

Street Smart



Photos: John Certain www.certainimages.com

By Shannon Linden

Just as Kevin Costner obeyed the ghostly voice in *Field of Dreams*, a team of Kamloops' developers has answered this city's call: if you build something the people have never seen before, they will come.

Urban living by design recently arrived in the River City with the unveiling of Mosaic — the aptly named, multifamily development project created by partners Frank Quinn and A and T Project Developments.

Located at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Battle Street, the swanky new building sits at one of the most sought-after addresses in the city.

Within walking distance to amenities, Interior Savings Center and Riverside Park, it's about as central as you can get. But being close to what's happening wasn't happening enough for its creators.

"It would have been easier to put in 40 generic units of stacked living," says Jeff Arnold, owner and

president of A and T. "But that's not the path we chose. That's not the vision we had for Kamloops."

It seems there's an urban revival happening here, and with encouragement from the city, Mosaic is leading the way.

Designed by award-winning Vancouver architects Howard Bingham Hill, Mosaic is reminiscent of that city's Yaletown. Dressed in contemporary colour and accessorized with black metal trim and wood detailing, the four-story, plum brick building exudes cool confidence combined with warm welcoming.

Interior designer Jody Ferner ensured that contemporary carries over from the outside in, where 18-foot ceilings highlight the lobby's modern décor. At night, a chic chandelier beckons weary owners home after a long day of work or shopping, guiding them through the striking but serene lobby, down the hall or up the access-controlled elevator to the warmth and wonder of their own units.

Each and every place is unique and that's some-

"It would have been easier to put in 40 generic units of stacked living"

thing the developers pride themselves on.

"This wasn't an easy design to engineer," Arnold says. "With living space on the rooftop, different sized and off-set units with varying floor plans, we had to be cognizant of weight transfer at all times."

Each of the thirty units has individually controlled air conditioning, instant hot water, high ceilings ranging from nine to 14 feet, and top end finishing throughout. Thoughtful touches include contemporary, streamlined and mood-setting lighting inside and out, engineered three-inch wide hardwood flooring with sound transfer reduction treatment, stone countertops and Bosch appliances.

Then there's the financial incentive of being part of the city's visionary downtown revival plan, in which homeowners are exempt from municipal property taxes on the initial assessed value for the first five years, with the possibility of renewal for reduced rates for another five years after that.

Aspirations lofty, the developers reached for the top with this project — the very top, because perhaps what is most impressive is the roof of the building.

Boasting Kamloops' first eco-sensitive, "green" rooftop, nine of the units come complete with garden space, outdoor gas fireplaces, and barbeque connections.

Amidst fabulous finishing, framed by mountain and river views, things look pretty good from the up there, but it's when I step inside and talk to the people who call Mosaic home that I truly appreciate the project's appeal.

Meet Marina

"I always wanted to live in the Interior," Saskatchewan native Marina Dodds says.

A petite woman with a big smile, she exudes natural enthusiasm, sitting across from me at her new table, in her new kitchen, in one of Mosaic's eight street-side homes.

"I love it here," she says. "I love Victoria Street and the character of the downtown. I love that this is an easy city to get around in. And I love the heat!"

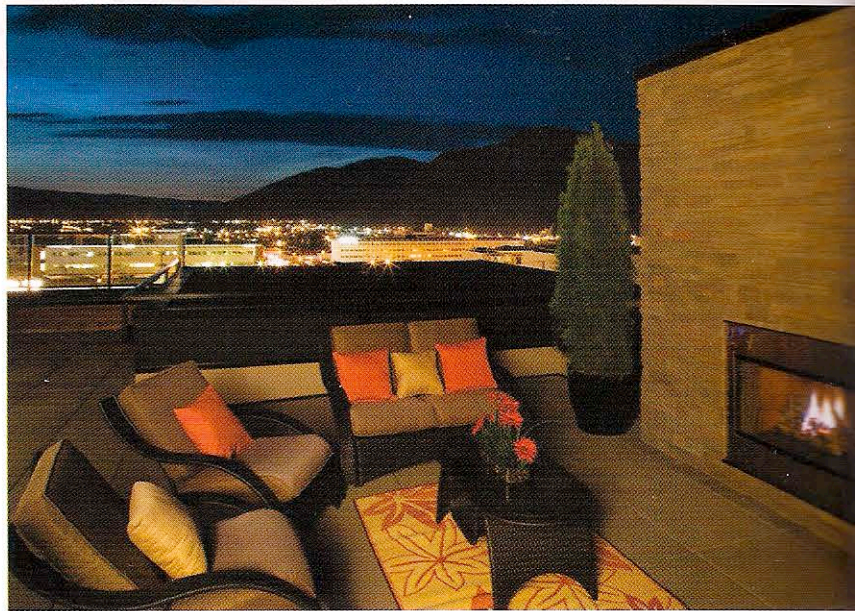
Deciding Kamloops was somewhere she could settle, she explored Mosaic online and talked to the people at A and T, reading testimonials on the company's website, before making the final decision to buy.

"I put my trust in the developers," she says.

Dodds appreciates that she was kept posted throughout the building stage and that she was able to tweak original plans to fit her particular needs.

"I didn't want any carpet," she comments. "Even my stairs are hardwood."

She absolutely loves her bedroom. Bright and beautifully decorated, the adjoining ensuite is de-



A splash of colour gives Dr. Jim Stephen's outdoor living space a stylish, inviting ambience to suit the spectacular setting.

signed to provide spa-like serenity with maximum functionality. With heated porcelain tile flooring, a floating vanity, china sinks, a rectilinear tub and a walk-in glass shower, it's no wonder she calls this area of the home "her palace."

