

# Fifty Five55 Dunbar at 5555 Dunbar 30 condo units in a four storey building by Omicron

Developer finds mid-rise building appeals to people with ties to area



Shown in an artist's rendering, the four-storey 5555 Dunbar features 30 units, the bulk of which will open onto both a central courtyard and to the exterior terrace. 5555 Dunbar. Rendering - building exterior

By Felicity Stone,  
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5555 Dunbar

Project size: 30 units in a four-storey building

Address: 5555 Dunbar St., Vancouver

Residence size: One to three bedrooms; 586 to 1,349 sq. ft.

Prices: \$369,900 to \$919,900

Sales Centre: 5555 Dunbar St.

Hours: 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday to Thursday; after Aug. 26, noon to 5 p.m.

Telephone: 604-568-7551

Developer: Omicron

Compliments of BCCondos.net

Architect: Rositch Hemphill Architects

Interior Design: Occupy Design

Web: 5555dunbar.com

Warranty: 2-5-10 National Home Warranty

Occupancy: Late 2014/early 2015

A new development in an established neighbourhood can sometimes meet with opposition — yet 5555 Dunbar, Omicron's four-storey, mixed-use project just north of West 41st Avenue, has been embraced by many local residents.

A block party for the official grand opening June 1 attracted 300 people. Neighbourhood businesses provided space and food. There was live music and a golf challenge. Kids painted colourful murals that will hang in the building when it's complete. Some residents asked if it would be an annual event.

"When we got involved as the marketers, the one thing we came to the conclusion together was essentially this is a great neighbourhood, and it's a neighbourhood sale," says Scott Brown, senior vice-president of Colliers International Marketing for the project. "It's not an investor sale."

Buyers at 5555 Dunbar, many of them downsizers, are people who want to live in the neighbourhood, he says.

"Every one of our buyers has at least an emotional connection to the neighbourhood that's already established. They may not have lived here, but they've had friends here, they've come here to shop, to visit, or they've grown up in the area in a single-family home," Brown said.

The first buyer was next-door neighbour Tan Tran, who owns the adjacent Blaq Sheep Fine Coffee. "I used to own a home just a block and a half from here, so when this one came up, I decided it would make more sense — just one elevator to work," Tran says. "This is a really nice, great neighbourhood, a lot of good schools around here, and I love the people."

Tran didn't stop there. "He also ran a promotional event for us and came in here and brought his friends and we all drank coffee that he supplied and he sold another home for us," Brown says. "So it's truly a neighbourhood sale."

Tran purchased a 1,015-square-foot, three-bedroom penthouse with a 440-square-foot terrace and outdoor fireplace. Like the other homes except for two garden suites, it will open on to both a central courtyard and to the exterior terrace.

The courtyard, which will be landscaped, yet covered to shield residents from the weather, means each home will have windows on both the east and west side for maximum natural light and air. All suites will have a balcony or terrace overlooking the street or lane, and some will have an enclosed balcony that is essentially an indoor/outdoor flex space: either extra living space not included in the basic square footage or opened up as an outdoor terrace. There is underground parking for every unit.

Half the homes are already sold. Buyers really like the atrium, the east-west exposure and resulting cross-draft, says sales manager May Lai. "And they like the finishing. It's clean and sleek looking." The kitchen and bathroom cabinetry is flat panel. Countertops are Caesarstone and backsplashes solid quartz. The bathroom floor tile continues up the tub surround and wall.

"Our buyers do eat out a lot, but they are going to cook a meaningful meal at least once or twice a week, from getting to know them," says Brown. "So then the kitchen size matters." They like the top-of-the-line Bosch gas cooktop and stove, the full-sized fridge with water in the door, integrated Bosch dishwasher and deep sinks. The Faber hood fan slides into the cabinetry, and the microwave is tucked under the counter. "(For) this buyer, you'd better have great appliances, you'd better have great appliance warranties, you'd better have good quality spec in terms of countertops," Brown says. "When you've got to compete in this market, some of these things are just standard fare."

At street level along Dunbar will be retail space. The site was already zoned for a low-rise building with commercial space along the street and the remainder residential, which fits into Dunbar's community vision.

Brown calls this type of smaller project social real estate. "Almost everybody who lives in here will likely have a best friend. It may not be the person next door, but they will truly have a neighbour that they socialize within here plus do things together like go to Blaq Sheep."

Next door, Tan Tran is expanding to serve breakfast on weekdays and brunch on weekends. "Then you have a place where the neighbourhood can just walk to," he says. "We're going to have a pyjamas brunch Sundays, so just come in your pyjamas; don't even brush your teeth. We want to be the place that people congregate."

