

Location is key for family living on south shore of Lady Bird Lake

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Bridges on the Park — 210 Lee Barton Drive

Eric and Lucie Schmidhauser moved into a second-story condominium in Bridges on the Park in mid-December. Lucie Schmidhauser is a pilates and tennis instructor at the Austin Tennis Academy Fitness Center at Spanish Oaks, and Eric Schmidhauser is the director of development for A Glimmer of Hope Foundation, a nonprofit international aid and development organization. They have a 6-year-old son, Max, and 8-year-old daughter, Grace.

Why did they move downtown?

The Schmidhausers wanted to spend less time commuting and maintaining a home and more time together outdoors.

"We said, 'Why don't we move downtown (into) a free-maintenance place where we can just enjoy being outside without any worries about doing the lawn and repairs and all that stuff?' " Lucie Schmidhauser said. "The quality of life and the lifestyle is much better."

Where did they live before?

A house on a 5-acre lot in Spicewood.

Was the condominium a worthwhile investment?

After comparing multiple downtown projects, they decided that Bridges on the Park offered the best location and square-footage value for the price, Eric Schmidhauser said. And the convenience of living downtown near the family's favorite outdoor spots, restaurants and entertainment was well worth it, he said.

What are the advantages of urban living?

The best thing is having Zilker Park and Town Lake Park as their backyard, Lucie Schmidhauser said.

"You have all the wonderful outdoor activities that Austin has right at your fingertips," Eric Schmidhauser said, adding that Max learned to ride his bike in Town Lake Park a few weeks ago. "It defies some of the stereotypes that a family would never live downtown. For us it's been a wonderful experience."

What are the disadvantages?

Other than having to drive farther to take their children to school until they transfer to a closer school next year, the Schmidhausers said they haven't experienced any downsides to living downtown. "We couldn't be happier, actually. Instead of having buyer's remorse, we're having buyer's celebration," Eric Schmidhauser said.

What's their view?

They look over South Lamar Boulevard and Zachary Scott Theatre.

What are their neighbors like?

They're mostly retirees and young professionals. "It's a very intimate environment," Eric Schmidhauser said. "We envision it will give us the opportunity to really know our neighbors and create friendships in the community."

Details on the project

Bridges on the Park is on South Lamar Boulevard at Riverside Drive. The six-story development has a sports pool, access to hike-and-bike trails and an outdoor fire pit. The condominiums range from \$350,000 to more than \$700,000, said Bobby Nail, an Austin partner with developer CLB Partners Ltd.

Courtesy of JB Goodwin