As a woman on her own, Dodds also appreciates the building's enhanced security.

"I like the controlled entrance," she says, "And I feel better setting the alarm at night before heading to bed."

Dodds is also thrilled with the convenience of downtown living.

"The library called to let me know a book I reserved was in," she says. "I walked out the door and was back in five minutes."

Back, ready to curl up in a lounge and soak up some sunshine on her street-side patio while getting lost in a good read, content she's found her place.

A Discussion with Dr. Stephen

Mosaic sets a new standard for Kamloops and that suits Jim Stephen, a pathologist at Royal Inland Hospital, perfectly. At this new stage of his life, three of his four children are living independently and he's on his own.

"The more I looked at Mosaic, the more it appealed to me," he says. "It was time to reorganize my life and the development provided a perfect opportunity to downsize without sacrificing what I want."

And a stroll through Dr. Stephen's penthouse suite confirms it — who wouldn't want what he's got?

With over 1,600 square feet of luxury living, his unit has all the extras Mosaic promises with a num-

ber of custom features built in. A stunning bookcase designed by carpenter Wayne Chizma sits under the steep staircase leading to the rooftop patio, while a fabulous cabinet by Excel acts as a modern china hutch across from the kitchen.

Along with his rooftop patio, the great room is probably Dr. Stephen's favorite.

"If I leave my bedroom French doors open, I can see most of my place, from the dining room, through the kitchen, den and entertainment area, and, if the windows are open, right outside."

"I really appreciate the exquisite finishing, the clean style, and the size," he says. "I recently had 25 people over for dinner and could easily accommodate that kind of entertaining."

Yet because he spends eight to 10 weeks a year out of town on work or travel-related endeavors, Dr. Stephen is thrilled with the "lock and go" lifestyle this kind of living affords. And of course, he's pleased with the conveniences of being downtown.

"I used to live in Rose Hill," he says. "Now days go by when I don't use my car."

And that — like his new home — is an idea whose time has come.

Dean Gets Domestic

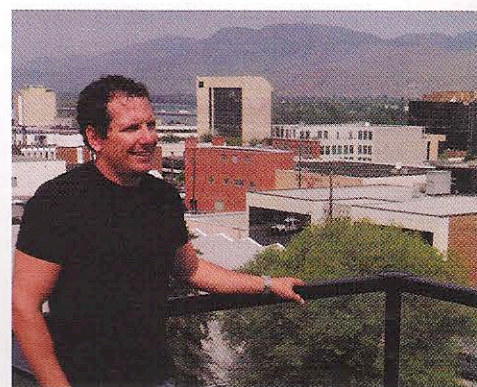
Co-owner of Bridgeport Flooring Company, Dean Pierobon has an infectious smile and a wicked sense of humour. Widely traveled and happening, he loves to be where the action is.

"There's something about being downtown, in the heart of things," he says.

Pierobon is impressed with the city's commitment to revitalizing the downtown core and appreciates the unique contribution Mosaic makes to that end.

"I first bought into my unit as an investment," he admits, "But when I saw it come together and realized how soundproof it was — quiet in the city — I was amazed and decided to move in."

Like Marina Dodds and Jim Stephen, he is pleased with the custom finishing he helped select. His unit features wide oak, distressed flooring and two beautiful brick walls, one in the den, the other going out to the patio. Travertine marble floors in his ensuite, personalized lighting, special glass splash, and a bigger



Mosaic resident Dean Pierobon takes in the view from his rooftop terrace.

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rooftop patio are among the features he enjoys.

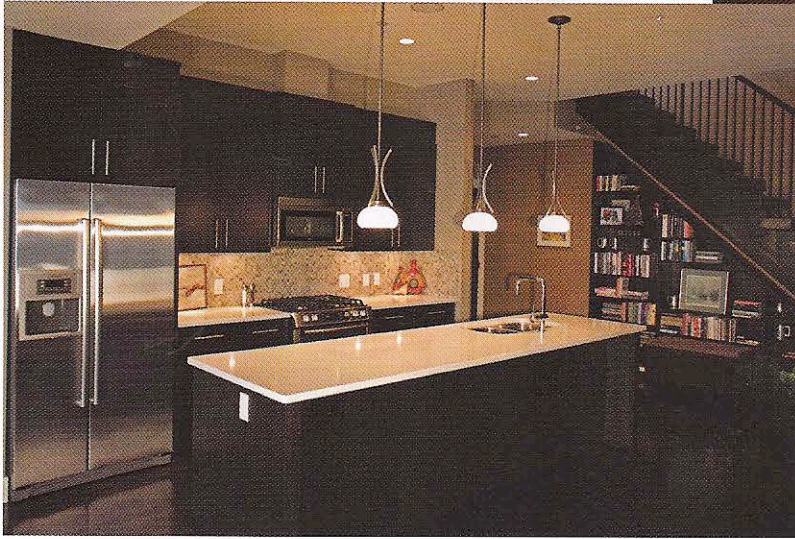
"I really love the great room," he says. "It's a spacious area for entertaining. The place has that New York loft look — not that I've been to New York — yet," he grins.

Maybe not the Big Apple, but for this Kamloopsian and others like him, Mosaic offers a satisfyingly substantial bite of the best in new development.

To learn more about Mosaic, check out the website: www.liveatmosaic.com.



Jim Stephen's suite epitomizes the elegant style of Mosaic, from the clean lines in the kitchen to the airy, open plan in the great room and dining area.



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