the landscape of Pompano.

“We love the area,” said Campbell, the company’s executive vice president. “We’re Pompano’s biggest fans.”

So does Related have any other Pompano projects waiting in the wings?

“We have a couple properties on the beach we’re talking to right now,” Campbell said. “But nothing I can talk about right now.”



(DBOX/Courtesy)

The Ritz-Carlton Residences will feature two towers on both sides of State Road A1A in Pompano Beach. The towers are expected to open later this year. (DBOX/Courtesy)

Not everyone is applauding all the changes.

Commissioner Audrey Fesik, who represents the beach, says she was elected in 2024 partly because residents were upset about all the development along the coast.

She's heard them gripe about the gridlock. And the hassle of waiting way too long at the bridge, trying to get back and forth from the mainland to the barrier island.

"What they're freaking out about is they don't want to be like Surfside and feel like they're living in a concrete wind tunnel," Fesik told the Sun Sentinel. "They don't want to be living in a concrete jungle."

Still, some are impressed by all the changes underway.

"The time has come for Pompano," said Charlie Ladd, a prominent developer in Fort Lauderdale.

"It's the only place left to go. If you go up and down the coast of Broward, there's no land left. And it's helping them generate this surge of development that's making their beach a more dynamic destination."



(New Jersey-based U.S. Development/Courtesy)

Salato, a nine-story luxury condo with 40 residences, is expected to open in Pompano Beach in late April. The condo is one of several on the rise in Pompano. (U.S. Development/Courtesy

Carolyn Burns, a real estate broker based in Fort Lauderdale, is also wowed by all the developers flocking to the small town where she once worked in the 1990s.

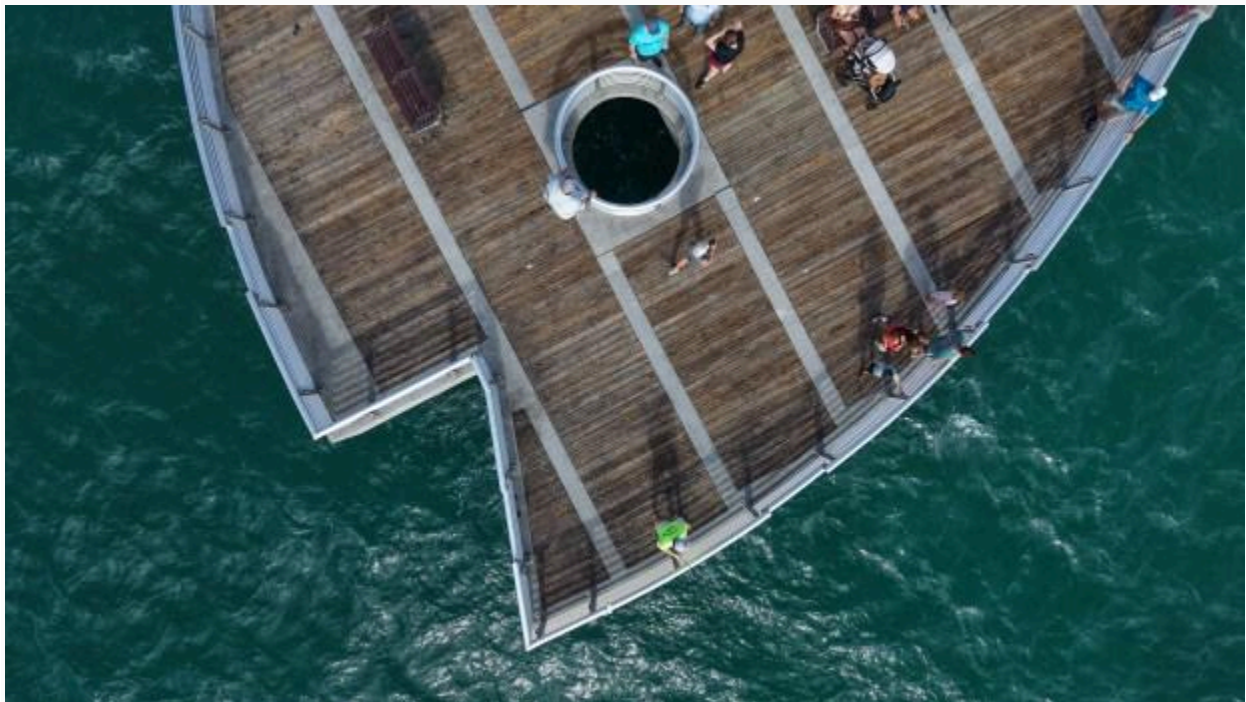
“Pompano Beach is really growing up,” Burns said. “Now when you drive down Atlantic, it’s like wow! They’re becoming quite fashionable and trendy. I like how it’s becoming as long as they keep the look and feel hometown-like.”

