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## On the waterfront

### Two-tower development to rise along the Fraser River

MICHAEL BERNARD SPECIAL TO THE SUN

JASON PAYNE/PNG



Plan C1 of RiverSky has 552 square feet of living space and 97 square feet of balcony in a one-bedroom unit.



Bosa Properties' RiverSky project in New Westminster offers units with either one, two or three bedrooms.



Space-saving features in the RiverSky display unit include a dining table hidden in the kitchen island that can accommodate up to eight people.

### RiverSky

The saying "there's no place like home" rings true for a lot of people — including Peter and Wendy Brown.

For the last couple of years, the seniors have been looking to downsize. The couple concluded that New Westminster, where they have spent most of their lives, offers the best of all worlds.

"Once you live here, you can't get out," jokes Wendy, who grew up in the Royal City's west end and attended the local high school. "Your roots go too deeply and twist, I think."

While they haven't yet signed on the dotted line, the couple was excited when Bosa Properties recently held a preview opening of its showroom for the RiverSky project, a two-tower development to be built right on the Fraser River waterfront. The Browns now live in a 3,000-square-foot four-bedroom home and are considering either a unit on the southeast side of the 16th floor or a subpenthouse facing west on the 32nd floor of the 33-storey first tower. "It's not set in stone yet," Wendy said.

They have been asked why they don't move into downtown Vancouver or maybe out to Surrey, where their dollars will buy more space, and respond by saying they want to stay where they have built their lives and where their friends live. "We curl in New West and Peter goes to an arts group here," said Wendy. "Everything is centred here."

They are drawn to the sweeping south-facing views, which would never be blocked by other structures because the building is right on the river. "We were impressed by the wall of windows with three sides of glass in a corner suite, which is pretty bright," Wendy said. "If you are going to something smaller, you don't want it dark. You want a place with a lot of sun."

The Browns are typical of what Bosa

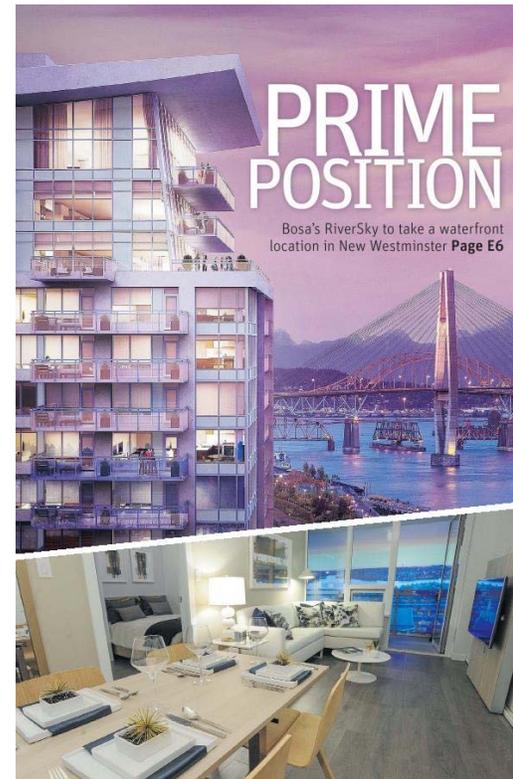
sees as an emerging demographic in the Royal City, says Bosa's senior vice-president, Daryl Simpson.

"While the number of onebedrooms that we have on the floor plate is indicative of that young first-time buyer, we are also seeing a move-down buyer that really hasn't been that active in New West for a while," he said.

"We have felt a significant demand for larger suites.

"We have a couple of threebedroom plans and there are four two-bedroom plans on each floor, but we are looking to increase that number to respond to the demand," he said, adding Bosa will be offering buyers the option of purchasing two onebedroom suites and merging them into one larger two-bedroom unit.

While much is made of the need to offer young first-time buyers close access to transit, it's also a big selling feature for the Browns. They have cut back to one car and are increasingly using SkyTrain to attend sporting events in downtown Vancouver and to visit friends in Surrey.



equipped training gym and a yoga studio. On the roof is a patio and terrace area with panoramic river views, chaise lounges, a fire pit, harvest table and barbecue area.

The dramatic lobby area is two storeys high, with a fireplace and a full concierge service, including a temperature-controlled area for receiving grocery deliveries. Each suite comes with a parking stall and dedicated parking for electric vehicles.

the neighbours by orienting the building on a north-south axis," she said.

"A lot of this project was driven by views, but also by connections. It was very important to the city that we connect to the SkyTrain."

Both Chan and Simpson noted that what initially was a technical challenge — building a tower on land next to the river and a high water table — has proven to be a plus.

With the above-ground parking and retail space taking up the first six floors, the residential units that start on the seventh floor have some views.

The show suite on Columbia Street features some of the space-saving devices that Bosa pioneered with its University District project in Surrey in 2013. Those include a dining room table hidden in the kitchen island that can accommodate up to eight people for dinner. Previewers were also given a chance to play with Bosa's space saver in the living area, a television/entertainment unit that slides to one side to reveal a horizontally pivoting single bed that can also serve as additional seating space.

"What we tried to do with the Bosa Space program is put the right amount of space in areas where you use it the most, rather than having a big area dedicated to a dining room that could just be a 'hole in your suite' that you are not using all the time," Simpson said.

The show suite one-bedroom unit is equipped with sleek integrated cabinetry that includes a pantry closet that optionally houses an ironing board. Composite countertops grace the kitchen and bathrooms. Premium appliances are apartment sized with a 24-inch gas cooktop and fridge-freezer, a dishwasher, a convection wall oven, a microwave in the island (in select homes) and a slide-out fan system.

The bathrooms feature a soaker tub with integrated shower, custom medicine cabinet, and recessed lighting above the toilet and tub-shower enclosure.

Building amenities include the RiverSky Club, with a largescreen TV and full kitchen and lounge area, a fully



Left: The entertainment unit can swing away to reveal a bed. Top right: RiverSky bathrooms feature soaker tubs with integrated showers, custom medicine cabinets and recessed lighting. Bottom right: RiverSky will have a generous breezeway through the lower portion of the building.

Another big selling point is the absence of expensive in-house amenities like a swimming pool, with Peter saying he will continue to use the local Canada Games pool for his three-day-a-week swimming routine.

Architect Molly Chan, whose firm NSDA designed the development, says the building's orientation was very important.

"Being so close to the river with those views, you want to make sure that you maximize the views for each and every one of those units and be considerate of