

Tower a City Centre evolution

Surrey's 406-unit project features attractive pricing, innovative technology

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SPECIAL TO THE SUN



The two-bedroom show suite in the sales centre for Evolve, at left, gives buyers an idea of how the project will look upon completion, as does this artist's rendering of an Evolve home, at right.



Three fully furnished show suites are on display at Evolve, including this two-bedroom home.

PHOTOS: RICHARD LAM



Evolve, a 35-storey concrete highrise with 406 units, has an expected occupancy date of 2018.

In a region where the prospect of owning a home is a distant dream for many young people, WestStone Group's Evolve tower in Surrey is offering buyers a chance to secure a foothold in the rapidly developing Surrey City Centre neighbourhood.

Attractive pricing, coupled with inno-

vative technology being used to market the homes, is translating into interest from first-time buyers and investors alike. Sales will launch in early spring, but the sales centre has already received upwards of 2,500 visitors.



Bill Morrison, president of Macdonald Realty Platinum Project Marketing Inc., says pinpointing the needs and affordability range for a typical young buyer was critical when approaching the design and price point for Evolve homes.

"It is really important to identify the actual buyer groups before entering the design stage," he says.

"With this first step, we can start at price point, then design up to it.

"In other words, we identify who will be buying what, understand their price limitations and what they qualify for, and then design that into square footage."

Three hundred of the 406 units in the 35-storey structure are priced below \$250,000. Some are small by most standards — they start at 316 square feet — however, the creative and efficient use of space has resulted in homes that are both livable and affordable, with studios starting at \$93,900.

"By focusing on cubic feet rather than just square feet, our designs use the suites' space efficiently in order to eliminate space that isn't used and that people don't want to pay for," Morrison says.

"Our goal was to produce affordable

homes that our buyers want and can afford and to avoid designing oversized floor plans with 50 square feet of wasted space.

"It may not sound like much, but it's the difference between a positive and a negative cash flow for an investor and for a young buyer. It's the difference between qualifying and not qualifying (for a home)."

Elements such as swing doors and unused hallway space were eliminated, freeing up space for more kitchen cabinetry and eating areas.

Pullout closets are cleverly concealed in walls. In the studios, beds are hidden under a platform that doubles as the floor for a chair and desk, and can be pulled out partway to create a sofa.



Evolve will comprise more than 400 homes — from 316 to 1,294 square feet — in a 35-store highrise at Surrey City Centre.