The Beach House restaurant was the first to open at the Fishing Village.

The two-story restaurant with a view of the ocean [opened in 2018](#).

“We were so amazed with the city’s plans for the future here and we wanted to be part of it,” said Andy Fox, the restaurant’s director of operations. “We’re excited to be part of this, so much so that we built a second restaurant right across the street.”

Baresco, a Mexican restaurant, opened in April 2023.



An aerial view shows the Fisher Family Pier, which is shaped like a fish, in Pompano Beach. (Joe Cavaretta/South Florida Sun Sentinel)

When Beach House opened eight years ago, the owners had no idea a W-branded condo would be opening a block away one day, Fox said. The Ritz-Carlton and Waldorf Astoria were a pleasant surprise as well.

“That was like the best-case scenario that came true,” Fox said. “And as great as it is now, five years from now it’s going to be booming with all the new luxury condos going up. And I don’t think any one of those three would have come here if it wasn’t for the Fishing Village.”

The [W project will rise](#) across the street from the Briny Irish Pub, an old neighborhood bar that’s been around since 1945.

Pompano may be making way for the new, but it’s still holding onto its old laidback charm, said Suzette Sible, the assistant city manager.

“You have people who say the new development drives out the old businesses,” she said. “But it’s the opposite. It brings in more foot traffic and helps those old-time businesses. And you end up with a nice mix of old and new.”

Briny, a [rustic Irish bar](#) at 3400 E. Atlantic Blvd., has been drawing in customers for decades with its nautical decor, casual atmosphere and pub food.

According to its website, Briny has deep roots in Pompano Beach’s seaside culture and has grown from a humble beachside tavern into one of the area’s most iconic neighborhood bars.

“Originally opened to serve locals and fishermen after long days on the water, the Briny quickly became a go-to spot for cold drinks, good conversation, and an easygoing, unpretentious vibe,” the website says. “Over the decades, it has remained true to its roots while evolving with the times — keeping its charm intact while adding live music, food, and its signature quirky maritime décor.”



The Pier Parking Garage, a cornerstone of beach redevelopment in Pompano Beach that cost \$20 million to build, is seen on March 5. (Joe Cavaretta/South Florida Sun Sentinel)

And now the W will soon be on the rise across the street.

The owners of Briny could not be reached for comment.

But Campbell, the developer who's building the W tower, says he knows the owners and they are just fine with the new development.

"They're friends of ours," he said. "They're kind of laidback out-of-the-picture people. They have only owned it for four or five years, but the place has been there forever. I think they like what's happening. It's bringing excitement. It kind of helps them as well."

One thing they've made clear, according to Campbell: They're not getting bought out.

"The one thing they continue to say is, 'We're not getting rid of the Briny Pub,'" Campbell said with a chuckle. "People would revolt if it completely disappeared."

And as the developer of the W, Related is totally fine with Briny staying just where it is, Campbell said.

“We like it,” he said. “There’s great synergy between old and new. The town has a little bit of the past, which gives it the charm. It’s not a big city, but it’s close to the big cities. I think it’s always going to have the old-world charm.”

<https://www.sun-sentinel.com/2026/03/14/pompano-beach-luring-some-big-fish-developers-transforming-skyline-with-ultra-luxury-towers/?clearUserState=true>